

BIG MONEY PRIZES OFFERED IN AN EASY COMPETITION! See inside.

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Every Wednesday.

August 26th, 1922.



LICKED BY LEVISON MINOR!

Beggy Trimble, the fat Fourth-Former, is helpless in the hands of the wrathful sag!

EDITORIAL CHAT.

The Editor would like to hear from his reader chums. Address all letters to Editor, "The Gem Library," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

My Dear Chums,—

It is a mighty risky proceeding to start talking about next week's number of the GEM. This is not because I should be likely to give you an exaggerated notion of its excellence, but simply for the reason that if one gets going on such a subject, there is absolutely no end to it, and space for Chat is not really generous measure.

The great feature is the carry on of the Levison stories. The series is attracting widespread attention, and no wonder, for the Levison trio—Miss Doris and her two brothers, Ernest and Frank—have always been prime favourites. I had often wished to get these characters well into the limelight again, and it is a positive treat to see how Mr. Martin Clifford has skilfully woven new interests into the tangled skein of Ernest Levison's past history.

Among the many idols at St. Jim's no one has stood higher than Ernest. I have had shoals of letters about him. His character has baffled readers, and fascinated them, which is generally the

case when something turns up hard to understand.

One of my readers who has followed the Companion Papers for years, and is the staunchest supporter possible, has always persisted in her view that justice has never been conceded to Levison, and that Frank and Doris have never had fair play. This correspondent will, I doubt not, alter her opinion now.

Those two prime mischief-makers, Baggy Trimble and William George Bunter, are responsible for some of the talk concerning what really did happen in the old days when Ernest Levison was at Greyfriars. You know right off the reel that the fat gossip-mongers of the two schools will make the most of the few crumbs of information which come their way. Truth is nothing to them, and to relate. It is a pleasure to these worthies to upset apple-carts and cause endless trouble.

Naturally, too, we get Ernest Levison on his dignity in view of the attacks made on him, and the slurs as to what he is supposed to have been in the bygone. He is a mettlesome chap, as clever as can be, touchy on many matters, and highly sensitive, though he seldom shows it. But it is the high-strung, brilliant fellow who sees most; frequently he sees things that are not there. All the consequences of an innuendo are clear to him, and his pride is pretty considerable.

Undoubtedly the present series supplies one of the best bits of characterisation we have ever had from the author.

Of course, one of the big attractions just now is the celebrated "Head 'Em" Competition. This business is proving irresistible. You cannot help trying your luck. Where the head fits put it on. You would not imagine for a moment that some of the characters in the yarns could lose their heads, but there it is.

I am not surprised that this competition has seized the imagination of my chums. You get carried away by it before you are well aware of what is happening. The set this week is No. 3, but back numbers may be obtained from the newsagent.

Not for some weeks have I mentioned the engaging little feature usually found on this page, the Readers' Corner and Tuck Hamper Department, in fact. The merry little paragraphs continue to roll in. The more the better. Some fall because of age. I like storyettes with a piquant dash of novelty about them, and very scant whiskerage. Don't forget this useful little feature. Has a Tuck Hamper come your way yet? If not, it may do so one of these days, but be original as possible, and refrain from sending me yarnlets which have been cut out of newspapers.

Our serial is swinging on in good style, with the interest and excitement increasing week by week. Next Wednesday's instalment is the best yet.

Before ringing off, I must say a word concerning the new volume of the "Holiday Annual," the splendid book which is the complement of the Companion Papers. No reader can afford to miss this season's edition—out September 1st. The rush has begun, so place an order before all the copies are gone.

And don't forget to book next week's number of the GEM either. It will be the latest and the greatest.

YOUR EDITOR.

"MY READERS' OWN CORNER."

A Splendid Tuck Hamper filled with delicious Tuck is awarded to the sender of what the Editor considers the most interesting paragraph. Half-a-crown is awarded for each other contribution accepted.

(If your name is not here this week it may be next.)

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THE TAKE DOWN.

A Chinese gentleman was sitting in a Sydney tram when two smart young fellows got in. "Movee up, Johnny, movee up," said one of them to the Chinese passenger. "If you wish to converse with me in French or English, I am at your service," said the Chinaman civilly, "but I don't understand your Australian slang."—Jack Baskin, Commercial High School, Petersham, N.S.W., Australia.

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The First of a Series of Grand, Long, Complete School Stories of the Chums of St. Jim's, dealing with the trouble that comes upon Ernest Levison, of the Fourth Form.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.
Trouble for Trimble.

"WHAT—" "Why—" "Who—" Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther of the Shell uttered those startled exclamations all at once.

The Terrible Three of St. Jim's had reason to be startled. The door of Study No. 10 in the Shell had flown suddenly open—so suddenly that it caught Tom Merry, who was near it, on the back of the head with a loud crack.

A fat junior rushed in in frantic haste. Headless of the Terrible Three, he grabbed the door, slammed it, and turned the key in the lock. Then he stood gasping.

"Trimble!" ejaculated Manners and Lowther. "Trimble!" roared Tom Merry, rubbing the back of his head.

"You fat rhinoceros—" "What the thump—" "I—I—I—I—I—" spluttered Tom Merry.

"Sorry," gasped Trimble. "I—I was in rather a hurry. I—I say, he's after me—I mean—"

"Who's after you, you fat villain? Whose tuck have you been bagging now?"

"Tain't that. It's Knox of the Sixth!" panted Trimble. "I'm dodging him! Stand by a chap, you know."

Tom Merry caressed the back of his head tenderly. But he restrained his inclination to collar Trimble of the Fourth and use him as a duster. If the bully of St. Jim's was on Trimble's track there was some excuse for that sudden bolt into Study No. 10, unceremonious as it was.

So the Terrible Three refrained from slaying Baggy Trimble on the spot.

"Quiet!" breathed Trimble. There was a sound of running feet in the passage. They passed the door of Study No. 10.

Baggy breathed more freely. "He didn't see you dodge in here," grinned Lowther.

"Nunno! But quiet; he may come back," murmured Trimble.

Tom Merry regarded the fat Fourth-Former very suspiciously.

"That didn't sound to me like Knox of the Sixth," he said. "His tootsies make a good deal more row than that."

"Sounded to me more like some scudding fag," said Manners.

"It was—was Knox," said Trimble. "After me with his implant, you know. Don't let him hear you."

Trimble listened at the locked door with painful intention.

"Well, what have you been doing, anyhow?" grunted Manners.

"Nothing, you know."

"That's why you're running for your fat life—what?" asked Monty Lowther sarcastically.

"Exactly," said Trimble. There was no sound from the corridor, and Baggy's anxious face cleared. "I think he's gone, the rotter. Fancy cutting up rusty like that over a remark—just a remark. I suppose a fellow can express an opinion, if he likes, about the junior eleven?"

"About the junior eleven?" repeated Tom Merry. Trimble nodded. His alarm had passed, but he was indignant.

"Just that," he said. "Mind, I wasn't surprised to find that my name wasn't in your list for the Greyfriars match, Tom Merry. I didn't really expect you to put me in. What do you know of a fellow's form, after all?"

"Why, you fat duffer—" "But putting in a chap like Levison," said Trimble.

"Really, you know, it's the limit—with me available!" The Terrible Three chuckled.

"You can cackle," said Trimble warmly. "I know I shouldn't put in Levison of the Fourth, if I were junior captain. Besides I know that he used to be at Greyfriars before he came to St. Jim's, and there was something fishy about the way he left. Something jolly fishy, in my opinion. And I simply said so, when the beast jumped on me, you know—started hammering me."

"Knox did?" howled Manners. "What the thump does Knox care what you say about Levison of the Fourth?"

Trimble started. "Kn-n-nox!" he stammered.

Trimble had forgotten—as he often did—that there was a class of persons that required good memories.

"So it wasn't Knox after you at all!" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Did—I did I say it was Knox?" stammered Trimble.

"Why, you fat villain, you know you did!" "I—I meant—"

"So it was Levison who was after you!" exclaimed Manners. "And you spun us a yarn about Knox as an excuse for dodging into this study and hiding yourself, you fat funk!"

"Nunno! It—it wasn't Levison."

"Clive or Cardew, then?"

"Nunno! It—it—" stammered Trimble.

He was interrupted by the sound of a voice outside the study door.

"Seen a fat porpoise rolling about this passage, Talbot?"

The voice was well known in Study No. 10: it was the voice of Levison minor—Frank Levison of the Third Form.

Talbot's answer was in the negative. Baggy Trimble seemed scarcely to breathe for a moment. The footsteps of Levison minor were heard receding towards the stairs.

The Terrible Three fixed their eyes accusingly upon Trimble. They understood now.

"You awful rotter!" said Lowther. "You hunked in here to get away from a Third Form fag."

"I—I—" stammered Trimble.

"And you in the Fourth!" howled Manners. "It was young Levison who was after you."

"I—I— He—he—" Tom Merry stepped to the door and turned back the key.

"Outside!" he said.

"I—I say, Merry—" "If you can't handle a Third Form fag," said Tom witheringly, "you can take a licking. Outside!"

"The—the fact is—" "Kick him out while I hold the door open, you fellows," said Tom Merry.

"You bet!" grinned Monty Lowther.

"I—I say— Look here—" gasped Trimble. "That beast's waiting for me in the passage. I—I'm not afraid of a cheezy fag, of course; but—but if I once start on Levison minor I—I shall damage him, you know!"

"He must chance that!" chuckled Tom.

"Besides, there's his sister," urged Trimble. "Doris, you know! Doris is rather sweet on me, so—so for that reason I'm letting young Levison off. Oh! Yoop! Yoop! Help! Yoooooooop!"

Tom Merry held the study door wide open, and Manners and Lowther interrupted Trimble with a sudden and vigorous application of boot-leather. The fat Fourth-Former roared and rolled into the passage.

There was a shout outside as Frank Levison of the Third came scudding up.

"Oh, here you are!"

"Yaroooh!"

Tom Merry closed the door of Study No. 10, chuckling. Outside there was a sound of terrific strife, and the voice of Baggy Trimble of the Fourth rang from one end of the Shell passage to the other, resounding like unto the voice of the Bull of Bashan.

CHAPTER 2.

In a Hornet's Nest!

"**W**HAT a fearful wow!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy made that observation in Study No. 6 in the Fourth.

"Horrid!" grinned Blake. "Sounds as if Trimble has been looking for trouble and finding it."

"Weally, it is wathah hard for a fellow to get on with his pwep with that wow goin' on," said Arthur Augustus. "I weally wish Twimble would go out into the quad to wear like that. It is unfeelin' to wear in that mannah outside a fellow's door."

The yelling in the passage suddenly ceased, and it was followed by a sounding of hurried feet.

"The giddy battle's over," said Digby. "The enemy is retreating, according to plan."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo! What do you want here?" roared Herries, as the half-open door of Study No. 6 was thrown open, and Trimble of the Fourth rushed in.

"Bai Jove! Twimble!"

"Oh! Ow! Wow!" gasped Trimble. "I—I say— Keep off, you young beast! Yaroooh! Keep off!"

Trimble dodged round the study table. Levison minor of the Third appeared in the doorway, flushed and breathless.

"Come out, you fat rotter!" he shouted.

"Oh dear! Keep off! I—I didn't know you heard me, you young beast! Besides, I never said anything about your major!" gasped Trimble. "And, besides, he was kicked out of Greyfriars!"

Frank Levison made a rush into the study for Trimble. Frank—generally one of the most peaceable fellows in that rather unruly Form, the Third—was evidently on the war-path now. But Jack Blake caught him by one shoulder, and Herries by the other, and Frank was brought to a sudden stop.

"Chuck it!" said Blake.

"Let go!"

"Don't you know that this is a Fourth Form study?" demanded Blake. "Do you think fags are allowed to chase the Fourth up and down the House, and rush into Fourth Form studies like wild Huns?"

"Let go! I'm going to lick him!"

Blake chuckled.

"What a dear little twopenny-halfpenny firebrand!" he remarked. "Look here, you ferocious midget—"

"Will you let go?"

"You savage, untamed grasshopper—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Keep him off, old chap!" gasped Trimble. "I don't want to hurt him, you know! Just throw him out of the study!"

Levison minor struggled.

"Will you let go?" he shouted. "I'm going to thrash that fat rotter! I don't care if he's bigger than I am, I'm going to lick him!"

"Weally, Levison minah, you cannot expect to be allowed to thwash Twimble in this studay duwin' pwep!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Bai Jove! What!"

"I don't care a rap for the Fourth, or for this study, either!" roared Levison minor. "I'm going to thrash Trimble! Leggo! He's getting away, you silly asses!"

Instead of letting go, Blake and Herries tightened their grip. Taking advantage of that circumstance, Baggy Trimble circled round them, darted through the doorway, THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 759.

and fled. The fag struggled hard to follow, but he was too securely held.

"You silly chumps!" he gasped. "You—you rotters!"

"Shush!" said Blake soothingly.

"I'll punch your silly nose!" roared Levison minor.

"Shush! You can wallop Trimble as much as you like, and the more the merrier," said Blake. "But you mustn't cheek the Fourth."

"Blow the Fourth!" hooted Frank Levison.

"The Fourth can't be blown by the Third!" said Blake, shaking his head.

"Bai Jove! Wathah not!"

"There's such a thing," said Blake severely, "as respect for one's elders. The Third can't carry on like this."

"Rats!"

"Bai Jove! If you say wats to this studay, Levison minah—" began Arthur Augustus D'Arcy warmly.

"Rats!" roared the fag.

"That does it!" said Blake. "Now, we won't bump him, because he's so small that he might disappear through a crack in the floor—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And we won't whack him, because he might break—"

"Yaas, wathah! Ha, ha!"

"You cheezy rotter!" yelled Frank. "I—I'll fight you, if you like—and lick you, too!"

Blake chuckled.

"Dear man," he said affectionately, "you're not going to fight me! I might hit you, you know, and then there would have to be an inquest, and lots of bother."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, you cheezy rotter!" gasped Frank.

"Isn't he ferocious for four foot one?" grinned Blake.

