



The
GEM 1^{1d}/₂

No. 630. Vol. XVII. 20 PAGES March, 6th, 1920





FINGO'S FEARLESS FEAT!

(A Dramatic Incident in the Splendid Long Complete School Tale in this Number.)



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers.
Address: Editor, The "Gem," The Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

For Next Wednesday.

"THE DISAPPEARANCE OF BAGGY!"

By Martin Clifford.

Baggy Trimble, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, has provided a great deal of excitement and many sensations at one time and another, but never so much as in this week's splendid story.

His disappearance, the cause of it, and the remarkable events which followed, will be read with breathless interest by all my readers.

"THE DISAPPEARANCE OF BAGGY!"

is one of Mr. Martin Clifford's best stories, as all will agree, and no reader should miss it on any account. Order your copy of next week's GEM at once, and avoid disappointment.

EXCELLENT!

It is always pleasant to know that one is on the right tack; but as regards Chat, which in the nature of the case must be a varied article with some of everything, there can be no absolute certainty, since a paragraph that would bore one reader stiff might be just the thing another was looking for. The converse holds good, of course.

But Mr. S. J. Evans, of Regent Street, Gloucester, in the course of a fine letter, has settled the whole business, so far as he was concerned.

"The Editor's Chat in all your papers is excellent," he writes. That is good enough. Naturally, there is a way to do things, and another way not to do them. As the lady said in Barry Pain's amusing story, "It is not the right way to catch burglars to stand on the top landing and shout out 'Who's there?'" This method is faulty, as it gives the burglar a chance to take what he is after—namely, the plate-basket and the challenge cups, which adorn the sideboard. You might as well leave all the valuables in the house standing meekly outside on the kerb or in the garden, nice and handy, to save the "nocturnal marauder" all further trouble.

COMPLIMENTS.

Compliments have their uses so long as they are meant. But as regards Chat there is no going straight as the fly crows—well, you see what I mean—for there are many and curious subjects to be dealt with, from belying-pins to batter-pudding, and some readers are fastidious in the extreme, and I do not blame them for that idiosyncrasy.

But in the main a compliment means a generous mind behind, and it is the generous mind the world wants when it is the property of the fellow who does not stop short at words when deeds are called for. There are the mean folks, as we know, as mean as the man who,

"Out of his bounty
Built a bridge at the expense of the county."

He is not sort of good, and can stand down. It is the kindly act performed without afterthought, and, so far as that goes, without any special forethought, but just because it comes easily and naturally, well-nigh automatically, it is that sort of action which counts, and to take the age-old simile of the stone cast into the water, sends forth waves of sympathy which assist.

BAGGY.

They are not half kind to Master Trimble—that is, some of my friends are not. The more abject the object the greater the call for pity. And here come suggestions that the scion of Trimble Hall should be expelled. Naturally, there is no fellow-feeling in Baggy's case because he stands alone, a sad, ill-starred figure out there in the wilderness of his own incurable selfishness, so it is useless to quote the poet in the interests of Baggy, otherwise I should have brought in the following to bolster up the case:

"A fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind.
But does that feeling creep into your mind,

When in the crowd some day you chance to find
A fellow feeling in your coat behind?"

No, the answer is not Baggy, Bad as he is, he would not descend so low.

STORIES.

There is often occasion to speak of the stories past, present, and to come in this column, but to-day I wanted to say a word about those stories that have never been written. Oh, there are plenty of them, and they are for the most part the best—the quintessence of wisdom and insight, the careful accumulation of all the greatest thoughts, and so on.

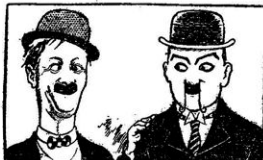
Sympathy always lives, and kindness and the little grey something which has been in the world—the charity and the imagination of life—all the time. Old writers, with their weighty style and proud stiffness of expression, are forgotten; but here and there, as you take a glimpse of the unending bookshelf of life, you see some cheery little tale which defies the ages, because it is human and sincere. It may be simply written, and have no pretensions to deal with all the problems of the time, but it remains and gives pleasure, just as some faded canvas has the power to do when genius was behind the brush.

But I have got away from the unwritten yarn. I know many authors who number their readers by the hundred thousand, but they are all disposed to admit the same thing—namely, that never yet have they written "the" book, the story which floats in outline before them and baffles their grasp.

Your Editor

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FINCO OF THE FOURTH!

A Magnificent, Long, Complete Story dealing with the Adventures of Tom Merry and Co. at St. Jim's.

BY

Martin Clifford.

CHAPTER 1.

A Surprise for Clive.

"C LIVE!" Mr. Linton rapped out the name in his usual sharp manner. The Fourth Form at St. Jim's always knew what to expect when Mr. Linton took them in hand in place of the good-natured Mr. Lathom.

"Clive!" The sharpness of Mr. Linton's voice had increased. But Clive was too busy thinking of the match against the Grammar School, to hear the voice of the master of the Shell. It was not often that Sidney Clive had the chance of distinguishing himself by playing in the junior first team, and the prospect set him thinking of the goals he was going to score.

"Clive!" The good-natured Arthur Augustus D'Arey could stand it no longer. He knew that condign punishment would descend upon the head of the South African junior, if he were not quickly aroused from his day-dream.

"Clive, dear boy!" It was a pretty loud whisper. Clive did not hear it, but Mr. Linton did.

"Take a hundred lines for talking in class, D'Arey!" he snapped.

"Weally, sir, I—"

"Take two hundred, Clive!" The master of the Shell had adopted the violent procedure of advancing upon the South African junior and shaking him violently. It was only then that Clive was brought back to the present moment.

"Sock the Grammar cads!" he murmured. "Eh? What is it? Did you speak to me, sir?"

"You were evidently dreaming in the class-room, Clive. Hold out your hand!" Clive received half a dozen strokes without wincing. His grit was boundless.

"Now, Clive, you will kindly return to your desk and pay attention to your work. I wish to see you after lessons, as I have a favour to ask of you."

Sore as he was feeling, Clive could not help grinning. It was just like the stern, but just, Mr. Linton to ask a favour of him after having had to cane him. Mr. Linton relied on Clive's own sense of justice to recognise that his punishment was deserved, and he was not mistaken in his judgment.

"Hard cheese, old man," whispered Clive's chum, Levison. "But you ought to know the gimlet-eyed old bounder by this time."

"He's got some muscle," said Clive, with a grimace. "I wonder what the old johnny wants to see me about after lessons?"

"As the wise and wary Mr. Asquith was fond of saying in the days of his power," murmured Ralph Reckness Cardew, "Wait and see!"

"Cardew, Clive, Levison, take three hundred lines each for talking in class after my repeated warnings!"

After that the lessons proceeded without a hitch, and the juniors were drilled in the difference between an infinite and a supine, till they did not know whether they were talking of insects or grammatical terms.

When lessons were over, the juniors streamed into the playing-grounds, eager for a bit of practice before the opposing team arrived. Gordon Gay & Co. were reported to be in excellent form, and the home team expected a close tussle.

"Hallo, Gussy, old bean! I hear our old Linton-bird has been pecking at you."

"Weally, Lowthah, I wufuse to talk of Mr. Linton in those twivulous terms!" "Never mind, you dummy, as long as he hasn't incapacitated you for this afternoon's match. Goggs and Monk are pretty good, I understand."

"I don't envy you bounders," said Cardew languidly. "I prefer sitting cosily on a camp-stool and watching you chase the—er—what's the Norman for a ball, Levison?"

"Don't ask me," grinned Levison. "I speak plain Saxon. But I agree with the witty Montague that it will be a hard fight."

"It will be a Gay match, anyway," put in the incorrigible Monty.

"Shut up, Lowther! Where's Clive, Cardew?"

"Am I Sidney's keeper, Merry? I understand the worthy Linton holds him in brotherly conversation."

"Not detained?" asked Tom Merry anxiously. He did not relish the idea of losing a good man out of the team. Three of his best men—Noble, Dane, and Roylance—were in the sanny with colds, and unable to play.

"No, dear boy! Oh, heah he is! We've been waitin' for you, Clive."

"Clive looked thoughtful as he came up to the juniors.

"I'm sorry I won't be able to play, Merry," he said apologetically.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" ejaculated Blake. "What's gone wrong now?"

"Linton, you see—"

"Hasn't forbidden you to play in the match because you were sleeping in class, has he?" asked Figgins. "Now, if it were Ratty, it would be just like him."

But it's not the sort of thing that Linton would do."

"Of course not, ass! And I wasn't sleeping—"

"Call it dreaming," grinned Levison.

"I wasn't dreaming, fathead—"

"The point is," interrupted Tom Merry impatiently, "why won't you play in the match?"

"Linton wanted to see me after class—"

"We know all that, ass!"

"If you will keep on interrupting, how do you expect me to tell you anything?"

"Yaas, wathah, deah boy, it's jolly wude to be interwupping a chap when he wants to explain somethin' to you."

"Once my noble kinsman starts he'll never stop," groaned Cardew. "It's Clive we want to hear, not you, Gussy, old bean!"

"Weally, Cardow, you wotah—"

"Shut up, Gussy!" said Clive ungratefully. "I was just explaining that Linton wanted to see me—"

"What? Twice?" asked Monty Lowther, in surprise.

"Twice? What d'you mean?"

"Well, you've told us twice, so—"

"Oh, rats! If you don't stop your silly puns, we'll scrag you!" said Figgins.

"But that wasn't a pun. That was a joke!" howled the indignant Monty.

"It's all the same! They're all as bad as each other," grunted Figgins.

"What did Linton want to see you about, Clive?" asked Tom Merry.

"To tell me there's a new boy coming, and ask me to look after him. He—"

"Oh! Since when were you leader of the Fourth?" asked Blake crossly. "It's like his cheek not to apply to me!"

"To me, you mean," said Figgins. "As leader of the Fourth, all new Fourth Form kids are under my care!"

"You New House ass—"

"You School House dummy!"

Clive grinned.

"As a matter of fact, the new fellow is going into the Shell, I understand," he said.

"Then why didn't Linton see me about it?" asked Tom Merry, in surprise.

"Because the new fellow is a South African."

"Oh!"

It was a united exclamation of surprise from about a dozen juniors.

There were several Colonial juniors at St. Jim's already. There was Harry Noble of the Shell, commonly called Kangaroo, a thorough sportsman in every way. There was Clifton Dane, the Canadian, a fellow with brains and pluck. There was Prominent, of New Zealand, not as prominent as the other two in athletics, but a hefty back at footer, if need be, and a good man with the willow. There was Kouni Rao, the Indian, who had gradually become accustomed to the life at St. Jim's under Figgins' fatherly eye. And there was Clive himself, a fine son of sunny South Africa. If the new junior was anything like the other Colonials, he would be a welcome addition to the Shell.

"Bai Jove, deah boy, that will be fine foah you!" It was Gussy, who had recovered from his surprise before the others.

"The question is, can you spare me?" asked Clive.

Tom Merry assumed a worried expression.

"Of course, you'll have to meet the new chap, Clive. But I'm dashed if I know whom to put into the team in your place."

It was then that Cardew showed that his friendship with Clive meant something.

"Will you have me in the team, Merry?" he asked. "I can't promise to be a competent substitute for my good Sidney, of course!"

"Right you are, Cardew. Get into your togs!"

Tom Merry knew that when Cardew chose to exert himself there were few superior to him.

Clive gave Cardew a grateful look. He knew that Cardew would make a sacrifice of personal convenience for few beside him.

"Oh, really, Merry, Cardew's no use! You ought to play me!"

It was Baggy Trimble's querulous voice. The fat junior had been hanging on the outskirts of the crowd listening to the conversation, in case he could pick up any tit-bit of scandal to retail to other juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha! This is going to be a match, not a guzzling competition, Baggy!"

"It's just your jealousy, Merry. Look here, Clive, would you like me to get a feed ready for the new fellow when you bring him back?"

"Are you thinking of standing him a feed, Baggy? That's very good of you!"

"Oh, rats! If you'll shell out half-a-quid I'll see to the grub!" And he extended a dirty palm.

"Wants washing!" said Clive, in his straight-forward manner.

"Eh?"

"The Honourable Baggibus is above such things as water," said Cardew.

"Why is Baggy like a celebrated soap?" grinned Monty Lowther.

"Stop rotting, you chaps! Am I to look after the grub or am I not to?"

"Echo says 'not!'" laughed Clive.

"Oughtn't echo to say 'to?'" asked Figgins innocently.

"Oh, I don't know. Anyway, I'll see to the feed myself, Baggy! It's about time I was making a move for the station, you fellows."

"I say, I'll go with you!" shouted Baggy, endeavouring to keep up with Clive's speedy pace. "Wait a mo, old man."

But Clive was not going to slacken his speed in order to enjoy Baggy Trimble's company. He was soon cycling at top-speed down the Rylcombe Lane.

CHAPTER 2.

Hatching a Plot.

"**B**EAST!" muttered Baggy Trimble, as he rolled into his study in the Fourth Form passage.

Then he glanced round in surprise. His study-mate Mellish, the sneak of the Fourth, was entertaining a party of all the biggest rotters and outsiders in the two Houses at St. Jim's.

Racke, Crooke, Digges, and Clampe were playing cards, and the others were watching them. Racke and Crooke were partners, and the two New House fellows playing against them seemed to be having a bad time of it. Digges was looking worried and there was a decidedly exasperated look in Clampe's eyes.

"Get out, Baggy!" snapped Mellish.

"Oh, really, Mellish! I suppose I've got a right to come into my study. And, anyway, I don't approve of all this smoking and gambling here!"

"Eh?" Racke looked up with a warlike air. "What was that you said, porpoise?"

"I—I— Oh, I just said I was jolly glad to see all you fellows smoking and gambling here. This is my study, but I'm glad you've made yourselves at home in it!"

"Oh, throw him out, you fellows!"

said Racke crossly, to the members of the party who were not playing bridge.

Crowle and Scrope, Mellish and Pig-gott arose together to carry out Racke's orders, but Trimble dodged under the table, and came out on the other side between Racke and Clampe.

"Past!" he said hastily. "I've got something important to tell you about a new chap, Racke, old bean!"

"Let's hear what he's got to say," said Clampe, glad of an excuse for interrupting the game.

