

HERE YOU ARE, CHAPS—THE BEST HOLIDAY COMPANION!

Week Ending  
September 8th,  
1923.

New  
Series.

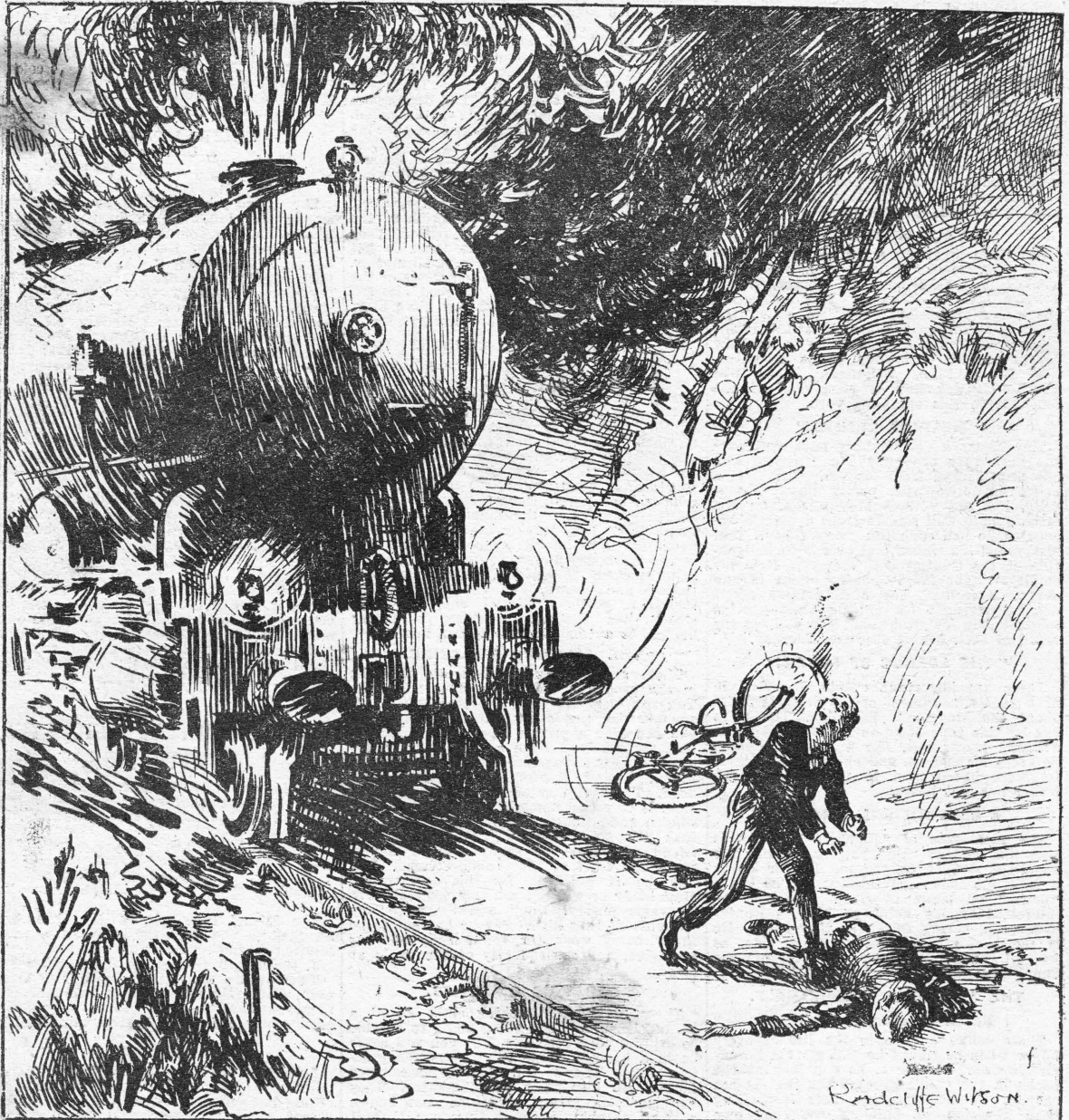
No. 242.

Twenty-eight  
Pages.

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

The Story Book  
for Boys.

EVERY  
TUESDAY.



Randolph Wilson.

**TEDDY GRACE'S GALLANT DASH TO SAVE HIS ENEMY!**

(A Dramatic and Thrilling Episode from the Great New Rookwood School Story in this issue.)

**SACKED FROM THE SCHOOL!**

A story of misunderstanding and injustice, which came near ending the school career of one of the most popular juniors at Rookwood—Teddy Grace, of the Fourth. It is a fascinating tale full of unexpected happenings, and thrilling moments.

**TROUBLE FOR "PUTTY" GRACE**

A story of misunderstanding and injustice, which came near ending the school career of one of the most popular juniors at Rookwood—Teddy Grace, of the Fourth. It is a fascinating tale full of unexpected happenings, and thrilling moments.

# In the Shadow of Expulsion!



This is a New story of the Chums of Rookwood full of surprises and dramatic situations.

By **OWEN CONQUEST.**

(Author of the Stories of Jimmy Silver & Co now appearing in the "Boys' Friend.")

## THE FIRST CHAPTER. In the Lion's Den!

"FAG!"

The voice of Carthew of the Sixth was both loud and deep. Carthew stood in the doorway of his study, with a dark frown on his far from handsome face. He made a megaphone of his hands, and bawled again.

"Fag!"

Only the echo of his own voice came back to him.

Carthew's frown deepened. He knew very well that had it been Bulkeley of the Sixth who shouted for a fag, there would have been an immediate response. The fag tribe of Rookwood worshipped big George Bulkeley, and hung upon his lightest word. He said to one fag, "Come," and he came; and to another fag "Go," and he went. Fagging for Bulkeley was regarded as an honour. Fagging for Carthew was an unpalatable duty that was avoided like the plague.

Again Carthew lifted up his voice. It fairly boomed along the Sixth Form passage.

"Fag!"

There was a moment's interval. Then a merry-faced junior came into view. He sauntered along the passage, humming a gay tune, and with his hands driven deeply into his pockets.

"At last!" growled Carthew. "Come here, young Grace!"

But if Carthew imagined that Teddy Grace of the Fourth had come in response to his repeated calls for a fag, he imagined a vain thing. Teddy was on his way to Bulkeley's study, to ask for a late pass. He intended to pop over to the cinema at Latcham.