"I'm over five feet!" shrieked Frank.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Minus how much?" grinned Blake. "Anyhow, you're too savage and ferocious for a grasshopper. Lend us a hand with this fiery snipe, you fellows, and we'll take him to his major. Levison major may know how to deal with him when he's in this savage state."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaas, wathah!" chuckled Arthur Augustus.

Frank Levison struggled frantically as the four grinning Fourth-Formers collared him together, and swept him off his feet.

Lifted clear of the floor, and still struggling, the fag was borne bodily out of the study.

Blake & Co. carried him along the Fourth Form passage to No. 9, the study that belonged to his major, Levison of the Fourth, and Clive and Cardew.

A dozen fellows looked out of their rooms, and howled with laughter at the sight of the struggling, breathless fag, crimson and panting, borne through the air by Study No. 6.

The procession reached Study No. 9, and Blake kicked the door open. Levison major, Clive, and Ralph Reckness Cardew were at prep—at all events, Levison and Clive were at prep, and Cardew was trying to make up his mind to begin.

The three juniors stared blankly at the apparition in the doorway. Ernest Levison jumped to his feet.

"What the thump are you up to?" he exclaimed. "Put my minor down at once! Do you hear?"

"Weally, Levison—"

"Keep your wool on, old top!" said Blake. "We've brought him home to be soothed. He's raging for gore, and no life in the Fourth Form is safe till he's been soothed. Once we let him loose the casualties will begin."

"Yaas, wathah!" chuckled Arthur Augustus.

"We're going in terror of our lives!" chorled Digby.

"Young Frank has started in to wipe out the Fourth!"

"Look here—" growled Levison, while Clive and Cardew chuckled.

"Here he is!" said Blake. "Take care of him. Mind he doesn't bite. And mind he doesn't thrash the whole study!"

Bump!

Frank Levison was landed on the study table, amid books and papers and pens and ink.

Then Blake & Co. retreated from No. 9, roaring with laughter. The study door slammed after them, and Frank Levison sat up breathlessly on the table, blinking rather sheepishly at his major.

CHAPTER 3.

A Leaf from the Past.

LEVISON MINOR slid off the table, and gasped for breath. Levison of the Fourth looked at him with rather grim inquiry.

"Well, what's all the row about?" he asked.

"We heard you after Trimble," said Cardew. "Have you thrashed the festive Baggy, and started on No. 6? Rather a big order—what?"



Tom Merry held the study door wide open, and Manners and Lowther interrupted Trimble with a sudden and vigorous application of boot leather. The fat Fourth-Former roared and rolled into the passage. There was a shout outside as Frank Levison of the Third came scudding up. "Oh, here you are, then!" he said. "Yaroooh!" roared Trimble. (See page 4.)

"Oh, rats!" said Frank. "Trimble dodged into their study, and I went in for him, and they bagged me. That's all."

"What the dickens were you after Trimble for?" asked Levison of the Fourth. "You oughtn't to pick trouble with the Fourth Form, Frank. Haven't you enough rows going on in the Third?"

"I never row in the Third—well, hardly ever!" said Frank indignantly. "And I punched Trimble because—because—"

He hesitated, and broke off.

"Bagged your last jam-tart?" asked Clive, laughing.

"N—no!"

Cardew burst into a chuckle. "Two to one I can spot it," he said. "There's only one reason why Franky ever goes on the giddy war-path! Somebody has been saying that his major isn't the last word in majors; Trimble has dared to hint that Frank's major isn't the giddy limit of all that a major could be—"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Frank, flushing again. "Trimble was a cheeky cad, and I went for him!"

"You young ass!" said Ernest Levison. "If Trimble was slanging me—and I suppose Cardew's right—couldn't you leave it to me to kick him, if I thought him worth the trouble?"

"You didn't hear what he said."

"Well, it wasn't worth hearing, I suppose. What the dickens were you talking to Trimble at all for?"

"I wasn't talking to him. I was looking at the cricket-list Tom Merry had put on the board, and so was Trimble. And he said—well, never mind what he said. It doesn't matter."

"Is my name there?" asked Levison.

"Yes, for the Greyfriars match."

"Good!"

"Ernest! It isn't true that—that—" Frank hesitated.

"That what?"

The flush had died out of the fag's face. He glanced at Clive and Cardew, and then at his elder brother, and did not speak. Cardew gave a solemn nod.

"We're in the way, Clivey," he said. "It's a secret of dread import, and Franky can't cough it up in our presence."

"What rot!" said Clive.

"It isn't that," stammered Frank. "Only—only—"

Ernest Levison was staring at his minor in astonishment. Frank coloured again under his stare.

"What on earth are you burbling about, Frank?" exclaimed Levison of the Fourth testily. "What the thump does it matter what Trimble said? And why can't you jerk it out before my study-mates? You asked me whether something was true or not. Well, what?"

All three of the Fourth-Formers were looking at the fag curiously. Still Frank did not speak.

"It doesn't matter," he stammered, at last. "I—I'll cut now, Ernie. Reggie Manners and Wally will be looking for me."

"You won't cut till you've explained what you're driving at," said his brother curtly. "Now, then, out with it, you young ass!"

Frank seemed to gulp.

"Well, Ernie, you— you know you were at Greyfriars before you came to St. Jim's—"

"I'm not likely to forget it."

"That was before I came here, of course. I never exactly knew why you left Greyfriars, and the pater sent you here instead. Of course, I know it was all right."

"Thanks," said Levison dryly.

"But—that fat rotter said—" Frank's voice faltered. "That's why I punched him, Ernie. He said there was something fishy about the way you left Greyfriars—as—as if there was something to be ashamed of in it. I'd punch any fellow that said that!"

"You'd better begin on me, then!" said Ernest Levison grimly.

"Wha-at?"

"I'm not proud of the way I left Greyfriars," said Levison. "It's an old story now. Don't blink at me like that, you young ass—I wasn't sacked! The Head didn't care for my company any longer."

"Why not, Ernie?" gasped Frank.

"Perhaps we didn't hit it off. Perhaps I was an ass. Anyway, he wanted me to clear, and I cleared. Lots of fellows here know that I had to leave Greyfriars. Nothing to make a song about. The Head would take me back now—he's told me so. So you needn't look so jolly mopish, you young ass! It's all serene."

"I knew there wasn't anything in it," said Frank, with a breath of relief. "Grundy of the Shell had to leave Redclyffe for punching a prefect. Something like that, I suppose?"

"Not quite like that in my case, but nothing to worry about; and anyhow it's all over long ago," said Levison moodily. "I wasn't sacked from Greyfriars; though I've come jolly near being sacked from St. Jim's, more than once, if you want to know. You're a young ass, Frank, and if Trimble wants to blow off gas, let him. What the dickens does it matter whether he blows off gas or not? Don't get into rows with the Fourth."

"Right-ho, Ernie, I won't," said Frank Levison. "I—I say, though, when we've been over at Greyfriars, all the fellows seemed very decent to you—Wharton, and Cherry, and Nugent, and the rest."

Levison nodded.

"They're my friends now," he said.

"Weren't they your friends when you were in the Remove at Greyfriars?"

"No!" said Levison, with a short laugh. "Very far from that, young 'un."

"Then it was their fault, I know that!" said Frank.

"You know too much in the Third! It wasn't their fault—it was my fault; just the same as it was my fault that I used to be at daggers drawn with Tom Merry, and Blake, and Figgins, here," grunted Levison. "But that's all over. I shall be jolly glad to see them when they come over for the cricket on Wednesday, and I hope they'll be glad to see me. Now cut off, you young ass, and don't start punching any more of the Fourth."

Frank Levison left Study No. 9, and Ernest sat down again to his work. Clive was working on steadily; but Ralph Reckness Cardew leaned back in his chair, regarding Levison with a very curious glance.

"You never told me that, old bean," he said suddenly.

"What?" grunted Levison.

"About having to clear from Greyfriars."

"It wouldn't have interested you."

"It would—no end!" grinned Cardew.

"Well, you know now," said Levison gruffly. "A dozen fellows could have told you, anyway."

"I think I'd have kept it dark, in your place."

"I did," said Levison coolly. "But such things come out—especially when the two schools have regular fixtures at cricket and footer, and the fellows meet."

"I suppose so," assented Cardew. "So, my dear old coffee-bean, when you were at Greyfriars you used to play the giddy goat, just as you used to at St. Jim's before my time—as I've heard. Is that it?"

"Better ask the Greyfriars fellows when they come over on Wednesday," answered Levison.

Cardew laughed.

"What is a polite way of tellin' me to mind my own bizney!" he remarked. "But my own bizney just now is prep, and prep is a bore." Cardew yawned deeply. "But I suppose I must begin. I'd rather have a pleasant talk over your ancient sins, Levison."

Grunt from Levison. He was not to be drawn; and Ralph Reckness Cardew, with another deep yawn, turned at last to his work—which was not done in a manner satisfactory to Mr. Latham, as transpired the next morning in the Form-room.

CHAPTER 4.

Cardew Means Well!

"FUNK!"

Baggy Trimble turned a deaf ear.

It was D'Arcy minor—Wally of the Third—who hooted that unpleasant word at him, after morning lessons, in the quad.

Any other Fourth Form fellow thus addressed by a fag of the Third, would have fallen upon that fag, and smitten him hip and thigh. Baggy Trimble preferred not to hear.

"Yah! Funk!" howled Manners minor, also of the Third, as the fat junior rolled on his way.

And still Trimble was deaf.

It was not only from fags of the Third that Baggy Trimble met with contemptuous remarks that day.

Baggy was well known to be no hero; but an ignominious flight of a Fourth-Former from a fag of the Third was the limit—the giddy limit, as Blake declared. Trimble might go in fear and trembling of Study No. 6 in the Fourth; that indeed was right and proper. But to go in fear and trembling of the Third was too much: it was a reflection upon the whole Form to which he belonged. Nobody expected Baggy to be heroic, but even Baggy was expected to stand up to a fag on the warpath.

And so the Fourth Form told Baggy what they thought of him; and, to judge by their observations, what they thought was not flattering.

Baggy Trimble was fairly thick-skinned; but contempt, it is said, will pierce the shell of the tortoise. Even Baggy did not like being called a funk.

He made a fierce resolve to seek out Levison minor of the Third, and to administer to that cheeky youth a tremendous thrashing, which should set the matter right.

But that resolve was not carried out. Second thoughts—proverbially the best—came in time.

On second thoughts, Baggy decided to treat that cheeky fag with the contempt he deserved. Unfortunately, this led a whole crowd of fellows to treat Trimble with the contempt he deserved.

So Baggy Trimble was feeling wrathful and ratty that day. The word "funk" was bawled at him a dozen times, and he did not like it. And his feelings towards the Levisons, major and minor, were anything but amiable.

Dear! Baggy would have liked to give them a licking apiece, but heroic measures were not in Baggy's line.

In fact, so far from seeking out Levison minor and administering to that cheeky fag a terrific thrashing, Baggy went in dread of being sought out by him.

He retreated right out of the quad when he sighted the Third Form fags, without even waiting to see whether Levison minor was among them. And as he came into the School House, in full retreat, he almost ran into Study No. 9, coming out. Cardew grinned at the sight of him, Clive frowned, and Levison of the Fourth looked quite indifferent. Baggy retreated at the sight of Levison. He

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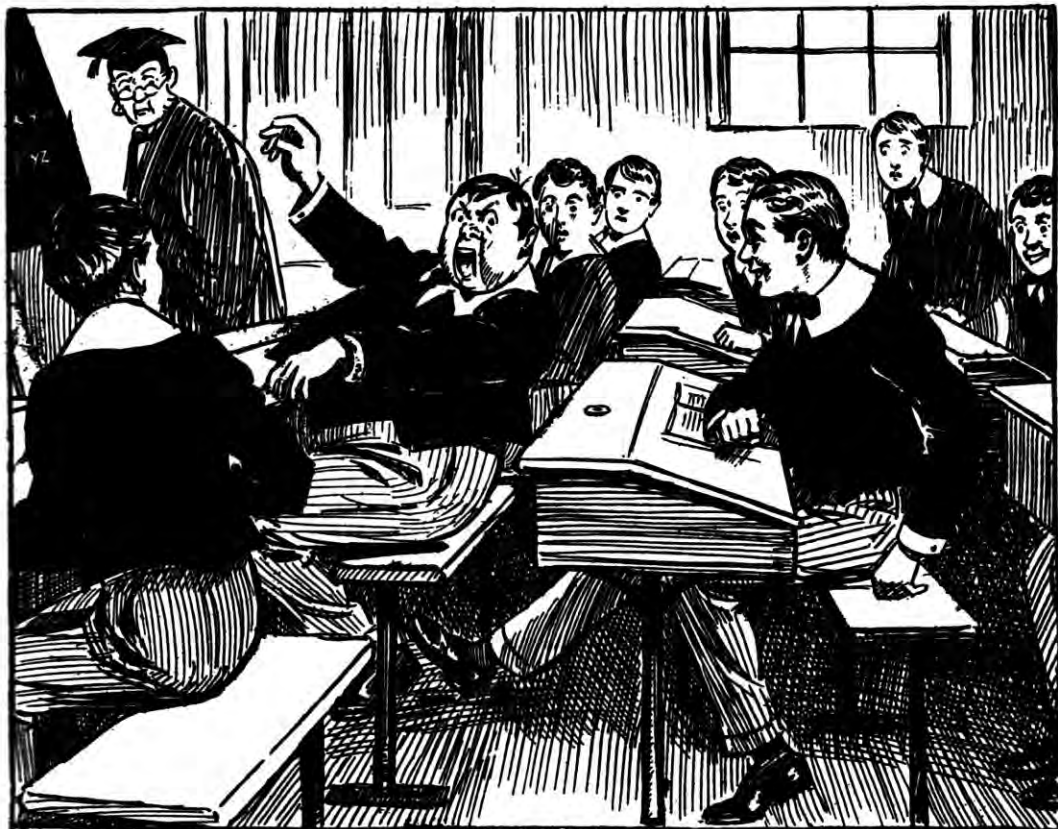
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Cardew, who had affixed a bent pin to the toe of his shoe, took advantage of Mr. Lathom's attention being drawn in another direction. He stretched his leg under the desk and bestowed a sudden jab on Trimble's fat calf. The yell that broke from the startled Baggy rang through the Form-room! (See page 8.)

had carefully avoided that youth till now—even dodging late out of the Form-room to avoid coming upon him in the corridor. But Baggy's luck was out.