"He's a South African, and Clive's gone to the station to fetch him. And now you know, what'll you give me for telling you, Racke, old man?"

"A jolly good hiding if you don't shut up! What's Clive and his precious friend got to do with us?"

But Mellish saw what Baggy meant.

"It's a good chance of letting down Clive and his chums by playing some jape on the new bounder. We do owe them a grudge, especially Cardew!" he suggested.

Racke and Crooke sat up at that. They would certainly risk a good deal to give vent to their spite against Cardew & Co.

"Let's see," said Racke. "The study will be deserted, unless Cardew's in it and—"

"Cardew's playing in the match," said Trimble triumphantly.

"Oh, good!" Racke began to see his way to a glorious jape. "I expect Blake and all that crew will also be out of doors. What about ambushing Clive and his precious pal in the study and tying them up there?"

"Phew!" Crooke looked doubtful. "Clive's a handful to tackle, and if the new chap's anything like him—"

"Count me out," said Mellish nervously. "I don't believe in going too far in japes, you know."

"Quite right!" wheezed Chowle.

"Clive's a terror!"

"If you're all funky—" sneered Racke.

"Who's funky?" growled Scrope. "The eight of us—not counting Baggy—ought to be enough to tackle the two of them."

"Hear, hear!" said Digges and Clampe together. Neither of them was exactly a hero, but each felt quite capable of dealing with a quarter of one of the South Africans.

"That's settled, then," said Racke authoritatively.

"Look here," blustered Trimble, "if you fellows don't stump up for what I've told you, I'll feel it my duty to go and tell Cardew and Levison what you're up to!"

"You'll get ten bob if the wheeze comes off," growled Racke, "and not a farthing till then. That's the only way of making sure that you'll keep your mouth shut about it, hang you!"

"Oh, really, Racke, I'm not likely to tell tales. I should hope I've got too much sense of honour for that—"

But the cads were too busy perfecting their plot to have any time for the fat junior.

It was settled that Racke, Crooke, Digges, and Clampe should wait for Clive and his friend in his own study and overpower them as soon as they entered. If they showed fight Mellish, Chowle, Scrope, Piggett, and Trimble were to come in to the assistance of Racke & Co. Otherwise the five of them were to keep guard outside the study, and keep off inquisitive newcomers. To Mellish was entrusted the special task of locking the study door after Clive and the other fellow had entered.

Then Racke and Crooke, Scrope and Clampe, Digges and Chowle, Mellish and



Racke & Co. were in a fearful state when Torn Merry & Co. entered the study. "Gee-whiz!" gasped Monty Lowther, staring at the treacly crew. "What a sweet sight!" "Ha, ha, ha!" came a unanimous shout of laughter. (See Chapter 4.)

Piggott set about getting the ropes and the gags, the tar and the feathers and the other accessories necessary for the complete success of their little scheme.

Meanwhile Baggy Trimble had returned to the playing-fields.

"Here comes Baggibus," said Cardew. "Coming to watch us trundle rotundity, Baggy?"

"Eh?"

Baggy hardly ever understood what Cardew was talking about. It was a habit of Cardew's to use roundabout expressions when he might very well have used simple ones.

"Baggy has come to offer us his services," grinned Levison. "He wants to be the ball in the match."

Baggy assumed a haughty expression. "You chaps will sing smaller when the jape comes off," he said mysteriously.

"Jape! What jape?" asked Levison sharply.

"Ah! Wouldn't you like to know? But I promised Racke I wouldn't tell, and I'm a man of my word."

"What's the ass burbling about?" growled Levison.

"The worthy Baggibus is talking out

of his cranial covering, as per usual," said Cardew.

And before he had time to say more, Gordon Gay & Co.'s arrival announced that the tussle was about to commence. But Baggy's careless words had left their mark on Levison's keen mind.

CHAPTER 3.

Not What Clive Expected.

THE train was just steaming into the station at Wayland as Clive reached the platform.

Out of the train stepped a solitary passenger, Ethel Cleveland—the cousin of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, who was a general favourite with all the juniors at St. Jim's.

"Fancy meeting you here!" said Cousin Ethel sweetly, as Clive assisted her out of the carriage. "I wanted my visit to be a surprise to everybody."

"The fact is, Cousin Ethel"—Clive was one of the juniors privileged to call Ethel by her Christian name—"I hadn't expected to see you here at all. I came to meet a new fellow—a South African."

"A South African? Perhaps an old friend? That would be nice for you!"

Ethel's interest was immediately aroused.

Clive shook his head.

"No. Mr. Linton asked me to meet him, but I haven't the faintest idea who he is. His name is John Fingo."

"What a queer name!" She looked around. "He couldn't have come by this train. Ah, here's Doris! I thought she would be here to meet me!"

A trap had just driven up, out of which stepped dainty little Doris Levison, the sister of Levison of the Fourth. She had been staying in the neighbourhood for some time, and was an old friend of Cousin Ethel's.

Whilst affectionate greetings were taking place between the two girls, Clive interviewed the stationmaster. He discovered that Fingo might have lost the connection at Lantham, in which case he would come on by a later train.

"What a shame!" said Doris. "I intended to ask you into the trap."

"Why shouldn't we wait to welcome the new boy?" suggested Ethel. "We ought to make him feel at home after he has come such a long way."

Doris nodded eagerly.

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"Oh, yes, and then he can tell us all about the country he lived in before he came here. I suppose he'll not be coming from the same part of South Africa as you, Sidney?"

Clive shrugged his shoulders.

"I really don't know. It's very good of you to keep the trap waiting, Doris. The next train won't be more than a quarter of an hour in coming, I should say."

The time passed pleasantly till the train steamed in, and sure enough, a youth of about fifteen stepped out of a compartment to the platform. But Clive and the girls were extremely startled when they saw him. He was coal-black!

"Goodness!" gasped Doris. "He's a nigger!"

"A Kaffir, you mean!" corrected Clive. "But we—I mean, you—had better drive off now. I've got to stay behind and be polite to him for a bit."

Cousin Ethel opened her eyes wide.

"Why shouldn't we ask him in the trap as we arranged?"

"What! A Kaffir? Oh, well, you've never been to South Africa, so you don't know what they are. Give them an inch and they'll take an ell. If you ask him into the trap, he'll be thinking he's our equal soon."

"But he's going to be a schoolboy at St. Jim's. He's not a servant or anything!"

Ethel could not make out what had come over Clive. To find him a snob was inexplicable.

Clive sighed. It seemed useless to try to explain. Only someone who had actually been in the midst of a large black population could appreciate the difficulties of maintaining the white supremacy.

"But we're not in South Africa," said Doris. "What's the harm in being a bit polite to him here?"

The approach of the new boy interrupted the argument. He raised his hat politely, and there was an ingratiating smile on his thick lips.

"Can you direct me to the road of the college school, master?" he asked.

Ethel held out her hand to the new boy, but Clive interposed brusquely.

"Are you Fingo?" he asked, leading the new-comer aside.

"That's me." The surprised pleasure on Fingo's shiny-black countenance was marvellous to watch. "And are you from the college school, baas?"

"Yes." Clive spoke like a superior to an inferior. "Mr. Linton—your teacher—sent me to fetch you. Leave your things here to be sent on after you, and mount behind me on my bicycle. We'll soon get to St. Jim's."

"Clive!" Cousin Ethel spoke in a hard tone of voice, that she seldom used, and Doris looked at her wonderingly. "Clive! The trap is waiting to take you and your South African friend to St. Jim's. If you refuse to use it, you are insulting us."

Sidney blushed to the roots of his hair, but he had made up his mind, and he trusted that Cousin Ethel would come to see that he was right.

"Fingo's coming with me on the bicycle," he said, looking stolidly before him without seeing anything.

Ethel turned abruptly to Fingo.

"You're going to the school on the other side of these woods," she said, "and my friend will be glad to take you in the trap. Will you come?"

A puzzled expression appeared on Fingo's face, and he glanced first at Ethel, then at Clive. At last he asked of Clive:

"What road to college-school, baas—eh?"

"We go straight through that gorse," said Clive, pointing out a short cut. And then, before anyone knew what had happened, Fingo had set off at a rapid trot in the direction pointed out.

"What a pace!" muttered Clive, staring in unwilling admiration after him.

"Are you satisfied now?" asked Cousin Ethel frigidly. "Is this the sort of welcome you give to a stranger from South Africa?"

"Ethel—" began Clive, and then stopped. There was really no way of explaining himself.

"Are you coming into the trap, Sidney?" asked Doris.

"No!" said Clive abruptly, mounting his machine.

"Very well," said Ethel icily, as she entered the trap.

"Where do Ethel's?" asked Doris.

Clive had raised his hat coldly and was already out of sight.

"To St. Jim's, of course. I'm going to see that my cousin D'Arcy and the other boys make Fingo feel at home."

"Clive is a nice boy," said Doris pathetically. "I don't think we ought to quarrel with him."

"I'm not going to speak to him till he

apologises to Fingo. His behaviour was simply abominable."

"And Fingo is so black!"

"Isn't Koomi Rao black? And isn't he a nice fellow? Hasn't Clifton Dane got Red Indian blood in him? And isn't he one of the best? And what of Hurree Singh of Greyfriars? Could you wish for a finer gentleman?"

"Ye-es."

Doris was trying to think of an excuse for Clive. He was her brother's closest chum, with the possible exception of Cardew. But she really did not know what to say. Her sympathies were with Cousin Ethel.

"Never mind, dear, don't worry about it," said Ethel, forcing a smile. Ethel was slightly older than Doris, and she felt that she ought to put a cheery face on the affair for Doris' sake. "The whole thing will soon blow over, and Sidney will see his mistake."

Doris took Ethel's hand lovingly. She thought a great deal of the older girl. Doris was no coward, but she sometimes wished she had as firm a character as Ethel Cleveland.

The girls were talking of the way they had spent their last holidays when they reached St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 4.

Rough on Racke.

LEIVISON was no fool, and he guessed that Trimble's words meant that some jape was afoot in which Racke had a hand. At half-past five he confided his suspicions to Cardew, and the two went into the School House to investigate. Cardew was feeling very pleased with himself; he had put up as good a show in the first half of the match as Blake or Figgins, and that was saying a good deal.

They first sought out Racke's study in the Shell passage, but it was deserted. Gore, whom they found entertaining his friends a little higher up the passage, told them that there was a party on in Mellich's study.

"That's where Racke'll be, I expect!" he said disdainfully. "Smoking and gambling like a regular bouncer!"

Leivison grinned, and Cardew winked his eye knowingly at Gore. It was not so long since Gore was hand-in-glove with the outsiders of the Shell and Fourth.

In Mellich's study another disappointment awaited them. It was deserted, but there were evident signs that it had been occupied recently, and the place was reeking with smoke.

"Phew!" said Leivison. "If any of the masters come along now there'll be the Dickens to pay!"

"Yes, and the worthy Mellich will pay it!" said Cardew. "Racke & Co. would never dream of owning up!"

"Well, let's look further up the corridor. What the Dickens has happened?"

Leivison tried the door in vain. It was locked.

Mellich and Scrope, keeping watch outside Study No. 9, had spotted Leivison and Cardew entering the study, and Mellich had been seized with the bright idea of locking them in. He happened to have the key of his own study in his pocket.

Leivison and Cardew shook the door violently, but there was no way of getting out. Nor would shouting help them, for the Fourth Form passage was deserted, except for the plotters.

"Make yourselves comfy!" grinned Mellich, speaking from the other side of the locked door. "We won't keep you there more than an hour or two!"

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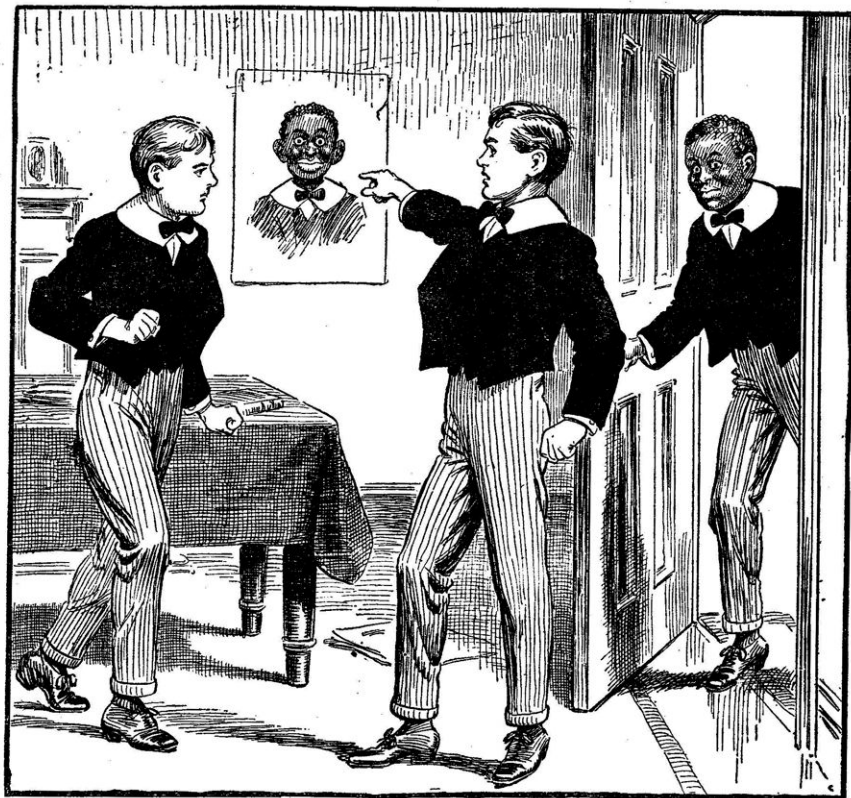
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"What's this?" growled Levison, entering his study and seeing a huge cartoon of Fingo drawn on the wall. "What rotter has done this, Olive?" "How should I know?" returned Olive surly. It was at that moment that Fingo entered the study. (See Chapter 6.)

"Let us out, you rotter!" snapped Levison. "We've got to play in the match. It's not over yet."

"Serve you right for coming along to poke your noses in where you aren't wanted!" sneered Scrope. "You should have stuck to your blessed game till we invited you to come here."

"You cads!" howled Levison.

"He, he, he!" It was Mellish's triumphant cackle.

"Don't answer them, Erny!" urged Cardew. "We'll find a way out yet."