Before he could get to Bulkeley's study, however, Teddy had to pass Carthew. And Carthew was impassable. He stood with arms and legs akimbo, in the manner of a policeman holding up traffic. And Teddy Grace was obliged to halt.

"What's wanted?" he asked.

"You are!" growled Carthew. "I want someone to field for me at the nets, and I've been bawling for a fag till I've nearly burst a blood-vessel!"

Teddy Grace favoured the prefect with a disarming smile.

"You can't fag the Fourth, old top," he said cheerily.

"Oh, can't I? We'll soon see about that. I'm playing for the First Eleven to-morrow, and it's quite legitimate to ask a Fourth

Form kid to bowl to me, so that I can get some batting practice."

"But you haven't asked me," said Teddy Grace, with a grin. "You've jolly well ordered me! But whether you ask nicely, or order fiercely, it's all the same. I can't fag for you, because I'm going over to Latcham."

Carthew scowled.

"You mean, you won't fag for me?"

Teddy Grace nodded, and tried to pass the tall prefect. But Carthew grabbed him by the collar, and swung him clean through the doorway into his study.

"Ow!" gasped the junior, as he collided heavily with the table. "Hands off, you rotter! If you touch me again, I shall hit out!"

Carthew came into the study, and slammed the door. There was a dangerous glint in his eyes, and his lips were contracted in a cruel line. He strode towards Teddy Grace with upraised hand, as if he intended to cuff him.

Teddy had meant what he said about hitting out. He had plenty of spirit, and he could not stand persecution in any shape or form. He sprang straight at Carthew, and shot out his left.

The blow caught the prefect on the point of the jaw, and took him utterly by surprise. He had not dreamed that a mere junior would dare to lay hands on his sacred person.

Carthew staggered back, emitting a bellow of pain and surprise.

"You—you young whelp!" he spluttered. "I'll make you sit up for this! I've a good mind to take you before the Head. Striking a prefect is a serious offence."

"But a prefect can strike a junior as much as he likes!" said Teddy Grace bitterly. "You're a cad—and a bully, Carthew, and you can take me to the Head as soon as you like. I'm quite ready."

"I'll deal with you myself!" said Carthew, his voice trembling with rage. "I dare say the Head would be too lenient. He wouldn't make the punishment fit the crime."

So saying, Carthew snatched up a cricket-stump, and advanced grimly upon the junior who had struck him.

Teddy Grace had no chance to get in another blow. Carthew was too wary and watchful.

The prefect made an effort to sling Teddy face downwards across the table.

But the junior was as slippery as an eel. He wriggled and writhed, and slipped out of Carthew's grasp.

Breathing hard, Carthew brought the cricket-stump into play.

Round and round the table rushed Teddy Grace, with the prefect striding in pursuit, lashing out savagely.

Carthew was in a towering rage, and he wielded the stump with vicious vigour.

Fortunately for Teddy Grace, many of the blows were wasted on the desert air, so to speak. But a number of them fell across the junior's shoulders, and he roared.

At last Carthew's rage simmered down, and he lowered the cricket-stump.

Teddy Grace was very white, and he was obviously in pain.

"Oh, you cad!" he muttered, reeling against the table.

Carthew tossed the stump into a corner.

"That'll teach you not to lay hands on a prefect again!" he panted. "I'll excuse you from fagging at the nets—you're hardly in a fit state for that. But you will take a hundred lines, and bring them to this study first thing in the morning, without fail. Now get out!"

Teddy Grace tottered from the study. He had given up all idea of getting a late pass from Bulkeley. Even Carthew had admitted that he was not in a fit state to field at the nets; neither was he in a fit state to go over to Latcham.

"The brute!" muttered Teddy, as he went slowly down the passage. "I'll pay Carthew out for the way he handled me!"

It was very seldom indeed that anybody heard Teddy Grace utter a threat of revenge. But somebody heard him now.

Mr. Manders, who had come over to the Classical Side to speak to Bulkeley, had just emerged from the latter's study. He overheard the fiercely-uttered threat of Teddy Grace, and he frowned.

Teddy had not really meant much. His threat sounded far more terrible than his actual intentions were. The probability was, he would not have "paid Carthew out" at all. He had spoken in the heat of the moment.

Mr. Manders, however, took Teddy's remark very seriously.

"Grace!" he rapped out.

Teddy halted. His face reddened, for he had not seen Mr. Manders bearing down upon him.

"I have just heard you utter a most vindictive threat against a prefect of this school," said Mr. Manders.

"Oh, crumbs!"

"It appears," went on the Housemaster,

THE POPULAR.—No. 242.

4 Look out for an amazing new **DETECTIVE SERIAL** starting in next week's "**MAGNET**"!

"that Carthew has had occasion to punish you for some misdemeanour, with the result that you have threatened to 'pay him out,' as you call it."

Teddy Grace was silent.  
"Threats of that nature will not be tolerated," said Mr. Manders sternly. "I shall report the matter to your Form-master, and request him to punish you."

So saying, Mr. Manders swept away with rustling gown. And Teddy Grace, no longer cheery, no longer humming a gay tune, walked slowly back to his own quarters. It seemed that troubles were fairly crowding upon him that evening. He had run foul of Carthew of the Sixth, and he had run foul of Mr. Manders. He had been lammed with a cricket-stump, and given a hundred lines; and he was to be reported to his Form-master for uttering a threat against Carthew—a threat which he hadn't really meant. Moreover, he was now unable to go over to the cinema at Letcham.

It happened to be Friday evening. And Teddy Grace came to the conclusion—not without reason—that Friday must be his unlucky day!

**THE SECOND CHAPTER.**  
**A Man Short.**

"GOING to brain somebody, Teddy?" Jimmy Silver asked that question, with a smile.

It was Saturday morning, and Teddy Grace was coming along the Fourth Form passage, brandishing a cricket-bat.

In his other hand were several sheets of impot. paper.

Teddy Grace stopped short.  
"I'm going to hand in some lines to Carthew," he said.

"But why take a bat along?"  
"For self-defence, in case Carthew turns nasty. He gave me a fearful laming last night, because I wouldn't fag for him at the nets; and I'm not going to risk another."