"Here, you keep off!" he stuttered. "I—I—it was all a mistake, Levison—quite a mistake."

"Are you burling at me, you fat chump?" asked Ernest Levison gruffly.

"I—I didn't really say you were sacked from Greyfriars, you know," said Baggy. "Young Frank was quite mistaken. I only said—"

"Oh, dry up!"

Levison tramped down the steps and went on his way with Clive; but Ralph Reckness Cardew lingered.

"Rotter!" mumbled Trimble, staring after Levison. "I say, Cardew, I wonder you pal with that chap."

"Do you?" smiled Cardew.

"Sacked from his last school, you know," said Trimble, with a nod.

"But I don't know," said Cardew. "How should I know? I'm almost new at St. Jim's, and Levison is an old hand."

"Well, he was here before I came," said Trimble. "But lots of the fellows know he had to get out of Greyfriars. He was in Wharton's Form there—the Remove. He was expelled, I think."

"You only think?" cooed Cardew softly. "You don't know?"

"Well, it's pretty plain, isn't it?" said Trimble. "He never talks about it. It's a sore spot. He, he, he! I've an idea, you know, that he was caught breaking bounds at night, or pub-haunting, or gambling."

"Only an idea?" smiled Cardew.

"Well, I don't know the facts yet," said Trimble. "But I'm jolly well going to ask the Greyfriars fellows when they come over to-morrow. They know."

"You're the chap for gettin' at the facts, ain't you, dear old nut?" said Cardew admiringly.

Trimble nodded complacently.

"I fancy I can get to the bottom of things," he assented. "Not much goes on without my knowing it—what?"

"That's odd!" said Cardew thoughtfully.

"Eh? What's odd?"

"Why, as you know so much, you should surely be aware that Levison is a pal of mine," said Cardew agreeably.

"Likewise, you should not be ignorant of the fact that when a fellow talks like that of a pal of mine I have a powerful inclination to pull his nose—an' I always yield to my inclinations—thus, dear boy."

With a quick movement, Ralph Reckness Cardew caught Trimble's fat nose between finger and thumb and tweaked it emphatically. There was a gurgling howl of anguish from Baggy.

"Grooooooh!"

Cardew released the fat nose and strolled down the steps after his chums. Baggy clutched his nose in both hands and seemed to be caressing it lovingly. It was hurt—and there was plenty of it to be hurt.

Cardew strolled after Levison and Clive, and overtook them in the quad. He gave Levison a gentle nudge with his elbow.

"You know the Greyfriars fellows will be here to-morrow, old pal?" he drawled.

"Of course."

"They know all about your sinful past at your old school?"

"Don't be an ass!"

"But they do, don't they?"

"They know anything there is to be known," said Levison, with a stare. "Why?"

"Nothin'—only Trimble's going to ask them questions."

"The fat, prying rotter!"

"I sha'n't be in the cricket," said Cardew. "I was goin' to yawn my head off watchin' you play. But, if you like—" He paused and looked oddly at Levison. "If you like, old man, I'll sacrifice myself on the giddy altar of friendship."

"What the thump do you mean?"

"I'll take the estimable Baggy out for a walk. I pulled his nose a minute ago," said Cardew reflectively; "but he will forgive me, if I pull his leg next. Shall I pull his leg to-morrow, old bean, and take him out for a jolly old walk, and keep him clear of the Greyfriars chaps?"

Levison stood still and looked at his chum.

"I suppose you mean well, Cardew," he said, after a long pause.

"Your supposer, my young friend, is in perfect order, and workin' to perfection," said Cardew urbanely.

"But you're an ass!"

"Thanks!"

"I've nothing to fear from Trimble trying to pump Harry Wharton's team. Let him rip!"

"Sure?" yawned Cardew.

"Quite! Besides, they're not the fellows to talk about a chap. Trimble won't get much change out of them."

"Oh, I see."

"But if they tell him of everything they know, it won't make any difference."

"You don't mind if Trimble goes ahead?"

"Not in the least."

"I was sure of that," said Sidney Clive.

"I wasn't sure of it," sighed Cardew. "My distrustful nature. Why, I'd hate any fellow to come along from my old school, an' relate my youthful deeds at Wodehouse. And—and I know you weren't always the model you've since become, my excellent Ernest; there was a time when you really couldn't have been held up as a shinin' example to errin' youth. But if you're sure you don't mind Trimble goin' ahead—"

"Of course I don't!" said Levison impatiently.

"My mistake!" said Cardew. "That saves me from havin' to take a walk with the entertainin' Baggy to-morrow afternoon. Many thanks!"

To which Ernest Levison's grateful reply was:

"Fathead!"

CHAPTER 5.

The Day of the Match!

TOM MERRY & Co. were in high feather on the following day.

It was a glorious day, and it was the day of the Greyfriars match; two circumstances that combined to "buck" the heroes of St. Jim's.

Harry Wharton & Co. were expected early at St. Jim's; and the home eleven had leave from third lesson, as the match was to be well under way before lunch. But that extra leave was given only to personages connected with the cricket fixture; other fellows had to keep on in the Form-rooms as usual until morning lessons ended—which was a very annoying circumstance to one podgy member of the Fourth Form, at least.

Baggy Trimble wanted to get going, as it were, as early as possible in his search for interesting information regarding Levison of the Fourth and his "past" at Greyfriars. Likewise, he wanted to dodge a lesson if he could.

Baggy was interested in the question of Levison's past—chiefly for the reason that it was no concern of his at all. Probably some other matter would have driven it from his fat mind—but it lingered there now, chiefly on account of Frank.

Frank Levison had chased Trimble up and down the School House—into Tom Merry's study—into Study No. 6—and had shown up Baggy in the most unmistakable light as a wretched funk.

Many a time and oft had Trimble been shown up, so far as that went. But this was the last occasion, and the worst. Ignominious flight from a Third-Form fag covered even Trimble with a fresh garment of shame.

But for Frank Levison's prompt resentment of Trimble's remarks concerning his major, and what had followed, Baggy would in all probability have forgotten about the whole affair. But now Baggy was pining for vengeance—even Baggy hated having fellows call out "funk," when they saw him—it hurt his sensitive feelings. He owed all that to Frank Levison and his ireful championship of his major, and Baggy was going to make both the Levisons "sit up" in consequence—if he could.

Frank looked upon his major with great admiration, as something like the very perfection of an elder brother, and it was not surprising, therefore, that he had lost his usually pacific temper with Trimble. But for Ernest's sake, it would probably have been better if Frank had restrained his wrath and taken no heed.

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Whatever had been Levison's reason for leaving his old school, it was not one that he cared to talk about, or to hear other fellows talking about—and this affair of Trimble and Frank had started a good many fellows talking about it. And Trimble was on the track of fresh information—if any was to be obtained from Harry Wharton & Co. Trimble yearned to hear that Levison had been actually expelled—he hoped to hear that it was for something exceedingly serious—theft would have pleased him most, but drunkenness would have afforded him satisfaction, or gambling—he hoped fervently that it was something extremely shady. And he was going to know, if he could; and when he knew, he was going to proclaim it from the house-tops.

Levison of the Fourth paid Trimble no regard at all, he seemed unaware of the fat youth's existence. Cardew, who trusted nobody to any great extent, wondered whether that attitude was "bluff." Clive took it at face value. As for Tom Merry & Co., they gave no thought to the matter at all.

After breakfast on Wednesday, Baggy Trimble ran the Terrible Three down in the quad. They grinned at the sight of him.

"Some fierce and fiery fag after you, dear boy?" inquired Monty Lowther.

Trimble smiled feebly.

"Want us to hide you somewhere?" asked Manners.

"I—I say, Tommy old fellow—"

"Cut out the old fellow," said Tom Merry. "What do you want, you fat boulder?"

"Would you like me to score in the match to-day?"

"Thanks, no."

"The fact is, I'd like to," said Trimble.

"You'd like to cut third lesson, you mean."

"Ahem! I—you see—"

"Rats!" said Tom, and the Terrible Three walked on, and became oblivious of the existence of the heir of Trimble Hall.

"Rotters!" murmured Baggy.

And in third lesson Baggy Trimble was still receiving valuable—but unappreciated—instruction from Mr. Lathom, in the Fourth Form room, while Tom Merry & Co. were greeting the visitors from Greyfriars, and the great match was beginning on Little Side.

It seemed quite an age to Baggy Trimble before morning classes came to their yearned-for end.

Cardew glanced at him once or twice with an amused smile. A few minutes before the lesson ended, Cardew, who had spent some busy minutes in affixing a bent pin to the toe of his shoe, took advantage of Mr. Lathom's attention being drawn in another direction, to stretch his leg under the desk, and bestow a sudden jab on Trimble's fat calf.

The yell that broke from the startled Baggy rang through the Form-room.

"Yooooop!"

Mr. Lathom spun round.

"What the dickens!" he ejaculated. "Trimble! How dare you, Trimble! How dare you utter a yell like—like—like a Red Indian, Trimble, in the Form-room? Are you out of your senses, Trimble?"

"Yow-ow-ow! Some beast—"

"What?"

"Somebody stuck a pin in my leg!" howled Trimble.

"Nonsense! Mellish, did you?"

"No, sir!" said Mellish, who was on one side of Trimble.

"Roylance—"

"Certainly not, sir," said Roylance, who was on the other side.

"Then, Trimble!"

"It—it—it was somebody, sir!"

"Nonsense! Trimble, I have found you idle, inattentive, and stupid this morning! Now you venture to play a foolish, unseemly prank—"

"I—I—I—"

"You shall not play such pranks in the Form-room with impunity, Trimble. You will be detained till dinner-time."

"Oh dear! I—"

"Silence."

When the Fourth Form marched out, Trimble remained at his desk. Cardew gave him a sweet smile as he passed him on his way out. Baggy's quest of information was delayed, at least, for when Baggy was at last released from the Form-room, his thoughts were of dinner, and at dinner-time dinner excluded all other considerations from Baggy's fat mind.

CHAPTER 6.

Harry Wharton & Co. at St. Jim's!

FRANK LEVISON was one of the first to reach Little Side when classes were dismissed. He hurried down to the cricket ground, to see how his major was getting on there; and Wally and Reggie Manners accompanied him. Wally of the Third and Manners minor

were't keenly interested in Tom Merry's match—but they kindly accompanied Frank Levison. The three were generally together; and the two knew that nothing would keep Frank away from Little Side just then.

"This isn't a foot-race, young Levison!" bawled Manners minor, as Frank spurred ahead of his chums.

"Oh, buck up!" called back Frank.

"Anything special on?" asked Wally.

"You know my major's playing."

"Well, my major's playing," said Wally. "But I manage to keep cool."

"And my major isn't," said Reggie Manners. "Not that I should worry if he were."

And Wally and Reggie walked on in a leisurely way, dropping behind Frank as he hurried on. The Greyfriars fellows were in the field, and Tom Merry and Figgins were at the wickets. Ernest Levison, standing with the group of waiting batsmen, gave his minor a nod and a smile.

"How has it gone, Ernie?" asked Frank, breathlessly.

"Four down for forty," answered Levison.

"You've not been in yet?"

"Not yet."

"Why didn't Tom open the innings with you?"

"Young ass!" was Ernest Levison's rejoinder to that.

Cardew came sauntering up, with his hands in his pockets. There were three or four Greyfriars fellows about, as well as the cricketers—and one of them was a fat youth—falter than Baggy Trimble—with a large pair of spectacles on his podgy little nose. That youth came along and joined Cardew at once.

"Jolly glad to see you, old fellow," he said cordially, blinking at the dandy of the Fourth through his big spectacles.

Cardew eyed him.

"You're awfully good," he said. "It's jolly nice of you to be glad to see a fellow you don't know."

"Oh, really, Cardew—"

"It's Bunter," said Levison.

"What is?" asked Cardew.

Levison grinned.

"That!" he answered.

"Oh, really, Levison—"

"Oh, you mean his name's Bunter?" said Cardew, as if suddenly comprehending. "Is Bunter really a name, then?"

"Don't you remember me?" hooted Bunter.

Cardew looked puzzled.

"How can I remember a chap I've never seen before?" he inquired. "I've a fairly good memory; but that's too steep. I couldn't remember a chap I don't know if I had a whole sack of the little grey books."

"Oh, really, you know!" said Bunter, with a feeble grin.

"You know me, you know, Cardew, old chap. Bunter—William George Bunter. I'm in the Remove at Greyfriars. I've come over here as a reserve for the eleven. I ought to be in the team, really; but, you know, there's a lot of jealousy in cricket—Wharton hates being put in the shade by a really good man. So I'm only a reserve. How's your grandfather, Cardew?"

"He's still a lord," answered Cardew gravely.

"Oh, really, you know—"

"How's yours, old bean?" inquired Cardew. "Lemme see, I think your grandfather is the Duke of Bunter, isn't that it?"

"Hem! I—he—you see—"

"Or is it only marquis?" asked Cardew. "Now I come to think of it, I have met you before, Bunter. Didn't you ask me to cash a postal-order for you when you came over here last? I believe you were expecting one then, at an early date. Has it arrived yet?"

Billy Bunter did not answer that question; he turned away with a snort. Evidently the grandson of Lord Reckness was not to be claimed as a pal by the Owl of the Remove.

"You in the team, Levison?" Bunter asked.

"Yes."

"Rather a change from old times at Greyfriars, what?" said Bunter, with a fat grin. "You weren't much of a cricketer there. Wharton wouldn't have put you into the Remove eleven for love or money, would he?"

No answer from Levison.

"But I suppose you're good enough for St. Jim's," went on Bunter amiably. "I don't think much of your cricket here."

Frank Levison opened his lips to speak, but his brother gave him a warning look, and the indignant fag was silent. Billy Bunter sat down and yawned portentously. He had stated that he had come over with the Greyfriars team as a reserve; but the St. Jim's fellows took the liberty of doubting that statement. They knew Bunter well enough to know that he had come over because he had succeeded in "touching" some other fellow for his railway fare, and that the objects he had chiefly in view were lunch and tea. St. Jim's "did"

their visitors well on such occasions, and Billy Bunter had not forgotten that circumstance.