In time of difficulty Cardew dropped his languid manner, and showed the sterling stuff underneath.

Mellish and Scrope were, by this time, in Study No. 9, relating their exploit. The other plotters were also in the study, listening appreciatively. Only Baggy Trimble was left outside to give notice of the arrival of the overdue South Africans.

"If only I had a knife!" murmured Levison. "I could force the lock. Haven't you a knife, Ralph?"

"No. Sidney has our knife," said Cardew whimsically. "This should teach us to get one apiece!"

Suddenly a glittering object under the table caught Cardew's eye. It was Racke's elegant cigarette-cutter.

"Even this ought to be of some use, old bean!" he said, as he fished it out.

Levison glanced at it doubtfully. It seemed impossible to tackle the heavy lock with such an instrument. Then an inspiration came to him.

"The hinges!" he said excitedly. "They're old and loose. It won't be difficult to get them off the door with this."

Cardew nodded approvingly. He had great faith in Levison's ability as a mechanic.

The passage was deserted when Levison and Cardew emerged from the study. Baggy Trimble had gone off to the tuckshop to keep up his strength, and the other plotters were still in Cardew's study.

"Wonder whether he's missed the

train?" Crooke was growling, as Levison and Cardew tiptoed up to Study No. 9. "Just our luck if he has."

"We'll have a fine welcome for them both when they return," sneered Racke. "Got the tar and feathers ready, Clampe?"

Levison grinned and quietly locked the door of Study No. 9 with the key which the plotters had left on the outside of the door. The conspirators had fallen into their own trap.

"What's the game, Erny?" asked Cardew inquisitively.

"Cut off to the playing-fields and get a crowd of the fellows to come along. We want to teach these bounders a lesson."

Cardew obeyed, grinning. He knew that Levison must have some dodge up his sleeve.

Suddenly Racke & Co. became aware of the fact that the door was locked on them. Racke was furious.

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"Hey, Baggy, you dashed lump of lard!" he shouted. "Open the door!" "I'm not Baggy!" said Levison, in a tone of surprise. "It's me—Levison, you know. You haven't forgotten my voice, have you?"

"What?"

The plotters were thunderstruck. The tables had been turned with a vengeance. "Make it pax!" whined Chowlie.

"Too late!" grinned Levison. "You should have known that you've got to have your eye-teeth cut to deal with yours truly."

"It's your fault," said Clampe furiously, turning on Racke. "You always make a mess of everything you undertake. You jolly well got us into this, and now you've got to get us out of it!"

"Oh, bump him!" howled Scrope and Crooke and Digges and Mellish together. And they suited the action to the word.

Bump!

"Ow!" It was an agonised groan from Racke.

Bump!

"Wow!"

Bump!

"Yaroo!"

Racke was struggling furiously, but numbers were against him. Suddenly the table on which stood the treacle and the feathers turned over, and the plotters fell down in a heap on top of the mess. "Stop it, you maniacs!" howled Racke, and they did stop it then. But it was too late. They were all in a fearful state when Tom Merry & Co. entered the study a little later.

"Gee-whiz!" gasped Monty Lowther, staring at the treacy crew. "What a sweet sight!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a unanimous shout of laughter. But the juniors were laughing at the aspect of the conspirators and not at Lowther's pun.

"Bai Jove, deah boys—I mean, you wotah! You look simply disgustin'!"

"Serve you right!" said Tom Merry. "Let's frogs-march them across the quad!"

And frogs-marched the hapless plotters were, till they were too sore to move. And when Racke returned to his study he discovered that the spoilt carpet was on the floor, his own having been taken by Cardew in exchange.

For all of which reasons Racke nursed thoughts of fierce vengeance against Tom Merry & Co., against the chums of Study No. 9, and still more bitterly against the new boy who was the innocent cause of all his woes.

CHAPTER 5.

A Rift in the Lute.

CLIVE and the girls reached the school together. Quickly as Fingo walked he had apparently not yet arrived at St. Jim's.

"Sidney!" It was the pleading voice of Doris Levison.

The girls had descended from the trap, and were standing in the fine old gateway of St. Jim's.

"Yes, Doris?" Clive was polite, but distant.

"We don't want to be bad friends with you, do we, Ethel?"

Ethel could not be angry for long, unless there was some very good reason for it, and she was always ready for a reconciliation.

"Certainly not! Be reasonable, Sidney, and promise to treat the new boy like any other chum!"

"You don't understand, Ethel. He's a Kaffir, and a Kaffir who's been educated is spoilt!"

He was talking with an air of superior

wisdom. Hadn't he heard his father use these words over and over again?

"He didn't seem so very educated to me, if that's what you object to," said Ethel, half-laughing at Clive's tone.

"And you might, at least, wait to see if he's spoilt or not before you condemn him!" urged Doris. "The way he walked away when he saw that we were quarrelling about him was quite tactful."

Clive abruptly changed the subject.

"Let's go and watch the junior match," he suggested. "They must be playing the second half now."

No. 45.—MONSIEUR ADOLPHE LE BLANC MORNAY.



The French master of St. Jim's. Rather too easy with his boys, but can be very severe when his patience is exhausted. Has been the victim of many lapses on the part of the juniors, and has occasionally come down very heavily upon them. Is no friend of Herr Schneider, the German master, who has frequently openly insulted him.

At that moment Fingo arrived. His progress through Rylcombe-lane had been marked by a regular procession of wondering village lads, who followed him right up to the gates of St. Jim's.

Pilcher asked him if he had escaped out of a circus, and Craggs wanted to know what polish he used on his face. Binka, the butcher, offered to fight him, and Grimes wanted to cut his flowing locks. But Fingo allowed these remarks to pass over him like water off a duck's back, and kept stolidly on his way.

When the village lads saw the young ladies they quickly and rather shamefacedly disappeared.

"Now, then, Clive," said Ethel sternly, "behave yourself, and show your friend the way to Mr. Linton's study."

"Or stand him a feed in your study first," urged Doris. "I'll come, too, if you like."

It was at that moment that Racke arrived on the scene.

"He's no friend of mine," said Clive, in a huff, and hurried off in the direction of the playing-fields.

"Welcome to St. Jim's, Fingo!" said Cousin Ethel. "Would you like to come with us and meet some of your friends—at least, I hope they'll be your friends," she added hastily.

"You're very good, missie. But why is young bas so cross?"

"Who? Clive? It's nothing. You might come this way, will you?"

"Yes, do," urged Doris. "My brother will be very pleased to meet you."

And, between the two girls, Fingo arrived at the playing-fields of St. Jim's.

Racke stared after them with an expression of cunning that boded ill. His first plot had failed, but Racke guessed that he could arouse sufficient ill-feeling against Fingo amongst the other fellows to give him an unpleasant time, without taking any open part against him himself.

"Hallo, deah girl!" said D'Arcy, coming off the field after a hard tussle in which Cardew had turned the scales at the last moment. "What in the world are you doin' heah?"

"How are you, Arthur? Your play is certainly improving. I've come to visit Doris's friend in Wayland. By the way, let me introduce you to a new school-fellow—Master Fingo, from South Africa!"

"How are you, bas?"

Fingo extended a capacious hand.

D'Arcy surveyed the stranger for a moment silently through his monocle, and then shook hands warmly. Gussy was not the fellow to make any invidious distinctions.

"Vewy pleased to meet you, deah boy." "Black but comely!" grinned Lowther, as he came up with the rest of the team.

And Tom Merry & Co. gave the newcomer a hearty welcome.

Meanwhile, Clive had taken Levison and Cardew aside, and explained the position.

"I've nothing against the fellow," he concluded; "but, as a matter of principle, I believe in keeping the Kaffirs in their place!"

"Don't let him talk such nonsense to you, Erny," urged Doris. "Just you treat him like one of yourselves till he shows that he is a cad."

Levison looked thoughtful. He had no desire to quarrel with Clive for the sake of a South-African kaffir.

"Gussy and the others are looking after him," he said uneasily, glancing across the field. "There's no need to make too much fuss of him, Doris."

"But you'll be polite to him?"

"Of course I shall. Do you take me for a snob?"

At that Clive flushed, but he said nothing.

Cardew noticed it, and hastily changed the subject by relating the recent triumph over Racke & Co. In the recital the dispute was forgotten, and the three chums of Study No. 9 adjourned to their study to tea, taking Doris with them.

In Study No. 6 D'Arcy was entertaining the new boy and Cousin Ethel to tea.

Fingo had a good flow of rather ungrammatical English, and he was soon busy telling tales of the veldt and the kral, that were extremely interesting to the assembled juniors.

Tom Merry, Jack Blake, and about a dozen more of the chums of the School House listened to the recital.

"Bai Jove, how vewy cwicious!" D'Arcy would keep on saying. "And is it all weally true, deah boy?"

CHAPTER 6.

Fingo Learns Manners.

"All true, same as Bible!" said Fingo, in an impressive way. And went on to relate still more wonderful tales.

Cousin Ethel had given the juniors a hint of Elsie's attitude to the new boy, so they had refrained from asking the chums of Study No. 9 to tea. But they could not understand Clive's prejudices a bit.

"Clive!"

The voice of Mr. Linton was addressing Sidney from the passage.

Clive hastily opened the door.

"Yes, sir?"

"Did you meet the new boy at the station?"

"Yes, sir."

"Did you bring him to St. Jim's?"

"Yes, sir," Clive hesitated. "At least, I offered to, sir, but he preferred to walk here by himself."

"Ah!" Mr. Linton eyed the junior keenly. "Where is he now, then, Clive?"

"I believe he is in Study No. 6," ventured Doris. "Cousin Ethel—I mean, Miss Cleveland—has taken him in hand—I mean, is looking after him—that is, has introduced him to D'Arcy, who is entertaining him, I think."

"Thank you, Miss Levison. There is another thing I wish to ask you Clive. It may turn out that the new junior is unfit for the Shell, and will have to go into the Fourth. In that case, I shall ask Mr. Latham to assign him to this study, as he is a South African. I presume you would make him welcome, Clive?"

"He's a Kaffir!" flashed out Clive hastily. "I'd make any white chap welcome with pleasure." Then he stopped and bit his lip.

"Clive, do I understand you have some ridiculous colour-prejudice against Fingo?" snapped Mr. Linton.

"I'm sure he doesn't mean it, Mr. Linton," pleaded Doris. "He'll get over it in time."

"I'm ready to treat him decently if you send him here, sir," said Cardew. "But we're a big crowd, as it is."

"And you, Levison?"

"I agree with my sister, sir. A fellow ought to be judged according to his merits and not his colour."

"I am glad that you hold such sensible views, Levison. It is this broadmindedness that has made Great Britain an empire of free peoples."

"You've never been in South Africa, sir," murmured Clive.

"Take three hundred lines for impertinence, Clive. I've quite made up my mind now that if Fingo is put into the Fourth Form he will share this study with you. And if I find any unpleasantness exerted against him by you, Clive, I shall know how to deal with it."

And Mr. Linton departed.

"Well, all I can say is that if that black, grinning sheep's-head of a Kaffir comes in here, I sha'n't stay!" roared Clive in a rage.

His original, colour-prejudice had become increased a hundred-fold by the many disputes and quarrels into which it had already brought him, and Clive felt a hatred of the innocent Fingo that it would take much to remove.

"You're in the presence of a lady, Clive," said Cardew warningly.

Cardew thought more of Doris Levison than of anyone else on earth, not even excluding Ralph Reckness Cardew.

"If you're going to take part against me—"

"If you're going to be a hot-headed fool—"

Clive swung himself out of the study without replying. He felt that if he stayed much longer he would have to go for somebody with his fists.

WHEN Fingo had been two or three days at St. Jim's, he discovered that whilst some fellows—Blake and D'Arcy, Tom Merry and Monty Lowther, Figgins and Koumi Rao—were extremely civil to him, and ready to show him all the ropes, others were nasty and rude without disguise. Amongst these was Sidney Clive, into whose study he had been put, and whom



No. 46.—ERIC KILDARE.

The captain of St. Jim's, and head prefect. The very ideal of a school captain. A splendid athlete and a fine scholar. Noble, fearless, and generous-hearted; liked and respected by all at St. Jim's. Captain of the cricket and football first elevens. A worthy son of the Emerald Isle. (Sixth Form).

he tried to conciliate in every possible way, but without success.

The relations between Clive and his chums had remained strained since the day of Fingo's arrival. Clive had reluctantly obeyed Mr. Linton's command to remain in Study No. 9, but he spent most of his time elsewhere. He was on bad terms with all the fellows who had taken up the Kaffir, as Clive called it, including Tom Merry & Co., Jack Blake & Co., and Figgins & Co.

Amongst the juniors who refused to associate with Fingo were all the rotters of both Houses, such as Clampe and Mellish, Howle and Scrope, Digges and Piggott, as well as a few fellows who were not to be found in the ranks of the rotters, such as Grundy, Wilkins, Gunn, and Gore.

"What's this?" growled Levison, entering the study, and seeing a huge cartoon of Fingo drawn on the wall, with his woolly hair and thick lips magnified enormously. "What rotter has done this, Clive?"

"How should I know?" returned Clive surlily. "D'you think I've got anything to do with the beastly thing?"

"Why not, after the way you've treated the chap?" said Levison, tearing the cartoon down from the wall and throwing it into the fireplace. "There's no one who's got his knife into him more than you have!"

"You ought to know, my dear Sidney"—Cardew was never more polite than when he was angry—"that a rotter is generally known by the company he keeps. You have the honourable Mellish and his cronies on your side, whilst we have only Tom Merry & Co. on ours."

"Do you call me a rotter?" Clive was white to the lips.

Cardew shrugged his shoulders.

"If the cap fits—"

"Then take that!" It was a smack on Cardew's cheek with the palm of the hand.

It was at that moment that Fingo entered the study.

"What's the matter, master?" He had witnessed the blow in surprise.

"That blow is a challenge, I presume?" Cardew was as polite as ever. "This afternoon will suit me—behind the elms—with or without gloves!"

"Very well!" Clive was sorry for the blow he had struck, but he was not the fellow to funk a fight. "Without gloves, then!"

"Master—"

"It's all right, my worthy Fingo." Cardew was talking quite placidly. "This fellow needs a lesson, and he shall get it. In my study I prefer a black gentleman to a white rotter!"

