



THIRTY CASH PRIZES FOR READERS!

The GEM 1^D₂

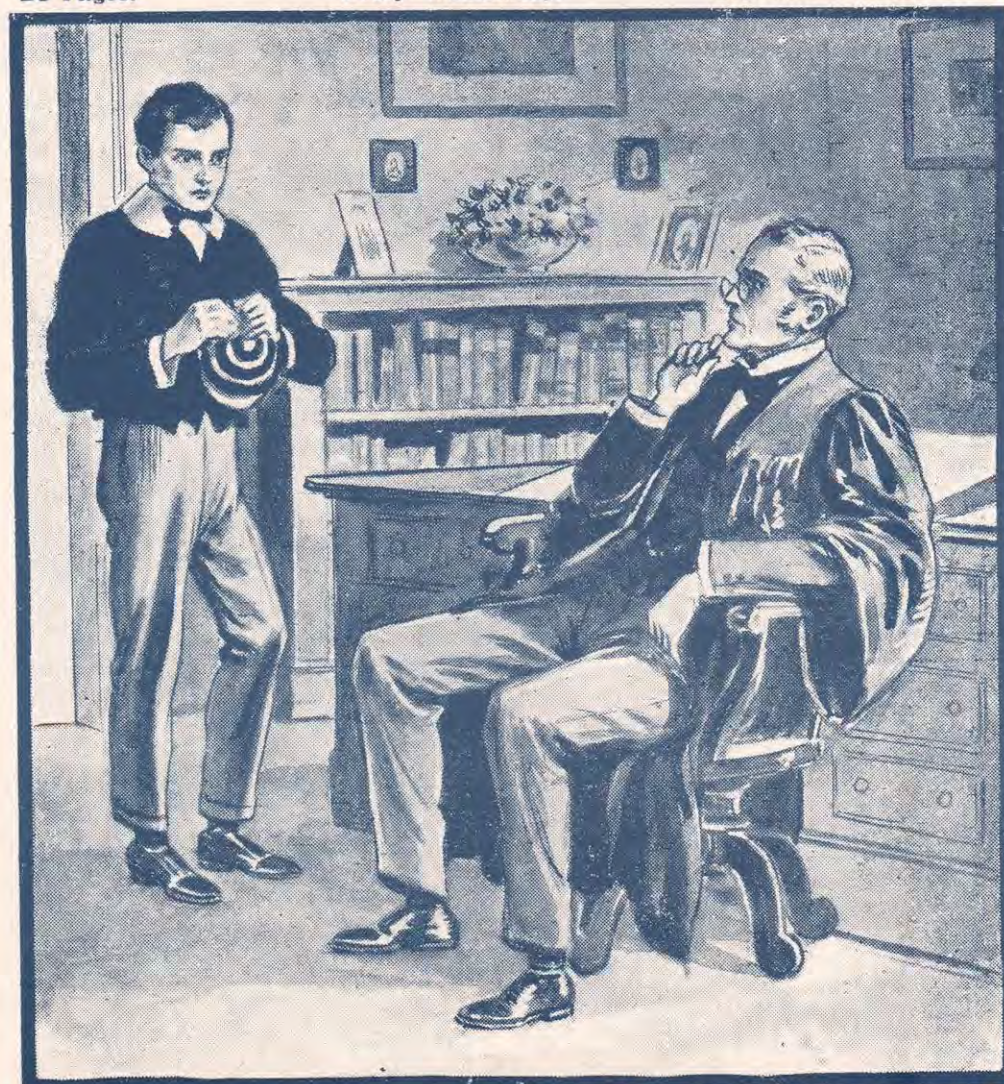
No. 753.
Vol. XXII.

LIBRARY

20 Pages.

Every Wednesday.

September 23rd, 1922.



LEVISON MINOR INTERVIEWS THE HEAD OF GREYFRIARS!
(Frank Levison's Bold Step to Clear His Major's Name.)

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,—

There is no doubt as to the intense interest the present series of stories of Ernest Levison has aroused. Mr. Martin Clifford goes right to the heart of the subject this time, and the happy result is a real triumph.

Never before has the reader been shown in such a clear and dramatic style the real reasons which underlie the conduct of a character like Levison. It is all very well to be wise after the event, but there have been plenty of occasions when one was puzzled to the last degree by the actions of Levison. It did not seem reasonable that he should carry on as he did, or that at a time of crisis when a word, as it seemed, would set matters right, he should resolutely decline to utter that saving word.

The new story winds up the drama in a telling way. There has been any amount of rough going, and the misunderstandings have been as numerous as blackberries in September; but the goal is reached at long last.

And you will all admit it is just like life—a theme thick with difficulties, and side issues which add to the inevitable complications. Mr. Martin Clifford has shown again his dexterity in outlining a character, though here we have rather more than an outline.

But it is this sort of thing that is happening every day of our lives. You cannot seem to get away from intricate

disputes. Just when the world seems to offer a fairly easy run, something occurs to darken the outlook; as in the case of Ernest Levison, the beginnings of the trouble are small, but insensibly there comes an accumulation of worry, and we find erroneous impressions piling up, with the usual stock-in-trade of mischievous comment, and most unfortunate interference.

To GEM readers, young and old, the concluding yarn in the series, "Levison's Chance!" will make a big appeal. It cannot help doing so. It is a human story, marked by the right sort of sentiment, and sympathy, just the kind of good feeling, which, when at the final stage it finds expression, serves to heal all the wounds to pride.

There is no intention of losing sight of the Levisons, although this splendid series has now drawn to a close. I think we should hear much more of young Frank Levison and Sister Doris before the world is much older.

The wind-up to this set of yarns is all thoroughly in keeping with what has gone before. Ernest acts just as one knows he would when faced by danger. His coolness is never done, but is the real thing.

In next week's GEM the fourth set of pictures in the novel and interesting competition will be found waiting for treatment. This feature has caught on with a vengeance.

There is no need for me to enlarge upon the other good things in the famous Wednesday paper. The Tuck Hamper Department has lost none of its prestige, and I must say the entries reach a remarkably high standard. The pity is that prizes cannot go to everybody.

The rush for the new volume of the "Holiday Annual" continues unabated. Myriads of people are picking up the

new "Annual" and getting acquainted with the celebrities of St. Jim's, and the mighty men of Greyfriars and Rookwood, and I am glad to see that these newcomers to our circle are busying themselves in ordering the Companion Papers so as to learn more of the popular favourites, for the capital stories in the "Holiday Annual" have served as a first-rate introduction to the Companion Papers.

Most of you will have heard by this time all about the forthcoming attraction in the "Magnet," namely, the Greyfriars Parliament. No, I am wrong there; not all about it, for there is heaps more behind. It suffices to say that the Speaker of the Greyfriars Parliament (otherwise Harry Wharton), is getting into his stride, and he imparts a real official touch to the preliminary proceedings. Readers of the Companion Papers will be urged to do their bit in discussing sports and hobbies, and making brilliant suggestions. Good ideas will be paid for handsomely, which is only reasonable, since Members of the other Parliament down at Westminster get remunerated for their services in illuminating the path of progress.

Parliaments get abused now and again, but mostly by people who do not understand the matter. A Parliament is the finest thing out so long as it sticks to the best ideas.

D'Arcy certainly ought to find a seat in the Greyfriars Parliament. He may have made arrangements in this respect during his recent visit. He would give tone to any assembly. But whatever happens, St. Jim's can be trusted to look after itself this autumn, as usual, and so can the GEM.

Just keep your eye on the new programme. It will please you.

YOUR EDITOR.

"MY READERS' OWN CORNER."

A splendid Tuck Hamper filled with delicious Tuck is awarded to the reader 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.)

This Wins Our Tuck Hamper! THOUGHTLESSNESS!

A visitor to town had just entered a crowded omnibus, when he was approached by the conductor for his fare. Clinging to the strap, he fumbled fruitlessly for his pockets as the omnibus jolted and swerved over the rough roadway.

Exasperated by his failure, he turned to a fellow-passenger.

"I say, old chum," he said, "just hold this 'ere strap while I pay this joker."—A Tuck Hamper filled with delicious tuck has been awarded to F. Blenkin, 385, Anlaby Road, Hull.

GOING DOWN.

The grocer was a wise man, and he always tried to be on the best of terms with his customers. When he saw a lady enter his shop looking ruffled he endeavoured to be extra courteous and obliging. "I think, madam," he said, "there is a slight, a very slight tendency

for prices to go down." "You do?" cried the customer tartly. "Yes, ma'am," continued the grocer, ignoring the storm signals. "Look at these eggs now. A year ago they would have cost you twopence more." "A year ago," said the lady frostily, "those eggs would have been fresh, and would have been worth twopence more."—Half-a-crown has been awarded to Alwyn W. Dunn, Elnore, Upper Clifton Road, Sutton Coldfield, near Birmingham.

A FAMOUS RAILWAY ENGINE.

The Great Bear is the largest passenger locomotive in Great Britain, and is on the Great Western system. It is the

only Pacific type in this country. It has four large cylinders. Besides working on fast passenger trains, the Great Bear hauls a hundred ton express goods train composed of seventy loaded, covered waggons from Bristol to London.—Half-a-crown has been awarded to Sidney Lemei, 9, Ebbsfleet Road, Criklewood, N.W. 2.

TUCK HAMPER COUPON

THE GEM LIBRARY.

No attempt will be considered unless accompanied by one of these Coupons.

THE BOYS' FRIEND LIBRARY.

Fourpence Per Volume.

No. 632.—THE BLACK BUCCANERS.

A splendid long complete yarn of the footer fleet. By J. W. Whewey.

No. 631.—RAILWAY AND RINGS.

A grand long complete story of the leading ring. By Reginald Wray.

No. 630.—THE SCHOOLBOY MYSTERY.

A leading tale of schoolboy fun and adventure. By Victor Nelson.

No. 629.—THE IDEAL OF ST. FRANK'S.

A magnificent school yarn, introducing Nelson Lee, Nipper & Co.,

Handforth & Co., Timbony Tucker, and the other leaders at St. Frank's.

No. 628.—THE IMPOSSIBLE CHANCE.

A superb long complete story of life and adventure on the racecourse.

By John Hunter, author of "The Breaker," etc., etc.

THE SEXTON BLAKE LIBRARY.

Fourpence Per Volume.

No. 242.—THE GOLDEN GODDESS.

A magnificent story of London and the East, introducing GUNGA DASS.

No. 243.—THE CASE OF THE ROOBY LADY; or, The

Mystery of Dr. Drusdally Gault.

A story of SEXTON BLAKE v. GEORGE MARDEN PLUMMER.

No. 250.—FINGERPRINTS OF FATE.

A wonderful story of baffling mystery. By the author of "The House

of Ghosts; or, The Case of the Spurious Spiritualist."

No. 251.—THE BRIGAND'S SECRET.

A fascinating story of SEXTON BLAKE and TINKER in Italy and

London. By the author of "The Lama's Secret."

No. 252.—THE MYSTERY OF THE CROSS.

A tale of thrilling adventure, featuring SEXTON BLAKE, PROFESSOR

KEW, COUNT IVY CARLAC, and ADRIAN STERLE, Newspaper

Correspondent.

Now On Sale! Order Your Copies TO-DAY!

DOWN and OUT!

A Grand, Long, Complete School Story of the Chums of St. Jim's, telling how Frank Levison, in an attempt to clear his brother's name, brought fresh trouble upon him

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

CHAPTER 1.

Under the Shadow.

"POOR little beggah!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy murmured the words. There was deep compassion in the look of the swell of St. Jim's.

He was standing at the window of Study No. 6 in the School House. From the window Arthur Augustus had a view of part of the quadrangle.

In the quad his glance had fallen upon Levison minor of the Third Form. Levison minor was with Wally of the Third and Reggie Manners, and those two cheery fags were chattering away at a great rate, apparently in the best of spirits. Frank Levison was not listening to them. His eyes had fallen upon a junior of the Fourth Form, who was walking alone under the elms. It was his major, Levison of the Fourth.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, at the study window, followed Frank's gaze, and saw Levison major; then his glance returned to the fag, and he murmured compassionately:

"Poor little beggah!"

Levison of the Fourth did not look towards his minor. He was pacing up and down, his hands driven deep in his pockets, and a thoughtful expression on his face. Blake and Herries and Digby of the Fourth came along under the trees. They sighted Levison, and turned in another direction. The outcast of St. Jim's did not appear to notice it; but Frank certainly noticed it. D'Arcy, from the window above, saw his young fag quiver and flush. That ruthless avoidance of his brother seemed to strike the little fag like a blow. Arthur Augustus shifted uncomfortably.