But considering that William George Bunter had visited St. Jim's a good many times, there was a startling lack of enthusiasm on the part of St. Jim's fellows in meeting him again. Nobody really seemed overjoyed to see him.

It was not that they had forgotten him. It was that they remembered him rather too well.

Even Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, than whom a more tolerant youth did not exist in the wide world, edged away from William George Bunter, and groaned inwardly when Bunter declined to be edged away from. The swell of St. Jim's was glad when he was called to take Figgins' place—Figgins having been caught out by Bob Cherry of Greyfriars. D'Arcy was glad to get into the game, and still gladder to get away from the Owl of Greyfriars. Bunter blinked at him rather sourly when he went.

"So D'Arcy hasn't been sacked," he remarked to the other fellows.

"D'Arcy! Why?" grunted Levison.

"Well, he ran away from school," said Bunter. "Actually came butting in at Greyfriars, you know. Of course, I stood by him. I wonder your Head let him come back. Not very particular at St. Jim's, what?"

Cardew glanced at Bunter with interest.

"Are you always as courteous as this when you're on a visit, old bean?" he inquired politely.

"Oh, really, Cardew—"

"Well hit, Tommy!" roared Monty Lowther, as Tom Merry drove the ball away to the boundary.

"Bravo, Tom Merry!"

"I should have caught that," said Bunter. "Just like Johnny Bull to miss a catch like that."

"Why, you fat owl," said Levison, "Johnny Bull wasn't within three yards of it, and he hadn't an earthly!"

"That's all you know about it, Levison," said Bunter calmly. "Lot you can teach me about cricket! I'll come to you for tips on geegees and cigarettes, if you like! Ho, he, he!"

"You cheeky rotter—" began Frank hotly.

"Shut up, Frank!" said Levison.

"That your young brother, Levison?" asked Bunter. "He wasn't at Greyfriars with you. I remember he came over once, though, with you. I've seen the grubby little waster before!"

"Why, you—" began Frank again.

But a look from his brother silenced him, and he fumed instead of continuing.

"What I want to know is when we're going to have some grub," said Billy Bunter peevishly. "Jolly near dinner-time. I should think. Is there a tuckshop about here?"

"Yes, but dinner's soon," said Levison.

"Well, I'm hungry," Bunter ran his hands through his pockets. "My only hat! I've left my money at Greyfriars!"

"All of it?" asked Cardew.

"Yes, fancy that!"

"Only fancy," said Cardew. "How could you have come to overlook it, Bunter? It's rather a serious matter. I hope you've got the numbers of the notes."

Bunter blinked at him rather suspiciously.

"It's not safe to leave fivers and tenners about without taking the numbers," said Cardew, shaking his head seriously. "Take my tip, Bunter, and catch the next train back and look after your money."

"Oh, really, Cardew—"

"Think of the temptation if some thoughtless fellow came across all that money," urged Cardew.

Bunter coughed.

"I was going to say—"

"You want a time-table?" asked Cardew.

"No!" roared Bunter.

"There's a train in fifteen minutes, I happen to know."

"Can one of you fellows lend me—"

"Hallo, they're coming off!" said Levison, ruthlessly interrupting Bunter. "Five down for sixty—that's not bad for our side. You'll get your dinner now, Bunter."

Harry Wharton & Co. came cheerily out of the field. They were ready for lunch. A merry party started for the School House, where the visitors were to join the St. Jim's fellows at "commons." Billy Bunter rolled in with the rest; and he looked for a seat next to Levison—to have a chat over lunch about old times at Greyfriars! Apparently Levison was not looking forward to that pleasant—or unpleasant—chat, for he successfully dodged Bunter, and it was the polite, patient, long-suffering Arthur Augustus who was honoured with the Owl's agreeable conversation during the cricketers' lunch.

(Continued on page 12.)

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The ST JIM'S NEWS

Edited by TOM MERRY.

Curling Grundy's Hair.

By Monty Lowther.

GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY strode in at the gates of St. Jim's early one evening, carrying something in a brown-paper parcel under his arm. He was also studying a book with a luridly coloured cover, entitled, "Fashions for Men." So engrossed was Grundy in that book that he ran clean into Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn of the New House.

"Biff!"

"Yowp!" gasped Figgins, clutching Kerr round the neck for support, as Grundy charged his spinal column. "What the dickens—"

"Groooh!" moaned Grundy, rubbing his nose. "Why don't you New House jossers get out of the way? I—"

"Bump him!" said Figgins.

The heroes of the New House laid violent hands on George Alfred and whirled him over. Next minute his writhing form was smiting the ground heavily many times in quick succession.

"Yaroooooooh! Yah! Wow!" bawled Grundy.

Fatty Wynn picked up the parcel, thinking it might contain some tuck that could be raided. The paper had become torn, and a weird-looking instrument fell out.

Figgins & Co. dropped Grundy, and gazed at their find.

"My hat!" gasped Figgins. "Wh-what on earth is it?"

"Looks like a patent pair of scissors!" said Fatty Wynn. "I say, Grundy—"

"Gimme that!" howled the Shell fellow, jumping up, enraged like an angry bull.

"I'll whop you rotters! Gimme my waver!"

"Your waver?"

"My waver!" howled Grundy. "That's a Marcel waver!"

"Great pip!"

By this time quite a crowd had gathered. They gazed at Grundy and the waver in amazement.

"What's it for, Grundy?" inquired Cardew.

"What's it for?" snorted Grundy. "It's a waver—for the hair!"

"Oh! Something to do with wireless waves in the air—what?" said Cardew. "Are you taking up wireless telegraphy, Grundy?"

"Idiot!" snorted Grundy. "It's for the hair—not air. I'm going to have my hair waved. It's the latest fashion for men."

"Oh!"

Fellows gazed at Grundy and at his hair-waver, and then a great howl of laughter arose. The juniors hugged themselves, and rocked with glee.

"Oh, my hat!" Grundy's going to have his thatch waved!" sobbed Tom Merry. "Carry me home to die, somebody! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rats!" growled Grundy. "You chaps can laugh—br-r-r-r!"

And he strode off, the waver and the fashion book tucked under his arm.

Wilkins and Gunn, his faithful henchmen, were awaiting him. It was a hot day, but the air in Grundy's study was like unto that of a bakehouse. Wilkins and Gunn were perspiring before a huge fire.

"So you've got the fire going!" said Grundy, as he entered.

"Yes, old chap," said Wilkins, mopping his perspiring brow. "Where are the sozzes?"

"The what?"

"The sozzes. We're going to fry some sozzes, aren't we?"

"Nothing of the sort, young Wilkins!" said Grundy grimly. "We're going to fry nothing."

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in here. I want you chaps to wave my hair for me. Here's the waver. You have to get it hot, and wave the hair with it. I want you chaps to do it. It's simple enough, I'm told."

"We—we've got to wave your hair!" stut-tered Wilkins.

"That's it!" said Grundy, taking off his cap.

"Is—is that what you've got us to stoke up this fire for?" demanded Gunn, in thrilling accents.

"Rather! Must have heat for hair-waving, you know."

"You—you—you—"

Wilkins and Gunn glared at their leader as though they would have liked to eat him.

But a grim look from Grundy caused those glares to melt into sickly grins.

"Well," demanded Grundy, in his high and mighty manner, "are you ready?"

"Oh! Er—ahem!—ye-es, old chap, we—we're ready!" gasped Wilkins. "Where's the giddy waver?" My hat! This is the giddy limit!"

"Not so much jaw!" said Grundy loftily.

"When the iron's hot, you've got to wave the hair—and do it properly!"

"Yes, Grundy!"

Wilkins and Gunn exchanged meaning glances behind Grundy's back whilst the waver was getting hot. And they nodded, as if in perfect understanding.

A Close Shave.

At length the iron was hot, and Grundy sat down in the chair. Gunn had a wet towel ready, whilst Wilkins took the hot iron gingerly.

"Careful!" warned Grundy.

Wilkins took a lock of Grundy's hair and jammed the iron on it. There was a sizzling noise, and a somewhat pungent smell arose.

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"Wharrer you doing?" demanded Grundy, looking up. "I— Yow! Yaroooooooh! Wooooooh!"

Wilkins jabbed the hot iron against Grundy's forehead, and the Shell fellow, bellowing like a bull, gave a wild leap out of the chair.

"My head! I'm burnt! Wow-wow-wow!"

"The wet towel, Gunn—quick!" said Wilkins.

Gunn fopped the towel over Grundy's head and wrapped it round. A gurgling noise came from underneath.

"Yoooh! Grooooooh! Lemme gerrou!"

When Grundy got free from the towel his face was red with wrath—and there was a red patch on his forehead where the iron had touched him.

"You clumsy idiot, Wilkins! For two pins I'd mop up the floor with you! Wow!"

he said superfluously. "Get on with the waving, and be me me careful!"

Once more Wilkins took up the iron from the fire. It was on the point of becoming red hot. He ran it through Grundy's hair, and those lovely locks began to sizzle merrily.

"Is it waving?" demanded Grundy from below.

"Waving? I should say so!" chuckled Wilkins. "It's lovely, Grundy! You ought to see it! Nunno—don't get up!" he added hastily, as Grundy made a movement in the chair. "Don't see it yet, old chap. Wait till I've finished."

Wilkins commenced to enjoy himself. He was quite callous in his treatment of Grundy's hair. He meant to have his own back on Grundy for the trouble he had put them to in waiting in to stoke up that fire.

Now there was a fire, Wilkins intended making full use of it!

He plied the hot iron with vigour over Grundy's head, and very soon George Alfred's head of hair resembled a heath after a fire. Great tufts of it were absolutely burnt away, and what hair remained was curled into all manner of weird and wonderful shapes.

Grundy looked up—and Wilkins kindly wiped the iron across his nose. This time Grundy leapt fully three feet out of the chair.

"Woooooh!" he moaned. "My nose! I'll slaughter you, Wilkins! Yoop! I'll—"

"You shouldn't have looked up, old chap!" said Wilkins, dodging hastily.

He dropped the hot iron on to the carpet. Grundy, in his efforts to get at him, tripped over the coal-scuttle, and sat down—on top of the hot iron.

"Yaroooooooh!"

Grundy was up like a flash of lightning. He was about to dash after Wilkins again, but he caught sight of his reflection in the glass on the table, and George Alfred stopped short.

"M-m-my only Sunday topper!" he gurgled, blinking into the mirror. "Is—is that me? Is that my hair?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wilkins and Gunn. Grundy's hair almost curled with horror.

He gazed at it in the glass, and his blood froze.

"My hair!" he gurgled. "Look at it! I—I—"

"Grundy wants you to look at his hair, chaps!" bawled Gunn, opening the door and admitting the crowd of fellows who had gathered outside. "We've been waving it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled the juniors, gazing at what was left of Grundy's hair.

George Alfred turned a red face towards the doorway, just as Wilkins and Gunn disappeared into the passage. They deemed it wiser to beat a retreat than to stay in there with Grundy. They would rather have entered a lion's den.

"My hair!" stuttered Grundy. "It's ruined! Look what he's done! I—" "It looks a treat, Grundy!" chorled Tom Merry. "Ha, ha, ha! There's a blister rising on your nose! Have you been trying to wave your boko?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Grundy, with a snort like a warhorse, fairly tore his way out of the study through the crowd. He dashed in search of Wilkins and Gunn. But those youths were nowhere to be seen.

Grundy met Dr. Holmes on the stairs, and the old Head of St. Jim's nearly fell down then when he saw the state of Grundy's hair. And when Grundy explained that he had had his hair waved, Dr. Holmes came down on him like a hundred of bricks.

"You ridiculous, stupid, conceited boy, Grundy!" he exclaimed. "I have never heard of such a thing! How dare you, a junior, think of waving your hair! And can you wonder at the ghastly result! Go at once to the village hairdresser, Grundy, and have your hair cut, so as to remove traces of your ridiculous experiment! Not a word, boy! Go!"

And Grundy went.

When he returned from the barber's his hair was so short that it resembled a "prison crop." And he had a lovely blister on his nose, which increased the size of that organ considerably.

Wilkins and Gunn kept discreetly out of his way for several days after that—in fact, they did not dare go near Grundy until the blister and his temper had gone down.

But it was some time before Grundy's hair came up to any respectable length. And during that period George Alfred was chipped unmercifully wherever he went.

He took the waver out with him one afternoon, and was seen to hurl it into the rippling waters of the Rhyll. From which we gathered that Grundy would never, never again attempt to have his hair waved!

Palmistry Pars.

(Monty Lowther has been swotting up a book of palmistry, and, with his noddle full of it, has examined the hands of several fellows, with the following results.)

GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY.—Your hand is a thick, heavy one, and corresponds closely to your head. You will go through life kicking and being kicked. You will find great difficulty in keeping your hair on, and, later on in life, will probably go at things baldheaded. Take up boxing, and you will make a few hits. Lucky colour, pink, with occasional spots.

BAGGY TRIMBLE.—You have a great deal in front of you, but if you follow your nose you should rise to great heights. Your hand shows that you were born at a very early age, and will probably live till you die of fatty degeneration. With the art of extraction already well developed, you should become a dentist.

HERBERT SKIMPOLE.—When you are twenty-one you will become of age. Throughout your life your mighty intellect will be always on the go—in fact, it might go altogether. Your inventions will make the world ring with the name of Skimpole, you will become Prime Minister, and will be buried in Westminster Abbey. And then you will wake up!

A. A. D'ARCY.—Beware of girls with fair hair and blue eyes. Yours will be a soft life. With your lovely tenor voice you should go far the farther away the better.

BREY RACKE.—Your hand shows that you will do many things—and people. The life line is very irregular. You will often get caught "napping." As a counterfeiter you should make a lot of money.