"Ralph," it was Levison's voice—"Sidney did not mean it. It was in the heat of the moment. He—"

"Is he willing to apologise?"

"No, I'm not!"

It was a snap from Clive.

"Then what I have said is quite justified. Will you second me, Ernest?"

"Look here! I refuse to have anything to do with this!" Levison turned to Fingo. "Cardew and I don't mind having you in the study, but Clive objects, and that's what we are quarrelling about. Can't you get into another study?"

"Yes, master." Fingo spoke quite humbly. "Young masters mustn't fight through Fingo. Fingo don't want any study."

Clive felt a sudden desire to make friends with Fingo, after all. He seemed a decent chap. But to turn tail now would seem like shirking the fight with Cardew. He quickly left the study, followed by Levison, who still hoped to avert a fight.

"You stay here, my good Fingo," said Cardew. "If you leave the study, I'll leave it with you!"

"But masters mustn't fight—"

"Fighting is good for me, Fingo. I'm a very lazy fellow, and want waking up at times. It's a pity it's the good Sidney I'm fighting against, but he needs a lesson in good manners."

"Fighting is sometimes good manners, master," asked Fingo, in surprise.

"Sometimes, Fingo. But I must go and see about a second for the fight. I dare say my honourable kinsman Gussy will be delighted to officiate." And Cardew departed.

Left alone, Fingo pondered deeply. The ways of St. Jim's were very strange to him. He wondered if he would ever become sufficiently versed in the customs of the place to associate freely with all the fellows.

Suddenly a longing for home came upon him. Visions of the sunny Continent arose before him. Forms of old friends swam before his eyes, and voices of companions filled his ears. Involuntarily tears trickled down his cheeks.

Racke stood for several seconds looking

at him without being noticed, so deep in thought was Fingo. Racke was delighted to find Fingo in the dumps. It suited a crafty scheme which he had been turning over in his mind.

Fingo looked up suddenly and saw Racke. He hastily brushed his tears aside. He did not care for Racke, though Racke had made a point of being civil to him since his arrival. But Fingo was a gentleman by nature, and treated everyone with courtesy.

"Will Master Racke sit down in the easy-chair?" he suggested.

"No, thank you," Racke spoke in the suave accents that he seldom employed. "I want you to come up with me to my study."

Fingo consented wonderingly, and Racke led the way. In the study he found Mellish & Co. assembled. Racke had told them his plans, and they had consented to fall in with them.

"Fingo, I think you know all the fellows. Some of them have not been very nice to you, but I have explained that you could not be expected to be like an ordinary English fellow, and they want to make friends with you."

Fingo looked at Racke gratefully. He had not expected this.

"What you've got to do is to learn good manners. We're willing to teach you. And to start off with, let us show you how to play poker."

Fingo stared. That playing cards should be good manners came as a surprise to him. But then Cardew had told him that fighting was good manners. He nodded resignedly.

"Very well, bas."

Mellish & Co. grinned, and proceeded with their tuition of the innocent fresher. And Fingo was an apt pupil. In a few lessons he would become an adept at all they could teach.

CHAPTER 7.

What Doris Did.

"GOOD-AFTERNOON Doris!"

"I'm Doris to my friends; I'm Miss Levison to you, Trimble!"

Doris endeavored to pass the fat Fourth-Former, but Baggy Trimble blocked up the passage-way with his body.

"Oh, really, Doris, I know you're only joking, you know!" Trimble gave a fatuous wink. He rather fancied himself as a lady-killer.

"I am in a hurry, Trimble. Let me pass, please!"

"Look here, Doris, there's something I want to tell you, you know—"

"I have no money to lend you, Trimble. And if I had, I should never dream of lending you any. You would only stuff yourself with tarts and make yourself ill."

"Who asked you for money, Doris? I hope I am above that sort of thing. I have a good mind now to tell you about Clive and Cardew now."

Doris looked up at that. Did Baggy really have something important to say, or was he only gammoning, as usual?

"Well, what is it?" she asked impatiently.

"Ah, I thought that that would interest you!" He linked his arm with hers intimately.

Doris gave a shiver of disgust and pushed him from her. His mere presence created loathing in her.

"Keep off, Trimble!" she said angrily. "And keep your information to yourself. It's bound to be a lie anyway!"

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Trimble rose from the floor looking surprised. A mere girl had sent him reeling—him, Bagley Trimble—and a chit of a girl like Doris Levison, at that! It must be avenged!

"Very well!" he howled spitefully. "I shan't tell you that Clive and Cardew are going to fight without gloves—no, not if you asked me a dozen times! So there!"

And he moved out of sight as haughtily as it was in the nature of Baggy to move, filled with the idea that he hadn't told Doris anything, after all.

Doris hurried toward Study No. 9, filled with anxious thoughts. Was it possible that Trimble had spoken the truth? Were Clive and Cardew really going to fight? And without gloves, too? That meant that there was bitter blood between them.

And what were they going to fight about? It could only be about Fingo. And was Fingo having a bad time of it at St. Jim's? Doris looked at Fingo as her protégé—hers and Ethel's. At all costs this fight must be stopped and Clive and Cardew reconciled. She tapped nervously at the door of Study No. 9.

"Come in, fathead!"

It was Ernest Levison's voice.

"Oh, it's you, Doris! I thought it was some other silly ass—I mean, some silly ass. Sit down, kid!" Levison's gruffness concealed a fund of admiration.

"I don't want to sit down, Erny. I want to know what Sidney and Ralph are going to fight about?"

Levison groaned.

"So you know about it, too? As if there wasn't enough trouble without that!"

"It's true, then. Is it about Fingo?"

"Of course it is! I wish his black face had never come to St. Jim's!"

"Ah! But it's not his fault that Sidney has taken an unreasonable dislike to him, is it now?"

"Oh, don't know. Clive must have seen some jolly nasty specimens of the Kaffir tribe in South Africa to carry on like this."

"I suppose so. Still, that's not Fingo's fault. He seems a nice boy. I prefer him to Racke and Mellish and Trimble, and a lot of other fellows at St. Jim's."

"So do I. It's not what he does that grates on Clive and Grundy and those chaps, but just what he is."

"How unfair! And is there no way of stopping this fight?"

"Oh, they had better have it out now. Perhaps you can get them to shake hands when it's over?"

"But I don't want them to fight! I want to stop the fight. Where are they fighting, Erny?"

"What's the use? Still, if you want to know—behind the elms in the quad." Doris rose.

"Will you come with me to stop it?"

"Of course! But it will probably be over by the time we get there."

Levison was right. Tom Merry, who had refereed the fight, was just counting Clive out as Doris and her brother arrived on the scene. It had been a strenuous fight, but Clive was oppressed by the feeling that Cardew's was the better cause, and he had not fought his best.

"Bai Jove, Dowie, deah girl, what have you come foah?" Arthur Augustus raised his monocle and looked at Doris in surprise.

"Aren't you ashamed—all of you," snapped Doris, "to allow a fight between two such chums? Ralph, what have you got to say for yourself?"

"Well, really, Doris, I must say that I

am heartily ashamed of having fought and licked Sidney; but under the circumstances I think it was the only thing to do."

"Well, beg his pardon, then."

"Certainly! Sidney, I beg your pardon for having fought and licked you. I hope you'll never give me cause to repeat the experiment."

"Don't be a fool, Ralph! This is a serious matter!" Doris was puckering her brow. "Apologise properly!"

Ralph Reckness Cardew was as clay in Doris' hands. He walked up to Clive and extended his hand to him.

"I'm sorry we've quarrelled, Clive. Let's make it up and say no more about it!"

"It's I who ought to apologise!" Clive had made up his mind at last to do the right thing. "I've acted like a cad. You've been in the right all along. I'm willing to apologise to Fingo as well, and make him at home in the study. I acknowledge that his behaviour has not justified the way I've treated him."

"Good on you, Clive!" It was Tom Merry's voice. "You're acting like a man. This is what I expected of you all along."

"Thank you, Ralph! Thank you, Sidney!" Doris was highly delighted at the turn of events. "Now, some of you, find Fingo, and bring him here. We'll see if we can't be friends all round."

Meanwhile, Fingo was in Racke's study, being initiated into all the ways of the cads of St. Jim's.

"Don't you like the fag?" grinned Crooke. "It's the best Flor de Cabbage."

Fingo was looking quite sick as he sat smoking. Still, his new friend, Racke, had told him that it was a very necessary item of good manners to smoke these things, and Fingo tried to bear up bravely.

"Your deal, Doris. You're picking up some of the games quite nicely. You'll see how Clive and those chaps will fall on your neck when they discover what a sport you are!" Racke spoke with his tongue in his cheek, of course; but Fingo took him quite seriously.

"Master Clive not bad," he said, as he shuffled the cards. "Fingo likes Master Clive. Master Racke thinks Master Clive wants Fingo to smoke and play poker." He meant "poker."

It was at that moment that Tom Merry unceremoniously pushed the door open and entered, followed by Clive, Cardew, and Levison, with a crowd of juniors, and Doris in the background.

"So that's where you are! We've been hunting for you high and low. What are you doing with Fingo, Racke? Teaching him some of your rotten tricks?"

Racke rose furiously.

"You get out of it, Merry! Fingo came here of his own accord, and he'll stay here as long as he wants to!"

Fingo rose anxiously. His old friend Tom Merry and his new friend Racke were apparently about to quarrel.

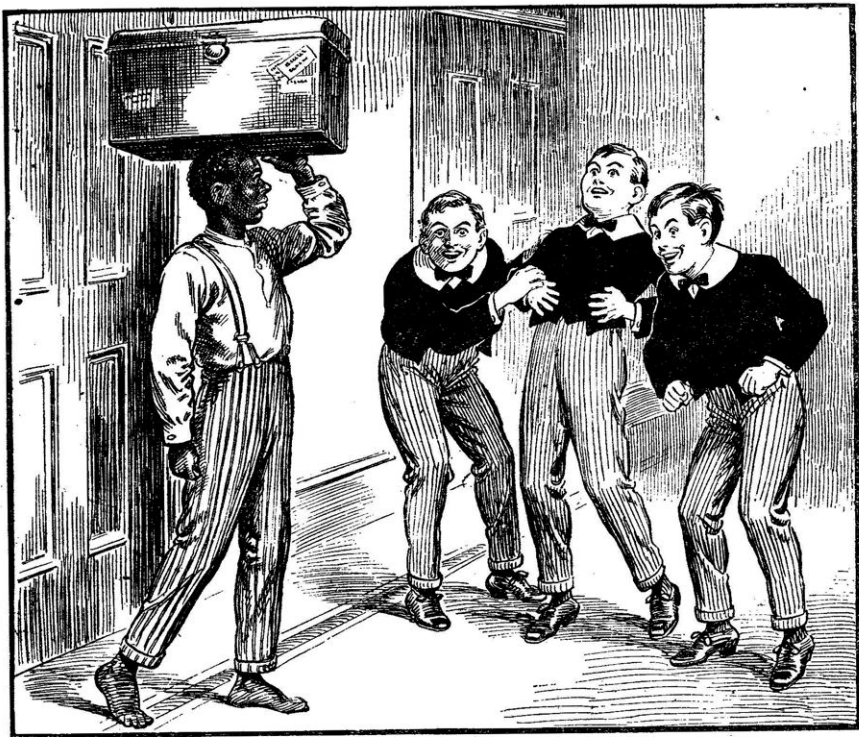
"Master Racke nice to Fingo, Master Merry!" he said, in a conciliatory manner.

"You see what he is, now!" It was Clive. "Was I not right, after all? An educated Kaffir is always like that—smokes, drinks, gambles, and steals."

"Come on, Fingo!" Levison spoke sharply. "Racke's company is not good for you!"

"Master Racke nice to Fingo, Master Levison!" Fingo was so confused, he hardly knew what he was saying. All this bickering and quarrelling about him very nearly drove him mad.

"Very well!" Cardew spoke sharply.



"Ha, ha, ha!" It was an exuberant burst of laughter that greeted Fingo's ears as he emerged from the study. "Ha, ha, ha!" Fingo turned round and saw three burly juniors apparently going into hysterics as they looked at him. They were Grundy, Wilkins, and Gunn, of the Shell. (See chapter 9.)

"I acknowledge you were right, Clive. Let us get along and leave the Kaffir with his new-found friends." "Wait a moment!" It was Doris Levison. "Fingo!"

"He, he, he!" It was Percy Mellish. "Doris is gone on the Kaffir! He, he, he!"

Ernest Levison made a stride towards the sneak of the Fourth, and shook him till his teeth rattled.

"Say that again, you young rotter!" he roared.

Mellish shrank back trembling.

"Well, why does she worry about him such a lot?" he asked sulkily.

"Oh, come on, Doris!" Levison said impatiently. "You've done enough for the black outsider! He's made his bed, and now he must lie on it!"

"Miss Doris like Fingo?" asked the Kaffir junior anxiously. He would not lose the esteem of Doris Levison for the world. She was his first friend at St. Jim's.

"Ho, ho, ho!" It was Racke's laugh. "Mellish was right. It's a clear case!"

Flushing, Doris drew away. She could not stand the gibes of the rotters any longer. Cardew, Clive, and Levison followed her. Tom Merry and his chums stayed behind to teach Racke & Co. good

manners. And they did it very thoroughly. In the end every cigarette and every card in the study had gone into the grate. Fingo looked on in wonder, and the rotters looked on with scowls.

CHAPTER 8. Fooling Fingo.

RACKE laughed uneasily as the Terrible Three and Blake & Co. departed.

"That's—er—only a joke, Fingo!" he stammered. "Clive and his friends are jealous because you've become pally with us. They want to keep you to themselves!"

"He, he, he!" laughed Mellish. "Yes, that's it! Of course! He, he, he!" "Look here, Fingo!" said Racke. "Have you ever been on the razzle-dazzle?"

Fingo scratched his woolly head.

"Me no understand!" he said.

"Oh, well," went on Racke, with the air of a man of the world, "then you don't know what life is!"

"Rather!" chimed in Chowle and Clampe. The cads of St. Jim's prided themselves very greatly on the number of times they broke bounds in the night, in order to attend some cheap village public-house, and play cards or billiards for stakes far above their means.

Racke explained quickly what going on the razzle-dazzle implied. Fingo's wonder grew ever greater. There seemed no fathoming the strange ways and customs of St. Jim's.