"Don't blame you," said Jimmy Silver. "Carthew's a beast! But I hope you don't find it necessary to protect yourself with the bat, all the same. Carthew might get hurt, in which case he'd pretend that you sloshed him without provocation."

"I fancy he'll leave me alone," said Teddy. "But I thought I'd better take a bat along, in case of emergency. Jolly good bat, this. I hope to pile up the merry runs with it this afternoon. What time does the char-a-banc leave for St. Jim's?"

"Twelve midday."  
"Good!"

"It's a long time since we licked St. Jim's on their own ground," said Jimmy Silver. "But I've a feeling in my bones that we shall do the trick this afternoon."

You're in tip-top form just now, Teddy, and if you don't hit up fifty of the best, your Uncle James will be a very, very disappointed man!"

Teddy Grace smiled.  
"I shall do my level best, of course," he said. "I'm feeling a bit sore at present, thanks to that brute Carthew, but it will wear off."

Teddy nodded to Jimmy Silver, and went on his way to Carthew's study.

Outside the door of that notorious apartment he halted, and rapped on the panel.

There was no reply.  
Teddy waited a moment; then he gave the door a clump with the business end of the bat.

Crash!  
Still no reply from within.

"I suppose Carthew's out," murmured Teddy. "In that case—"  
He stopped short suddenly, and gave a violent start.

There was a sound inside the study. Not the gruff "Come in!" of Carthew, but a groan.

"My hat!" muttered Teddy Grace, in alarm.  
The groan was repeated.

"There's something up!" exclaimed Teddy. And he hurried into the study. Then a startled exclamation broke from his lips.

Mark Carthew was there. He lay huddled on the floor, apparently insensible. How he had come to be in that condition was not clear. But there he lay, with white face and closed eyes, and every now and again a groan escaped him.

Much as he disliked Carthew, Teddy Grace was prompt to render first aid. He knelt down beside the huddled form of the prefect, and was in the act of loosening Carthew's collar when there was a quick step in the passage.

"Bless my soul! What does this mean?" Mr. Manders had come on the scene. He stared with startled eyes at the inert form of the prefect.

Teddy Grace turned his head.  
"Carthew's unconscious, sir," he said.

"So I perceive," said Mr. Manders. He had regained his composure, and his voice was cold and hard. "How came Carthew to be in this condition?"

The junior shook his head.  
"I've no idea, sir. I came along to Carthew's study to hand in an impot, and I found him like this."

The keen eyes of Mr. Manders roved round the study. They lighted upon the cricket-bat, which Teddy Grace had temporarily placed on the floor.

"Whose bat is that?" demanded Mr. Manders.

"Mine, sir."

"What is it doing in this study?"  
"I—I brought it along, sir—"

"Ah! To attack Carthew, I presume?"  
"Only if he started on me, sir. I shouldn't have used it without provocation."

"It seems that you have already used it—and very effectively!" said Mr. Manders grimly.

Teddy Grace started to his feet. He paled before the accusing glance of the Housemaster.

"Sir. You—you're not suggesting—" he stammered wildly.

"It is quite obvious to me, Grace, that you have carried out the threat which I heard you utter last evening," said Mr. Manders coldly. "You have attacked Carthew with a cricket-bat, and stunned him."

Teddy Grace stood as if turned to stone. He realised that denial would be futile. Mr. Manders was convinced of his guilt. The only thing to do was to wait until Carthew came round. Then the prefect would be able to explain how he came to be lying senseless on the floor.

Mr. Manders completed the task which Teddy Grace had begun. He loosened Carthew's collar, and he placed a couple of cushions under the prefect's head. Whilst doing so, he noticed a big bruise that was beginning to form on Carthew's temple. It was just such a bruise as might have been caused by a blow with a cricket-bat.

Carthew came round a moment later. He opened his eyes, and blinked dazedly at Mr. Manders.

"What—what's happened?" he muttered faintly.

"That is just what I want to know, Carthew," said Mr. Manders. "At least, I think I know already, but I should like your confirmation of it."

Carthew struggled into a sitting posture. Teddy Grace anxiously waited for him to explain.

"All I know, sir," said Carthew slowly, "is that I was standing facing the window, when all of a sudden something struck me with great force on the forehead, and I went down like a log."

"Did you not see what struck you?"

"No, sir."

"Surely you saw this boy Grace come into the study?"  
Carthew shook his head.

"Then he must have tip-toed into the room when your back was turned," said Mr. Manders. "I heard him utter a threat against you last evening—a threat which he has now carried out in a most dastardly manner. Let me assist you to your feet, Carthew."

"Thank you, sir."

The prefect was still very white and shaken. But he was gradually recovering from the effects of the blow.

Mr. Manders turned to Teddy Grace.

"You will come with me!" he said sternly.

Teddy followed the master from the study like a fellow in a dream. The troubles he had experienced overnight were trifles light as air, by comparison with this calamity. He was to be arraigned before the Head on a charge of brutally attacking Carthew. And he would find it difficult, nay, impossible, to prove his innocence. He had been heard to launch a threat against Carthew; and the Head would naturally suppose that the threat had been carried out.

Dr. Chisholm was in his study when master and junior entered. Mr. Manders told his story, in the cold, relentless manner of a prosecuting counsel. He did not exaggerate; yet he made things appear terribly black against Teddy Grace.

"The evidence against this boy is conclusive and crushing, sir," he said. "You may send for Carthew and question him, when he has recovered from this brutal assault."

"There is no need, Mr. Manders," said the Head. "I am satisfied that Grace is guilty. How could he be otherwise? He was heard to threaten Carthew last evening; and he was bound to deny his cowardly action."

Teddy Grace did deny it, vigorously and vehemently. But his wild outburst made no impression upon the Head.

"Be silent, wretched boy!" said Dr. Chisholm, at length. "Nothing you can say will be of any avail. You have been found guilty of an offence which is little

**GRAND AUTUMN PROGRAMME**  
**of Stories for Boys Out This Month!**

**THE BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY**

- 681.—**A TRIP TO MARS.**  
A Masterpiece of Mystery and Thrills on the Red Planet. By FENTON ASH.
- 682.—**THE SCHOOLBOY INTERNATIONAL.**  
One of A. S. HARDY'S Greatest Footie Fiction Triumphs.
- 683.—**THE POLRUANS' QUEST.**  
A Real Winner of Whirlwind Adventure in the Far East. By MAURICE EVERARD.
- 684.—**THE KIDNAPPERS.**  
The Further Exciting and Sporting Exploits of the Three Macs at Haygarth School. By JACK NORTH.