He was sorry for Frank from the bottom of his heart. Yet if he had been with his chums in the quad at that moment, he would have avoided Levison of the Fourth just as they had done. It could not be helped. Levison of the Fourth was an outcast; he was barred by all his House. It was hard on his young brother; all the fellows felt that. Tom Merry & Co. were all "down" on Ernest Levison, but they tried to make the thing as easy as they could to Frank. They were always cordial to him when they came across him. They wanted him to understand that his brother's exclusion did not apply to him. And Frank, who idolised his brother, did not display the slightest gratitude for his exemption; he was only inclined to "slang" them for what he resolutely persisted in believing was their injustice and wrong-headedness. Evidence for or against did not matter to Frank; he believed in his brother, and was only angry and indignant that everybody else did not do the same.

"Poor little beggah!" murmured D'Arcy for the third time. D'Arcy's tender heart was touched. He would have done anything to console the fag—anything but speak in a friendly way to his brother. That was impossible. And that was the only thing that could have consoled the outcast's minor.

"Wake up, Frank!" Wally D'Arcy's voice floated up to Arthur Augustus at the window. "Wake up, old bean! What's the row?"

"Eh? Nothing!" said Frank confusedly.

"I've spoken to you twice, and you haven't answered," said Wally severely.

"Have you?"

"Yes, I have, young Levison. Are you going to sleep standing up, like a horse?"

"No, you ass!"

"Now, about this afternoon," continued Wally of the Third. "As it's a half-holiday, we're going to have a run out. Reggie thinks a boat is a good idea. What do you think?"

"Eh? Yes—no!"

"Jolly lucid, I must say!" remarked Wally, with a snort. "Look here, we're going to have a boat out. Frayne's coming and young Hobbs and Jameson. You're coming?"

"No, I can't," said Frank.

"You've not got detention?" asked Manners minor.

"Oh, no!"

"Then why can't you come?" demanded Wally.

"I—I—"

"Oh, your blessed major!" said Wally comprehendingly. "Still worrying? Frank, you're a young ass! I never worry about my major. I let him go on playing the goat, and getting into scrapes."

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, at the window. "Cheeky young wascal! Bai Jove!"

"I give my major his head," continued Wally. "So does Reggie. Do you ever worry about Manners of the Shell, Reggie?"

Reggie grinned.

"Not if I know it!" he answered.

"There you are, Frank! Now, look here. Your major's down on his luck. I'm sorry! Reggie's sorry, too—ain't you, Reggie?"

"Lots!" said Reggie Manners.

"You see, we're both sorry," said Wally, "and there's an end of it. Now just chuck your major out of your head, and come out with us. See?"

Wally of the Third appeared to think that the difficulty was now disposed of. Rather to his exasperation, Frank Levison's face remained troubled and glum.

"Don't you understand, you young ass?" demanded Wally.

"Eh—what?"

"What I've just been saying."

"I—I didn't hear you."

"Didn't hear me?" roared Wally, in great wrath.

"No. I—I was thinking," stammered Frank.

His troubled eyes were still on that lonely figure under the elms, and he answered Wally without looking at him.

"Well, of all the thumping young asses!" growled Wally. "I've a jolly good mind to give your major a dot on the nose!"

"Are we going out in that boat?" yawned Reggie Manners. Levison of the Fourth left his place under the elms, and went towards the School House. Three Shell fellows passed him on the path—Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther. They dropped their eyes as they passed him. Ernest Levison walked straight on, looking neither to the right nor to the left. Frank gave a little start.

"Poor little beggah!" murmured Arthur Augustus, at the study window—the fourth time he had made that compassionate remark.

Frank turned to his comrades of the Third.

"You fellows clear," he said. "I'm not coming out this afternoon."

"What's the good of moping?" demanded Wally.

"I'm not moping!" said Frank indignantly.

"Looks to me jolly well like it! You ain't very cheerful company, anyhow," grumbled Wally. "Why, if my major were like your major, I'd boil him in oil! What you're bothering about him for beats me."

"Hollow!" assented Reggie.

"If you're going to say anything against Ernest—" began Frank Levison, his voice trembling.

"Wouldn't for worlds!" grinned Wally. "I'm not going to fight you this afternoon, Frank. Dash it all, haven't you had enough fighting, with Trimble of the Fourth, and Mellish and young Piggott of ours? Do you want to pitch into your old pals next?"

"Young ass!" said Manners minor.

Frank Levison made no rejoinder. He knew what his comrades thought of his brother—the same that the whole Lower School thought of him. They did not say so—they would not say so—but that was only to spare his feelings. They were sorry for him, too; but a half-holiday was a half-holiday, and none the less so because Frank's brother was barred by the school.

"I'll see you when you come in," said Frank; and he left his comrades and went into the School House.

And Wally & Co., in great disgust, made their arrangements for the afternoon without including Levison minor.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 763.

CHAPTER 2.

Levison Minor's Resolve!

"COME in!"

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was still looking from the study window, with a rather saddened and thoughtful expression upon his noble face, when a tap came at the door of Study No. 6. He turned from the window.

It was Frank Levison who entered the study.

"Twot in, deah kid!" said Arthur Augustus, with great cordiality, as soon as he saw his rather unexpected visitor. "Awfly glad to see you!"

Frank smiled faintly.

Arthur Augustus was among the fellows who believed the worst of his brother; and was most anxious of all to let Frank know that he, Frank, was as highly thought of as ever. There was no resentment in Frank's look now; only a misery that touched D'Arcy's kind heart. The blow that had fallen upon Levison of the Fourth had hit his young brother harder than it had hit Levison himself, to all appearance.

"I want you to help me, D'Arcy!" said Frank abruptly.

"Anythin' I can do, deah boy! Sit down!"

Levison minor sat down.

"Wunnin' out of cash—what?" asked Gussy genially. "I know what it is like, deah boy. I've been there, you know! And I am wathah in funds to-day. That's lucky, isn't it?"

"It's about my brother."

"Oh deah!" murmured Arthur Augustus hopelessly.

He would have preferred Frank's visit to be about financial matters. On those matters he could have helped.

"I'm not going to argue about it, D'Arcy," said Frank. "I've been through all that, and it's no good. Every fellow in the Lower School believes that my brother was expelled from Greyfriars for stealing. It's false, but they all believe it!"

"Yaas, wathah! I—I mean——"

"It's rotten!" said Frank. "It's wicked! One of the best fellows that ever breathed——"

His voice trembled.

"I—I wouldn't say a word, kid, to stop you fwom believin' in your bwathah," said Arthur Augustus manfully. "It—it's wippin' of you!"

"But you don't believe in him."

"Hem!"

"I don't blame you," said Frank drearily. "I can't understand myself why Ernest doesn't knock the whole silly story on the head. I suppose all the fellows believe that he would if he could?"

"Well, that—that's wathah weasonable, isn't it?" murmured Arthur Augustus.

"I suppose you think so. It's rotten unjust!"

D'Arcy made a grimace.

"Twy to look at it like anothah chap, Frank," he said. "Keep your belief in your bwathah, of course. But twy——"

"It's all rot!" said Frank. "That fat Greyfriars boulder, Bunter, spun a yarn to Trimble of the Fourth. Trimble's spread it all over the school. He says that Ernest was expelled from Greyfriars for robbing the headmaster. As if he would!"

"Well, you see——"

"Oh, I know!" said Frank impatiently. "Ernest's only got to ask the Head to speak to Dr. Locke of Greyfriars. Dr. Locke would state the facts, whatever they are. That would clear him. I know—I know. I've had it dimmed into my ears in the Third. Ernest won't! They all think he dare not, because——"

Arthur Augustus was silent. To him, as to nearly every other fellow, there seemed to be only one reason why Levison of the Fourth refused to demand investigation into Trimble's story. Why should he shrink from inquiry, and accept the general verdict of guilty, if he had nothing to fear from communication between the two headmasters? And what could he have to fear, excepting Dr. Locke's statement that he was guilty. It was known, it had always been known, that "something" had happened to cause Levison to leave his old school.

"It's not much use talkin' about it, kid," said D'Arcy, at last. "I may mention, deah boy, that I offahed to bowwow my patah's cah, and win your bwother ovah to Gweyfwiahs, and see the Head there in his pwesence, and ask for the twuth. He wufused, and—and punched me. We had a fight. Aftah that——"

D'Arcy paused.

"Cardew believes in him," said Frank.

"Cardew is wathah a contwawry sort of boundah. Clive doesn't; and Clive's opinion is wathah more sewious than Cardew's on any subject. But you see, kid, it's not a mattah of opinion, but of evidence. If Levison can cleah himself, why doesn't he?"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 763.

Frank shook his head.

That question had been hammering in his brain for days and days. He could not understand.

A word from the Greyfriars headmaster would be enough if Ernest Levison was innocent of the charge brought against him.

Why did not Levison ask for that word to be spoken?

Why? Why?

That question tormented Frank. It had almost come near to shaking his faith in his brother. It was by instinct, not by reason, that he clung to his belief in Levison of the Fourth. And he realised miserably that the others had not that motive; they could not be blamed for condemning a fellow who refused to take an easy and simple action to clear his name. It was not as if the accusation was a light one, not worth troubling about. Levison of the Fourth was condemned as an expelled thief—a charge that would have driven any other fellow to take any possible measures. And he refused to take any measures!

"He has not told you anythin'?" asked D'Arcy.

"Only that he cannot call in the Greyfriars headmaster. He thinks he would have to leave St. Jim's if he did."

"Not if he is innocent."

"Yes, somehow—I don't understand, but he thinks so."

D'Arcy did not reply to that. He could only wonder at the blind faith of the fag, who still believed in the condemned junior in face of such evidence.

"But—but I know it's no good talking," said Frank.

"Ernest won't clear himself. He could, I know! I'm certain of that. If the Greyfriars headmaster were asked, he would knock the whole story to pieces at once by his answer."

"Then he certainly ought to be asked," said Arthur Augustus dryly.

"That's what I'm thinking of."

"Oh!"

"You see," said Frank eagerly, "Ernest won't do it. I suppose it's pride—obstinacy, if you like; I don't know. But it can't rest at this. I—I've thought it out, and if Ernest won't act, I'm going to!"

"Bai Jove!" murmured D'Arcy.

"It's a good way to Greyfriars," continued Frank. "But I've looked out the trains. I'm going to Greyfriars!"

"Phew!"

"I—I'm not telling Ernest," said Frank, his pale face flushing. "He wouldn't let me go! I—I couldn't go if he asked me not. And—and I'm determined to clear him! I'm going to see the Head of Greyfriars, and ask him to make the truth known here. He can't refuse."

"Poor little beggar!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

Frank flushed hotly.

"You think Dr. Locke will tell me that my brother is guilty?" he exclaimed.

"Hem!"

"Well, I'm willing to risk that," said Frank bitterly. "I know it isn't so. I know Dr. Locke can clear him, and will! So I'm going to Greyfriars this afternoon. Will you help me?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"I—I haven't the money." Frank's cheeks burned. "It's a lot of money on the railway. I can't ask Ernest; he would guess. I'll square it later on, D'Arcy, you know that. You're the only fellow I could ask. You—you've always been decent. You were kind to me the day I came to St. Jim's——"

"W-w-was I?"

"You showed me to my brother's study that day," said Frank.

"D-d-did I? What a memory you've got, kid! I am vewy glad if I did anythin'," said Arthur Augustus. "If—if you weally think of goin' to Gweyfwiahs——"

"I'm going this afternoon."

"But—but——" Arthur Augustus was distressed. He was fully convinced that the fag was going to Greyfriars to have his belief in his brother shattered for ever. "You—you can't take such a long railway journey alone, Franky." Frank Levison laughed.

"I'd take a journey to the North Pole to clear my brother!" he answered. "It's nothing. I've been over there with the cricketers. But——"

"I will lend you the money with pleasuah, kid, if you are bent on goin'!" said Arthur Augustus. "But don't you think it would be wisah——"

"I shall go, if I have to run my bike over to Wayland and sell it to raise the railway fare," said Frank quietly.

"Bai Jove! That settles it, then."

Arthur Augustus took out his little Russian-leather purse, and counted out three pound notes into the fag's hand. "That will see you through," he said.