"Me no like razzle-dazzle!" said Fingo at last. "Me like sleep in the night."

Racke & Co. looked shocked.

"My word, Fingo!" said Crooke. "You'll never get on here if you don't act the sport! Be a man!"

Fingo looked penitent.

"Me do what young masters say," he replied at last.

"Good!" smiled Racke approvingly. "To-night Mellish will show you the way to start life."

"Oh, rather!" said the sneak of the Fourth. "Black Doggie and poker—eh, Racke, old chap? Rely on me, Fingo!"

"What Fingo do?" asked the Kaffir junior, in perplexity.

And Racke hastily outlined the method of leaving the dormitory at night without being noticed, and getting to the village inn. Fingo drank in every word. There was a certain exciting mysteriousness about the scheme that appealed to him.

"But you mustn't say a word about this to anybody," warned Racke.

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"Fingo no tell!" promised the black boy. And he made a queer movement with his hands across the back of his neck which seemed to indicate that if he broke his word he would deserve to be hanged.

Mellish shuddered. There was a certain earnestness about Fingo that quite alarmed him.

At that moment there came a rap at the door.

"Come in, fathad!" snapped Racke. Baggy Trimble entered, grinning.

"Get out, porpoise!" snapped Racke. "Oh, really, Racke, I've got a message for Fingo from Mr. Linton!"

"Fingo like Master Linton. What Master Linton want?"

"Mr. Linton told me to tell you that if you're not satisfied with your present study you could change over."

Baggy Trimble leered sideways at Racke & Co. in a way that seemed to indicate that there was some jape on the go.

"Fingo no want—" began the black boy.

"I'd advise you to take the chance," said Racke. "Clive and his friends don't want you. They'll like you better when you've changed over."

"What study is Linton giving him?" asked Crooke suspiciously.

"The study with the little baloney looking out into the quad," said Trimble, grinning. "Ho, he, he!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. They knew which study Trimble was referring to. It was no other than Mr. Lathom's. And the idea of planting Fingo in the study of the absent Fourth Form master was delicious.

"Coming, Fingo?" asked Baggy. "If you want to change over, you'd better do so at once."

"No come," said Fingo. And he followed the fat humorist out of the study.

"Come along here, then!" said Baggy. And he led the way to Mr. Lathom's bed-sitting-room on the first floor.

As he pushed open the door of the spacious apartment, Fingo glanced round appreciatively. It was "some apartment," as Buck Finn would have said.

In the centre of the room stood a highly-polished mahogany table with carved legs. Comfortable easy-chairs stood all round the room, and at one side of the room was a comfortable and downy bed curtained off by hangings from the rest of the apartment. On the mantelpiece were some costly vases, as well as a tobacco-pouch and a pipe-rack with three or four pipes. Opposite to the bed stood a fine piano, on which Mr. Lathom was apt to practise in his leisure moments.

"This is your new study, Fingo," grunted Baggy. "You'd better shove your things in here as soon as you can." And he departed.

Fingo's surprise did not last very long. The powers that be had evidently recognised the fact that a son of Tyli, the great sub-chief, must be treated differently from ordinary mortals.

Fingo decided to make himself perfectly at home. First of all, he sat down in the most comfortable of the easy-chairs and began pulling off his boots. Out in the velvet boots were an unknown luxury, and Fingo did not feel at all comfortable in them. Fingo regarded footwear as a useless encumbrance. His feet were so hard and rugged that nothing could hurt them. To cover them with leather was like bringing coal to Newcastle, or painting the lily white.

His socks followed, and then his collar and tie. Fingo began to feel more happy. In Clive's study he had not dared to do this, because of what his

study-mates might say. But here, in this magnificent apartment, he could surely please himself. Off went coat and waistcoat, and now Fingo was once more nothing but a kaffir boy, in shirt and trousers!

His bare feet pattered on the study carpet as he went hither and thither in the study, examining and exploring. Presently he filled one of Mr. Lathom's pipes with the tobacco which he found on the mantelpiece, and sat down smoking. He had been quite ashamed of his lack of "good manners" in Racke's study, when he had begun to get sick over a cigarette. He must practise the noble art of exhaling tobacco if he was to become one of the Smart Set!

But that pipe did not agree with Fingo. A giddiness came over the kaffir junior that forced him to put down the pipe hastily.

"Ugh! Grugh!" he growled. "After having swallowed a mouthful of water straight out of the washstand jug, without troubling to pour it into a glass, he felt better, and he mentally registered a vow never again to touch a pipe."

"Pipe bad boy!" he said. "Fingo no smoke him!"

To which uncomplimentary remark the pipe made no reply.

"Fingo fetch things to new study," decided the black boy.

And Fingo made his way to Study No. 9 without troubling to dress himself again. Most of the fellows were out of doors that afternoon, playing on the fields or rowing on the Ryll, and Fingo hardly expected to meet anybody in the passages. Besides, what did it matter? Fingo could not understand the importance attached to outer garb by Europeans.

With all his surface education he was only a wild boy from the African backwoods!

CHAPTER 9.

Fingo Causes a Sensation.

"O H or!" Nancy, the housemaid, gave an exclamation of horror as she met Fingo on the stairs.

"Oh lor!" Fingo looked after her in surprise as she rushed past him down the stairs. He could not understand what she was so alarmed about.

Nancy was soon in the servants' hall relating her adventure.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," remarked Ephraim Taggles, the porter. "There oughtn't never to be no black rips allowed at this 'ere college! I asks you, what's the school coming to?"

Taggles was feeling particularly aggrieved because the hotel-keeper in Elycombe had refused to supply him with any more gin on credit. And he grasped the opportunity of venting his spleen on the kaffir junior.

"Wot I says is this 'ere," he continued. "If I was the 'Ead I'd sack 'im straight away, that I would!"

"I should think so!" said Nancy. "The way he was running up those stairs! Oh my!"

And she shook her head.

Meanwhile, Fingo had arrived in the Fourth Form passage. He made his way straight to Study No. 9, and entered.

There was nobody in the study. Fingo gathered up his belongings, packed them into a small tin trunk that was standing at one side of the room, put the trunk on his head, and left the study.

Like all kaffirs, he always carried burdens on his head. It was the most convenient way of carrying them, according to Fingo's notions.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was an exuberant burst of laughter that greeted Fingo's ears as he emerged from the study.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Fingo turned round, and saw three burly juniors apparently going into hysterics as they looked at him. They were Grundy, Wilkins, and Gunn of the Shell.

"Did you ever?" gurgled Grundy. "Hardly ever!" gasped Wilkins and Gunn together.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it's funny," chuckled Grundy: "but the young beggar must be taught that he can't disgrace St. Jim's by running about like this. Rush him!"

If Fingo had not been burdened by the load he was carrying he would easily have outstripped the three fellows who, for some mysterious reason, were running after him. But as it was, he suddenly found himself surrounded by Grundy, Wilkins, and Gunn.

"Fingo want to go to new study," he reiterated. "No stop Fingo!"

Grundy did not even deign to reply. "Bump him!" he rapped out.

Fingo dropped his trunk, which fell with a crash to the floor, right on top of Grundy's big feet.

"Ow! Wow! Wow!" he yelled, dancing about with pain.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wilkins and Gunn together.

Grundy turned fiercely on his chums. "What are you cackling at?" he howled. "You burbling duffers!"

"I—I—just laughing to think of the way we're going to bump Fingo!" stammered Gunn.

"No bump Fingo!" gasped the black junior, backing away in alarm.

But the accident with the trunk had made Grundy merciless.

"Seize him!" he rapped out. "Now then—one!"

Bump!

Fingo was heaved on high and lowered forcibly to the floor. He struggled manfully, but had no chance against the three burly Shell fellows.

"That's for running about like a wild savage!" snapped Grundy. "Two!"

Again the African junior was lifted on high, and let drop to the ground. When he rose he was rubbing himself ruefully.

"Fingo good!" he protested. "Why bump Fingo?"

"That's for being a nigger!" rapped out Grundy. "Three!"

But before the third instalment of the bumping could take place, Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, was seen approaching round the corner.

"Cave! Kildare!" gasped Wilkins. And Grundy & Co. vanished suddenly.

Fingo rose from the ground feeling sore. As he was replacing his box on his head Kildare appeared on the scene.

"Here, I say, youngster," rapped out the captain of St. Jim's, "this will never do! We won't have you running about like this!"

And he indicated Fingo's bare arms and legs.

Fingo looked penitent.

"Fingo sorry," he said. "Fingo no do it again!"

"Very well, youngster," said the captain of St. Jim's kindly. "Don't let it happen again. Where are you carrying that trunk?"

"Me go new study," explained Fingo.

And Kildare, satisfied by the explanation, passed on.

No further adventures befell Fingo ere he reached Mr. Lathom's apartment. Entering, he deposited his box on the ground, and then began to unpack.

Having finished these preliminaries, Fingo dressed himself properly, having no desire to experience another bump.

ing. Then he sat down at Mr. Lathom's writing-desk and began a letter home.

Everything was new and strange to Fingo, and he had much to relate. However, he put everything in the brightest possible light, so that his father and mother might not think that he was feeling depressed.

This letter was, of course, written in Kafir. Having completed it, Fingo sat down, and proceeded to write a letter to his former teacher in English.

Fingo's letter was a curious document when it was finished. He wrote:

"My Respectful Master and Baas,—Fingo am now here in England. Fingo like the school, but the school not very much like Fingo. Fingo learn good master's. Fingo learn card-play and smoke. Master Racke like Fingo. Fingo like Master Clive. Master Clive no like Fingo. Me Fourth Form. Tell you plenty more other letter.

"Your remembering you,
"Fingo."

Whatever one might say to the curious grammar and diction of this letter, the spelling, strange to say, was perfect. Fingo had evidently learned at least one branch of learning pretty thoroughly.

Having finished these letters, Fingo put them aside preparatory to posting them.

He next lit the fire, and filled a saucepan with water. Into this saucepan he dropped a quantity of stamped maize or "mealies," which he had brought with him. It was Fingo's favourite dish, and he looked forward to enjoying it at tea-time.

"Dear me, my dear Lathom! I didn't know you had returned!"

Fingo was stirring the pot of maize as Mr. Linton entered, making this remark.

"Me no Lathom. Me Fingo!" he said.

Mr. Linton stared at Fingo, hardly believing his eyes. That a junior should make himself at home in Mr. Lathom's study, whilst the Fourth Form-master was away, seemed not reality, but an unbelievable nightmare.

"Boy, how dare you!" he gasped at last.

Fingo stared at him. He could not see what Mr. Linton was getting so excited about.

"Me like new study," he said, continuing to stir the maize.

Mr. Linton wasted no more time in words. He had a cane in his hand, and he advanced sternly towards the Kafir junior.

"This is colossal impudence! Hold out your hand!" he said sharply.

The sudden command was too much for Fingo, who, in his excitement, dropped the pot he was stirring. The mess spread over the floor and over Mr. Linton's boots.

"Boy, are you insane?"

And the next minute Mr. Linton was lashing furiously at Fingo with his cane.

Fingo yelled. Mr. Linton was hitting hard.

"Restrain yourself, Linton!" said Mr. Railton, the Housemaster, as he entered.

"Don't be so savage, I beg!"

"Fingo good! Why you hit Fingo!" asked the Kafir junior piteously.

"Pray explain, Linton," said Mr. Railton.

If it had been Mr. Ratcliff or Mr. Selby in Mr. Linton's place, Mr. Railton might have found it difficult to extract an explanation. But Mr. Linton was generally a just man, and recognised that he had perhaps gone too far in his anger.

This boy has had the colossal impudence to make himself at home in Lathom's study!" he ejaculated.

"Me think this my study," expostulated Fingo.

"What?" asked Mr. Railton. "Did someone inform you that this was your study?"

"Yes, Master Trimble."

"Oh!"

That explained everything, of course.

Fingo was told to return at once to Clive's study, and take his belongings with him. And Trimble received a thrashing that he remembered for many a long day.

Trimble decided that he had had enough of fooling Fingo.

Fingo's mention of Trimble's name was regarded as sneaking by the majority of his Form fellows, though Fingo had revealed the name in all innocence, not knowing that Trimble had committed a punishable offence. Consequently, Fingo made new enemies in every direction.

Under these circumstances, it was no wonder that he felt extremely grateful to Racke & Co. for the attention which they paid him. But Racke was not the sort of fellow to stand by a boy like Fingo out of pure kindness. Racke was playing a deep game, and Fingo's friendship was one of the necessary factors in that game.

Would Racke succeed?

CHAPTER 10.

A Midnight Expedition.

"NDIPUNI!"

"U" Fingo was murmuring something in his native language as he lay asleep. He was evidently having some troublesome dreams.

Fingo Mellish hissed the word into Fingo's ear, at the same time shaking him violently.

"Inkosa!"

Fingo was beginning to awake, but not very rapidly. He had only been asleep an hour or so, and the day had been a tiring one.

"Fingo!"

"Who's that, dear boy?" Gussy had evidently been awakened by the sound of Mellish's voice.

Mellish held his breath. If Gussy struck a light, and saw him out of bed, the projected expedition to the Black Dog, a new Rylocombe public-house, would have to be abandoned—at least, for that night.

"Jigali gappa!"

Fingo was still talking in his sleep.

"Dweamin' of his home, bai Jove! Poash fellah!"

And Gussy rolled himself over in his bed and sank once more into the arms of Morpheus.

Mellish waited a second, to make sure that the swell of the Fourth had really fallen asleep again, and then renewed his attempts to awaken the Kafir junior.

"Fingo!"

This time Mellish was successful. Fingo was awakened, and as soon as he realised that Mellish was bending over him, he hastily dressed himself, and followed Mellish into the corridor. Racke had given Fingo explicit directions.

"This way, Fingo!"

Mellish led the way.

"Yes, master. Fingo follow."

And the Kafir junior went after Mellish down the stairs into the main hall. The adventure appealed to him, though he was not aware how serious an offence it really was.

Mellish and Fingo made their way out of the School House through a window, the latch of which Mellish loosened with his knife, so that there should be no difficulty on the way back. Once in the quadrangle, they were joined by Racke and Crooke.

"That you, Fingo?"

"Yes, master."