**THE SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY**

- 299.—**THE CROOK'S DOUBLE.**  
A Story of Thrilling South American Adventure, introducing Sexton Blake, Tinker, and the Hon. John Lawless.
- 300.—**THE CASE OF THE FIVE DUMMY BOOKS.**  
A Wonderful Story of Mystery and Detective Work, introducing Granite Grant and Mlle. Julie.
- 301.—**THE DOCTOR'S SECRET.**  
A Tale of Sexton Blake and Tinker in a Sensational Case of Mystery and Adventure. By the Author of "The Case of the 'Wizard' Jockey," etc., etc.
- 302.—**THE CASE OF THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER.**  
A Romance of Amazing Intrigue and Thrilling Adventure in London and Cornwall. By the Author of "The Mystery of the Dover Road," etc., etc.

**Now on Sale Price Fourpence Each!**

short of a crime. You will proceed to the punishment-room, and remain there until Monday morning. In the meantime, I will communicate with your father, and tell him to expect you on Monday, on which day you will be publicly expelled."

The words were spoken sadly, but sternly. The Head never derived any pleasure from such scenes as these. The only person who was pleased, though he strove not to show it, was Mr. Manders. That sour-visaged gentleman disliked boys, and took a positive delight in their discomfiture.

The Head signed to Mr. Manders to remove the condemned junior. And Teddy Grace, looking utterly dazed, and feeling as if the world had come tumbling about his ears, followed the master to the punishment-room.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were in the corridor when master and junior passed. They could not question Teddy Grace at such a moment; but they could see that there was something very seriously amiss.

"Manders is taking him to the punishment-room," murmured Lovell. "Something jolly serious must have happened."

Jimmy Silver nodded. "This means that Teddy won't be able to turn out against St. Jim's this afternoon," he said.

"What beastly luck!" growled Newcome. "On his present form, Teddy's our best man—with all respect to you, Jimmy."

"I quite agree," said Jimmy Silver glumly. "Dashed if I know who I can play in his place. All our reserve players have got engagements of some sort, this afternoon."

"Then we shall have to play ten men," said Raby.

"Looks like it."

Jimmy Silver was determined to discover the why and wherefore of Teddy Grace's banishment to the punishment-room. He visited that gloomy apartment as soon as Mr. Manders had gone; and he held a conversation through the keyhole with the prisoner.

"What's happened, Teddy?" "I'm going to be sacked," came the dull reply.

"You—sacked!" Jimmy Silver wondered if he had heard aright. "Why? What on earth have you done?"

"Nothing." "But fellows aren't sacked for nothing, and—"

"Yes, they are—sometimes. There have been several cases of fellows being sacked, and then found innocent. And I'm innocent—you don't need to be told that, Jimmy."

"But what are you supposed to have done?"

"Nearly brained Carthew with a cricket-bat."

"Great pip!"

"I took my lines along to Carthew this morning, and found him lying senseless on the floor," explained Teddy Grace. "I was stooping down to attend to him, when along came old Manders. He heard me make a threat against Carthew last night—a threat I didn't really mean. But Manders jumped to the conclusion that I'd carried it out—especially when he saw my bat in the study."

"But—but didn't Carthew explain who or what it was that struck him?" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"He says he was taken unawares, and didn't see who did it."

"And the Head thinks you guilty?"

"Yes," answered Teddy bitterly. "Manders saw to that."

"So you're going to be sacked?" said Jimmy Silver slowly. "Well, this beats the band! It's knocked me all of a heap. I—I'm frightfully sorry this has happened, old man. But keep your pecker up! You're not to go till Monday, I suppose?"

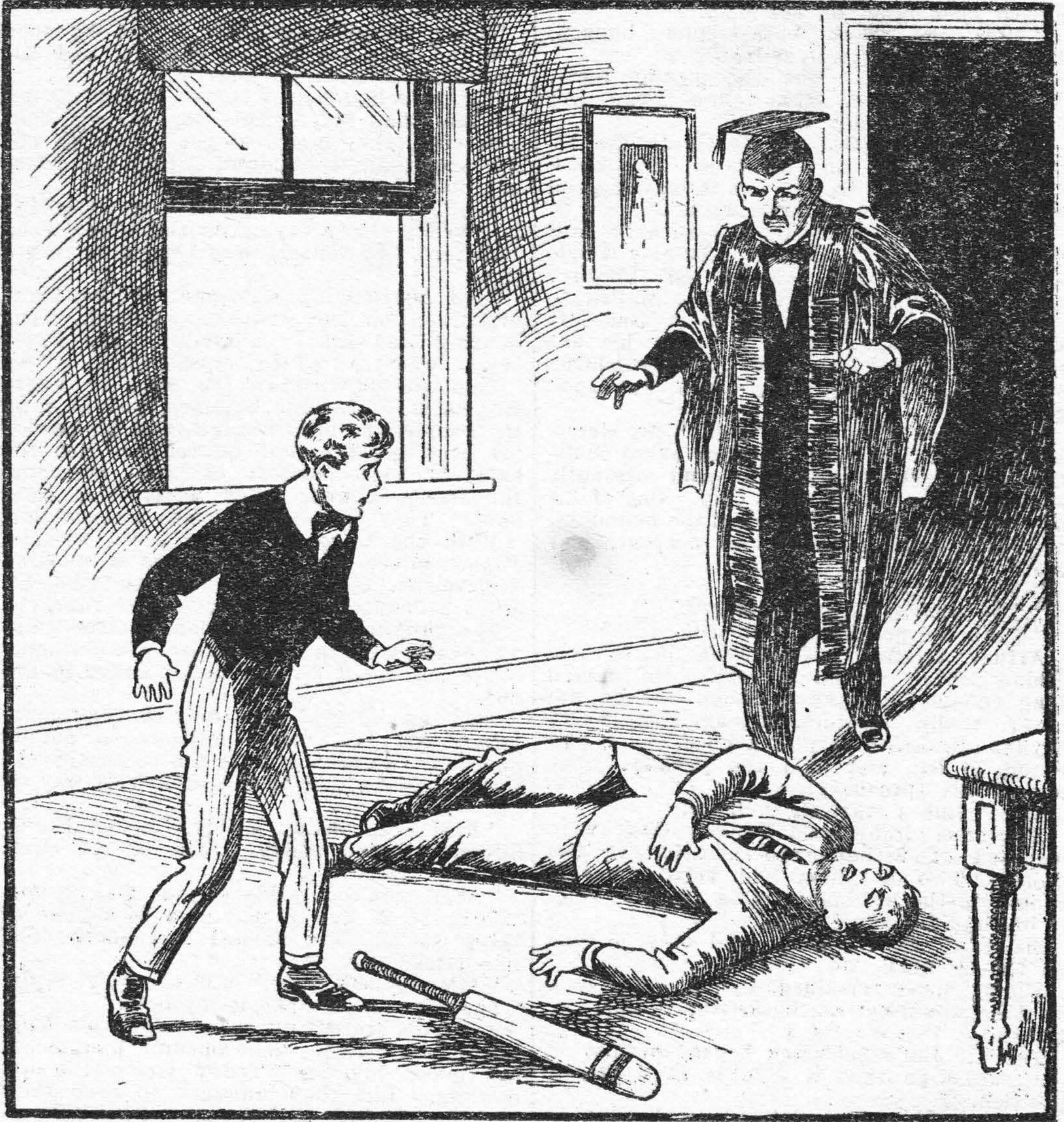
"No."