"It's more than I want," said Frank. "But I'll settle this up. You know that, D'Arcy."

"Yaas, deah boy, I know it. That's all wight. But I wish you wouldn't go."



Taggies, the porter, waved a horny hand at the cyclist as he came sweeping down to the gates. "Look 'ere, Master Levison—" Taggies did not finish. He had just time to jump out of the way as the desperate cyclist swept down. He was left gasping. "My heye!" he stuttered. (See page 7.)

"I'm going."

Frank Levison turned to the door. Arthur Augustus glanced after him hesitatingly.

"If you're weally goin', kid, I'll walk down to the station with you and see you off!" he said. "I'll see that you get your return ticket all wight."

"Thanks!" said Frank, with a faint smile.

He paused a moment.

"After I'm gone, D'Arcy, you'll tell Ernest?" He flushed. "I know you're not on speaking terms with him now. But you can speak to him for once."

"Yaas—yaas, certainly," said Arthur Augustus hastily.

"You see, I—I hate to be doing this without his knowledge. I wish he'd let me go, but he wouldn't. But as soon as it's too late for him to stop me I want him to know. I'd like to tell him first, but I can't. Tell him when I've gone."

"Vewy well, deah boy."

"And tell the other fellows, if you like," said Frank proudly. "I'd like them to know. I'd like them to understand that I've got a witness for my brother, who will make them believe they've been unjust to Ernest, whether they like it or not."

"Poor little beggah! I—I mean let's get off to the station, deah boy."

And the fag and the Fourth-Former quitted Study No. 6 and walked out of gates together.

CHAPTER 3. A Blow to Levison!

LEVISON of the Fourth entered his study—No. 9—in the Fourth Form passage. He had passed a dozen fellows on his way in, and not one of them had spoken to him. Talbot of the Shell had given him a nod, that was all and Levison had affected not to see it.

He did not want compassion. Gore had sheered openly as Levison passed him, Crooke had whispered to Racke, and both had grinned; Mellish of the Fourth went through the motion of buttoning up his pockets. Trimble had called out to nobody in particular, "You fellows missed anything?" Heedless, with a face as unconscious as if it had been graves in bronze, Ernest Levison ran that gauntlet of mockery, and went to his study unmoved.

It was not till he was in Study No. 9, and the door was closed, that his calm face relaxed.

Then, for a moment, a look of suffering passed across it. Hard as nails Levison might seem in public, indifferent to the finger of scorn. But he was not the "old Levison," of his bad days, and he felt every look, every sneer, every derisive smile. Outwardly he showed nothing of it. Inwardly he suffered, but he knew how to suffer and be strong. It was only for a minute, or less, that his face was broken and troubled. Then the calmness returned to it.

He sorted out his books, and sat down to the study table.

He had found at least one recipe for trouble, the best—hard work. In the midst of his disgrace, with the finger of scorn pointed at him on all sides, Levison had entered his name for the Head's Greek prize, and his spare time was given to study now. He was out of all games, out of all pursuits of the juniors. Nobody thought of asking Levison now to join in a rag on the New House, or a raid on the Grammar School fellows. Nobody wanted his company on the playing-fields, or in a scout run in the woods, or in a boat on the river. It was not long since his time had been as full up as that of any fellow at St. Jim's. Now he had plenty of time on his hands. He put it into work, the best resource he could have thought of. His Form-master, Mr. Lathom, pleased with his industry and keenness, had told him that he

had a good chance of the prize, and Levison meant to win it if he could.

He was deep in Greek when Ralph Reckness Cardew came in. There was a curious expression on Cardew's face.

Excepting for Frank of the Third, Cardew was the only fellow who believed in Levison, and he had not believed at first. Somehow, he had come round to faith in his chum, willing to dismiss Levison's refusal to clear himself as a puzzle he could not solve. Levison's other study-mate, Clive, had told him frankly that he could not believe in a fellow who was willing to rest under the imputation of theft. Levison did not seem to blame him, but he never spoke to Clive now. The South African junior seldom came to Study No. 9. The "Study No. 9 Co." was quite broken up in these days.

"Deep in it, old man?" yawned Cardew, as he sat on the corner of the table, and glanced at the sheets covered with the Greek characters in Levison's small, fine writing.

"Yes."
"The giddy ten thousand still retreatin'?" grinned Cardew. "How many jolly old parasangs have they covered so far?" Levison smiled.

"It's not Xenophon," he said.

"What is it, then?"

"Thucydides."

"My only estimable Aunt Gloxiana!" ejaculated Cardew. "You're buckin' against Thucydides?"

"Yes."

"Rather you than I, old top," said Cardew. "I rather think I wouldn't fool the Head's prize, with the Head thrown in. You're a weird fish, Levison."

Levison did not answer that. Lonely as he was in his ostracism, he wanted to get on with his work, and Cardew was an interruption. Ralph Reckness Cardew was quite well aware of that, but he did not stir.

"You're weird, old bean?" he said. "Blest if I begin to understand you. When all the school got down on you, you didn't turn the old giddy cheek. You cut up rusty. Fightin' Gussy, scrapperin' with Tom Merry, punchin' heads right an' left, and showin' off a temper that was like—ahem—I won't mention the person—gentleman generally depicted as clothed in black!"

Levison nodded.

"And then, as I fully expected, you took up with Racke & Co, and slid into what I hear was your old game," continued Cardew. "I saw that you were on the merry road to ruin, goin' to the giddy bow-wows, and I was prepared to go along with you, paintin' the jolly old town red, turnin' night into day, breakin' bounds, and lookin' on the wine when it was red, and the billiard-table when it was green, and all that. And instead of keepin' on you backed out, dropped Racke, makin' that noble youth awfully wild, and took up work! Now, what did you do it for? Excuse my burnin' curiosity. I hate a riddle without an answer!"

Levison looked up.
"I pulled up in time, Cardew," he said quietly. "I came near—" He paused. "It seemed to me that there wasn't anything left to fight for. I had the name of a rotter, and I thought I'd have the game. I—I was a fool. But it didn't last. I've got lots to fight for. There's Frank and—and my sister, and the people at home. And there's my good name." He smiled bitterly as Cardew started. "Yes, I know that's gone for good—here. But St. Jim's isn't the world. I'm going to get out of St. Jim's all that St. Jim's can give me. After that I'm going to have a clean record to look back on."

"If any other chap heard you talkin' in that strain, old bean, they'd call it—"

"Humbug!" said Levison.

"Well, yes."

"You can call it that, if you like," said Levison, and he dipped his pen in the ink.

"Not in the least, old bean," said Cardew amicably. "I fancy, in your place, I should go to the dogs so fast it would make my head swim. I'm glad to see you're different. After all, this yarn about you will die away in time."

"It will die away, but I shall never have friends here again," said Levison calmly. "Only you, Ralph; and why you believe in me beats me hollow. It's not sense!"

"Oh! You can see that?"

"Quite clearly, and I don't blame any of the fellows. I did at first. I was bitter enough. I don't now. I should believe a chap guilty on the same evidence. I can see that."

Cardew whistled softly.

"Levison, old man," he said, "I believe in you. The fellows think it's only my way of settin' my opinion against everybody else's. Perhaps it is. But—but why don't you give me the reason to believe in you? If you were not expelled from Greyfriars—"

"I was not."

"If you didn't pinch the headmaster's cash—"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 763.

"I did not!"

"Then Dr. Locke would say so at once, if he were asked."

"He would."

"Then why the merry thump can't you go to Mr. Railton or the Head, and ask them to get into touch with him?"

"I've told you. I should have to leave St. Jim's if I did."

"Only if you were guilty."

"In any case."

"I don't understand!" said Cardew.

"I don't expect you to. Frank doesn't understand. Frank's been urging me to get a witness from Greyfriars. He can't understand why I don't! But I can't!"

Cardew looked at him hard. His face was very grave.

"Is that the fact, honest Injun, Levison?" he asked. "If Dr. Locke were called in as a witness, would you have to clear?"

"I should be turned out."

"Good gad!" muttered Cardew.

Levison gave him a quick look.

"But it won't happen," he said. "I can stand all this. I've got to stand it. Dr. Locke will not be called in. This yarn is the talk of the Lower School now, but it will die away, leaving me barred. But Dr. Holmes will not hear of it—that's all I care about. What are you looking at me like that for, Cardew? What's happened?"

"Old chap, you're goin' to have a shock," said Cardew softly. "Young Frank—He's done it for the best, I know. He believes in you, and thinks that a word from Greyfriars would clear you—"

Levison started.

"What has Frank done? What do you mean?"

"I—I've just seen D'Arcy, and he's said—" Cardew faltered.

There was a knock at the door of Study No. 9. It opened, and the eyeglass of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gleamed in. Levison looked at him. He was startled, almost scared—he hardly knew why. Cardew's words seemed to have roused some fear in his breast. His eyes were fixed on Arthur Augustus.

"May I come in?" asked D'Arcy.

"Trot in!" said Cardew.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy entered the study. He did not like speaking to Levison, but he did his best to conceal that fact; even towards the outcast of the school Arthur Augustus' polished politeness was not wanting. He coughed a little.

"Levison—" he began.

Levison caught his breath. He rose from his chair, and stood like a fellow expecting a blow.

"I have a message from young Fwank," said Arthur Augustus. "I promised to deliver it as soon as he was gone."

"Where has he gone?" Ernest Levison's voice was dry and husky. "Where has Frank gone?"

"To Gweyfwahs!"

"Greyfriars! Why?"

"To see Dr. Locke, and ask him for the truth."

"Oh, heavens!"

Levison of the Fourth sank back in his chair. His face was white as chalk. Cardew made a quick movement towards him.

"Levison, old fellow—"

Levison burst into a laugh. It was a harsh, jarring laugh—a laugh that jarred on the ears of the two juniors, so bitter was it, so full of misery and despair.

"The game's up, then," said Levison. "Right up! Ruined! And ruined by my own brother! Poor old Frank!"

CHAPTER 4.

Ruin!

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY drew a deep breath. Cardew looked very startled. There was only one conclusion to be drawn from Levison's words—that he was guilty, and that Frank's visit to Greyfriars would demonstrate the fact.

"Ruined!" repeated Cardew mechanically.

Levison of the Fourth laid down his pen and closed the Greek volume before him. He pushed his papers away.

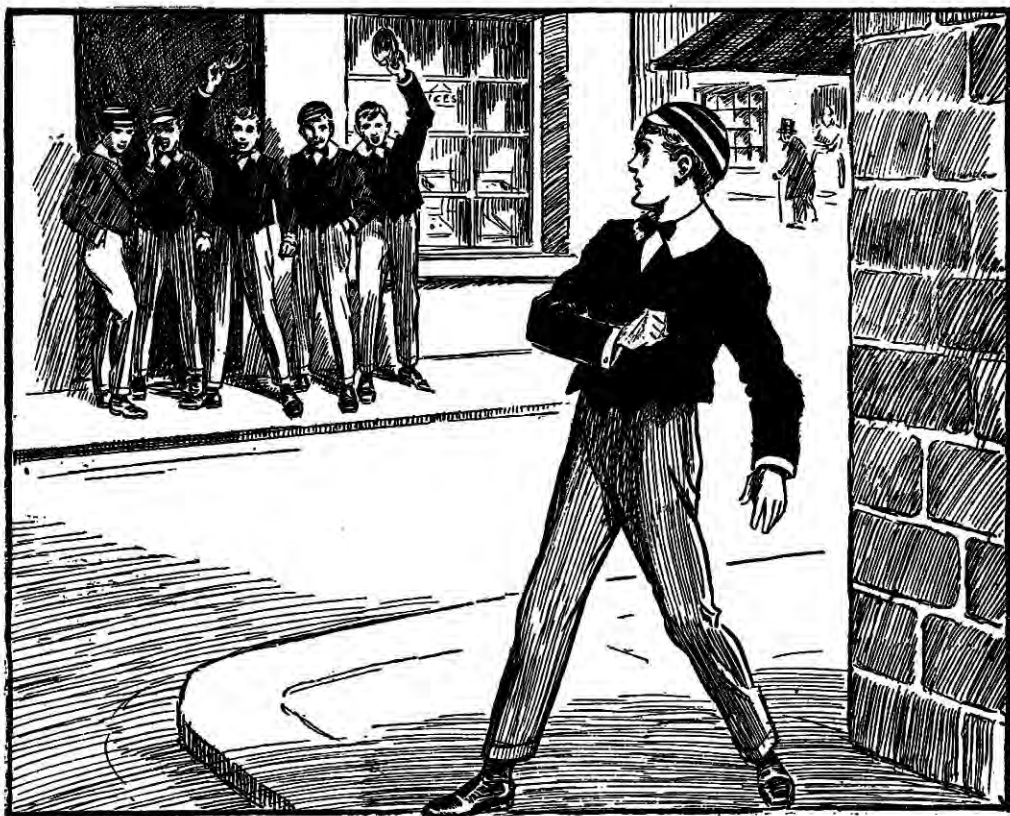
"That's done with!" he said. "Poor old Frank! He means it for the best, and he's done for me here! Poor old kid! It's me for the long jump now. You can tell your friends, D'Arcy, that I shall be gone from St. Jim's to-morrow. They'll only have to stand me for one more day."