"Good! Now we're going to show you what life is. Come along this way!"

And Racke led the way towards a part of the wall low enough to climb over if the juniors stood on one another's shoulders.

Racke & Co. had made quite a fine art of these midnight expeditions, but Fingo felt perplexed and confused. However, Racke seemed to be trying to teach him the customs of St. Jim's, and Fingo was duly grateful.

Mr. Robins, the proprietor of the Black Dog, came to the door at Racke's knock. He gave a welcoming leer as he saw the juniors.

"Come in, young gents! The billiard-room's ready for you!"

"Right you are!" Racke spoke airily.

Mr. Robins laughed to himself. He felt he was going to make a good thing out of the young cads. Banks, the bookie, who knew Racke & Co. of old, had told Robins all about them.

At St. Jim's, all was quiet in the early hours of the morning. D'Arcy woke up once and listened in the silence of the night to hear whether Fingo was still talking to himself. As all was perfectly silent, he turned over in his bed again and had another nap. When the rising-bell went, the swell of St. Jim's did not hear it.

"Gussy!"

"Yaas, dear boy?"

D'Arcy awoke with difficulty as Cardew called to him.

"Are you going to sleep all day? Rising bell's gone!"

"Has it really? I'm jolly sleepy."

"Not had enough sleep?" asked Levi-son sarcastically.

"No, dear boy."

D'Arcy took the question seriously.

"Hallo! Where's the Kafir?" Clive asked the question in surprise.

The juniors looked at Fingo's bed. It was empty.

"Better ask Mellish," growled Clive.

"He's one of the Kafir's chums now."

"Who? Me?"

There was virtuous indignation in Mellish's voice. No one would have guessed from Mellish's innocent expression that he had returned from the Black Dog only a short time before.

"How can I know where the Kafir is? He's no friend of mine. It's Racke who's taken him up. He's not my sort." "Thank goodness! He's not quite as bad as that." Jack Blake never minced his words. "The question is, what's become of him?"

"Praps he's got up before us to take a walk in the grounds," suggested Levi-son. "He may not have been feeling well."

"Yaas, wathah! He was talkin' in his sleep last night. Dweamin' like anythin', dear boys."

Fingo was not in the grounds, however. Nor did he appear at breakfast. The juniors had no idea what could have become of him.

"Clive!"

It was Mr. Linton's voice.

"Yes, sir?"

"Have you quarrelled with Fingo?"

"We're not exactly on good terms, sir."

"If it proves that he has run away from school because he has been badly treated by his school-mates, I shall hold you responsible, to some extent, Clive."

Clive looked mutinous, but he did not know what to say. He had been quite ready to make it up with Fingo the previous afternoon, if Racke & Co. had not interfered.

The juniors discussed Fingo's disappearance.

appearance breathlessly before morning lessons. Tom Merry tapped Racke on the shoulder.

"Keep your paws off me, Tom Merry, hang up!"

"Do you know anything about Fingo's disappearance, Racke?"

"No." It was a deliberate lie, but lies were easy to the cad of the Shell. "And I don't want to know, either!"

"If it proves that you have had a hand in this business, I'll give you the hiding of your life, Racke!"

Tom Merry spoke evenly but forcefully. He meant it. And Racke winced under Tom's straightforward gaze.

Meanwhile, the Kaffir junior was sleeping on a bench in the billiard-room at the Black Dog.

Racke & Co. had done their work only too well, and then had cleared out, leaving Fingo in the public-house.

"Wot a booty!" grinned Banks, the bookie, as he gazed at Fingo. "A reg'lar Apolony, by jiminy!"

Banks probably meant Apollo.

"N a rich cove, too." Mr. Robins always looked at the financial side of things. "Lost ten quidlets, and never turned a hair!"

"Garn!" Mr. Banks looked at Fingo more respectfully. "Wot are you goin' ter do with the nig now?"

"Wake 'im, and send him back ter school, with a letter ter the school-master."

"Who writ the letter?"

"I did."

Mr. Robins grinned knowingly.

"Wot's in the letter?"

Mr. Robins read out the contents for the benefit of the bookie. It was addressed to Mr. Linton, and stated that four juniors—Masters Levison, Clive, Cardew, and Fingo—had visited the "inn" the previous night. Mr. Robins did not wish for a repetition of such visits, the letter continued, and asked Mr. Linton to put a stop to them. Levison, Clive and Cardew had been sent back to the school, but Fingo had been taken ill, and was sleeping at the "inn." If Mr. Linton wished for proof, there were several witnesses who would be ready to swear to the identity of the juniors.

"I want yer ter be wun o' the witnesses," Mr. Robins concluded. "I'll give yer a quid for it."

The whole scheme had been engineered by Racke to get his own back on Cardew & Co.

He and Crooke had both had remittances lately, and were quite willing to spend them for the noble purpose of getting the juniors of Study No. 9 into trouble.

If Fingo refused to acknowledge that Levison, Cardew, and Clive had been his companions, five witnesses were to be procured by Robins, at a sovereign a-piece, to back up the lie.

Moreover, Racke relied on the fact that it was not so very long ago since Levison and Cardew were amongst the smartest of the smart set themselves, to influence opinion against them.

When Fingo set out on his way back to St. Jim's next morning, he would bear the fatal letter in his pocket.

CHAPTER 11.

The Heart of a Hero.

"DORIS!"

"Yes, dear?"

"Let me do the driving, Doris. We'll have to hurry to catch the train, you know."

Doris pouted. She knew that Cousin Ethel was the better horsewoman of the two, but she was not going to acknow-

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ledge it. Doris was jealous, in a friendly way, of Ethel's abilities.

The two girls were leaving Wayland after a very pleasant stay there. They had friends at St. Jim's and in the village of Rylcombe, as well as at Wayland, and these friends had been very nice to them.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had promised to let Ethel know how Fingo was getting on from time to time at St. Jim's and Doris was confident of getting news about Fingo from her brother Ernest. Fingo was a curiosity to the girls, and they enjoyed the sensation of feeling that they were championing the Kaffir junior.

Doris was sure that Fingo's friendship with Racke was only temporary, and that as soon as he got used to the ways of St. Jim's, he would become reconciled to the chums of Study No. 9.

The cool morning breeze blew with healthy vigour in their faces as they drove stationwards along the Rylcombe Lane. They had started out from Rylcombe instead of from Wayland, because they wished to bid farewell to the Glyns at Glyns House before departing. Now they were making for the station at top-speed, their conversation with Edith Glyn having delayed them. They would be lucky if they caught the train.

"I've practised quite a lot of driving lately, Ethel. Do let me keep on now."

Ethel smiled indulgently. Doris's voice was very winning.

"Very well, Doris. If we're late, we'll only have to wait half an hour or so for the next train. Dear me! What a dog!"

It certainly was a fearsome-looking brute that had attracted Ethel's attention. Towser, the big bulldog belonging to Herries, of the Fourth, was a toy dog by comparison. It belonged to Binks, the butcher, and was worrying a big bone in the middle of Rylcombe Lane.

"Bow-wow!"

"Gracious, Doris, don't drop the reins!"

But Ethel's warning was too late. The sight of the great brute jumping at the horse had given Doris a sudden start. She had relaxed her hold on the reins in a moment of panic.

"Wow-wow-wow!"

Ethel tried in vain to regain hold of the reins, but the horse had taken the bit in its teeth and was making off at full speed. The girls clung tightly to the sides of the trap with one hand, to keep from falling off, whilst they entwined each other with the other.

"Oh, Ethel, what have I done? It's all my fault!"

"No, Doris; you couldn't help it. It might have happened to anybody."

Ethel was not the girl to reproach her friend in time of peril. But Doris was conscience-stricken. Why had she not surrendered the reins to Ethel a moment before?

The horse careered along the lane madly with ever-increasing speed, and the girls found it every moment more difficult to keep their seats.

Pringle and Craggs, Pilcher and Grimes, and the other village lads stared after the trap with frightened eyes. Grimes knew cousin Ethel well, and he would have risked his life for her with pleasure. At full speed he gave chase, followed by the others; but it was in vain. The runaway horse was going at a rate that made it impossible to catch up with it.

"Ethel! The river!"

It was a horrified moan, as Doris caught sight of the Ryll.

Ethel said no word, but pressed Doris closer to her. If the worst came to the worst, they would sink or swim together.

It was the hand of Fate that caused

Fingo to emerge from the Black Dog on the banks of the Ryll at that moment. He was about to return to St. Jim's with the fatal letter that might lead to the expulsion of Levison, Cardew, and Clive.

"Fingo! Help! Help!"

Cousin Ethel forgot to be surprised at seeing Fingo coming out of a public-house, and at that time of the morning, too. All she knew was that Fingo could make an attempt at saving them, if he dared. Would he dare?

"Fingo! Help! Help!"

Doris Levison echoed Ethel's cry. Fingo heard at last. He took in the situation at a glance.

"Coming, missie—coming!"

There was no hesitation in his voice or in his actions. At a pace that would have won him championship honours at a Marathon, he hurried towards the runaway horse. But the horse was already on the bank of the Ryll. Would Fingo be in time?

He was! On the very brink of the river Fingo threw himself in the path of the horse, catching hold of the horse's bridle with a dexterity that came of long practice. It was not for nothing that Fingo had lived so long on the veldt.

Had the horse made one step forward, the trap, with the girls in it, would inevitably have been plunged into the Ryll. Doris Levison shrieked hysterically, Ethel's heart stood still. But the horse stood firm as a rock. It recognised a master's hand.

"All right, missie! Good horse!"

The girls stared at him. Fingo spoke in a cool, matter-of-fact tone of voice as if he knew nothing of the danger from which he had rescued them at the peril of his own life.

"Hurrah, hurrah, hurrah!"

Grimes led off the shouts of applause as the village lads came on the scene.

"Fingo, you've saved our lives!"

Ethel was the first to recover herself. "How can we ever thank you sufficiently?"

Fingo would have blushed if the colour of his skin had permitted it. As it was, he allowed a shamefaced smile to play about his thick lips.

"Fingo like Missie Ethel and Missie Doris. Fingo much sorry if they drown."

It was a silly little speech. Fingo could have expressed himself much more effectively in his native language. But it came from the heart, and it brought the tears to Doris's eyes. She recollected how she had resented Fingo's last expression of admiration in Racke's study. Fingo's admiration was that of a heathen for the idol he adores.

"Shoulder them! Carry them to St. Jim's!"

Grimes and Pilcher, Craggs and Pringle, Binks and the rest surrounded the trap in an exuberant crowd.

"Oh dear! What are you doing, boys?"

"Me want to walk!"

But the protests were unheard. Fingo was lifted shoulder-high by the village lads and conveyed in triumphant procession to St. Jim's, amidst the blare of whistles and the beating of pans. Craggs struck up "See The Conquering Hero Comes," and the song was shouted vociferously from a dozen throats.

The procession grew ever thicker as the party neared St. Jim's, and the singing grew ever louder and more uproarious. Gordon Gay & Co., of the Grammar School, came running out to see what the noise was about, and when they were told of the gallant rescue they joined the procession in full force. Johnny Goggs struck up "He's A Jolly Good Fellow," and the Grammarians backed him up vociferously, whilst the village

lads, under the guidance of Craggs, continued singing "See The Conquering Hero Comes."

It was in this triumphant fashion that the Kaffir junior returned to St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove! It's Ethel!"

D'Arcy stared at her in astonishment.

"Doris, what does this mean?"

Levison looked astounded.

"And Fingo!"

That shout came from a score of throats as the St. Jim's fellows hurried to the gates to meet the procession.

"What has happened? Where have you been, Fingo?" Mr. Linton had arrived on the scene.

Ethel explained. Mr. Linton listened with concern. But he was delighted with the pluck Fingo had shown.

CHAPTER 12

The Voice of Conscience.

"FINGO!" Mr. Linton wore a troubled expression.

"Yes, sir?"

"Much as I admire your courage, I must have an explanation of your absence during the night. Report in my study as soon as you have recovered from your excitement."

"Yes, master."

Mr. Linton walked away. Duty was duty under all circumstances. He had taken charge of the Fourth during Mr. Lathom's temporary absence, and he must keep discipline.

"Good-bye, Miss Ethel! Good-bye, Miss Doris! Good-bye, Fingo!"

Grimes & Co. moved off, followed shortly after by the Grammarian juniors.

The St. Jim's fellows were left standing alone around the gate.

"Fellows and chaps"—it was Sidney Clive's voice—"I apologise to Fingo in front of you all for the way I have treated him. He is a splendid fellow, and if he will have me as a chum I shall be delighted."

"Me like Master Clive!"

Fingo was surprised at his own popularity. Surely it was only natural to do what he did. But Tom Merry & Co. insisted on surrounding him and shaking hands with him, and asking him to make friends with them.

"But where were you last night, you lounder?" Monty Lowther came out with the question that they were all anxious to ask.

Ethel and Doris looked at Fingo apprehensively. They had seen him coming out of the Black Dog, and now they had leisure to feel surprised.

"Really, Monty, I don't see that that is any affair of yours!"

It was cousin Ethel who had interposed before Fingo could give himself away.

"Yaas, wathah!" The tactful Gussy was quick to back up his cousin. "I'm surprised at you, Lowther! I don't think we have the wight to inqah into Fingo's affaiah."

"Fingo no tell," he said.

And Racke, Crooke, and Mellish breathed a sigh of relief.

Tom Merry & Co. escorted Fingo as far as his study, but here they left him with his study-mates and the two girls.

"Come on, chaps," said Tom to his chums, "I guess they want to make it

up now amongst themselves. Give them a chance to wipe out old scores."

And so Blake and Gussy and Lowther, and the rest, took Tom's advice, and left the inmates of Study No. 9 by themselves.

"And now," said Ethel, "I think we should put our heads together and think out the best way of getting Fingo out of his scrape."

Fingo was puzzled. He thought the Black Dog was a highly respectable place. But when it was explained to him in what bad repute such places stood, light dawned on him.

"Then Master Racke very bad boy," he said. And he told the two girls and the three juniors the whole tale.

Levison and the rest listened attentively. At the end of the recital, Levison demanded the letter.

"As things stand, I think I shall be fully justified in reading it." And the others agreed.

"The dear Racke is a clever creature," murmured Cardew, when the full villainy of the plot dawned upon him.

"But not quite clever enough."