"Things may happen between now and then. The truth may come to light. I hope it does, for your sake. But this is a pretty go, and no error. I don't feel like cricket this afternoon. I've a good mind to phone to St. Jim's and cancel the match."

"Don't you do anything of the sort, Jimmy! Never mind about me. If you're determined to worry on my account, leave it till after the match. You've simply got to lick St. Jim's. It was your greatest ambition of the term, you know."

"But we shall be a man short—"

"All the more reason why you should



**WHO IS THE CULPRIT?** There was a quick step in the passage, and Mr. Manders came into the study. He started back in surprise. "How came Carthew to be in this condition?" he snapped. Teddy Grace shook his head. "I've no idea, sir," he replied. "I came along to this study to hand in an impot, and I found him like this." (See Chapter 2.)

fight tooth-and-nail. For goodness' sake don't cancel the match because of this business, or I shall feel ten times more miserable than I feel already."

"Oh, all right," said Jimmy Silver. "We'll play."

"And mind you pop up this evening and tell me how the game went."

Jimmy Silver promised to do so. And then, with a heavy tread and a crestfallen look, he went to rejoin his chums.

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.**

**A Surprise for St. Jim's!**

**J**IMMY SILVER & CO. alighted from their charabanc, in the gateway of St. Jim's.

It was a very subdued party of cricketers that Tom Merry & Co. came forward to greet.

As a rule, the Rookwood juniors were brimming over with the sheer joy of life. But the sparkle had gone out of their eyes now. Their thoughts, like those of the dying gladiator, were far away. It was of Teddy Grace that they were thinking—the fellow who would have been with them now, but for a tragic turn in Fortune's wheel.

None of the juniors believed Teddy Grace to be guilty of the attack on Carthew. By whose hand the deed had been done they could not say, could not even conjecture. But they would have staked everything on Teddy's innocence. Teddy was frank and open in all his dealings. He wasn't the sort of fellow to sneak into a prefect's study and attack him unawares.

"You fellows don't seem very chirpy," said Tom Merry, as he shook hands with Jimmy Silver. "Hope there's nothing wrong. Why, there are only ten of you!"

"We're a man short," said Jimmy. "He's spending the week-end in the punishment-room. And all our reserves are fixed up for the afternoon, so I could find nobody to fill the gap."

"Rough luck!" said Tom Merry, sincerely enough. "Even with your handicap, though, you ought to give us a good fight."

"We mean to!" said Tommy Dodd grimly.

The St. Jim's cricketers escorted their visitors to the cricket ground. A goodly crowd had turned out to see the match. Rookwood were always welcome guests on the St. Jim's playing-fields. Jimmy Silver & Co. were a fine fighting side, and they never knew when they were beaten. On this particular afternoon, they seemed to be in the doldrums; but whether this would affect their play remained to be seen.

Jimmy Silver won the toss. "It's a perfect wicket," he said. "We'll bat."

St. Jim's looked very keen and eager as they walked out to field.

All the old familiar faces were there. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, complete with monocle, took up his position at point. Fatty Wynn measured out the distance from the wicket to the spot where he would start bowling. Talbot and Blake, Figgins and Redfern, Kerr and Noble, all trotted to their respective positions, and waited for the first pair of Rookwood batsmen to emerge from the pavilion.

Presently they came. Tommy Dodd and Tommy Doyle were the opening pair. Walking in step and swinging their bats, they went forth to the fray.

The start was sensational. With the very first ball of the match, Fatty Wynn captured Tommy Dodd's middle stump.

"Out!"

"Well bowled, Fatty!" Tommy Dodd gazed ruefully at his wrecked wicket.

"Hard cheddah, deah boy!" sang out Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

The leader of the Rookwood Moderns walked slowly back to the pavilion. As he

went out, Jimmy Silver came in. They passed each other on the field.

"How did that catastrophe happen, Tommy?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"I don't know," was the gloomy reply. "It just happened. That fellow Wynn isn't human; he's a giddy wizard!"

Jimmy Silver stood up stoutly to the remaining balls of the first over. The bowling was too good to hit; but it wasn't good enough to capture Jimmy's wicket.

It was now Tommy Doyle's turn to face Figgins, the other bowler. Tommy Doyle was a fellow who believed in brighter cricket. He could not have stonewalled to save his life. He played with the left shoulder well forward, and swung his bat like a golf-club. He made three boundaries and a two in that over, which was good going.

But Tommy didn't last long. Tom Merry, a wise general, stationed two or three fieldsmen on the boundary-line. And presently Tommy Doyle fell into the trap. One of his mighty drives fell just short of the boundary, and Dick Redfern brought off a spectacular catch.

"Well held, sir!"

"Two wickets down, by Jove!"

"Keep the pot boiling, St. Jim's!"

Arthur Edward Lovell went in to join Jimmy Silver at the wickets. He stayed long enough to make a dozen, but he was never really comfortable against Fatty Wynn. He tried to pull a good-length ball round to leg, and paid the penalty. His wicket was spreadeagled.