"Bai Jove!"

"Levison—" muttered Cardew.

Levison looked at him.

"The game's up!" he said. "Don't you catch on? I can face it. I'm not going to whine. If it wasn't for my father and the mater and—and Doris—" His face worked for a moment. Then he set his lips hard, and pulled himself together, grimly. The blow had fallen. Levison of the Fourth was at the end of his tether; but he was not going to weaken.



"Hallo, hallo, hallo! This way, young Levison!" Frank Levison started, and looked round. His face brightened as he saw Harry Wharton & Co. across the street. Their looks were welcoming, and a welcoming face was a pleasant sight to the fag, alone in a strange place. "Run away from school—what?" asked Bob Cherry. (See page 9.)

St. Jim's should see, at least, that the outcast of the school was game to the last. He laughed. "Thank you for telling me, D'Arcy. I know it must have been an effort to you."

"You are vewy welcome, Levison."

Levison breathed hard. A glimmer came into his eyes. It seemed as if a new hope had flashed on his mind.

"He's really gone?" he asked hastily.

"Yaas, wathah! I saw him into the twain at Wylcombe."

"How long ago?"

"The three twain for Wayland Junction."

Levison made a rapid mental calculation.

"The local. He will have to change at Wayland for the express. There's a wait at the junction." He looked at his watch. "Twenty-past three. He's not at Wayland yet. If there's time—if there's time to stop him—his eyes burned.

"Weally, Levison—"

"There's no time," said Cardew hastily. "Levison, you can't stop him now. But why—why, if you've nothing to fear, Levison—"

"There's a chance. I'm not going to lose the last chance of sticking on at St. Jim's!" Levison was springing to the door as he spoke. "I'm going to try! There's the ghost of a chance yet!"

He was gone.

"Bai Jove!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus.

Cardew ran into the corridor. Levison was already at the stairs; he was going down them three at a time. Grundy of the Shell was coming up. Levison collided with him, and sent the burly Shell fellow spinning.

He did not pause a second. He darted on, while Grundy sprawled on the stairs and roared.

A few seconds more and Levison was out of the School House. There, in the bright sunshine he paused a second.

To make for Wayland to stop Frank before he could take the express—that was his thought. There was a chance yet—

the ghost of a chance. By cutting across country on his bicycle—

Three Shell fellows were on the gravel path wheeling their machines down to the gates. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther were going for a spin that sunny afternoon. Levison saw them and instead of making for the bike-shed—a loss of minutes—he ran towards the Terrible Three.

"Lend me your bike!"

Tom Merry jumped.

He stared blankly at Levison's white, excited face and burning eyes. He was not even on speaking terms with Levison now, and the request simply astounded him.

"What the thump—" he ejaculated.

Levison did not speak again. His grasp was on the bicycle, and he dragged it away; Tom, in his utter amazement, letting go. Levison's leg was over it in a second; with one foot on a pedal he started, and then he was grinding at the pedals, and the bike fairly flew. Tom Merry gave a shout that was nearly a roar.

"Levison, you cheeky cad—"

"Well, by only hat!" exclaimed Manners. "Of all the neck—"

"Is he mad?" ejaculated Lowther.

"Levison!" yelled Tom Merry. "By Jove! I'll mop up the earth with you! Bring my bike back, you cheeky rotter!"

Levison was pedalling as if for his life. If he heard he did not heed. It was against all rules for juniors to bike in the quadrangle; but the outcast seemed to have forgotten all rules. He was pedalling towards the gates at breakneck speed. It was fortunate that no one came in Levison's way just then.

Taggles, the porter, waved a horny hand at him as he came sweeping down to the gates.

"Look 'ere, Master Levison—"

Taggles did not finish. He had just time to jump out of the way as the desperate cyclist swept down. He was left gasping.

"My hey!" stuttered Taggles.

Tom Merry shouted to his chums.

"After him! Stop him, and hold him till I come up!"

"You bet!"

Manners and Lowther rushed their machines down to the gates, and mounted and rode in pursuit. They caught a glimpse of Levison in the distance—riding like the wind. Manners and Lowther were good riders—in ordinary circumstances they would have expected to beat the Fourth-Former on the cycle-track. But on the present occasion, Levison seemed to leave them standing.

They rode hard, but Levison vanished ahead, and there was no sign of him when they reached Rylcombe. Probably he had taken a turning, while ahead and out of sight. Manners and Lowther looked at one another. Then they rode back to meet Tom Merry in the lane.

Tom, flushed and angry, was following his chums at a trot. He halted, as the disappointed cyclists came back.

"Got away?" he asked.

"Couldn't be helped," said Monty Lowther. "Blessed if I thought Levison could beat me on a bike, but—"

"He was riding like a giddy champion!" said Manners.

"What on earth's the matter with him?"

"Cheek!" said Lowther.

Manners shook his head. He was convinced that it was not merely "cheek" on the part of the outcast that had caused him to bag Tom Merry's bicycle in so unceremonious a manner.

"Something's up," he said.

"Something will be up when the cad comes back!" growled Tom Merry.

"Might be a case of illness," said Manners. "He's gone to catch a train, I should think. If Doris—"

Tom Merry's expression changed.

"If it's that—" he said.

"Must be, I should think."

"Cardew may know," said Lowther. "Let's get back."

The chums of the Shell walked back to St. Jim's, considerably perplexed. They found Arthur Augustus D'Arcy the centre of a little crowd in the quadrangle.

"Well, that settles it!" Blake was saying, as the Terrible Three came up.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"You fellows know anything about Levison—" began Tom Merry.

"Gussy's the man that knows!" grinned Blake. "Young Frank's gone to Greyfriars to get at the truth—"

"Oh!" exclaimed Tom.

"And Levison's gone off like a madman to stop him at the junction, if he can. He'll be too late."

Tom Merry compressed his lips.

"So that's it!" he said.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It settles it," said Blake.

"It does," said Tom. "It's as good as a confession."

"Quite as good," said Monty Lowther. "What do you think now, Cardew?" he added, with a glance at the dandy of the Fourth.

Cardew shrugged his slim shoulders.

"Dear man, I think what I've always thought."

"Well, what's that, then?" grunted Blake.

"That you're a set of blitherin' asses, old bean!" yawned Cardew; and he sauntered away before Tom Merry & Co. could think of an adequate rejoinder.

CHAPTER 5.

A Race Against Time.

LEVISON of the Fourth was riding hard—riding as if for his life. His face was crimson now—crimson with heat and exertion. His hair blew out in the wind. He did not even know that Manners and Lowther had pursued him—certainly he did not care. His thoughts were not behind him—they were before; at the junction where Frank Levison was changing trains—changing into the express.

If he were only in time!

The bicycle fairly flew!

He was riding on the footpath through the wood, where cycling was not allowed by the local bye-laws. In that mad hour Levison cared as much for the local bye-laws as for the rules of the school. It was the shortest cut to Wayland, and he took it without even stopping to think.

The perspiration streamed down his face as he bent over the handle-bars and scorching.

Would he be in time?

There was a sudden shout on the footpath. Talbot of the Shell was there, with Kangaroo—the two Shell fellows

had just time to leap out of the way of the rushing cyclist.

"Levison!" exclaimed Talbot.

"You cheeky rotter!" roared Kangaroo, in great wrath.

Levison did not hear them—it was doubtful even if he saw them. He rode madly on.

The stile was in view now, with the white Wayland road glistening in the sun beyond it. Levison jammed on the brakes, and even with the brakes on he nearly crashed into the stile. But he stopped just in time, and leaped from the saddle. On the stile sat Clampe of the Shell, smoking a cigarette at that safe distance from the school, and no doubt thinking himself "no end of a dog." Clampe had his back to the footpath, and he was startled by a sudden crash on his back. Levison, unheeding Clampe, was swinging the bicycle over the stile. There was no time to talk to Clampe. Leslie Clampe gave a fearful yell as he tumbled into the road, and a frantic shriek as he landed there, with his cigarette in his mouth. The business end of the cigarette was very hot.

Levison clumped the bicycle down and ran it into the road. Clampe sat up, yelling.

The Fourth-Former did not give him a glance. He was on the machine again, pedalling away up the road towards Wayland town.

"You rotter!" roared Clampe. "I'll smash you!"

His shouting voice did not even reach Levison; the furious rider was already out of hearing. With the pedals going like lightning on the highest gear, Levison drove on towards Wayland. Almost in a twinkling he was in the old High Street of the market town, threading his way among the traffic. How he escaped an accident there, Levison never knew. He knew that voices shouted to him, that drivers brandished their whips; he knew it, but knew it only as fellows know the dim happenings of a dream. Only one thought was hammering in his brain—to reach the station in time; in time to prevent Frank from going to Greyfriars.

The station at last.

Levison jammed on brakes; he jumped from the machine, leaving it to spin on the kerb.

Hatless, with tossing hair, and a face crimson and streaming, he ran into the station, with startled and curious glances turned upon him from all sides. He caught a porter by the arm.

"The express—" His voice came throaty and husky—he could hardly speak. He shook the startled man's arm in his excitement. "The express—"

"Gone!"

"Gone!"

"Five minutes ago," said the porter. "'Ere, you get off!"

Levison dropped his hand, and stood stock still. He had not lost a second in that wild race, but there had been no chance. The express was gone, with Frank Levison in it.

For a full minute he stood still.

Then he turned blindly, and almost groped his way out of the station into the sunlight of the street.

"'Ere's your machine, sir." A staring cabman had picked up the bicycle. "Lost the express, sir?"

"Yes," muttered Levison dully. "Thank you!"

He wheeled Tom Merry's bicycle away. He did not mount the machine—he walked with it, wheeling it, hardly conscious of what he was doing. He found himself in a lane that led back to Rylcombe without knowing how he had got there.

Frank was gone! It was too late to stop Frank! The game was up—the game was up! He repeated the words to himself, almost stupidly. The crimson had died out of his face now, leaving him pale, worn, wan. He walked on and on, unconscious of fatigue. Curious glances were cast at him as he wheeled the bicycle through Rylcombe. Grimes, the grocer's boy, at the door of Mr. Sands' shop, called to him.

"Anything wrong, Master Levison?"

Levison started, and stared round.

"Hallo, Grimes! Wrong? No!"

"You look ill, sir," said Grimes, staring at him in wonder.

"Do I? I'm all right."

But, recalled to himself, Levison mounted the bicycle, and rode towards the school. At the gates of St. Jim's he found the Terrible Three. He dismounted. Tom Merry stepped forward.

"I'll take my machine now, if you've done with it, Levison."

There was no anger in Tom Merry's look or tone now. Levison was what he was the whole school knew. But he was down and out. And it was not like Tom Merry to give another shove to a fellow who was going down. His manner was almost friendly as he took the bicycle.

"Done with it?" he asked.

Levison nodded.

"Yes." He tried to collect his thoughts. "Yes. I'm sorry, Tom Merry. I—I was in a hurry—"

"I know!"
 "I thought there might be time," stammered Levison. "There wasn't!" He stared almost stupidly at the Terrible Three, and passed his hand across his brow. "There wasn't time! I'm sorry I took your bike. I didn't mean—" His voice trailed away. He went in at the gates, and left the Terrible Three looking at one another with grave faces. "It's plain enough now!" muttered Manners. "But—but, poor brute! I—I'm sorry for him!"

CHAPTER 6.

Levison Minor at Greyfriars!

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!"

It was Bob Cherry of the Remove at Greyfriars who uttered that exclamation.