Meanwhile Racke, Crooke, and Mellish were holding a conference in Racke's study. Fingo's popularity had put a rather different complexion on their scheme.

"Linton'll take Fingo's word before ours!" growled Crooke. "I have been against the whole dashed thing from the very start."

"And even if the plot succeeds, what good will it do? They'll let Fingo off on account of what he's done," suggested Mellish.

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"Yes. But we've paid five men to say that Levison and Cardew and Clive were in last night's affair."

"They're bound to be shady characters. Their word won't carry much weight."

"Banks has some letters of Levison's, written long ago, when Levison used to have bets with him on horses. If Banks produces them, Levison's a goner!"

"Oh, well, we've got to go through with it now, I suppose?" Crooke hedged a dubious grunt.

Rat-tat-tat! It was a violent knock on the door.

"Come in!" Racke spoke in an impatient snarl. But he rose in angry surprise when he saw who his visitor was.

"You! What are you doing here?"

And Mellish and Crooke also stared as if their eyes would drop out of their heads.

For their visitor was Mr. Robins himself!

"Look 'ere, gents!" Mr. Robins faced Racke & Co. squarely. "I've jest 'erd of wot's been done by that nig, and

now I'm not goin' to do anythin' agin him. 'Ev yer got that?"

Mellish heaved a sigh of relief, and Crooke looked pleased. Only Racke scowled. To have revenge against the chums of Study No. 9 so close in hand, and then to give it up, went against the grain.

"And wot's more, if you're goin' ter tell any lies, I'll give the game away meself. D'yer hear?"

And, having said his say, Mr. Robins took his departure as suddenly as he had arrived.

After that, Racke & Co. could do nothing against Cardew, Clive, and Levison, even if they wished.

The chums of Study No. 9 waited to hear of further developments of the plot, but, as nothing occurred, they let the matter slide. It was at Ethel's request they had refrained from laying hands on Mellish, Crooke, and Racke. Not that Ethel had any sympathy with them, but she did not think them worthy to be touched.

And the chums of Study No. 9 agreed.

Fingo confessed to Mr. Linton that he had gone into town, and slept at the Black Dog, but, as it was a first offence, and the Kaffer junior was evidently the innocent dupe of somebody's persuasion, he was let off with a warning. His gallant deed, of course, stood him in good stead.

Mr. Linton did not press the inquiry as to who the unknown person had been who had led Fingo astray. He respected the South African's unwillingness to sneak.

Before the two girls finally departed, a grand feed was given in Study No. 9, to which were invited Tom Merry & Co., Jack Blake & Co., and Figgins & Co., and even those fellows who originally had refused to make friends with Fingo, but who had since declared themselves in the wrong. And a rousing speech was delivered by Sidney Clive in honour of Fingo of the Fourth!

THE END.

(Another grand long story of Tom Merry & Co., next week, entitled: "THE D.S. APPEARANCE OF BAGGY." Order a copy from your Newsagent AT ONCE!)

OUR GRAND NEW SERIAL STORY!



FOR more than an hour the hunt lasted, and during most of that time Cyrus Kerzon rested underneath the tree in which Jim Quinton and Ranallah were hidden. At first there was a certain sense of adventure, tinged with amusement, in the situation, but it began to pall long before Kerzon moved.

Jim grew uncomfortable, and made very careful efforts to alter his position. It seemed to him that the silence of the woods had grown profound, and that the faintest sound he made must carry to the man who was waiting below him.

The vigil ended at last. One by one Kerzon's party returned to him, and their report was apparently the same. Jim, of course, could not make anything out of the language which Kerzon and his helpers spoke, and he guessed that they were explaining away their failure by the gestures they made.

Of Dillon Braester and his father he saw nothing further. At one time, before the discomfort of his hiding-place began to count, Jim was hopeful that they would come along and talk with Kerzon. It might have given him some understanding of how they came to be there, and how far it had concerned him. There was the question of Tim Daly, too. What had happened to him and his Karradon friends?

Jim debated the question very thoroughly with himself, and formed his

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

Jim Quinton of the Sixth Form at Harwood's, Bigglesdale, by the will of John Quinton, his father, is to succeed to a great position at Karradon in Africa. A great deal of mystery is attached to the position which John Quinton really held; but he is supposed to have been almost as powerful as the king himself. Mr. Matlock, the late John Quinton's solicitor, makes known details of the will to Jim Quinton, who at once decides to carry out his father's wishes. He is then introduced to Tim Daly, Erik, and Nijellah, a negro, who are to be his servants.

In their presence the solicitor hands to Jim a sealed packet of papers, which John Quinton had left solely for his son's perusal.

Jim has enemies in Dillon Braester, another Sixth-Former at Harwood's, Braester senior, Cyrus Kerzon, and a fellow named Flaxman, who call themselves the Karradon Syndicate.

Eventually the rival parties reach Africa, and Jim and his friends, including Dick Willoughby, a school chum, who had joined the party, set out for Karradon.

One night they are attacked, and Daly, sends Jim, Dick, and Erik on to the "Quinton Dump," while he stays behind with Nijellah.

Later Jim returns with a Karradon in search of Daly and Nijellah. They meet Dillon Braester, who, before he is overpowered, calls for help, and the two seek safety by climbing a tree.

(Now read on.)

own opinions. It was plainly too risky for Ranallah and himself to do very much here, and the best plan was to get back to the Dump and talk the whole thing over with Erik.

When Kerzon and his boys had gone, Jim leaned forward and whispered to Ranallah.

"Get back?" he asked; and motioned with his hand. "Quinton's Dump. Tell them there."

Ranallah understood, and gave one of his comprehensive smiles. He agreed entirely with the Bazar's suggestion, and indicated by many gestures that they would talk it over there. Afterwards they would arrange to come back here and do something, to let the Manzi people and the bad white men know that they were annoyed with them.

They clambered down the tree cautiously, and wasted no time once they were on the ground again. Ranallah led the way, and Jim had some difficulty in following him as quietly as he wished. Once they had left their old camping-ground well behind them the fear of interruption died down, and they followed the twisting, narrow pathway through the woods more leisurely.

They reached the Dump again without any untoward incident. Jim's first desire was to see Erik, and tell him just what had happened. If he confirmed Jim's own opinion—that the Braester and Kerzon party were responsible for the present whereabouts of Tim Daly and Nijel-

lah—then they would have a serious talk on the question of carrying out a rescue.

That was the idea in Jim Quinton's mind as he entered the cavern again. It was now only very dimly illumined by such light as trickled through from the outside, but Jim could faintly discern about.

He passed on into the smaller apartment, where he expected to find Dick Willoughby and Erik waiting for his return. Dick was there all right, and jumped up, with some show of excitement, as soon as his friend entered.

"Good man!" He seized Jim's hand as though he had been away for months. "You've got back safely? No casualties?"

"None at all, thanks!" Jim laughed. "But we've had quite an interesting time of it, old Ranallah and I? I'll tell you all about it when Erik comes in. Where is he?"

"Where's Erik?" Willoughby looked at him in puzzled wonder. "He's come back with you, hasn't he? He overtook you all right, didn't he?"

It was Jim's turn to stare now and ask questions. Erik, it seemed, had left the Dump within ten minutes of Jim and Ranallah. He had explained to Willoughby that he had promised Meljor daily always to watch Bazar Quinton, in case any evil befell him. He would overtake them on their journey, and explain his conduct to the Bazar himself.

"I couldn't persuade him to remain," Willoughby added here. "It's been a pretty slow job watching here for the pair of you to come back. Wonder where on earth Erik's got to?"

Jim shook his head.

"I don't know," he said slowly. "We've never had a glimpse of him, and if he happened to be round our old camping-ground about the time that we were, goodness knows what may have happened to him! The Bracsters are there, and Kerzon, and a whole gang of those Manzri boys!"

He told the story of his day's adventures to Willoughby, but at every sound he turned, hoping that Erik had returned safely. Then he and Willoughby talked over the whole position, but always they left it for Erik's superior knowledge to decide the definite course.

"I wish Erik would turn up!" Quinton began to get uneasy at last, and rose from his seat. "If by any ill-luck he's fallen into the hands of the Bracster crowd—"

He broke off abruptly as a full realization of the position flashed into his mind.

"Oh, he'll turn up!" Willoughby tried to be cheerfully hopeful, but it was painfully obvious that he was not so confident as he pretended. "Anyhow, we'll have something to eat, and give old Erik another hour. He's bound to be here by then!"

"Right-ho!" Quinton promptly began to hunt among the boxes and the haversacks for something of which they could make a meal. Dick Willoughby put his watch on the rough table, and asserted that he was not even going to think of Erik for an hour at least.

The hour passed, and there was still no sign of the little man.

"Well, Dick!" Quinton faced his friend squarely, and there was a queer little smile of determination playing about his lips. "I said I was in command of this job earlier in the day, and it looks as though I really am. And you're second in command. I think the present situation demands a consultation, old son!"

The Bigger Game.

At Harmood's School Jim Quinton had the reputation of being a sound and absolutely reliable man. On the river or on the football field it was useless to hope to flumm him or to put him off his stroke. In an emergency, or when things were going wrong with his side, he was an ideal leader.

But to keep one's head and remain perfectly calm in a game which one understands thoroughly is quite a different proposition from being called upon to show the same qualities in a game in which one has had no experience whatever.

Two months' ago Quinton's biggest task in life had been to get the last ounce out of the Senior Fours. To-day he was in the heart of an unknown country, in command of eight or nine friendly natives, most of whom could not understand him at all, and supported by one friend, who knew even less of this game than Quinton did himself.

And to that the fact that the nearest human beings were his enemies, who, as he had judged, had already robbed the expedition of its best men, scared away the greater number of their porters, and compelled them to abandon the best part of their baggage.

"We're not downhearted, Dick," Quinton remarked, as he reviewed the situation. "But we may as well recognise hard facts when we are up against them. The first thing I'd like to understand is just what game our young friend Dillon Bracster is playing in this. What do they hope to do, anyway?"

Willoughby shook his head doubtfully. "I don't quite see the idea behind it all, unless— You don't think they're hoping to push Dillon Bracster into your job?"

"Looks like it," Jim answered shortly. "And we've got to stop their game. Dick let's get Ranallah in and find out his views on the position. It's expert advice we're wanting at present."

He went out, and came back a few moments, followed by the Karradon native. Ranallah was a fine specimen of his race. He was some three inches shorter than Jim Quinton, but was well-proportioned, and carried himself in the manner of an Army drill-sergeant. His Colonial shirt and short knickers, and he had even risen to the dignity of a pair of shoes, which had been repaired and adapted so much that their original type had been lost. About his neck was a string of gaudy beads, which fitted closely, and appeared to be a sort of extra collar to the shirt he wore.

When he entered the inner apartment his hand came up in what seemed to be an exaggerated sort of salute to Dick Willoughby, then stood stock-still, his wide-open eyes fixed intently on Quinton.

In the fulness of time Jim grew accustomed to this exaggerated stare, but at first it was more than a little trying. In the same way he found it very difficult to overcome Ranallah's assumption of utter ignorance concerning everything. His attitude appeared to be that whatever he knew was as nothing compared with the profound wisdom of Bazar Quinton. Let the Bazar command him and he would obey.

For more than half an hour Jim struggled to learn something from Ranallah. He knew from his recent experiences with the Karradon that Ranallah was a particularly wideawake and energetic person, especially in an emergency. But when it came to a question of gaining sound advice from Ranallah, he appeared

to have no other desire but to pay curiously-mixed compliments.

Jim grew impatient at last, and decided to dispense with Ranallah's help. "All right, Ranallah," he told him. "You go. If you can find Tant Erik, bring him here, to me!"

Ranallah's eyes opened a shade wider until they were positively bulging from his head.

"Yes, I go, Bazar," he answered. And, after another queer ceremony with his hand, he turned and left the place.

"We haven't got much further," Jim said, as the Karradon disappeared. "I'm beginning to get the hang of these fellows now, but I don't quite see how it's going to help us. I expect old Ranallah will probably disappear now, with some wild idea of finding Erik. If you ask for advice they can't give it, but if you hint that a certain job has to be done, they just go and do it!"

He laughed, but there was not much amusement in it, for Jim was beginning to realise only too thoroughly just how much he was up against things at the present time.

"You're picking up their lingo all right, Jim," Willoughby remarked, in an effort to be feebly encouraging. "All I've managed to get hold of so far is that Bazar means Big Man, and Meljor means something a bit less—sort of sub-chief, isn't it? And Tant is a stage lower than Meljor, and about the equal of our 'Mr.," so far as I can make out. Nijellah is a Meljor and old Ranallah is Tant. I don't quite understand—"

He broke off as Jim jumped to his feet and stepped to the doorway. Quinton had evidently not been paying very much attention to Willoughby's discussion on the language, and had been quick to hear the sound which came from the outer cavern.

Almost before he reached the exit the big blanket, which acted as a door between the two places, was drawn aside. There were two figures standing there, and they were evidently anxious to make their entrance together.

Dick Willoughby caught a glimpse of Ranallah first, as he came in front of the Karradon stepped Erik!

"Tant Erik back, Bazar!" Ranallah announced. Then turned and disappeared.

"Great Scott! You, Erik! Well, I'm jolly glad to see you, anyway!" Jim Quinton was pulling him into the place. "How did Ranallah find you? I mean, it's only about five minutes ago I suggested he ought to find you—and here you are! What's happened exactly?"

Erik was full of apologies in the beginning. In a very short time it became quite clear that Ranallah hadn't found him at all, though it did not affect the matter so far as Ranallah was concerned. He had been told to go and bring Erik back, and the fact that he met him almost outside the entrance to the dump merely proved the wisdom of the Bazar's command. That was all, so far as Ranallah was concerned.

Later on Quinton discovered that this particular incident, over which he had no control whatever, was regarded as a clear proof of his greatness!

But Erik was explaining why he had gone away and what had happened to him. Despite all orders Erik's duty in life was to watch over Quinton and to be near him if the least danger threatened. He had followed Quinton and Ranallah, and had seen the brief fight between the two and Dillon Bracster.

He had followed their example when this business was settled, and had hastily clambered up a tree not so very far away from them. Later, he had seen them set

out on their return journey, and had thought it best to make quite sure that no one was following them.