Then came a startling collapse.

Newcome, Raby, and Tommy Cook were disposed of without any addition to the score. Two of them had been run out, thanks to the brilliant fielding and throwing-in of the St. Jim's fellows.

Six good wickets down, and only 30 runs on the board!

Jimmy Silver remained, but it didn't look as if he would get much assistance from the tail-end.

The St. Jim's fieldsmen began to close in—a sure sign that a side is in a strong position.

It was at this critical juncture that Teddy Grace arrived on the ground.

Jimmy Silver saw him arrive, and he rubbed his eyes. Was it really Teddy Grace who came hurrying on to the ground, or was it his double?

Any doubts that Jimmy Silver might have entertained as to the newcomer's identity were soon set at rest.

It was Teddy Grace right enough. He was in his flannels, and he sprinted on to the playing-pitch, and came breathlessly up to Jimmy Silver.

"Teddy!" gasped the Rookwood junior captain. "How on earth did you get here?"

"Biked," was the brief reply. "Escaped from the punishment-room while everybody was at lunch."

"My hat!"

Jimmy Silver stared at his schoolfellow with eyes that glowed with admiration.

How many fellows, Jimmy wondered, who were in the shadow of expulsion, would have come to the rescue of their side in this manner?

Here was Teddy Grace, condemned to be cast out of Rookwood—convicted of an offence which he had not committed. Yet he was prepared to push his own troubles aside, in consideration for the eleven. His skipper needed him at St. Jim's, and, behold, here he was!

Jimmy Silver put out his hand impulsively.

"You're a real sportsman, Teddy!" he said, with feeling. "Better take a rest before you have your innings. Rawson's in next. You can follow him. We're in a bad way, as you'll see by the score-board."

The dramatic arrival of Teddy Grace seemed to put fresh heart into the Rookwooders. Their batting was no longer feeble. Instead of poking and scraping in an endeavour to get runs, they hit out fearlessly.

The score was taken to 60 before Jimmy Silver and Rawson were separated. Rawson made a hot return to Fatty Wynn, who held it with one hand.

A volley of cheers rang out as Teddy Grace went in to join Jimmy Silver.

Although he tried his hardest to forget the sorry plight he was in, Teddy could not help reflecting, with a wistful sigh, that this was his last match for Rookwood. The last innings he would ever play for the

THE POPULAR.—No. 242.

team he loved—and he meant to make it his best innings!

Teddy opened cautiously. But he soon got the measure of the bowling, and the runs were rattled up merrily.

St. Jim's had hoped to get Rookwood out for less than fifty. This hope having been shattered, they hoped to get Rookwood out for less than a hundred. But the latter hope was being shattered also.

With Jimmy Silver batting brightly, and Teddy Grace laying on the willow good and hard, the century was topped in record time.

That partnership was one of the finest ever seen on the St. Jim's ground. The bowling was fairly collared. Even Fatty Wynn was reduced to impotence.

Tom Merry tried all the wiles he knew. He set traps for the batsmen, but in vain. He went on to bowl himself, and he bowled his best and brainiest deliveries. But the batsmen were masters of the situation. Boundaries flowed, as it were, from their bats. They were magnificent—unassailable.

With the score at 150 for seven wickets, Jimmy Silver declared. It was a sporting declaration. Jimmy wanted to give St. Jim's a chance of knocking off the runs.

The two Rookwood batsmen received quite an ovation when they came off. Jimmy Silver had made 66, and Teddy Grace 50, not out.

The tea interval was only a ten-minute affair. St. Jim's were anxious to get to business. There was none too much time at their disposal, and they had a long way to go.

"Feel like bowling, Teddy?" asked Jimmy Silver, clapping Teddy Grace on the back.

"Yes, rather!"

"Well, you're a giddy marvel, and no mistake! If it was I that was in danger of being sacked, I'm dashed if I should feel like cricket!"

"It's my last game," was the quiet reply, "and I mean to make it my best."

St. Jim's started off in splendid style. Tom Merry and Talbot, their opening pair, could not make much of Teddy Grace's deadly bowling. But they managed to keep their wickets intact. With Tommy Dodd's bowling, however, they were happy. They scored off him with ease and freedom, and the runs mounted merrily.

Tom Merry's wicket fell at last. He was bowled off his pads by Teddy Grace. But Jack Blake followed on, and he sent up the score by leaps and bounds with hurricane hitting.

The score was actually taken up to 100 before Blake was bowled.

St. Jim's were well within sight of victory now, for they had eight wickets in hand.

And then Teddy Grace, who had enjoyed very little luck with the ball, came into his own. He captured three wickets with three balls—the coveted "hat-trick."

The score had been 100 for two a few moments before. Now, it was 100 for five.

Harry Noble came in, and hit a couple of boundaries, and then knocked down his own wicket.

108 for six!

Figgins followed on, and strove gallantly to retrieve the fortunes of his side. He and Talbot put on 30 runs between them. And then Teddy Grace found his way to Figg's wicket.

138 for seven!

St. Jim's needed only 13 runs now—surely a simple task!

The Rookwood fieldsmen were on tiptoe. They worked like heroes. The fielding was dazzling, the throwing-in marvellous in its accuracy.

With five runs added, Talbot's wicket fell. He had played a long and patient innings, and had proved a tower of strength to his side. But Teddy Grace had bowled him at last.

The atmosphere was electric when the last man but one made his way to the wicket. A moment later he was retracing his steps. Lovell, at short slip, had brought off a wonderful one-hand catch.

Eight runs wanted—one wicket to fall!

Fatty Wynn, the last man in, walked with ponderous steps to the batting crease. He was the calmest person on the ground. The spectators were agog with excitement.

Fatty stopped his first ball dead. He hit the second through the covers, and the batsmen crossed twice.

The next ball was a scorcher. The batsman missed it; the wicket-keeper missed it, and it sped all the way to the

boundary for a bye, which meant a present of four runs to St. Jim's. That ball had missed Fatty Wynn's wicket by a hair's-breadth.

One to tie—two to win! Could any finish have been closer?

Teddy Grace put all he knew into the next ball. Fatty Wynn ran out to it, and drove with all his force.

"Thanks awfully, old chap!" said Jimmy Silver.