Five fellows belonging to the Greyfriars Remove had stopped outside the village tuckshop in Friardale. Harry Wharton & Co. had spent that half-holiday in a cycle spin, and on their way back to the school they were stopping for refreshment in the shape of ginger-beer. And as they discussed that cheering beverage under the oak-tree outside Uncle Clegg's little shop, Bob Cherry's glance fell upon a youthful figure coming out of the railway-station across the road.

"I know that kid!" said Johnny Bull, following his glance. And the dusky-skinned member of the party remarked:

"The knowfulness is terrific!"
 "It's a St. Jim's kid," said Frank Nugent, with a nod. "He's the young brother of that chap Levison, who used to be at Greyfriars."

"Levison minor!" said Harry Wharton. "What on earth is he doing over here—on his lonely own?"

"Can't have come all that thundering way to pay us a visit, can he?" said Bob Cherry. "Let's ask him."

Levison minor stood looking about him in the village street. He was tired, with the long journey in the express, and changing trains. He was looking for some vehicle to hire to Greyfriars, when Bob Cherry, putting his hands to his mouth by way of a trumpet, bawled to him.

"Hallo, hillo, hallo! This way, young Levison!"
 Frank Levison started, and looked round. His face brightened as he saw the Famous Five across the street. Their looks were welcoming, and a welcoming face was a pleasant sight to the fog, alone in a strange place. He ran quickly across the street.

"Here we are again!" said Bob Cherry. "Run away from school—what?"

"No, no!" gasped Frank.

"Only my little joke!" grinned Bob. "Sample this ginger-pop."

"Coming to Greyfriars?" asked Harry Wharton, with a rather puzzled look at the St. Jim's fag.

"Yes."

"We're honoured, old sport!" said Bob.

"I've come to see the Head."

"My only bat! I didn't know you were on pally terms with our headmaster!" ejaculated Bob Cherry.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Levison grinned faintly.

"I've got to see him," he said. "It—it's important! I—I hope he's at home."

"Oh, he's at home!" said Bob. "He takes his half-holidays with Q. Horatius Flaccus, or Sophocles, or some of those jolly old classical johnnies. Have you come over from St. Jim's alone?"

"Yes."

"Long journey for a little kid," said Bob.

"I'm not a little kid!" said Frank warmly. "I'm in the Third!"

"I stand corrected," said Bob Cherry, with great gravity.

"At Greyfriars the Third are little kids; but at St. Jim's they are potent, grand, and reverend signiors. All serene!"

Frank laughed good-humouredly.

"I've got to see Dr. Locke," he said. "Thanks for the ginger-pop. Can I get a cab or anything around here?"

"Yes; there's a giddy old hack," said Harry Wharton.

"But you'd do better to hop on behind one of our bikes, if time's any object."

"It is, of course," said Levison minor. "I—I've got to get back to St. Jim's, you know, this evening somehow."

"You'll be jolly late!" said Nugent.

"Yes, I know."

"Well, jump on behind my bike," said Bob Cherry. "Your weight won't make any difference to me, young shaver. I'll land you at Greyfriars in two ticks and a quarter."

"Thank you very much!" said Frank gratefully.

The juniors paid for their ginger-beer, and wheeled their bikes out into the street. Frank was feeling greatly cheered by the kind reception at the hands of the Famous Five. It was cheering to find himself among friendly faces so far from home.

They had not asked him the cause of his journey, though he knew they must be feeling surprised. He did not refer to it. He could not tell Harry Wharton & Co., his brother's former schoolfellows, that his brother was in black disgrace at St. Jim's.

It came into his mind to ask them the truth of the story Trimble had learned from the Owl of Greyfriars. But he reflected that possibly they did not know all the circumstances, and the subject was too miserable and distasteful to be mentioned if he could avoid it. If all was cleared up, there was no need for Greyfriars ever to know in what black disgrace Ernest Levison had been for a time.

It was with the Head of Greyfriars that he had to deal. Dr. Locke could tell him the facts, and could tell the Head of St. Jim's the facts, to be passed on to the school. That was what Levison minor had come to Kent for—that was the purpose he was going to carry out now.

He mounted behind Bob Cherry on Bob's bicycle, standing with his feet on the rests, and holding on to Bob's shoulders. The Famous Five wheeled out of the village street, and in the lane they put on speed.

"Safe there, young 'un?" asked Bob, looking over his shoulder for a moment at the fag.

"Safe as houses," answered Frank cheerily.

"Going too fast for you?"

"Not fast enough!" answered Frank.

Bob chuckled.

"Then I'll put it on," he said.

And Bob Cherry put it on, and came up to the gates of Greyfriars with a terrific rush, and jammed on his brakes. Levison minor jumped down lightly. The rest of the Co. came wheeling up.

"I say, you fellows—"

A fat junior waved a podgy hand to the Famous Five in the gateway. Frank Levison's eyes glittered, as he recognised Billy Bunter.

It was Bunter's chatter—false, as Frank believed—that had started the whole miserable affair at St. Jim's. If Bunter had not gone over with the team on the day of the great match, Levison of the Fourth might still be respected by his old friends. Levison minor would have liked to plant his knuckles on the fat little nose of the Owl of Greyfriars, but refrained. He could not very well signalise his visit to the Head of Greyfriars by fighting with a Greyfriars junior at the school gates.

"I say, it's tea-time!" said Bunter, blinking at the Famous Five. "Toddy's gone out to tea, and forgotten about me! If you fellows—"

Harry Wharton & Co. walked on, seemingly deaf, with Levison minor. Bunter gave a discontented grunt, and rolled after them. He patting Levison minor on the shoulder.

"Glad to see you, young 'un," said Bunter patronisingly.

"Let me alone!" muttered Frank savagely.

"Eh! What? I say, I knew your brother when he was here," said Bunter. "We were—ahem!—great pals. Like to come to tea in my study?"

"No!"

"Hem! I'll tell you what, young Levison." Billy Bunter paused a moment, perhaps reflecting upon the nearest method of introducing the subject of his celebrated postal-order. "I say—"

Frank hurried on and left him.

"I say, young Levison!" bawled Bunter angrily.

Frank did not heed. He had no civility to waste on the fellow who had maligned his brother. He went into the house with Harry Wharton & Co. There Wharton called Trotter, the page. Trotter looked rather curiously at Levison minor when he heard that that very youthful young gentleman was calling on the Head. But he assented to taking in Frank's name to Dr. Locke.

The St. Jim's fag waited with Harry Wharton & Co. while Trotter was gone. He moved anxiously and restlessly. He was near the object of his quest now, and he would not allow himself to feel doubts or misgivings. But he was uneasy.

"Come up to Study No. 1 to tea after you've seen the Head, kid," said Harry Wharton.

Levison minor nodded.

"Thank you," he said, "I will! Oh, here he comes!"

Trotter came back.

"The 'Ead will see the young gentleman," said Trotter.

"This way, sir."

And Levison minor, of St. Jim's followed the page down a broad corridor, and was shown into the study of Dr. Locke, the headmaster of Greyfriars.

CHAPTER 7.

Ernest Levison Explains!

"RUINED!"
 Levison of the Fourth repeated the word in muttered tones as he threw himself into a chair in his study at St. Jim's.

He was tired out after his hard ride and the long walk (Continued on page 12.)

The ST. JIM'S NEWS

Edited by TOM MERRY.

"My Lucky Day!"

By Ephraim Taggies (Gatekeeper at St. Jim's).

NOTE.—This was dictated by Taggies, and has been recorded by Redfern.—ED.

The Night Bird.

WHICH as 'ow I'd 'ad a most hupsettin' day. I kicked the milk hail hover to begin with, as the milkman 'ad left it slap bang on the middle of my doorstep. Next I falls hower a pail of whitewash, which was just becomin' the door of the woodshed. After that I trips hower a suspended cord across the Fourth Form corridor, and Herr Schneider's luncheon distributed himself half the passage. On the whole, I calls it a most hupsettin' day. It was not afore half-past ten that night my 'ead began gettin' a bit clackin'. I 'ad a dnal stroll round when hit 'appened, just afore turnin' hin for the night. Then, half of a sudding like, I discerns a figure climbing the school wall! Scholar or bergular? I couldn't tell which hat the moment, but I wouldn't let the villian hescape, not me! Hi doubles hup my deta with true British pluck and charges across to that there wall. Ah, the fellow sees me comin', and scrambles furiously to get hower the wall. But his luck was hout. I grabbed his left boot, just as he was lettin' the rest of his body slide hower the wall, and 'angs hon tight. In the bright moonlight I could feel that the night bird was starlin' patented boots, so I himejetty harrove hat the Sexton Blake conclusion that he wasn't a bergular hat hall, but a young rip from one of the 'ouses. I clutches hat 'is foot with both my 'ands, and slowly pulls the fellow back hower the wall. But he was desprtit, that fellow was, and he clung onto the ivy of the old garden wall like a bloke clings to a drownin' straw. I did him to fluish with, and he leaves go, to land plump at my feet in han 'eap.

"Gutcher!" I pante, triumphant-like. "Now, who har you?"

The fellow give a startled gasp. "I—I say," he mutters thickly, "don't kick up dust, Taggy, old chap! I'm Cardew! I've got a terrific—er—headache, and I'm—I'm going for a stroll!"

"A s'nice time to go for a stroll, with yer patented boots hou!" I says, stolid. "That there toon don't wash!"

"Let me go, let me go!" pleaded the fellow in a shrill voice. "I'll give you anything if you'll only let me go!"

I peers hat 'im closer.

"You ain't Master bloomin' Cardew!" I declares. "You're cramin'! You jert step across to my lodge, so that I can have a look at you, and see why you're leavin' the premises in this candlestick fashion!"

"Oh, Taggies—Mr. Taggies, don't!" he groaned, turgin' hat my arm in what one might describe as a touchin' manner. "I'll give you anything you like, if you'll only let me go!"

"No bribin' and corruptin' me" with your bobs and 'alf-crowns!" I says, with admonishin' severity whatever that means.

The fellow jerked himself to his feet, and dives the "and I wasn't 'oldin' into his trousers pocket.

The Surprise Packet.

I waited with patience and curiosity. Then he pulls hout summat crispy and rustlin' from it.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 763.

"Here's a fiver!" he said, breathin' 'avily. "Now let me go!"

Hi stretched forth my horny palm and felt that there note. Mind you, dear reader, I'm werry, werry careful 'ow I hacccepts money hat this 'ere college. But, bless your 'earts, a fiver is a fiver in these 'ere 'ard days, and they ain't as thick as the leaves of Vallumbrosar, neither.

"Thanky, sir!" I says, alterin' my tone of voice from hindifferent to cordial. "Thanky werry much! By this 'ere I persooms you're Master Racke of the Shell, as he's the honly gent hi knows hof what has five-pun notes to fling abaht has he likes!"

"I am Racke!" muttered the fellow, whose arm I 'ad now released. "All I want you to do is to clear off without makin' a deuce of a noise! I'm goin' for a stroll! I've got a—er—earache!"

"Many hold aches you likes to 'ave, sir!" I agrees knowingly. "Which way might you fancy to leave these 'ere premises, sir?"

"Well, the blessed gate would attract attention from a beak who was paradin' grounds!" growled Master Racke. "You just clear off, and let me go my own way!"

Hi stood lookin' hat im in the glowmin' on the starlight—I don't know which it was—undecidedly for the moment, then hi makes hup my mind.

"Right you har, sir! Just has you fancies, sir! I'll mike hert!"

And I did.

Master Racke made for that there tree which grows hout hower the road, and 'e werry quickly disappeared. I walks hon, and soon gets near to my lodge. I 'ad to pass the gates to enter it, and as I did so I pulled out the five-pound note which Master Racke 'ad given me, to 'ave a decco at the thing. We just keeps a tiny light burnin' all night at the school gates, but it's werry 'igh hup, and werry dim in consequence. But that there fiver rustled genuine—at least, genuine enough for the likes of me—and the faint black writin' and the scroily sort of things in the corner was quite visibler. So I folds hup my fiver—I likes that word—and

puts it back in my waistcoat. When I got to my lodge I went to 'ave another fondlin' look at it, but my desire was not granted! Now, don't get alarmed, dear readers. Don't 'old your breath and wonder whether I've lost it, because I 'ave'n't.

A Slight Calamity.