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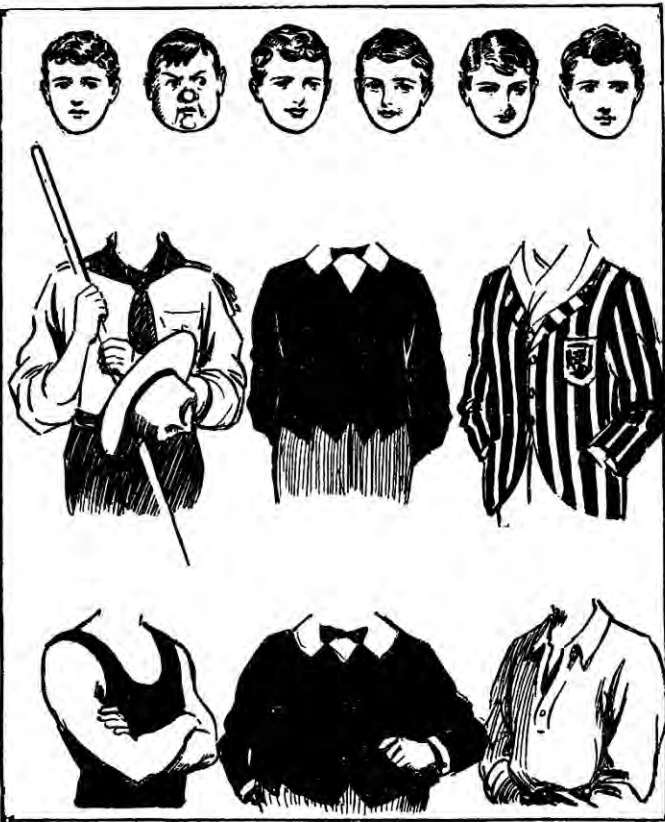
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This is the third set of pictures in this novel competition, and another will appear next week, making a total of four sets of pictures in all.

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The first prize of £5 will be awarded to the competitor who succeeds in submitting sets of pictures which are exactly the same or nearest to those now in the possession of the Editor. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit.

The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide the value of any or all of the prizes; but the full amount will be awarded.

It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor be accepted as final and legally binding.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

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"LEVISON'S PAST!"*(Continued from page 9.)***CHAPTER 7.****Trimble Wants to Know!**

"I SAY, Wharton!" Harry Wharton stopped politely. It was after lunch, and the cricket was not due to be resumed just yet. Wharton was strolling in the St. Jim's quadrangle with Frank Nugent, his chum, when Baggy Trimble came up. The Greyfriars junior was not pleasantly impressed by Baggy; but as he was at St. Jim's, it was up to him to be civil to any St. Jim's chap, so he gave a polite nod and stopped.

"I've been wanting to speak to you," said Baggy. "That awful brute Lathom detained me till dinner, so I couldn't see you when you came and welcome you, you know."

"No harm done," said Wharton. "I'll take the will for the deed."

"It's about Levison," added Baggy.

"Eh—what about Levison?"

"He's in my Form here," said Trimble.

"That's nice for him," remarked Wharton gravely, and Nugent smiled.

Baggy gave the captain of the Greyfriars Remove a rather puzzled look.

"Ye-es, exactly," he assented. "Well, Levison was in your Form when he was at Greyfriars, wasn't he?"

"That's so," assented Wharton.

"You didn't pull with him then, did you?" grinned Baggy.

Harry Wharton's expression became less polite.

"It was some time ago," he said.

"But you didn't like him—what?"

"Really, that isn't a matter I want to discuss with a fellow I've never spoken to before," said the Greyfriars junior.

"Bit of a goer, wasn't he?" persisted Trimble. "Cee-gees and cards and cigarettes and all that?"

"I think we'll get along to the ground, Frank," said Harry Wharton, without answering Trimble.

"Let's!" assented Nugent.

And the two juniors walked away, at a pace which the fat Baggy could not have equalled without running for it. Baggy stared after them in disgust and astonishment.

"Call that manners!" he ejaculated. "Frightfully ill-bred lot at Greyfriars, and no mistake! My hat!"

Baggy Trimble looked round for another victim. He had not even had an opportunity of asking Wharton the question he had been leading up to. He caught sight of Bob Cherry and Johnny Bull under the elms, and rolled along to them. On this occasion Trimble plunged into the subject without any preamble.

"I say, Cherry, what was Levison kicked out of your school for?" he asked.

Bob stared at him.

"Levison?" he repeated. "What the thump do you mean?"

"He was kicked out, wasn't he?" asked Trimble, his fat countenance falling a little.

"Hasn't Levison told you why he left Greyfriars?"

"No fear!"

"Then, doesn't it occur to you that it doesn't concern you?" asked Bob.

"Look here, you know—"

"Mind your own business," suggested Johnny Bull.

"Look here, I say—"

But Bob Cherry and his companion walked away to join some St. Jim's fellows in the quad, and, as Clive was among them, Trimble did not pursue the two Greyfriars fellows with further inquiries. He gave an angry and discontented blink after them.

"Jolly queer they won't tell me!" he reflected. "Sort of conspiracy to keep it all dark, I suppose. Rotters! I'd tell anybody, if I knew! But I'm jolly well going to find out!" Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, was sampling lemon-squash at the open window of the school shop, and Trimble bore down on him. Trimble, for once in a way, was in funds, and he decided to propitiate the nabob in advance, by a method which certainly never would have failed to propitiate Trimble himself.

"Nice on a warm day—what?" he asked, referring to the lemon-squash that the Greyfriars fellow had just finished.

"The nicefulness is terrific!" assented Hurree Singh.

"Have another with me!" said Trimble.

The nabob shook his dusky head.

"The thankfulness is great!" he replied. "But the onefulness is also the enoughfulness!"

"Well, I want to speak to you—"

Trimble.

"The speechfulness is the music to the ears," said Hurree Singh politely. "Go aheadfully!"

"Why did Levison leave Greyfriars School?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh gazed calmly at Trimble's fat, eager, inquisitive face.

"You can tell me, you know," urged Trimble persuasively.

"In confidence, of course! Not a word, you know!"

"The esteemed Levison left Greyfriars because—"

Hurree Singh paused.

"Because—"

said Trimble eagerly.

"Because he departed, my esteemed friend."

"Eh?"

"The leavefulness was a natural consequence of the departfulness," explained the nabob, with a perfectly grave and serious dusky visage.

"Ye-es, of—of course," said Trimble, puzzled. "I know that! But why did he go?"

"Because he went, my esteemed inquirer!"

"Yes, but why—"

"The gofulness led to the wentfulness," said Hurree Singh.

Trimble blinked at him. The dusky face was as serious as that of a bronze statue; Hurree Jamset Ram Singh seemed to think that he was explaining matters. Or else he was gravely pulling Trimble's podgy leg.

"But what was the cause?" exclaimed Trimble.

Hurree Singh considered.

"The cause was the producer of the effect," he answered at last.

"Look here. Was he kicked out of the school?" hooted Trimble.

"I did not behold the kickfulness."

"I mean did he get the sack?"

"I have never seen the esteemed Levison in possession of a sack."

"Expelled, you ass!" yelled Trimble. "Was he expelled? Did the Head of Greyfriars expel him?"

At this point in the conversation Hurree Jamset Ram Singh was afflicted with sudden deafness. Apparently no longer conscious of Trimble's existence, he turned away, then walked off towards the cricket-ground. Baggy stared after him in great exasperation. He was still staring when Vernon-Smith, of Greyfriars, came out of the tuckshop; and Trimble turned to him as a last hope, as it were. There seemed to be unexpected difficulties in the way of acquiring information concerning Ernest Levison's "past." And Baggy "wanted to know" more than ever now.

"Hold on a minute!" he exclaimed, catching Smithy by the arm.

Vernon-Smith stared down at him.

"Hallo! What do you want, fatty?" he asked.

"You knew Levison when he was at Greyfriars, I suppose?" said Trimble. "I want to know why he left."

The Bouncer of Greyfriars eyed him.

"You really want to know?" he asked.

"Yes, yes, really!" said Trimble eagerly.

"I can tell you where to get the information, if you like," said Vernon-Smith.

"Where?"

"There's a chap you can ask who can tell you all about it from beginning to end."

"Who is it?" gasped Trimble, in delight.

"Levison."

"Eh?"

"Ernest Levison."

And, having given Trimble that valuable piece of information, Vernon-Smith walked on, smiling cheerily. Trimble fairly gasped with wrath.

"Why, the—the rotter— Pulling my leg! Cheeky rotter! They're all in a conspiracy to keep it dark. I'll jolly well find out! I'll—"

Trimble shook a fat fist at the back of the Bouncer's head, and rolled away towards the cricket-ground. The juniors were gathering there again for the resumption of play; and Trimble's quest of information had to end, for the present—leaving him no wiser than it found him.

CHAPTER 8.**The Doubting Thomas!**

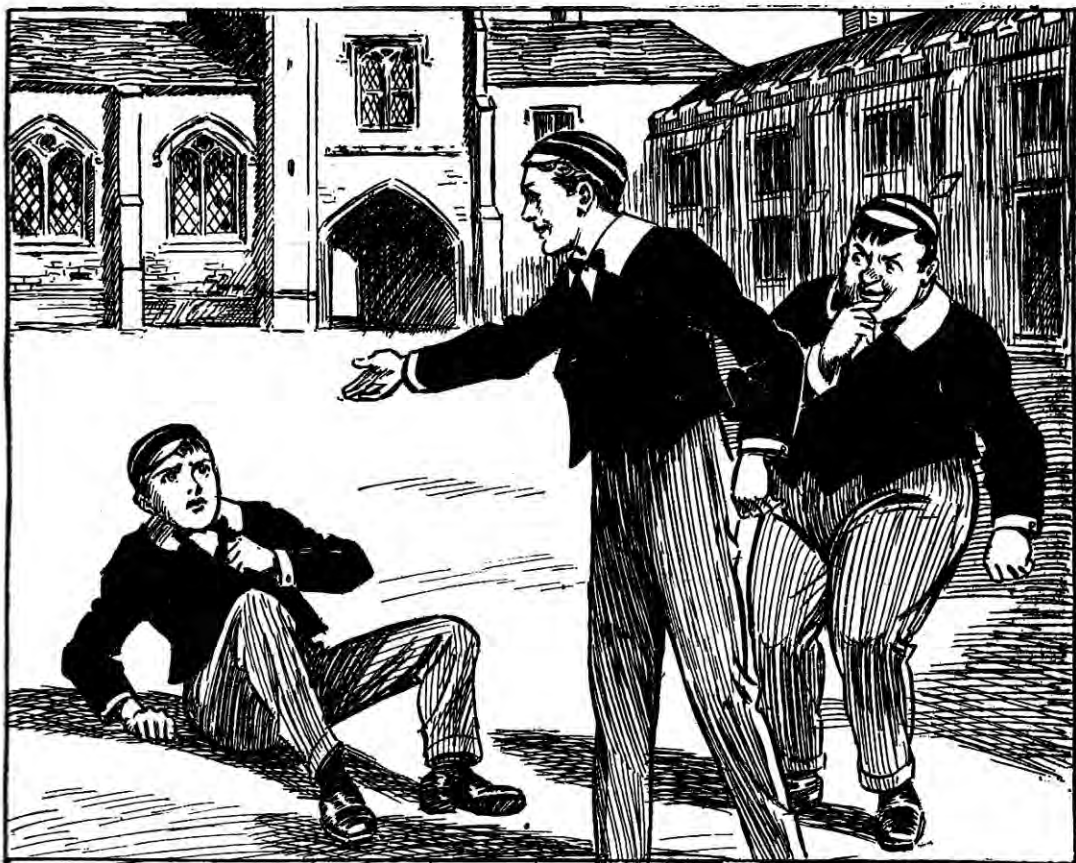
RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW tapped Levison on the arm, as he stood with several other waiting batsmen, watching the play. Tom Merry and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy were at the wickets, and Ernest Levison was down for next man in, and he had his pads on and his bat in his hand. He glanced round rather impatiently as his arm was tapped; it looked to him as if D'Arcy's wicket was likely to go down to Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's bowling, and he did not want to miss what was going on. But he smiled as he saw his chum.

"Worth watching!" he remarked.

"Eh! What's worth watchin'?"

"The game, you ass! Their bowling's pretty strong!"

"Oh, the game! Yes, worth watchin' no end," assented



"You must not smash my dear Trimble when I'm takin' him for a walk," said Cardew. "Sit down, dear boy." With a sudden movement Cardew plumped Levison minor down in the quad with a concussion that made Frank gasp for breath. Then he walked on with Trimble. (See page 18).

Cardew, without casting a glance towards the field. "Somethin' else is worth watchin', too, I shouldn't wonder! I've been watchin' Trimble!"

"Blow Trimble!" said Levison impatiently, turning his eyes back to the field in time to see Arthur Augustus save his wicket by the skin of his noble teeth.

"You don't mind his askin' the Greyfriars chaps quetions?"

"I've told you I don't!"

"He's been askin' them."

"Let him!"

"He doesn't seem to have had much luck, so far, and he's burnin' with curiosity," yawned Cardew. "They seem to choke him off some!"

Levison did not heed.

"Sure you wouldn't like me to take Baggy for a walk this bright afternoon, old bean?" murmured Cardew.

"Do you want to take him for a walk?"

"No fear! Sacrifice on the giddy altar of friendship, an' all that," explained Cardew.

Levison turned his glance from the game, to look full into the face of his chum. His own face was a little flushed.

"You think there's something to hide?" he rapped out.

"I've noticed that the Greyfriars fellows seem to think so."

"How do you mean?"

"They won't tell Trimble anythin'. If there was nothin' to tell, they'd tell him. Sounds rather mixed, but you catch on."

Levison knitted his brows.

"Naturally, they won't gratify an inquisitive bounder," he said. "I knew they'd tell him nothing."

Cardew grinned.

"So that's why I needn't take him for a walk?" he asked.

"No!" growled Levison. "I don't care if they tell the fat fool every word, and all St. Jim's, too. It's all over and done with."

"It wouldn't do you any harm here?"

"Why should it?"

"If the Head knew?"

Levison paused a moment.

"I don't care if the Head knows," he said. "Anyhow, I suppose Trimble doesn't have little chats with the Head, does he? I know you mean to do me a good turn, Cardew. But I don't like it. To be quite plain, I'd rather you didn't butt into the matter at all."

"Mea culpa!" sighed Cardew. "I'm always buttin' into somethin' and puttin' my foot in it. But—"

"How's that?" came in a yell from the field.

"Out!"