And a great gasp went round the ground, for Jimmy had not only stopped that terrific drive, but held and hugged the ball—an amazing catch! Rookwood had won that remarkable match by one run—the narrowest possible margin! But if Teddy Grace had not made his dramatic escape from the punishment-room, there would have been another story to tell.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

### "After Darkness, Light!"

**T**EDDY GRACE tramped to and fro in the twilight. He was alone.

Teddy had cycled behind the charabanc which conveyed Jimmy Silver & Co. back to Rookwood. But he did not return to the school himself. He wanted to enjoy his freedom a little longer. Out here, in the cool twilight, his thoughts were a little brighter than in the dark and dingy punishment-room.

Teddy was about a mile from the school. He had left his bicycle against a stile, and he was now pacing to and fro on a narrow footpath at the head of the railway embankment.

"I'm beginning to wonder whether it's worth while going back to the school at all," he muttered. "Now that I'm free, I might as well be free for good. If I go back, what does it mean? Imprisonment in the punishment-room until Monday morning, and then—the sack! A cheerful prospect!"

Teddy began to wrestle with his thoughts. If he did not go back to the school, what should he do?

Innocent though he was, Teddy shrank from the thought of going home. He would not be able to bear the look of distress on his mother's face.

A wild scheme was beginning to take shape in his mind, a scheme of going to London and making good, as other run-aways had done before him.

Teddy was no fool. He knew that the streets of London were not paved with gold. It was a gay city, but it was also a grim city. There would be rough as well as smooth. But Teddy Grace was not soft—even though he had once been nicknamed "Putty." He was quite prepared to go to London and fight a lone battle.

He was still busy with his reflections when he was startled to see a cyclist bearing down upon him.

The rider wore a Rookwood cap. Closer inspection showed him to be Peele, of the Fourth.

"The silly chump!" muttered Teddy Grace, startled out of his reverie. "It's madness to cycle on a narrow footpath like this!"

It certainly was. So narrow was the path that two persons could not have passed without touching each other.

It was an elevated footpath, too. On one side there was a dip, going down into a meadow. On the other side, there was the almost sheer decline of the railway embankment.

Even a professional trick-cyclist would have hesitated before taking that path. Teddy Grace had not dreamed of cycling along it himself. He had wisely left his machine against the stile.

But Cyril Poole, evidently seized by a spirit of recklessness, had chosen to tackle this dangerous ride. Perhaps he was doing it for a wager. Or perhaps he wanted to have something to brag about in the junior common-room that evening. Peele liked to be thought a devil-may-care fellow.

Teddy Grace stood aside, on the very fringe of the footpath, in order to let Peele pass.

But Peele never passed him. His front tyre struck a large stone that lay in the middle of the path.

The machine swerved to one side, and before Peele could bring it under control the front wheel shot over the edge, and rider

Who Will Win the Great Cycle Championship Next Week?

and machine went hurtling down the slope of the embankment!

"Good heavens!"  
The calamity had occurred so suddenly that it almost deprived the only onlooker of his breath.

Cyril Peele and his cycle had disappeared as swiftly as if the earth had opened and swallowed them up.

Fearful for Peele's fate, Teddy Grace peered over the embankment's edge.

At the foot of the slope, rider and machine had parted company. The cycle had run right across the line; but Cyril Peele lay in a huddled heap on the metals.

Teddy Grace called to him. There was no reply.

And then the terrifying shriek of an engine-whistle caused Teddy to glance apprehensively down the line.

It was nearly dusk now, and the gleaming lights of an express train came whirling into view round a curve.

Teddy Grace gave a startled gasp.

There was a sudden movement from Peele. He had been badly dazed by his fall, but the approaching rumble of the train had brought him acutely to his senses. He moved an arm, and then a leg, in an endeavour to drag himself clear of the metals. But he did not succeed.

"Help!" he moaned faintly.

Teddy Grace fairly plunged down the green slope of the embankment. He landed at the foot of it with an impact which shook every bone in his body. But he struggled to his feet, and darted towards Peele.

With an herculean effort, Teddy Grace dragged his schoolfellow clear.

He was only just in time. The hot breath of the engine was upon him, and the lighted rows of carriages shot past in a blinding flash.

Gradually the lights grew fainter, and the express rushed on into the night.

Teddy Grace dropped on one knee beside the fellow he had rescued.

"Are you much hurt, Peele?" he asked.  
"Not very much," muttered Peele. "But I couldn't have dragged myself clear of those metals, to save my life! I seemed to have lost the power of movement, somehow. It was shock, I suppose."

Teddy nodded.  
"Think you can walk back to Rookwood, with my help?"

"I'll try. Wait a jiffy, though. I've somethin' to say to you. You've just saved my life, an' jolly nearly lost your own in doin' it. I'm not much of a hand at expressin' eternal gratitude, an' all that sort of stuff. All the same, I'm real grateful. I was a mad idiot to bike along that foot-path."

"You were!" agreed Teddy Grace heartily.  
"You might have broken your neck."

"Well, I didn't; an' I suppose I must thank my lucky stars, as well as you. There's no bones broken, so now we'll have a shot at gettin' back to Rookwood."

Teddy Grace had intended not to return to the school. But he waived those intentions now. He could not leave Peele to struggle back by himself. It was as much as Peele could do to get along, even with Teddy's assistance.

Very little was said during the journey. The only conversation was as follows. Peele started it:

"I hear you're goin' to be sacked?"

"That's so."

"The Head thinks that you laid into Carthew of the Sixth with a cricket-bat?"

"Yes."

"Well, I fancy he'll think otherwise before long."

That was all. The couple staggered on in silence. And never had a mile seemed so long. Peele declared afterwards that there must have been over three thousand yards to that particular "mile."

It was not until the gates of Rookwood were reached that Peele spoke again.

"Would you mind steppin' along to the Head's study with me, Grace?"

"Why?"

"You'll see directly. But I must insist on your comin'."

"All serene."  
Together they proceeded to Dr. Chisholm's study. The Head surveyed their torn and dusty clothing in amazement.

"Bless my soul!" he ejaculated. "What is the meaning of this? I understand that you have broken out of the punishment-room, Grace. As for you, Peele, how came you to be in this bedraggled condition?"

In a few sentences Peele explained how he had come to grief when cycling along the footpath, and how Teddy Grace had saved him from being run down by the express.