That there elusive fiver 'ad slipped through a hole in my waistcoat, drat it! I 'adn't lost it, as I've said afore. The thing was there all right, for I could 'ear it rustling, and I didn't want to 'ave to slit open the linin' of my garment to get it hout. So I just lets the thing go, takin' good care, all the same, to keep my waistcoat hon all night, so that it shouldn't take a funny fit into its 'ead and walk away, like currency and bank notes are in the 'abit of doin'. It was still there all right next morning, and it remained there quite safe until twelve o'clock. Then it took a werry funny fit into its 'ead. Werry strange, dear readers, but it attracted me towards the village, and I had to go. I gathers hup my hold-top, and, and quits the premises, toot sweet! That there fiver was a mighty queer 'un, to be sure. Not content with takin' me hout hinto the roadway, it began to guide my fairy footsteps. It guided mine, at hany rate, towards the Green Man. I was just on the point of enterin', when I spotted an old friend of mine standin' at the door. It was Mister Erasmus Zacheriah Pepper!

(To discover what happened to Taggies, Pepper, and the fiver, see Part 2, which will appear next week.—T. M.)

Battle in the High Street.

THE FAGS ON THE WARPATH.

By An Eye-Witness.

LAST Saturday afternoon the warriors of the Third Form, under the leadership of Wally D'Arcy, with Frayne and Gibson as able and enthusiastic lieutenants, having nothing particular to do with their time and surplus energy, went on the warpath.

With the Grammar School in the immediate vicinity, Wally and his faithful followers never have any need to look far afield for trouble, and in this case they were not disappointed. They had not been in Rylcombe five minutes before they had managed to capture an isolated Grammarian fag in the High Street, and after tying him up in a hastily procured sack, they released him with their full permission to go home at once—if he was capable of managing the journey.

He went, and returned in far less time than they had expected, in consequence of a combination of circumstances, the most important of which were the fact that he had recently been the winner of the junior sack race at the Grammar School sports, and was therefore capable of a decent turn of speed in spite of his impediment, and that he met a body of fellow Grammarian fags half-way down the lane.

The newcomers released him, and, thirsting for revenge, poured into Rylcombe, looking for the Saints. Wally & Co. were quite agreeable to being found. They had just discovered a shop in which fruit was purchasable at a very cheap rate. Not that the greengrocer had any hopes of selling it, as it was part of a consignment that had gone

Free
COLOURED
CARICATURES
(POSTCARD SIZE)
Of Famous
FOOTBALLERS

Inside Every Copy of

Football 2d
EVERY
WEDNESDAY
Favourite
and
Football Special

EVERY FRIDAY 2d

astray on the railway, and had arrived in a most unsatisfactory condition.

However, the Saints were far from grumbling about this. The more over-ripe its condition the better for their purpose, and the cheaper it was, the more they could obtain for their money. And they wanted as much as they could get. They had an idea that it might be needed.

The Grammarians came round the corner yelling loudly. That was the greatest mistake of their campaign. They might, had they advanced carefully and quietly, have caught the Saints unawares, and stood some little chance in the conflict; but that outburst of noise put the tin roof on their hopes.

Wally was forewarned, and forewarning, to a leader of Wally's calibre, is likely to lead to something decidedly unpleasant, so far as the other side are concerned.

He had about twenty seconds in which to make his preparations before the Grammarians came within range, and he used that time to such a purpose that when the Grammarians got there they were met with a barrage of decomposing fruit and vegetables that squelched and slobbered and thudded and slapped up against them, filling their eyes, plastering their faces, and smearing them from head to foot.

The Grammarians wavered, halted, came on again half-heartedly, then turned and fled continuously.

The Saints yelled in triumph, but Wally had an uneasy feeling about it. This tame surrender did not appeal to him. Nobody shared his misgivings, but it was not long before they were justified.

It so happened that the trucks that had gone astray had contained merchandise other than fruit, and quite as perishable, if not, indeed, more so. One or two of the Grammarians knew of that, and they led the way to the establishment of Mr. Sands. His overdue consignment included two cases of eggs. At least, they were eggs at the time they were packed. By now they were more in the nature of stink-bombs.

They clucked together, obtained the cases, and returned to the attack. The Saints saw them coming, and yelled defiance. Wally alone, perhaps, realised the significance of the way in which they advanced, with their hands concealed. They came on in open formation, so that the barrage of fruit was the less effective. Then they halted suddenly, as one man, and opened fire on their own account.

Whiz! Thud! Biff! Squelch!
"Ow! Oooop! Yaroooh!"

There is no doubt that the Saints were more than surprised. The ammunition of the Grammarians was of an even more deadly type than their own. Those eggs were very ancient indeed.

But the Saints stood their ground manfully. The air was thick with missiles—eggs, apples, tomatoes, cabbages, vegetable marrow, and more eggs. The clothes and faces of the contestants were thick with them.

The Saints were plastered with eggs, and the Grammarians with rotten fruit, but when the ammunition began to run short, and the contestants came to grips, the marks of battle became less distinctive.

In the middle of the uproar there was a shout of "Cave!" and the less excited among them looked up to see Mr. Ralliton, in company with Mr. Adams of the Grammar School, coming down the High Street. That spelt danger to both parties, and the leaders hastened to get their respective followers off the field of action.

So they scurried heiter-skeiter, Grammarians one way, Saints the other, seeking safety and leisure to remove some of the traces of the conflict, and promising themselves that the issue should be fought out to a more definite decision upon another occasion.

"SILHOUETTES"

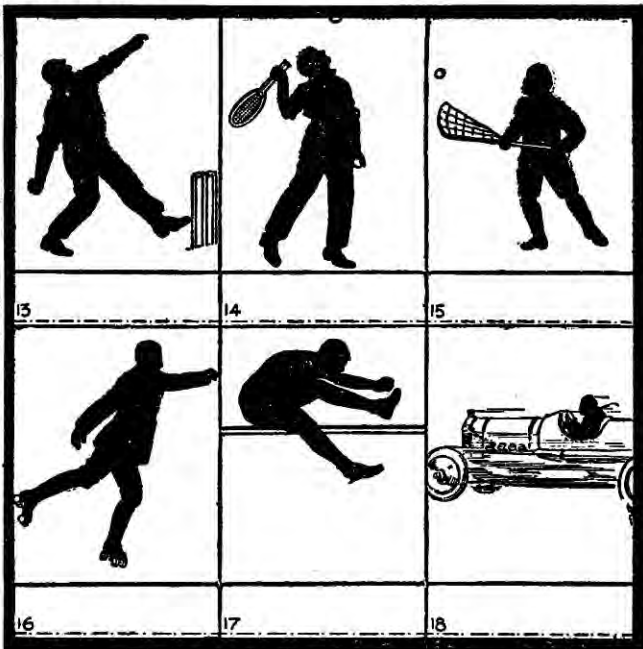
FIRST PRIZE

£25

10 Prizes of £1 and

20 Prizes of 10/-

THIRD SET.



WHAT YOU HAVE TO DO.

Here is a splendid opportunity for you to win one of these generous prizes.

On this page you will find six silhouettes, each showing a person doing something, and what you have to do is to write in the space under the picture the exact action portrayed. All the actions can be described in one or two words, but not more than two words.

When you have solved this week's picture puzzles, keep them by you in some safe place. There will be six sets in all, and when the final set appears you will be told where, and when, to send your efforts.

Sets 1 and 2 appeared in the "Gem" for weeks ending September 9th and 10th. Copies of these issues can still be obtained from The Amalgamated Press, Back Number Dept., 7-9, Pilgrim Street, Ludgate Hill, London, E.C. 4.

You may send as many complete sets of efforts as you please.

The FIRST PRIZE OF £25 will be awarded to the reader who succeeds in submitting a set of solutions exactly the same as, or nearest to, the set of solutions in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. No competitor will be awarded more than one share of the prizes.

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

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

It must be distinctly understood that the decision of the Editor is final and binding.

OUR COMPANION PAPERS.

"THE BOYS' FRIEND" Every Monday
"THE MAGNET" Every Monday
"THE POPULAR" Every Tuesday
"CHUCKLES" Every Thursday
"THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL" Published Yearly

"DOWN AND OUT."

(Continued from page 9.)

home, but he did not seem to feel it. One thought was buzzing in his excited brain—he was ruined! By his brother's act, intended to clear him, he was ruined at St. Jim's, and he was at the end of his tether.

He did not feel angry with Frank. He knew that the fog was acting from affectionate devotion, founded upon unshakable faith in him. It seemed so obvious to Frank—believing in his brother as he did—that the truth ought to be told, whatever it was, and his brother cleared. He did not understand.

The door of Study No. 9 opened at last, and Levison looked wearily round, expecting to see Cardew. He started as he saw Tom Merry. The captain of the Shell came quietly into the study, and he was followed by Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth and Figgins of the New House. Levison stared at them. He could not imagine what the three juniors wanted with him. They were not the fellows to triumph over him when he was down. Racke, or Crooke, or Trimble, perhaps—but never Tom Merry & Co.

He did not speak; he looked at them dully. He was too deep down now to care what they thought, what they said—what anyone thought or said. The game was up for him at St. Jim's, and that was all that mattered.

"Pwax excuse us buttin' in like this, Levison," said D'Arcy politely.

Levison nodded without speaking.

"We—we wanted to speak to you," said Figgins. "We're sorry you've come such a mucker. You'll have to leave now?"

"Yes."

"That's it," said Tom Merry. "Look here, Levison, we've been down on you; but as a reasonable chap you couldn't expect anything else, could you?"

"No!"

"But now you're going, that's all over," said Tom. "After what you did at Greyfriars, I can't say I think you ought to stay at St. Jim's. It's not right. But now it's come to the finish we'd like you to know that there's no bad feeling. We wish you well when you leave."

"You're very kind."

"You'll do better somewhere else," said Figgins. "And I and the other New House chaps, Levison, wish you luck."

"And the same from the School House!" said Tom.

"Yaas, wathah."

"Thank you," said Levison.

Sidney Clive came into the study, hesitating. He had been at the door. He coloured as he met Levison's glance.

"I'd like to say the same as these chaps, Levison!" he said. "We've been chums, and goodness knows, it was a shock to me; but I can't forget we've been friends, and I wish you the best of luck. I'm sure I'm right in thinking that you've changed since—since—" He broke off. He did not want to make any allusion to the story of the theft at Greyfriars.

Levison smiled faintly.

Cardew was in the doorway of the study, lounging carelessly with his hands in his pockets. His eyes were keenly on Levison. Tom Merry made a movement to go. He had said what he had come to say, what he had felt bound to say to the fellow who was so terribly down and out.

"Hold on!" said Levison quietly.

Tom turned back.

"Yes?" he said. "If there's anything I can do, Levison—"

"Nothing. But now I'm right at the finish I'd like you to know—" Levison paused. "I've got to get out of St. Jim's. That's settled. I'd like you to know before I go that I never was a thief."

Tom compressed his lips a little. What was the use of more denials at the last moment.

"You see, I can prove it," said Levison, "now it will cost me nothing to prove it—as I've got to go, anyhow. Do you see?"

"I—I don't see," said Tom. "If you could have proved it, Levison, why didn't you? There's been plenty of time. Every fellow in your House would have been glad to believe you innocent, if you'd let them."

"Yaas, wathah."

Levison smiled again, a smile that had a touch of his old mockery.

"I can explain now," he said, "if you care to listen."

"Go on!" said Tom.

"Bunter told Trimble a yarn the day the Greyfriars eleven was over here," said Levison. "Bunter never really knew all the circumstances of my leaving Greyfriars. He drew on

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 765.

his imagination to satisfy Trimble. I've heard since that Trimble stood him a spread to get the yarn out of him; and Bunter seems to have spun him a striking sort of yarn in return. He's a born liar, like Trimble, and too stupid to know the harm he might do. I dare say he's forgotten the whole thing by now. If I had chosen to appeal to the Head of Greyfriars, Bunter certainly would have been flogged for telling such a string of lies."

"But—"

"I was not expelled from Greyfriars," said Levison. "I was never even suspected of anything like dishonesty. You will all know it soon, now Frank's gone over there to bring the whole story out."

"You tried to stop him," said Figgins.

Levison nodded.

"And that made you all think the matter was settled, I suppose—that Frank would bring back proof of Trimble's story, if he brought back anything?"

"Yes."

"I suppose it was natural enough," said Levison. "It looks like it. Well, when Frank's told Dr. Locke the story, Dr. Locke is certain to communicate with Dr. Holmes here."

"Yaas, wathah."