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy in surprise.

And he gracefully retired from the wicket. Ernest Levison, paying no further heed to Cardew, ran lightly on to the field, to take his place at the wicket.

"Wathah wemarkable, wasn't it, Cardew?" said Arthur Augustus.

"Eh! What was?"

"My wicket goin' down to a wotten yorkeh like that. Wondahs will nevah cease."

"Very remarkable," said Cardew gravely. "But there's one thing that would have been much more remarkable."

"What's that, Cardew?"

"If your wicket had kept up."

"You uttah ass!"

Ralph Reckness Cardew stood watching Levison at the wickets for some time. But he turned away at last, bored by the game. Sidney Clive was watching the game, and Cardew tapped him on the shoulder.

"Comin' for a stroll?" he asked.

"Eh? No. I'm seeing this out," answered the South African junior.

"Not bored?"

"No, ass!"

"'Lucky bargee!' sighed Cardew. "I am! I really think after all I shall have to fall back on Trimble for company."

"You must be hard up for company, then," said Clive with a laugh.

"Sacrifice on the giddy altar of friendship," said Cardew. And he walked away, looking for Baggy Trimble.

Levison's assurances had had no effect whatever upon his doubting chum. And in spite of Levison's scarcely polite refusal of his kind offer, Cardew determined that he would do Levison of the Fourth that good turn—as he deemed it. He had kept an eye on Trimble, and seen his various efforts to extract information from the Greyfriars fellows. And the fact that they had told him nothing was proof enough to Cardew that there was something they could have told. Trimble had drawn the Famous Five of Greyfriars "blank," also Vernon-Smith. But other fellows might prove more communicative. So Cardew looked for Baggy Trimble, with the intention of inflicting that fat youth upon himself for the afternoon, and keeping him out of contact with the Greyfriars crowd.

Trimble, however, was not to be found. Cardew looked for him about the field, and he was not there. He strolled into the School House, and did not find him. He looked into the tuck-shop, and it was empty. Finally, he came back to the cricket-field. The St. Jim's innings had ended for seventy, and Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry were at the wickets for Greyfriars when Cardew re-appeared on the scene. Cardew did not even notice the change till he heard some fellows remark how badly Levison had done in his innings. At that, Ralph Reckness Cardew smiled rather grimly. In Levison's failure to score for his side he thought he detected a sign that Ernest Levison was not so easy in his mind as he had appeared to be—as he had wanted Cardew to think!

Cardew looked at Levison in the field. There was a slight cloud on the Fourth-Former's face, whether caused by his poor innings, or by thoughts of Trimble seeking information, Cardew did not know; but he guessed. And he renewed his search for the fat Baggy, determined to discover him and carry him off for the remainder of the day. As Cardew walked away, there was a shout from the St. Jim's crowd round the field.

"Well, caught!"

"Well done, Levison!"

Cardew glanced round. Harry Wharton was coming off, caught out by Levison of the Fourth.

CHAPTER 9.

Great News for Baggy!

"TRIMBLE, old chap!"

Trimble blinked rather morosely at Billy Bunter. He was not keen on Bunter's society. Bunter was too much like his fat and fatuous self for Baggy to yearn for his company. And Bunter's effusively friendly manner showed that he wanted something; and Trimble's firm belief was that it was more blessed to receive than to give!

"Hallo!" he said rather gruffly.

Billy Bunter gave him his most friendly smile. Bunter was not feeling very chippy; there had been a total absence of enthusiasm on the part of the St. Jim's fellows on his account. He desired Trimble's company about as much as Trimble desired his, but it was a case of any port in a storm. It was now some time since dinner, and Bunter had blinked with longing eyes at the tuck-shop window without being able to become a purchaser of any of the good things displayed behind the diamond panes. Hence his friendly greeting of Baggy Trimble. Trimble was his last resource, otherwise there was a dreary blank till tea-time!

"They've got some rather good stuff in there, old fellow," said Bunter, with a nod towards Dame Taggles' little window.

"I know they have!" assented Trimble coolly.

"I left my money behind at Greyfriars," said Bunter.

"Gammon!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Gammon!" repeated Trimble. "I know you!"

"Oh, really, Trimble—"

"Bow-wow!"

Trimble was about to walk away, when a sudden reflection made him pause. Bunter came from Greyfriars, and Bunter was a source of information as yet untapped. Trimble turned back with quite a friendly smile.

"Come in and have a ginger-pop, old fellow," he said.

"I'm your man!" said Bunter promptly.

While the ginger-pop was being disposed of, Baggy Trimble approached the subject of Levison. Billy Bunter winked at the bubbles in his glass. He had heard one or two remarks among Harry Wharton & Co., and he was aware that Baggy had been asking questions on that subject. If Baggy was in search of information, Bunter's opinion was that that information was worth more than one bottle of ginger-pop.

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"You knew him at Greyfriars?" said Trimble.

"Better than anybody else," said Bunter with a nod. "I was there when he came, you know—and when he left! Hoo, hee!"

"Why did he leave?"

"That's telling!" said Bunter, with a grin.

"You can tell an old pal!" urged Trimble.

"Dead secret!" said Bunter.

"Something serious?" inquired Baggy, fairly palpitating with curiosity by this time.

"Yes, rather! Awful!" said Bunter.

"Have a jam-tart, old boy?" said Trimble affectionately.

"Certainly, old fellow!"

Bunter had the jam-tart. Then he had another. Then he had a meringue. Still he did not reveal the secret. He shook his head seriously and solemnly, and hinted at what he could tell if he liked; but that was not of much use to Baggy Trimble.

"I wonder what time they'll be having tea?" Bunter remarked. "I'll tell you what, Trimble. I was expecting a postal-order this morning at Greyfriars—"

"But about Levison—"

"It hadn't come when we left," said Bunter. "Suppose you lend me ten bob, old chap, and I'll send the postal order on immediately I get back. Then I'll stand a spread."

"You were telling me about Levison—"

"The fact is I'm jolly hungry," said Bunter. "What time do you have your tea?"

Trimble suppressed a groan. Bunter, in his little ways, had a remarkable likeness to the worthy Baggy himself, it was clear. A spread was the price of the information he had to impart.

Trimble made up his mind to the sacrifice.

"Well, what about having tea now?" he said. "I—I—I'm so glad to see you, Bunter, old chap, I—I feel that we ought to have a bit of a—a spread in honour of the occasion."

"Just what I was thinking," assented Bunter. "Now, if you'd cash my postal-order, old scout—"

"We'll have tea in my study," said Trimble.

"I'll help you do the shopping."

"Oh, do!" groaned Trimble.

Trimble's financial resources amounted to exactly seven-and-sixpence. With Bunter's help, that little sum was laid out to the last penny, and the goods were conveyed into the School House. There was a tacit understanding between the worthy pair that Bunter's information was to be imparted over tea.

The spread did not take place in Trimble's study, however. Trimble's study-mate, Percy Mellish, was there, doing lines, and at the sight of him Trimble backed hurriedly from the doorway. He was not looking for a third partner in the spread—and Mellish would have claimed his share. Bunter was bad enough, without Mellish helping to dispose of the booty.

"Come on!" said Trimble hastily.

He led Bunter into Study No. 6. It was a safe quarter, as Blake & Co. were certain not to leave the cricket-ground till tea-time, which was as yet afar—for all but Bunter and Trimble.

Baggy closed the door, and the good things were spread out on the table of Study No. 6.

Billy Bunter was not wholly pleased. He had expected something a bit more substantial as the price of the information for which Trimble was so eager. But he was prepared to make the best of it, and he started at once, rather as if it were a race, and not a spread. Trimble, eager as he was to hear Bunter's story, was a good second—he did not want to see all his good things disappear from his gaze like a beautiful dream down the greedy gullet of the Owl of Greyfriars.

"Here, go easy with that cake!" exclaimed Bunter. "Give a chap a chance!"

"You fat—" began Trimble.

"What?"

"I—I mean all serene, old fellow!" gasped Trimble.

It was Bunter who bagged the lion's share of the spread. Trimble was haunted by a fear that if he displeased his ravenous guest he would not receive the information he sought, after all. So the Owl of Greyfriars had the best of it.

By the time he had disposed of two-thirds of the tuck Billy Bunter was feeling quite amiable. He could have disposed of more, but he realised that Trimble had done his best, so he was feeling quite kindly towards his host.

"And now about Levison?" hinted Trimble.

"Like to hear the whole story?"

"That's it."

"Right-ho!" said Bunter.

Billy Bunter had no objection whatever to telling the whole story now that there was nothing more to be gained by keeping it back. But he laboured under two difficulties.

In the first place, he was not very well acquainted with the circumstances which had caused Levison's departure

from Greyfriars. In the second place, it had happened some time ago, and Bunter had almost forgotten what circumstances he knew.

But little difficulties like these were trifles light as air to William George Bunter. What he lacked in knowledge or memory he could make up from his imagination. He felt that Trimble, having stood him a good spread, ought to have his money's worth.

So he proceeded to give Trimble his money's worth. "Of course, it's a dead secret!" he said, sinking his voice. "I'll keep it dark, of course."

"Awful for Levison if it got out at this school!" said Bunter.

Trimble's eyes fairly danced. He wanted it to be awful for Levison—for both the Levisons. That was exactly what he wanted. The "awfuler" it was the better Baggy would be pleased.

"Go on, old chap!" he said almost breathlessly.

"I—I hardly know if I ought to tell you," murmured Bunter, speaking chiefly to gain time while he hurriedly debated in his mind what he had better tell Trimble.

"I say, go it!" said Trimble, in alarm. "Look here, you know, you're bound to tell me now. I say—"

"Well, keep it awfully dark, then," said Bunter. "Poor old Levison, you know—"

"Was he expelled from Greyfriars?" gasped Trimble.

"Sacked!" said Bunter. "Had up before all the school, you know, and sacked. Kicked right out!"

"Good! I—I mean how awful!" said Trimble. "What had he done?"

"Something pretty serious."

"Yes, of course. But what was it?"

"Guess!" said Bunter.

"Smoking?" asked Trimble.

"Oh, that was nothing to him!"

"Playing cards for money?"

"Plenty of that."

"Drinking?"

"And the rest!" said Bunter.

"Not—not stealing?" Trimble fairly gasped. "Was it stealing?"

His breathless eagerness spurred Bunter on. An eager listener like this was very agreeable to the Owl of Greyfriars. The keener Trimble's eagerness grew the keener Bunter grew to tell him something really startling. The actual facts would have been an anti-climax, as it were!

Bunter sank his fat voice to a mysterious whisper.

"What do you think of robbing the Head?" he breathed.

Trimble jumped, startled and in ecstasy.

"Robbing the headmaster?" he gurgled.

"Robbing his safe!" said Bunter.

"Splendid!"

"Wha-a-at?" ejaculated Bunter.

"I—I mean awful!" said Trimble. "Was he caught at it?"

"Caught in the act!" said Bunter. "Hundreds of pounds, you know—thousands, for all I know! Dropping banknotes all over the place when he was handed over to the police."

Trimble beamed. He was getting his money's worth, with a vengeance. No wonder Harry Wharton & Co. had declined to be drawn!

"The—the police!" gurgled Trimble. "Actually handed over to the police? Was he? How did he get off? Was he prosecuted?"

Bunter hesitated; he realised that he had piled it on a little too thickly. He proceeded to back out a little.

"Not actually handed over," he said. "The Head stopped at that. The—the police were sent away after all."

"So he wasn't arrested?" said Trimble, disappointed. "He—he's never been to prison."

Trimble was so keen to hear that Levison had been sent to prison that Bunter almost determined to send him there. But he refrained.

"Not actually to prison!" he said. "They stopped at that! Only sacked—after they'd taken all the loot off him, of course. Terrific scene in Big Hall, you know! I say, don't tell Wharton or those fellows that I've told you; it's kept awfully dark, you know."

"Dr. Holmes couldn't have known when he let Levison come to St. Jim's," said Trimble, gloating.

"Couldn't have," agreed Bunter. "I say, it must be getting near tea-time now. Suppose we go and see if they're chucking cricket."

"Right-ho!" said Trimble. And the two fat juniors quitted Study No. 6.

Bunter was at liberty to go to the cricket now, or to go to Jericho, for all Trimble cared! He was finished with the Owl of Greyfriars; he had learned all that he wanted to know—more, in fact, than he had ever hoped to learn.

Baggy Trimble felt as if he were walking on air as he left the School House. He knew it all now, and he held Levison of the Fourth in the hollow of his hand!

A Third Form fag in the quad caught sight of Baggy, and squeaked "Funk!" Trimble only grinned.

There were worse things than funks in existence, he reflected. Thieves, for example—fellows who were expelled from school for robbing their headmasters! Trimble gloated.

He rolled down to the cricket ground after Bunter. The Greyfriars innings was near its close, and the name of Levison was on all lips.

"The hat-trick!" Frank Levison was saying, as Trimble came up. "What price that? Bravo, Ernie!"

"Not bad!" said Wally of the Third patronisingly.

"Why, you young ass—" began Levison minor.

"Hallo! Here's Trimble!" exclaimed Reggie Manners.

"Hallo, old fat funk! Run for it!"

Trimble grinned at the three minors.

"Don't talk to me, young Levison!" he said loftily.

"I wasn't talking to you, you fat funk!" said Frank Levison.

"I've never been sacked from school, anyhow!" said Trimble.

"Only deserved it—what!" said Frank.

"I've never robbed my headmaster!"

"Eh?"

Trimble rolled on, leaving the three fags staring after him blankly.

"What on earth was he driving at?" asked Frank.

"Off his dot, I should think!" answered D'Arcy minor.

"He can't mean—" began Reggie Manners.

"What?" asked Frank.

"Oh, nothing!"

"Why, he couldn't—" began Wally, with a startled look.

"Couldn't what?" demanded Levison minor.

"Oh, nothing!"

Frank Levison looked at his two chums in turn. Then a startling thought came into his own mind, and he turned quite pale. He turned his head to look after Trimble, but that fat youth had already disappeared into the crowd about the field.

CHAPTER 10.

Too Late!

GREYFRIARS were all down for sixty, and Tom Merry & Co. were preparing for their second innings, when Ralph Reckness Cardew spotted Trimble at last.