The Head listened to Peele's recital in amazement. Before he could make any comment on the matter, however, Peele was speaking again.

"An' now I've got a confession to make, sir," he said. "Carthew of the Sixth was found unconscious in his study this mornin'—"

"That is so," said the Head. "I regret to say that Grace, doubtless in a fit of passion, brutally attacked him with a cricket-bat."

"Nothin' of the sort, sir."

The Head frowned.

"Peele! How dare you speak to your headmaster in that manner?"

"It wasn't Grace who laid Carthew out, sir. It was I."

"What!"

"I didn't do it intentionally, sir, of course. I'll tell you how it happened. I was feelin' a bit mad with Carthew, because he's been rather down on me lately. An' so, little dreamin' that he was in his study at the time, I buzzed a cricket-ball through the open window, in the hope that it would smash the glass panel of his book-case. It must have been the cricket-ball that hit Carthew on the head an' knocked him senseless. Grace happened to go into the study a moment later, an' Mr. Manders found him there, an' naturally concluded that it was Grace who had attacked Carthew."

Peele paused. The Head gazed at him in astonishment, not unmingled with severity.

"Why did you not make this confession of the facts before, Peele?"

"I hadn't the pluck, sir," said Peele frankly. "But after Grace had saved my life, I couldn't have kept silent any longer an' seen him sacked. I simply had to speak out."

There was a long pause.

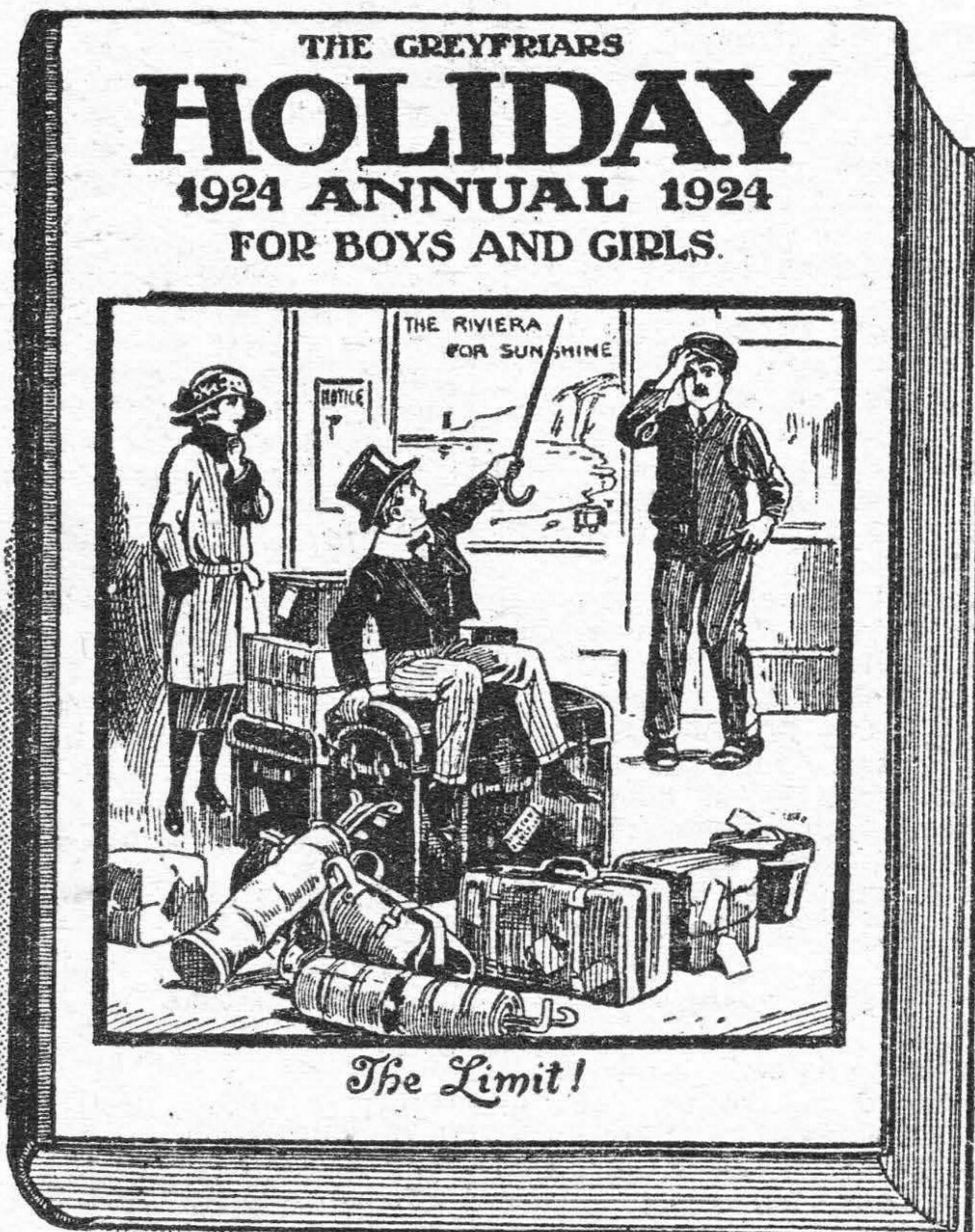
Teddy Grace was looking his old cheery self again now. The clouds had rolled by, and he was cleared. Everything had turned out splendidly. After darkness came light; and the words of the old scribe seemed to ring true: "Heaviness may endure for a night; but joy cometh in the morning."

As for Peele, he was glad that the guilty secret was out. A great load seemed to have slipped from his shoulders. He did not expect leniency at the hands of the Head; but he got it, nevertheless. His frank though belated confession had saved him from severe punishment. And the Head saw no reason to doubt Peele's statement that the injury to Carthew had been accidentally inflicted.

At a general assembly that evening Teddy Grace was vindicated before the whole school. And everybody—with the possible exception of Carthew and Mr. Manders—rejoiced to think that justice had triumphed and that all had ended happily for the fellow who had been under the dark shadow of expulsion.

THE END.

THE BEST THAT MONEY CAN BUY—



6/-

The Greatest Story Book on the Market.

NOW ON SALE.

A Topping, Long, Complete Story:—

"RIVALS OF THE ROAD!"

in next week's issue.

THE POPULAR.—No. 242.

A Story of Thrills and Spills in Next Week's Issue!