"He will tell the facts," said Levison. "The facts will clear me of what I'm accused of. Trimble's yarn will be knocked into a cocked hat. Everybody at St. Jim's will know it is a lie!"

"You—you really say—" gasped Tom Merry.

"You'll know it all in a few days, officially," said Levison.

"No need for me to tell you now, for that matter. If you're fed up, let it rest where it is."

"We're not likely to do that," said Tom Merry quietly.

"If you're telling us the truth now, Levison—and I hope you are—why couldn't you call on Dr. Locke's evidence before? Why should you leave St. Jim's? You're talking in riddles."

"Can't you catch on," said Figgins.

Sidney Clive did not speak, but his eyes were fixed very earnestly on Levison's face.

"Pwax, tell us the west, Levison," said D'Arcy.

"Very well. I couldn't call on Greyfriars for evidence, because it meant my getting out of this school. I wasn't a thief, as that fool Bunter told that other fool Trimble; I was not expelled. But—" Levison's voice faltered. "There was something—something I wanted to keep dark from Dr. Holmes, something that meant the boot for me here if it came out. Once the two headmasters begin to compare notes on the subject of Ernest Levison it will come out."

"Oh!" said Tom Merry, with a deep breath.

A glimmering of comprehension dawned on his mind.

"It won't come out that I am a thief," said Levison calmly, "because I never was one. It won't come out that I was expelled from Greyfriars, because I was not expelled. But it will come out that—that—"

"Go on, old chap," said Clive very softly.

"It's a rotten story," said Levison. "You fellows remember what I used to be like here, when they called me a 'hard case,' before Frank came to St. Jim's? Well, I was like that at Greyfriars. No need to make any bones about it. I was at Greyfriars what Racke of the Shell is here—a dingy sort of blackguard. I was no worse than I hadn't sunk so low. You've known me a worse fellow than I ever was at Greyfriars. But it came to Dr. Locke's knowledge. And there was something else. I played a rotten trick on another fellow. No need to go into details. I own up it was rotten. But there was no question of stealing, or anything of that kind—just one of the impish tricks I used to play on fellows here before—before— Oh, you know."

"I know," said Tom.

"I was had up before the Head, and got the chopper," said Levison. "It wasn't just one thing, or just another. I had a bad record, and I'd put the lid on and got the chopper. The Head spared me an expulsion, but I had to go—in disgrace. That's the story. That's what will come out when Frank sets the two headmasters comparing notes."

Tom's eyes were keen on Levison's face.

"And that's all that will come out?" he asked.

"That's all."

"That's nothing to make St. Jim's down on you."

"I know."

"Then why—"

"You don't understand yet," said Levison. "Can't you see? I had to get out of Greyfriars. I was in disgrace. I came to St. Jim's. Do you think Dr. Holmes would have let me come here if he'd known the facts?"

Tom Merry started.

"I—I suppose not," he muttered.

"Bai Jove!"

"He never knew the facts," said Levison quietly.

"But—your father—"

"My father was furious with me for coming such a mucker at Greyfriars, naturally enough. I had a rotten time at home.



Tom Merry caught Levison by the arm. He read Levison's expression only too clearly. "What's the verdict, old chap?" he asked kindly. "I twust—" began Arthur Augustus. Levison smiled wearily. "It's what I expected," he said. "It can't be helped. My luck's out! I've got the sack!" (See page 10.)

But Doris was never told, nor Frank. They only knew I'd left. And—and when the pater got me here he said nothing of it—let it all slide. I'd never have been admitted here if Dr. Holmes had known. Now you catch on, I suppose? As soon as Dr. Locke and Dr. Holmes take up the subject my innocence will be proved—of all that Trimble's accused me of. But Dr. Holmes will know then that I entered this school upon what he will consider false pretences.

"I—I see," muttered Tom.

"It means the boot," said Levison. "He wouldn't have admitted a fellow who had to get out of another school in disgrace. It would have been his duty to refuse. When he knows he will act, as he's bound to act. All the more because he will consider that he's been deceived. I shall have to go. I've made up my mind to it now. But now you know why I didn't call Dr. Locke's evidence to prove that I never was expelled from Greyfriars for theft."

"I—I see now."

"You see, I wanted to stick on," said Levison. "I could stand being an Ishmael, and I stood it. Now I've got to go. Poor old Frank thinks he is clearing my name, and he is for that matter, but it's the finish for me here. That's all."

There was silence in Study No. 9.

Tom Merry & Co. understood now, understood only too clearly.

It was because Levison had no imaginable motive for refusing to clear himself that he had been condemned by the school. Now the juniors knew his motive—a powerful one. For the very act that proved his innocence made it impossible for him to remain at St. Jim's.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus, breaking the silence at last. "I am awfully sorry, Levison. I—I see now. I—I apologise."

"Same here," said George Figgins. "You couldn't expect us to guess a thing like that, Levison, could you?"

"No."

"If you'd told us—" said Tom Merry.

Levison laughed slightly.

"If I'd told anybody that a word from Dr. Locke to Dr. Holmes would get me the sack here, how long do you think I should have stayed? Telling one or two fellows would have been telling the lot. It would have been bound to get out. And even if it didn't, telling a few would have done no good. Those who weren't told wouldn't understand."

"That's so."

"And would you have believed me?" said Levison scornfully. "It couldn't be put to the test only by the crash coming. You've no proof now that I haven't just told you a string of lies. You won't have the proof until I'm kicked out of the school."

"I—I suppose that's so," confessed Tom Merry.

"But—"

"You might have told a chum," said Sidney Clive quietly.

"I should have believed you, Levison."

"I wonder!" said Levison.

He laughed again.

"Suppose Frank changed his mind, and never saw the Head at Greyfriars, and nothing came out, and I stayed on here? Would you fellows believe then that I've told you the truth? Or would you believe that I've spun you a clever yarn, and fixed it up for Frank to make that journey to give it colour?"

"Bai Jove!" murmured Arthur Augustus.

Tom Merry and Figgins exchanged a startled look, and did not speak.

"You see," said Levison bitterly, but without anger, "you've already got a doubt in your minds. But you can be easy. The story's true that I've told you, and the proof will come along to-morrow, when I get out of St. Jim's. I shall leave a clean name behind me here, but I shall have to go. And then you'll believe."

"I believe you now," said Tom Merry manfully, crushing down a faint, lingering doubt. "I believe you, Levison, and—and I'm sorry I ever was down on you. You couldn't expect us to believe in you as the matter stood. It was

asking too much. But now we know the truth it's different. I hope you won't have to go."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"No chance of that," said Levison. "Dr. Holmes will think he has been tricked. I dare say he won't expel me, but I shall have to clear."

"I am vewy glad you have explained, howevah," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "What you weally need, Levison, is some good advice from a fellow of tact and judgment. I weally wish you had told me befoah. Now I am goin' to give you a tip."

"Go ahead!" said Levison.

"Go to the Head at once, and make a clean bweast of it all befoah he hears from Gweyfwiahs," said Arthur Augustus. "Tell Dr. Holmes the whole stow, and appeal to him—"

Levison's brow set grimly.

"I'm not going to ask for mercy," he said. "It's my own fault—then, if not now—my own fault, and I'm not going to whine."

"You must think of othahs, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "It will be a fearful shock to Fwank if you have to go, and to Dows. Go to the Head and own up, and twy your luck."

Levison shook his head.

"I agree with Gussy," said Figgins. "It's a chance."

"It's a good chance," said Tom Merry. "You see, Levison, the Head wouldn't have let you come here if he'd known. But since then you've got a good record. Your Form-master will speak up for you. Any of the fellows will speak up, now you've told us how it stands. I think you'd have a good chance if you put it to the Head."

"Not likely!"

"Try, old chap!" said Sidney Clive.

"Weigh in an' talk to him like a Dutch uncle," said Cardew. "Levison, old man, you're a fool. You're chuckin' away your chances. Look here! You're goin' to the Head if I have to carry you."

"Yaas, wathah!" grinned Arthur Augustus.

Levison sat in thought for some minutes. He did not believe that there was any chance. He could realise only too well the doctor's anger at what he would regard—justly—as a deception. There was no hope.

"I'll try," he said at last. "It's no good, but I'll try."

"Good man!" said Tom Merry.

And the juniors left the study together, and Tom Merry & Co. went with Ernest Levison as far as the Head's door. And there were many surprised looks on all sides as the outcast of the school was seen walking, evidently on friendly terms, with Tom Merry & Co.

CHAPTER 8.

Not Nice for Bunter!

FRANK LEVISON caught his breath as he stood in Dr. Locke's study at Greyfriars School.

Now that he was there—now that the old gentleman was peering at him over his gold-rimmed glasses in mild surprise—Frank could hardly realise how he had found the nerve to come at all.

He stood dumbfounded, his cap in his hands, his eyes on the study carpet.

Dr. Locke, the Head of Greyfriars, peered at him. He remembered the name of Levison; he could not imagine what the former Removite's young brother wanted to see him for. But he was kind and courteous; he had ordered the St. Jim's bag to be admitted. Now he smiled kindly to reassure the fag, obviously overwhelmed with confusion.

"Levison's brother, I think?" said the doctor.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Frank.

"You are at St. Jim's with him, I think?" said Dr. Locke.

"Yes, sir!"

"I hope your brother is getting on well at his school?"

"Oh, no—yes—that—that's why I've come, sir!" faltered Frank. "I—I know it's a cheek, Dr. Locke! I—I—I want you to help me—to help Ernest!"

He stood with a crimson face when he had spoken. The surprise deepened in Dr. Locke's face. He made a sign for the boy to come nearer to his writing-table. "Quintus Horatius Flaccus," with whom the doctor had been spending a happy afternoon, lay quite unheeded on the table. Levison minor's visit had brought back the headmaster with a jump from the first century B.C. to the twentieth A.D.

"Sit down, my boy," said the doctor. "And now tell me why you have come. I shall be glad to help either you or your brother if it is in my power."

The kindness of his look and tone reassured the trembling fag. He began to speak, faltering at first, but gathering courage as he went on. The Head of Greyfriars listened, his face growing very grave.

"I am glad you came to me, my boy," he said, when Frank had finished. "I cannot understand why your brother did not appeal to me to make the truth known."

Frank's face lighted up. Had a tormenting doubt found

a lodging somewhere in his troubled mind? The Head's words brought back the sunshine to his face, at all events.

"He is innocent, sir?"

"Certainly."

"I knew it!" said Frank. "Oh, I knew it! I—I wanted him to ask our headmaster, sir, to communicate with you! I don't know why he wouldn't. That's why all the fellows thought him guilty!"

"They had every reason to think so when your brother refused to take the obvious step to clear his name," said Dr. Locke, rather dryly.

Frank hung his head.

"Yes. But now—now, sir, you will make it known—you won't let Ernest be thought a thief?"

"Most assuredly not."

Dr. Locke touched a bell.

"Trotter," he said, when the page appeared, "find Master Bunter of the Remove and send him to my study immediately."

"Yesir!"

Dr. Locke made Frank a sign to wait, and turned to "Horace" again. The fag sat and waited in happy silence. He looked at the book-lined walls, at the high windows over the sunny quad, the bust of Socrates in the corner, the kind, scholarly face of the Greyfriars headmaster, bent over the entrancing pages of "Q. H. Flaccus." Frank was happy, his heart was light; he could hardly keep still. In spite of Ernest's inexplicable refusal to clear himself, he was going to be cleared, and all would be well. Once more the St. Jim's outcast would be on the old footing, respected by the best fellows in the school, a member of Tom Merry's eleven—and Frank's action would be the cause of that great change. The fag was glad—fervently glad—that he had undertaken that journey.

Billy Bunter presented himself in the study at last. He was looking rather uneasy. The Owl of the Remove had many sins on his fat conscience, and he could only surmise which of them had come to the doctor's knowledge. Which-ever and whatever it was, Bunter was prepared to deny it all from beginning to end.

"Bunter!" Dr. Locke turned from "Horace," and fixed a stern frown on the fat junior. "Bunter, you accompanied the Junior Eleven to St. Jim's, I understand, on the occasion of the last match with that school?"

"Yes, sir!" said Bunter, rather relieved. Surely there wasn't anything to be licked for in that?

"At St. Jim's, on that occasion, you met a boy named Trimble?"

"Trimble? Yes, sir," said Bunter. "Not a bad chap, sir—he stoned me a feed!"

"You told Trimble certain circumstances connected with Levison, who was once in the Remove at this school?"