That fat and fatuous youth was leaning on the pavilion, watching the cricketers with a grinning face, happy in his new-found knowledge. His eyes rested on Levison of the Fourth, and he grinned the more. He was keenly interested in Ernest Levison, wondering how on earth the fellow had the "neck" to face a Greyfriars crowd, considering everything. But Levison of the Fourth had always been famed for his nerve. Doubtless he relied upon the Greyfriars fellows keeping the secret, and, indeed, but for the chance arrival of Bunter with the eleven, Trimble certainly would have learned nothing from them.

Trimble derived some enjoyment from watching Levison of the Fourth chatting cheerily with the cricketers, all unconscious of what Trimble knew—of the sword of Damocles that was suspended over his head! Trimble was startled out of a very pleasant reverie by Cardew's friendly tap on his shoulder.

"Awfully interested in the cricket, dear old bean?" asked Cardew, with a pleasant smile.

"Oh, very!" said Trimble. "Especially Levison! He, he, he!"

"Couldn't tear yourself away—what?"

"Oh, I'm staying on!" said Trimble.

"Just my luck!" said Cardew, with a sigh. "I've been huntin' for you, old chap, and now I've found you, you won't come along!"

Trimble looked at him suspiciously. If the grandson of Lord Reckness had ever shown him any cordiality before, certainly it had been only for the purpose of pulling his fat leg.

"What's on, then?" asked Trimble.

"You see, I'm on my desolate own!" said Cardew plaintively. "Levison's in the game, and Clive's a fixture, watchin' his amazin' exploits—and a fellow doesn't want to take a run in a car by himself."

"In a car?" repeated Trimble.

"An' naturally a chap doesn't want to dine all on his lonely at Seaciff," said Cardew.

Trimble's eyes beamed.

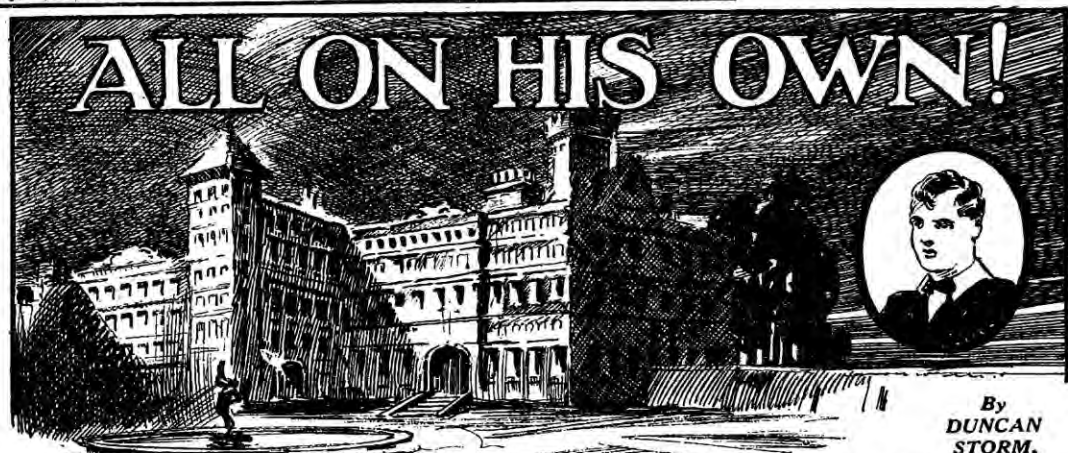
"Won't you come, old bean?" said Cardew persuasively. "Of course, I know you're fed-up with ridin' in expensive cars, when you're at home in Trimble Hall. I know a dinner at a seashore hotel is nothin' to you. But just for the sake of cheerin' me up, old fellow—what?"

"I'll come like a shot!"

"Dear man!" said Cardew, passing his arm affectionately

(Cont'ued on page 18.)

SEE THAT ALL YOUR CHUMS READ THIS SPLENDID STORY!



A STORY OF A LAD'S UPHILL FIGHT FOR FAME AND FORTUNE.

THE OPENING CHAPTERS.

JIM READY, a sturdy lad of fourteen, having seen his last friend laid to rest, is left all alone in the great world. He is leaving the cemetery gates, when he butts up against

A KINDLY STRANGER (John Lincoln), the principal governor of the great school of St. Beowulf's, who had been watching him at the funeral.

The two walk along the road together, and Jim tells his new-found friend that he intends starting work at the brickfields in Dennington. The stranger smiles, and tells Jim it is education he needs first. He then withdraws a piece of parchment from his pocket, and, after signing it, hands it to Jim. It is a free pass into the great school. Jim is to take his chance as a Lincoln scholar at St. Beowulf's.

Jim gets a warm reception from the bullies of the school, but the decent fellows welcome him.

He finds a friend in Wobbygon, a plucky lad from Australia, and the master of a pet kangaroo, Nobby.

Nobby bolts one night, but the boys give chase and capture him. On their return to St. Beowulf's they find that burglars have broken into the school. The ruffians are captured. Wobby commands their car, and hides it in the **Haunted Barn**.

Later, he learns of the scoundrels' intentions of smuggling their ill-gotten gains out of the country. He plans to capture the plunder. At the dead of night he and his pals quietly dress, and sneak their exit by the box-room chimney. They get the car out from the **Haunted Barn**, and with Wobby at the wheel are soon driving up the long sweep of **Smugglers' Beacon**.

Mistaken for the burglars' confederates, a car-load of men from Scotland Yard chase the schoolboys, but Wobby evades the pursuing car. He pulls his car up suddenly by a large white monument.

"We are near Goodman's Hanger!" he cries.

(Now read on.)

A Strange Sight!

"**G**OOD job you didn't knock the blessed thing down!" said Stickjaw, rubbing his head as Wobby backed the car from the ghostly memorial. "There would have been an awful row about it. That monument was put up by Colonel Sir Peter Pepper, one of the governors of the school. He is the Indian member on the council of management, and he's hot stuff!"

"Let's see what the memorial says," remarked Wobby, switching on the light.

He read this inscription:

"**THIS MEMORIAL**

Is Erected to the Faithful Memory of

THE CHARGER OF COL. SIR PETER PEPPER, C.B.,

PETER HUGO,

Who had more sense than most men.

And better manners than most women."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 759.

"That's old Pepper!" said Stickjaw. "He's got a red face and white moustache, and goes off in the most awful tempers. They say that his liver shrivelled up in India, and is now like a little nut, and that he only keeps himself alive by eating red-hot stew full of curry and chillies. But he's a good old chap. He tipped the whole of the Lower School half-a-crown last time he came visiting. He also came on Slurk, who was bullying a kid round by the five courts. He didn't say a word, but just gave Slurk a horsewhipping on the spot. Didn't report him or anything; just licked Slurk till he couldn't sit down for a couple of days. Said that would teach him not to bully kids in future, and that the next time he caught him at it, he'd wring his neck. He lives at Goodman's Hanger near by here!"

"Then this is where we get on the road again," said Wobby. "I've got a notion from the map that there's a sort of cart track leads round the house and park to the road. We'll find that and follow it."

Wobby's way of finding a cart track was to move across the turf in a zig-zag direction until the car came to a bump.

Presently the car bumped hard.

"Here we are, boys!" said Wobby, flashing on his headlights for a second. "All we've got to do now is to follow this rut, and we are all Sir Garney-no!"

He shut off his engine, for the track led downhill, and the car rolled along silently.

"This is the way to get about," said Wobby, with great satisfaction. "Don't make a row, boys! I've got the sort of feeling that we are somewhere near a house. I can smell stables and coal smoke."

The car rolled on silently. The track they had been following seemed to fade away, and the ground they were covering seemed as smooth as velvet.

Wobby was puzzled.

"I say, you chaps!" he said. "I believe we have got into some toff's garden. We shall get into hot water if we ride over his flower-beds. Crums!"

A blur of light showed in the mist ahead, and Wobby stopped the car hurriedly.

"This must be Goodman's Hanger," he said, "and we've driven straight into the old swell's back-yard. Sit there, boys; I'll go and look round."

He jumped out of the car and made for the light. It led him on to a low, stone terrace and then to the walls of a fine old house of flint and stone, with deep carved doorways, and French windows which opened on to the terrace.

Wobby reached the shelter of this wall, keeping out of the ray of light that lit

the garden from the brilliantly illuminated room.

He peered into this room, and his eyes met a strange sight. It was a magnificent dining-room, almost a hall. There was a great carved fireplace of stone, and on the walls were portraits of ladies and gentlemen of many periods, all looking down, as it seemed, on Wobby. In the great armchair at the head of the table was a neat-looking old gentleman with a pink face and white hair and moustache, clad in a dressing-gown and nightcap.

His moustache was bristling with rage, for he was bound to the great carved chair with a long length of clothes-line, whilst two evil-looking young aliens were calmly feasting themselves at a large ham and huge game pie.

Upon the table were bundled up silver and gold cups, and from two of these cups the ruffians were drinking champagne—presumably the champagne of the old gentleman—tasting him mockingly as they drank.

Even through the thick plate-glass windows Wobby could hear the voice of the irate master of the establishment as he stormed at these intruders on his privacy.

"You infernal young loafers!" he was raving. "You are the sort of rogues and wasters that this dashed Government encourages! I hope the champagne chokes you."

"Gee-whizz!" muttered Wobby to himself. "Bushrangers! That old duck that's cinched in his chair must be old Pepper, and these must be some of the gang working whilst the police are chasing us over the Downs instead of looking after their jobs. I'll call the pebs!"

To the Rescue.

WOBBOY slipped back from the terrace and made his way through the mist to the waiting car.

"Out of it, boys!" he said. "This old country is stiff with burglars. They are in that house now. Come out of it, Nobby!"

He slipped a line through the ring in Nobby's dog-collar.

"Where's the people of the house?" he whispered to Stickjaw.

"There is only the gamekeeper at his cottage and the lodgekeeper at the gate," replied Stickjaw. "Old Pepper won't have a servant in the house. There's an old corporal who looks after him, but he's as deaf as a stone. I expect he's asleep somewhere. This is a big place, you know."

"So much the better!" replied Wobby.

"We'll find where these rascals got in."

He skirted round the side of the house, and was not long in finding where the burglars had made their entrance. It was by the simple means of sawing out the lock of a side door which gave entrance to the kitchen wing, for this door stood wide open.

Wobby switched on the light of his electric torch.

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY. PRICE 2.

"Now we'll find our way to that room and join the party," he said gleefully, as he tucked his boomerang under his arm and led the way through passage after passage, the walls of which were all of thick stone. But expert as Wobby had proved himself in finding his way across open country, he was soon lost in the labyrinth of this ancient house, whose many owners had amused themselves by building on additions till they had made a perfect puzzle of the place.

After a long and twisting journey, followed by his companions, Wobby opened a door and found himself in a coal-cellar.

"Gee-whiz!" he muttered. "I'm bushed this time. Chap who built this house must have been mad. Let us try back."

There was a promising little doorway in the right of the passage through which they had passed. Wobby pressed it, and it opened, leading into a narrow, dark passage not more than two feet wide. Down this passage came the murmur of voices.

"This leads somewhere, nugs!" said Wobby. "Keep quiet! Hold Nobby's tail so that he does not thump!"

They caught hold of the kangaroo's tail, and half dragged him through the passage.

Soon they heard the voices distinctly.

"It's no good cracking on, colonel!" said a voice. "You ain't in your old police-court now, y'know! Half these silver pots ain't no good to us. They are only racing cups. We're not called for them. We want that little collection of Indian jewels that you've got tucked away in this old barrack. That's the stuff we are after—something nice and portable!"

"I'll see you to blazes first, sir!" replied the old colonel, his white moustache bristling.

Wobby looked at the wall which divided them from the room in which the speakers were seated.

Here the stone wall of the passage was cut away, and its place was taken by a great wooden panel through which showed two pin-holes of light.

Wobby gaped. He knew where he was now. That panel was the one which he had seen when he peeped through the front window. It was the picture of an old bottled-up admiral, who, sword in hand, was leaning calmly against a cannon, looking down into the room, whilst a furious battle raged in the background. Those two pin-holes were in the eyes of the old admiral.

People who knew these parts better than Wobby could have told him that these two pin-holes had been made in the secret panel by Miser Pepper, the colonel's grandfather, who used to love lurking about his old rambling house like a rat in a wall, watching his servants as they went about their work. If a servant laying the table sneaked any of the plums off the dish, Miser Pepper would know about it.

It was Miser Pepper who had done a lot of the queer, twisty building of Goodman's Hanger, which had so worried the boys. He had saved up a rare lot of money, and had founded the great collection of rare gems which the colonel still went on with.

The colonel was well known as the buyer of the historic jewels that came into the market, and a long residence in India had increased his taste in this direction. He loved the deep green glow of the flawless emerald, and was reputed to be the finest judge of rubies living.

So, in their way, were the two evil-looking toughs who sat at his table, for one was Punch Baker, and the other was Flash Dosky, both cracksmen of international reputation.

These dealt in jewel robberies of the big sort alone, and the proceeds of their robberies found their way to Amsterdam into the hands of the experts who disguised stolen jewels for the South American markets, where high prices were paid and no questions asked.

Wobby peered down into the room through Miser Pepper's peepholes.

The colonel, bound in his chair, had turned a deep purple in hue, and his white moustache bristled like the back of an angry cat.

"I'll see you hanged, sir, before I tell you where my jewels are, you scoundrel!"

Punch Baker poured himself out another glass of the colonel's champagne.

"Go easy with your 'scoundrel,' colonel," he said, with a sinister look in his close-set eyes. "I and my friend Dosky may not look much, but we are—the top fliers in our trade. If you will hand over half the jewels

you have got in this house without making a sound about it, we will cry quits. If you won't—"

Baker paused significantly. "Well, supposing I won't, sir?" replied the colonel.

Baker's eyes glittered with an ugly light. "We'll take the lot!" he replied.

"You've got to find them first, sir," replied Colonel Pepper irritably. "That infernal old ancestor of mine who built this house made it a hiding-place that will take a week to ransack. I can tell you, too, as a magistrate, that the police are hot on your track, and on the track of those ruffians who have been robbing this countryside. You are very free and easy in giving your names. I signed a warrant for your arrest last week-end, sir! Yes, sir! Hang you, sir!"