To this end he had followed Kerzon, and had discovered their camp and that of the Manzi boys they had enlisted in their service. Some hours of careful watching and listening had enabled him to gather a certain amount of information; but his chief discovery had been one of far greater importance than the terms and the methods by which the Manzi warriors had been engaged.

"I saw Meljor Daly, Bazar," Erik stated, in his quiet, matter-of-fact way. "He is very sick, but he will be better soon."

"You saw Daly?" Jim stared at Erik as though he found it impossible to believe his statement. "Where? What's he doing, Erik? Is he coming to join us here? Did you speak to him at all?"

"I spoke to him, Bazar," Erik answered. "He was wounded, and they took him prisoner, with Nijallah and his friends. They are bound, and cannot escape, and it was not wise for me to aid them. Meljor Daly did not wish it."

He spoke apologetically; but Jim guessed that if Daly and Erik had decided against the attempt there was probably some very excellent reason for the decision.

"He wishes us to go on to the country of the Karradons as fast as we can," Erik went on, very much as though he were repeating a lesson. "We must not waste time. He wished me to tell you that."

Erik paused and looked at Quinton, and then he nodded quickly.

"Very good, Erik! We'll go ahead as quickly as we can," he said. "There are one or two questions we ought to decide; but we'll talk of those later. Tell me more of Meljor Daly."

But Erik had very little more to record. His chief capacity was to state hard facts. He had seen Meljor Daly, and for many reasons Daly would not join them on their journey to Karradon. Later he hoped to see Bazar Quinton, and meantime, the latter had complete charge of the expedition. All that Daly could advise was that they should push ahead as rapidly as possible.

"He said, too, Bazar, that we should go by the lower road," Erik added. "It will be safer for us. And it is the time of the year when it can be used."

Beyond that Quinton could get little further information from Erik, not because the little man did not wish to give it, but simply because his capacity ended at the point where he had stated exactly what was to be done. Meljor Daly was sick, but he would see Bazar Quinton in due course.

With that Jim had to be content, and he set about making arrangements for the continuance of their journey at once. There was the question of the baggage which they had left behind them near their old camping-ground. Ranallah and as many of the Karradon boys as could be spared were sent to bring in what they could.

None of the porters who had deserted so hurriedly on the night of the attack had come back. Where they had gone or what their fate might be Jim could not guess. Erik told the whole matter quite philosophically, and seemed to regard it as the natural course.

They were short of some of their donkeys, too; but by the end of the following day they had managed to arrange the recovered baggage so that some of it could be left at the Dump. Throughout

all those hours Jim was busy, and he himself was conscious of the fact that in some way he changed. The necessity for making definite decisions, for giving orders, and for acting as the head of the whole party, brought out the best that was in him. He was no longer a boy, but a man.

Through it all Dick Willoughby was a true friend. He was almost as quick as Jim Quinton himself to recognise those little differences of caste which are so essential for the white man to understand when he is dealing with the native.

Yet it was a full two days after Erik's return before they were ready to start afresh on their journey. Both Quinton and Willoughby appreciated the difference between this new beginning and the old one from Port Florence. Then Tim Daly had been the calm, experienced head of the expedition, and ahead of them lay nothing but a joyous adventure.

To-day Tim Daly and the more experienced of the Karradon men were missing. And they knew only too well

and the few they had with them were at least reliable.

During the whole time Erik was not only a guide, but acted at times as a scout and advance guard. He seemed to be anticipating trouble every night, and would often disappear for hours at a stretch, when he ought to have been resting.

The country became more hilly, and the climate more pleasant, while the road was more clearly marked. At this stage the Karradon boys who had begun to show a certain amount of weariness during the past few days, began to revive, and some of them on occasion even broke into weird singing.

At the top of the hill up which they were climbing they had, for a brief space, a wonderful view of the country below. Erik stopped for a few minutes to point out to Quinton a darker patch almost on the horizon.

"That is Karradon, the king's palace,"

he explained briefly. "Beyond that is Bazar Quinton's land. We shall be there to-night!"



Erik suddenly gripped Quinton by the arm and pointed in the direction of the platform. Sitting on the raised seat by the side of the gorgeously-attired Karradon was Dillon Brauster! (See page 19.)

the possibilities of danger which might have to be faced before they reached the country of the Karradons.

The road which they now took was not nearly so good as the one they had been on when with Daly. At times it was no more than a path through thick forest country; at other times there was no sign of the existence of any road at all, except to Erik and Ranallah, who had now assumed the role of guides.

Yet, despite the sense of responsibility which had descended upon him, Quinton enjoyed the journey. Accidents would happen, of course, but in the main they got along with their ten men almost as well as they had done with nearly forty,

He spoke proudly, and Jim felt inclined to clap him on the back and raise a cheer.

"Good old Erik!" he told him. "I guess you'll be glad when this trip is over. Wonder if old Daly has got there yet?"

Erik shook his head and became very serious again.

"Meljor Daly will not be there yet," he answered, and went ahead again to rejoin Ranallah, who kept at the head of the column.

The last stretch of the journey took much longer than Jim had expected, and when night fell, and they were still apparently a long way from the king's

own place, he discussed with Erik the advisability of resting for the night and finishing the remainder of the journey early in the morning.

Erik did not answer directly, but recalled to Quinton's mind the message which Daly had sent, that they should get there as early as possible. To this Erik himself could perceive no exceptions. "Perhaps you're right; Erik," Jim agreed. "We'll have a short halt, and push on again. How long now? Another three hours?"

"Two hours," was Erik's verdict; and the Karradon boys were only too anxious to push on. Besides, could not the Bazar hear a strange sound? It was music, and perhaps there was a feast to-night, and it would be good to join it, however tired they were.

Quinton could not hear the faintest sound, but he accepted Erik's word, which was justified later on. They saw very little of the country now because of the darkness, but at times they were in woodland, and at other times in the open from which he could see the faint light of fires in the distance.

Most certainly there was a feast being held in Karradon this night! The noise as they drew gradually nearer the great fires was enough to scare any enemy away from the boma of the king. But to the nine or ten Karradons who were returning home it was a joyful, heartening sound. Tired and weary though they were, they meant to join in the revels to-night, although as yet they had no inkling of what it was all for.

They passed one group of huts, and then another, for this was the system on which the "town-planning" in Karradon had been arranged. Around the large group of huts which comprised the royal establishment, as it were, a stout fence was erected. Inside this fence, fires had been lighted and were blazing away bravely when Bazar Quinton's party reached the entrance to the king's boma.

The donkeys had been tied up and made secure some distance away, and most of the baggage had been dumped in the same place. Ranallah gave orders which would ensure that the animals were properly tended and guarded. Jim took his own personal pack, and Erik brought along a small package which contained the first gift which Bazar Quinton would present to the king.

Erik, indeed, had explained on the journey here the form and ceremony which would be observed when the Bazar, son of the great Bazar Quinton, was introduced to the king, whom he had come to help.

"Feeling nervous, old son?" Willoughby asked half-jestingly, as with Quinton, Erik, and Ranallah they walked forward towards the narrow entrance to the king's boma. "Don't know!" Quinton laughed a little, but in reality he did feel that this would be one of the strangest and perhaps most wonderful nights of his life. "Erik is going to do the speech-making. We've fixed that up. But I wish old Tim Daly had been here. By Jove! They seem to be having a real high old time in the village to-night!"

As they drew nearer they could see something of what was taking place inside the boma. A great fire was burning in the broad, clear space in the centre, and about this various figures were dancing, while the strange and weird music shrieked and wailed in doleful and terrifying fashion.

There seemed to be two or three hundred people sitting about within the circle of the firelight, and gradually the amazing details became clearer to the party. On the other side of the fire a kind of low platform had been erected, and they

could distinguish quite a number of figures sitting here. Two of them were apparently sitting on specially raised seats.

Erik suddenly gripped Quinton by the arm. It was an unusual and an unexpected action for the little man, but Quinton scarcely had time to think of it. He, too, had seen what Erik had just observed.

"Great Scott, Quinton! D'you see who—?" It was Willoughby who was crying out now in an excited whisper. "It's a white fellow sitting up there! It isn't—you don't recognise him?"

Erik had kept Ranallah back, and the four stood in the darkness near the stout fence or boma, peering carefully into the blaze of light to make quite certain that their eyes were not playing them foolish tricks.

For, on the platform, sitting on the raised seat by the side of the gorgeously-attired Karradon, whom Quinton judged to be the king himself, was Dillon Braester!

About the king other men were gathered, and among them was one white man, who sat very near the raised seat where young Braester was. At the moment when Jim Quinton first recognised him, Cyrus Kerzon was talking with great earnestness to one of the Karradon men. This man was even more strangely attired than the king, and was waving a stick about as though to emphasise each point put to him.

There was no sign of the elder Braester. Nor, despite his anxious and careful scrutiny of the scene, could Jim discern Tim Daly among the men about the king.

An unpleasant sense of defeat began to creep into Jim Quinton's mind. How had Kerzon managed this? Why was Dillon Braester sitting up by the side of the king?

"I guess we'd better cut in quickly and argue with Kerzon and Braester!" Jim turned suddenly to Dick Willoughby. "There's been some nasty work going on over this, I fancy! Where's Erik?"

He turned to the little man; but before he could speak Erik himself was begging the Bazar to listen to him and praying that he would be good enough to accept his advice.

"Stay here, Bazar, for a little while!" Erik urged. "Ranallah and I will go forward. There has been a great mistake, Bazar, and the king does not understand. But let Ranallah go forward with me! We will return to you shortly. The king knows us."

"You think it's too risky for me to come, Erik?" Quinton asked, with a faint touch of bitterness in his voice.

"Stay with the Meljor Willoughby for a time!" Erik pleaded. "If you go, there may be great danger, Bazar!"

The King's Decision.

JIM did not attempt to argue against Erik's suggestion. In the first rush of ideas which came to his mind after seeing Dillon Braester sitting in state by the side of the king, he had the feeling that it was his fault. He had been too slow and had mismanaged his part in this expedition. "And all right, Erik!" he agreed abruptly. "You go ahead! Meljor Willoughby and I will wait for you here. We're safe enough for the present, I suppose?"

"If the Bazar would come along here," Erik suggested, "it would be wiser."

(There will be another grand instalment of this magnificent adventure series next week. Order your copy EARLY.)

READERS' NOTICES.

Correspondence, Etc., Wanted.

F. Reed, 7, Beatrice Street, Barking Road, Plaistow, E. 33, has for sale foreign stamps—100 for 2½d. post free.

D. Vaughan, 15, Wested Lane, Swanley Junction, Kent, wants contributions for amateur magazine.

R. A. Smith, 2, Walpole Road, Palmerston Road, E. 17—with readers anywhere.

Miss J. Auty, c/o Mrs. Newsome, 46, Avenue Street, Timaru, S. Canterbury, New Zealand—with readers anywhere.

E. Symons, 109, St. George's, Jesmond, Newcastle-on-Tyne—with readers anywhere, 13-16.

Miss D. Hurley, 33, Douglas Road, Accoaks Green, Birmingham—with readers anywhere, age 16-17.

E. M. Wells, the Dell, Ivor Heath, Bucks—with readers anywhere.

I. L. Wilkie, 172, High Street, Uxbridge, Middlesex—with readers anywhere.

L. J. Haynes, 33, Radstock Road, Fairfield, Liverpool, wants members for the "Mersey" Correspondence Exchange.

S. Morris, Queen Street, Oudshoorn, S. Africa—with readers in the British Isles or America, age 15-18.

L. Jacobson, High Street, Oudshoorn, Cape Province, S. Africa—with readers interested in stamp collecting.

A. L. Smith, 86, Mackay Street, Port Elizabeth, S. Africa—with English readers.

B. Barber, 11, Ashgrove Road, Redland, Bristol—with readers anywhere, age 12-14.

E. R. Dyer, 192, Neville Road, Upton Park, E. 7—with readers interested in amateur magazines.

F. G. Barrell, 24, Church Road, Hamersmith, W. 6—with readers anywhere, 14-17.

J. Halford, 2, Queen Mary Street, Leicester, has a cabinet of tricks and illusions for sale, or will exchange for a concertina or harp.

G. P. Altham, Grange Street, Bare, Morecambe—with readers overseas with a view to exchanging stamps.

C. Hopwood, 46, Penevad Street, Grange-town, Cardiff, has a No. 1 Brownie camera. Will sell or exchange for a good punch-ball.

M. Fisher, 5, Sutton Model Dwellings, Barrack Road, Newcastle-on-Tyne, will purchase films.

I. M. Gardner, Eaglesham, Rickmansworth Road, Watford, has a number of Companion Papers for sale; also wants "Gems," Nos. 1-12; 3d. each offered.

S. H. Nicholson, 3, Montpelier Terrace, Sunderland, wants "Magnets," Nos. 20-30; 3d. each offered. Write first.

Fred Leonard, 20, Haig Road, Dudley, has for sale or exchange a number of the Companion Papers.

E. Atherton, 43, Chisholm Road, Croydon, has for sale "Magnets," Nos. 216, 334, 558, 559, 562, 556, 598, 603; also "Gems," Nos. 552, 555, 556, 561, 571, 592; "Penny Populars," Nos. 1-11; also "Boys' Friends," Nos. 900-961.

Owen J. Robertson, 17, Water Lane, near Faversham, Kent, wants "Gem" No. 598; also "Penny Popular" No. 2; 3d. each offered.

(Continued on next page.)
THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 630.

Albert Port, 8, Garden Street, Stepney. N. 1, wants "Bob Cherry's Barring Out," "School and Sport," and other "Magnets" and "Gems" of six years previous. John G. Coates, 74, Rosebery Street, Queen's Road, Gorton, Manchester, wants "Magnets" and "Gems" for Christmas, 1914 and 1916; also "The Toff" and "After Lights Out" and "Bob Cherry's Barring Out"; 6d. each offered.

Arthur Uden, The Old Farm House, Beaconsfield, Bucks, wants "Magnets" and "Gems" of early dates. J. H. Wedge, 23, Melbourne Street, Darwen, Lancs, has a large number of the Companion Papers for sale. B. Barber, 11, Ashgrove Road, Redland, Bristol, wants "Gem" No. 539, and "Boys' Friend," No. 865. J. T. Jones, Penlan, Penysarn, Amlwch, Anglesey, has a number of

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