The colonel's eyes flamed. "Look here, colonel!" said Baker quietly. "This sort of Indian pickles that you are giving off don't go with me and my friend Dosky. We've come from America into this little old country of yours, and there's not a man on the Pacific Coast who would dare to shoot his mouth, same as you are doing to Baker and Flash Dosky, yeggmen, hold-up men, safe-crackers, and train-handlers. Why, it was me and Dosky that cleaned up the safes of the Thirty-Third National Bank for near a million dollars!"

"I don't care if you and your disreputable friend have robbed a thousand banks, sir!" snapped the colonel. "You are not going to touch my jewels!"

"That's big talk, mister!" replied Punch Baker. "Time is short, and we've none of it to waste whilst you are hitting the wind. We know the police are busy in this country. We side-stepped them to-night down by Hangman's Cope to put this little job through!"

He rose from the table, and, picking up the heavy steel poker, thrust it into the great log-fire that was burning on the hearth. Then he returned to the table, staring intently at his white-haired prisoner in the chair.

"Don't care was made to care, colonel!" he said slowly.

Behind the screen of the old admiral's picture, Wobby was breathing hard.

Was this bluff, or were these scoundrels actually going to torture the helpless old man who was bound in the chair? Wobby could not tell yet.

Punch Baker had seated himself at the far end of the table, facing his victim, and had lighted a cigarette. He was puffing at this with satisfaction which might be pure bluff or the callousness of a fiend.

"You've only got to say the word, colonel!" he said persuasively.

But the colonel made no reply. He was staring at his captors as though they were some new vermin.

"Remember," put in Baker, in his oily tones, "you are all alone in this house, colonel, except for that old chap, who is as dead as an adder. You may shout the house down, and he won't hear you!"

"I sha'n't do any shouting," replied the colonel, briefly.

"Don't know so much about that!" replied Baker. "I've heard some talk like that before. But the y've generally ended by shouting with the best when we've ticked up the soles of their feet same as we are going to tickle yours!"

He strolled nonchalantly across to the fireplace.

Flash Dosky had risen to his feet. He looked a trifle pale and unsteady. It was evident that he was second hand in this game, and not quite

accustomed to the more drastic methods of Punch Baker.

Baker was adamant. He took the great old-fashioned carved bellows from the fire-side, and started to blow up the fire to a white-heat.

Soon the poker was ready. Then he returned to the great armchair in which the colonel was bound hand and foot.

The two released the colonel's right leg, and, despite his kicks, tied it over the arm of the chair.

"You infernal ruffians!" stammered the colonel.

"Will you tell us where the jewels are?" demanded Baker.

"No!" replied the colonel.

"Give you one more chance!" responded Baker.

"No!" shouted the colonel. "Do your worst!"

"I'll do my best—to make you talk business!" responded Baker.

Going over to the fireplace, he withdrew the heated poker from the embers, then turned and walked towards the chair.

"Stop!" The sudden cry made Baker pause; then he looked up, astounded, for the voice seemed to come from the picture of that bottle-nosed old admiral who leaned so calmly against the cannon.

"Stop, you tug!" cried the voice again.

Before Baker could move, the great picture toppled from the wall and down its back slid an avalanche of boys, together with the kangaroo, into the room!

Detective Travers Arrives.

It would be difficult to say which of the three occupants of the dining-room at Goodman's Hanger was more surprised when the picture of the famous Sir Hot-stuff Pepper, vice-admiral of the White, smashed down from the wall of the great chamber, shooting an avalanche of boys and one kangaroo over pell-mell on to the floor.

Colonel Sir Peter Pepper, tied in his arm-chair, and the two ruffians, Punch Baker and Flash Dosky, who were about to torture him for the secret of his collection of jewels, were men who had seen a great deal of the world.

Wobby would have said of these that they had all been over a lot of grass.

But, when a wall suddenly opens, and shoots boys and kangaroos into a gentleman's dining-room, in the middle of the night, even men who have seen many strange things may well stand paralysed for a moment.

So it happened with Punch Baker.



Suddenly the great picture toppled from the wall and fell over. Down its back slid an avalanche of boys to fall at the feet of the two burglars.

He had the redhot poker in his hand, which he was about to apply to Sir Peter's foot, but, crook as he was, gunman, hold-up man, and a man supposed to be ready for any emergency, Punch stood paralysed for a second.

It was just a second too long, for one of the boys disentangled himself from the heap with a cry of "stoush the tugs!" Punch had a glimpse of a curiously-shaped lump of wood flashing from under the boy's arm. Then something hit him on the head, with a blow that scattered his senses in one great red flash of light. Punch Baker, crackman, knew no more. His spirit departed from him for the time being. As Wobby would have said: he was nix!

Flash Dosky, less intelligent than his leader, was less astonished and more speedy in his movements. He drew a pistol and levelled it at Jim Ready. Jim lived up to his name, he was more ready with one of the colonel's racing-cups, a good, heavy silver cup, than was Flash Dosky with his pistol.

The cup flew in the air as the pistol cracked, and it caught the bullet first, and the bridge of Flash Dosky's nose as its second objective.

There were twelve pounds of solid silver in the cup, and, before Flash Dosky could recover from the blow, there leaped over the table a strange and terrible shape.

Flash Dosky did not know much about kangaroos, especially boxing kangaroos. He had a glimpse of what looked like a flying donkey with a huge tail, which came at him over the table in one bound and hit him tremendous blows from four arms which kicked like the hind legs of a mule.

Flash Dosky yelled with fear as he dropped his pistol and strove to run from this flying apparition. But down he went, with the flying donkey punching him heavily in the stomach, and dancing a war-dance on him as he lay on the carpet.

"Quick, nuggets!" gasped Wobby. "Get the kangaroo off that peb's chest or he'll rip the sawdust out of him, and there'll be nothing left to hang!"

The boys lurched themselves on Nobby, who very reluctantly allowed himself to be dragged from his victim.

Flash Dosky did not move. He lay very white and still on the carpet.

"Serve him right!" growled the bound figure in the chair. "I don't know who you are, young gentlemen, or what you are doing

walking about through the walls of my house at this time of night, but I am deuced glad to see you. Make those ruffians fast with this rope, when you have got me loose."

"We'll see to you right now, sir!" answered Wobby politely.

Defiantly he unslashed the bound colonel from his great armchair. Whilst Jim and Lung chafed the life back into the colonel's numbed wrists and ankles, Wobby tied up the prisoners.

Punch Baker opened his eyes dreamily, to find that the tables were turned. His prospective victim was free of the armchair, whilst he himself was bound.

The air was filled with the acrid scent of burning hair. Perhaps it was this scent which had helped to bring Punch round from his trance.

"What was dat hit me?" he asked drowsily.

"Crumbs!" exclaimed Wobby. "The poker's burned a hole in the carpet!"

He snatched the weapon up from the spot where Punch in his defeat had allowed it to fall in the rich pile of the thick Turkey carpet.

"You are asking, sir, what hit you?" said Wobby, addressing himself to Punch. "It was my boomerang, and it wouldn't have done much harm if it had brained you, you torturing tug!"

Punch blinked, recovering his senses enough to find that he was bound hand and foot.

For a moment his evil forehead seemed to flatten like the head of a cat, and he struggled vainly in his bonds.

"Don't you worry, Punch," said Wobby, watching his catch affably. "You are tied up a good deal tighter than you braced up the gentleman here. We heard it all, from A to Z. Of all the low-down, snake-headed galoots that crawl the world, you take the biscuit!"

Sir Peter had risen to his feet now and was tied up in the agonies of acute pins and needles as the circulation came back to his limbs.

"My dear boys—" he began, attempting to express his growing sense of thanks to his deliverers. "Ow, dash it! My dear boys—Oh, confound it! My dear boys—Oh, what pains! My dear boys, I am most profoundly moved and gratified—Dash it! Oh! Ah! Ow!—gratified—dash it! I might say! Oh, hang it! I am most gratified by your timely arrival and your deliverance

of my poor, weak old body from these ruffians. They had me in their clutches, and it would have gone very hard with me if you had not come so promptly to my rescue. What are your names?"

Sir Peter was getting easier of his pains now.

"This is Jim Ready, sir," said Wobby, acting as master of the ceremonies.

"Pleased to meet you, Jim Ready!" said Sir Peter, stretching forth his hand. "I see that you are all St. Beowulf's boys. What are you doing out this time of night?"

Jim was confused. He was not accustomed to these situations. Wobby was all there, though.

"We are out on a little stunt of our own, sir," he said. "It's a bit of private business, if you don't mind, sir, and if you can let us run through with it without asking too many questions we shall be pleased."

Sir Peter stared at Wobby.

"Australian?" he asked.

"Yes, general!" replied Wobby, tactfully giving their host his promotion.

Sir Peter's eyes twinkled.

"Thought as much. You've got the nerve as well as the kangaroo," he said. "What is your name, young sir?"

"Wabby, sir," replied Wobby. "Jack Wabby! But everybody calls me Wobbygong at home: here it's shortened to Wobby."

"Well, Mr. Wobby," said Sir Peter. "I am very glad to make your acquaintance. And who are these other young gentlemen?"

Wobby introduced his chums in turn.

"I shall take an early opportunity of reporting your gallant behaviour to Dr. Brackenbury," said Sir Peter.

"For goodness' sake, sir," replied Wobby, "don't do that, or you'll put the whole lot of us on a fizzer. Don't you see, sir, we are out on a little scursh of our own. We are playing a hand against this gang of tugs who are beating up the country. We've got ahead of the police—"

"Only a little way ahead, my young friend!" said a pleasant voice.

Wobby looked up with a start, for there, in the blank space in the wall caused by the fall of the admiral's picture, stood Mr. Travers, of the Criminal Investigation Department, looking down on the scene generally.

(Next week's instalment of this grand serial will be more exciting than ever! Make sure of reading it.)

"LEIVISON'S PAST!"

(Continued from page 15.)

through Baggy Trimble's. "You're awfully good! We'll trot it to Rylcombe, an' telephone for a car—what?"

"I'm your man, dear boy," said Baggy promptly.

It was Baggy's first opportunity of joining in one of Ralph Reckness Cardew's expensive little outings on a half-holiday. He was not likely to lose that chance. But there was a sly grin on his fat face as he walked off with Cardew. Baggy was not a bright youth, but he was quite well aware that it was not his fascinating society that Cardew wanted. Cardew had some reason for wanting to get him out for the afternoon—he knew that. He thought he could guess what that reason was, too. And he wondered what Cardew would have thought had the dandy of the Fourth known that the mischief was already done!

That little circumstance Baggy sagely resolved to keep to himself for the present.

The two juniors walked away to the school gates, Cardew airy and elegant, chatting amiably, Baggy Trimble looking fatter and rounder than ever beside the slim dandy of the Fourth. There was a sudden pattering of footsteps behind them, and Cardew glanced round, to see Levison minor speeding on their track.

Frank Levison's face was red with running, and his eyes were glinting. He came up almost out of breath.

Baggy Trimble read the signs of war in his looks, and backed round Cardew.

"Look here, young Levison—" he began.

"You fat rotter!" panted Frank.

"Easy does it, dear kid!" urged Cardew. "Are you going to be in a permanent state of ferocity in the future? Give Trimble a rest."

"Get out of the way!" shouted Frank. "I'm going to smash him!"

"Keep off!" roared Trimble. "I'm not going to fight a fag!"

"Smash him later on," suggested Cardew. "At the present moment Trimble is my dear pal, and I'm not seein' him smashed!"

"Keep him off, old chap!" said Trimble. "Of course, I could smash the cheeky little beast easy enough, but he's not worth it!"

"Not at all," agreed Cardew.

"Trimble, you rotter," panted Levison minor, "what did you mean—"

"He, he, he!"

"You were speaking of my major!" roared Frank.

"I didn't mention his name!" grinned Trimble. "Cap fit, cap wear, you know! He, he, he!"

"I'll smash you!" panted the fag. And he shoved Cardew savagely aside and made for Trimble.

Cardew's hand dropped on his collar like a clasp of steel. Frank Levison was brought to a sudden halt.

"Let go!" he shouted furiously.

"If any other fag in the Third shoved me, dear boy, I should make a jolly old example of him," said Cardew placidly. "I suppose I must let you off, because you're dear old Ernest's minor. But you mustn't smash my dear old pal Trimble, when I'm takin' him for a walk. Sit down, dear boy!"

With a sudden movement, Cardew plumped the fag down in the quad with a concussion that made Frank gasp for breath. Then he walked on with Trimble, and they turned out of the gates.

Frank Levison staggered to his feet, panting. He made a step towards the gates in pursuit; but he paused, and turned back. Trimble could wait—and for some mysterious reason Cardew was bent on protecting the fat Fourth-Former.

(Continued on page 19.)

"LEVISON'S PAST!"

(Continued from page 18.)

He could wait—and, in the meantime, Frank did not want to miss the cricket. He hurried back to Little Side.

Tom Merry and Piggins were at the wickets now, and there was some mighty hitting going on that drew loud cheers from the St. Jim's crowd. Frank's eyes sought his brother, standing in the group of batsmen, watching the game. Wally and Reggie were clapping loudly, bestowing their lofty approbation upon the batsmen. But Frank did not join with them. Trumble's words were still ringing in his ears. He was watching the cricket, but he hardly saw what was passing. He came out of a brown study when Wally jabbed him in the ribs.

"Your major's on," he said. "What's the matter with you, young Levison—gone to sleep standing up, like a horse?"

"Eh? Yes! No!" stammered Frank.

"Well, my only Aunt Jane!" said Wally.

There was a roar round the cricket field.

"Well hit, Levison! Bravo! Good man, Levison!"

And that shout, somehow, seemed to bring comfort to Frank's troubled mind, and the old glow of pride came back to his face as he watched Levison of the Fourth.

THE END.

(What will be the result of the startling information gleaned by Baggy Trumble about Billy Bunter of Greyfriars? Next week's splendid story entitled "HARD LUCK FOR LEVISON," by Martin Clifford, will tell you. Make sure of reading this fine yarn by ordering next week's GEM well in advance.)



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