"Did I, sir?" said Bunter, blinking at the Head, in an effort to remember. "Oh, yes! Trimble asked me, and I told him."

"What did you tell him, Bunter?"

Bunter paused, and blinked at Levison minor. He remembered rather vaguely what he had told Baggy Trimble. He recalled that Trimble had been very keen for information—that he had wanted to hear anything and everything against Levison. He remembered, too, that Trimble's keen appreciation had spurred him on to draw the longbow—a little way he had, in any case. Bunter began to realise that Levison minor's visit to Greyfriars must be in connection with what he had told Trimble. Bunter's fat knees knocked together, and he blinked from the Head to the fag, and from the fag to the Head in growing dismay.

"You heard my question, Bunter?" rapped out the Head.

"Oh, yes, sir!" stammered Bunter. "I—I didn't tell Trimble anything, sir—not a word!"

"What!" thundered the Head. And Bunter, in his terror, jumped almost clear of the carpet.

"I—I mean—" he stuttered.

"Tell me the truth at once, Bunter! If you dare to prevaricate, I will flog you with the greatest severity!" exclaimed Dr. Locke.

"I—I—I didn't mean—I wasn't—I—I—" Bunter tried to collect his fat wits. "I—I was really pulling Trimble's leg, sir. He was so keen to hear anything against Levison, and—he stoned me a feed, so—I spun him rather a yarn, sir. I—I'd forgotten why Levison left, and—and I—I—"

"You told him that Levison had robbed his headmaster?"

"I—I—"

"And that he had been expelled from Greyfriars for theft?"

"I—I—I might have—have—I mean, Trimble might have—have thought so, sir!" gasped Bunter. "Trimble's awfully stupid, sir. Shocking! He—he wouldn't understand a fellow properly—"

"Did you, or did you not, tell Trimble that Levison had been expelled from Greyfriars for robbing his headmaster?" asked Dr. Locke, in a voice that made Bunter tremble.

"Yes, sir!" gasped the hapless Owl.
 "You knew that that was a false statement, Bunter!"
 "W-w-w-was it, sir?"
 "Did you not know that it was?" rapped the headmaster.
 "Owl! Yes, sir!"
 "You have done a great deal of harm by your reckless falsehood, Bunter."
 "I—I'm sorry, sir!" gasped Bunter. "I—I didn't mean— You know, sir, Levison was always a rotter, and he really was sacked! It came to the same thing, anyhow. And he might have stolen, for all I know!"
 "Do you regard that, Bunter, as adequate grounds for making so terrible an accusation against a boy who was once your schoolfellow?"

Possibly Bunter did. If so, he did not venture to say so.
 "Nunno, sir!" he gasped.
 "Very good. You will be punished for this wicked conduct, Bunter. I shall mention the matter to your Form-master, and request him to administer a very severe caning."
 "Wow!"

"You may now go, Bunter."
 "Oh dear!" groaned Bunter. And the hapless Owl of the Remove rolled dismally from the room.
 Dr. Locke turned to Frank Levison. He smiled as he saw the brightness in the face of the St. Jim's fag.

"My boy, I am glad you came to me. Your brother's obstinacy is quite inexplicable; but certainly the matter will now be cleared up. I will give you a letter to take to Dr. Holmes at your school, stating the exact circumstances under which your brother left Greyfriars."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gasped Frank.
 "He never was guilty of theft, and was not actually expelled," said Dr. Locke. "You are aware, of course, that he was compelled to leave!"

Levison minor flushed.
 "I—I've always understood that there was some trouble, and that it was thought best for Ernest to go to another school, sir."

Dr. Locke gave him a very keen glance.
 "That is all you knew?"

"Yes, sir."
 "No doubt your father was the best judge of what to tell you," said Dr. Locke, rather dryly. "I may say, my boy, that I have not lost sight of your brother entirely since he left this school. I have made it a point to learn how he has progressed. For a time I was disappointed. But later I was very pleased indeed to hear of him. I am satisfied that he has thrown over the ways that made it impossible for me to allow him to remain here. I am assured that he would now be a credit to Greyfriars, if he were still here. I have, indeed, told him that I should now be willing to allow him to return, if that should be his and his father's wish."

"Oh, sir," said Frank, his face brightening again, "that is very kind of you!"
 "Not at all," said Dr. Locke. "I have a very high opinion of him now. I shall tell Dr. Holmes so. You are returning—"

"Immediately, sir."
 "You will need some refreshment—"
 "Wharton has asked me to tea, sir," said Frank shyly.
 The Head smiled.

"Very good. I can safely leave you to the hospitality of the Remove. I will write the letter to Dr. Holmes, and send it to you in Wharton's study when it is ready."

In faltering tones, Frank Levison thanked the kind-hearted old gentleman, and took his leave. He seemed to be walking on air as he went down the corridor. Harry Wharton was waiting for him at the corner of the passage.

"Come on, kid! Tea's ready!" said Wharton cheerily.
 "Same here," said Frank, laughing. He could laugh now.

It was quite a merry spread in Study No. 1 in the Remove. After tea, the Famous Five walked down to the station with Frank—with the Head's letter safely tucked away in the fag's inside pocket.

It was a long journey back to St. Jim's. But it was a happy one for Levison minor. The summer dusk had deepened into night before he stood once more at the gates of St. Jim's.

CHAPTER 9. The Inevitable.

TOM MERRY clapped Levison of the Fourth on the shoulder. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy gave him an encouraging smile.

"Go in and win!" said Figgins.
 "Put it straight to the old sport!" murmured Cardew. Levison of the Fourth hesitated.

He had arrived at Dr. Holmes' door; but he hesitated to tap. The juniors round him were hopeful; and perhaps Levison, encouraged by their looks and words, felt some slight glimmering of hope himself. But if so, it was very faint.

What had he a right to expect? Dr. Holmes was to know that he had been deceived. For it amounted to that. He could not fail to be angry, to feel that his unsuspicious kindness had been imposed upon. Why should he relent?

At the bottom of his heart, Levison knew that there was no hope. Had there been hope, he would have "chanced it" before this; it was not willingly that he had rested so long under the imputation of crime. It was to keep on at St. Jim's that he had allowed Trimble's accusation to stand—that he had refrained from calling in the witnesses who would have shattered it.

That witness would speak now, and whether the information came from him, or from Levison's own lips, the Head of St. Jim's would know the facts, would know that he had been deceived into admitting to the school a fellow whom he never would have admitted had he known the truth. St. Jim's was not a refuge for fellows who were turned out of other schools for bad conduct.

"Go it, old man!" said Tom encouragingly.
 "Pewwaps you would like me to come in with you and do the talkin', deah boy," suggested Arthur Augustus. Levison smiled faintly.

"I'll chance it," he said. "Anyhow, the Head's got to know now; he will hear from Dr. Locke. I may as well chance it. But the game's up—I knew that, anyhow."

He raised his hand, and tapped at the door.
 "Come in!"

Ernest Levison passed into the study, and the door closed behind him. Tom Merry & Co. waited in the passage anxiously. They were joined by a good many more fellows there—Lowther and Manners, Blake, and Herries, and Digby, Wildrake, and Talbot, and some more. All were curious to know what had happened to cause this revulsion of feeling towards Levison—and they soon knew. And when they knew, all the fellows shared Tom Merry's hope that the Head would be merciful, and temper the wind to the shorn lamb. Once or twice they caught the sound of a murmur of voices from the study. The anxious juniors would have given a good deal to know what was going on behind that closed oaken door.

Levison of the Fourth—if they could have seen him—was standing before Dr. Holmes with downcast face. The Head was listening to him—in surprise at first, and then with growing, grim condemnation in his face. Levison knew what that look meant, and his voice faltered. From the first he had known that there was no hope.

"You may continue, Levison!" said Dr. Holmes.
 Levison faltered out the rest. Then there was a deep silence in the room for some minutes.

Dr. Holmes spoke at last.
 "It appears, then, Levison, that when you came to this school, you had been turned out of your previous school in disgrace."

"Yes, sir."
 "Your father said no word of this to me."
 "You—you knew I'd been at Greyfriars, sir," faltered Levison.

"I knew that! I understood that Mr. Levison regarded it as judicious to send you to another school, for reasons of his own, which it was not my business to inquire into. It certainly did not occur to me that I was taking in a boy whose conduct had been so bad, that his former headmaster compelled him to leave."

Levison stood silent.
 "I will not say that I was deceived," said the Head. "Doubtless your father hoped that you would do better here, Levison; doubtless he justified his silence to his own conscience. I do not judge him. If I had known the facts, you would never have come here. If you had confessed the facts to me of your own accord, I might have found it possible to take a lenient view. But you have not chosen to do so, until your brother's visit to your former headmaster left you no other resource. It is clear to you, I suppose, that after this you cannot remain?"

Levison drew a deep breath. It was clear enough to him. He had not expected anything else.

"Dr. Locke, sir, told me once—that that he would be willing to take me back to Greyfriars," he faltered. "He told me so when I visited Greyfriars once, as a member of the eleven."

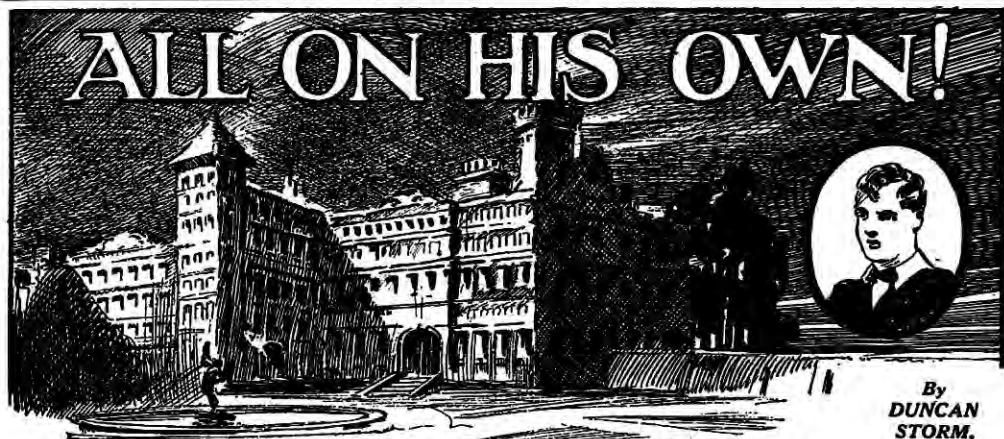
"That, then, may be a solution of the problem," said Dr. Holmes dryly. "If your statement is correct, Dr. Locke is very welcome to take you back to Greyfriars. Certainly you cannot remain at St. Jim's."

Levison's head drooped a little. He had known it, he had expected it, but it was a blow to him all the same.

"I do not desire to be unduly hard," said Dr. Holmes. "There is no question of expulsion. You may remain till the end of the week, and then you may go home, without any public comment on the matter. I shall communicate with

(Continued on page 19.)
 THE GEN LIBRARY.—No. 763.

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 the stranger 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. He finds a friend in Wobbygon, a lucky 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 commanders their car, and hides it in the Haunted Barn.

Learning of the scoundrels' intentions of smuggling their ill-gotten gains out of the country, Wobby plans to capture the plunder. At the dead of night he and his pals steal out of the school. Boarding the commandeered car, they are soon hot on the trail.

They are only just in time to rescue the colonel from further members of the gang, two of whom they capture. The boys then drive to Whitechurch Castle, where they find some of the stolen plunder hidden in a well. They are shadowed and attacked by the two escaped burglars. During the fierce fight which ensues, a huge car, crowded with men, with none other than John Lincoln at their head, arrives. The Founder of St. Beowulf's is interested in the lads' story, and asks to join the party. The lads consent, and, after a promise from Mr. Lincoln to send for them later, they arrange to return to the school in his car.

(Now read on.)

A Bad Blunder.

"IN that case, my men can use your car, and it shall go into my garage at High March Castle," said John Lincoln. "They shall take the prisoners along to my place in it, and I will guarantee to have you to the school before dawn."

He gave a whistle. A big, broad-shouldered man came climbing over the ramp of the fallen prize-fighter, as immovable as the face on a carved briar pipe. It was the face of a man not to be surprised by anything.

"Stubbs," said John Lincoln. "Yes sir!" replied Stubbs. "These young gentlemen form a gang," explained Stubbs' master.

"Yes sir!"

"You have been elected to the gang, Stubbs."

"Yes sir!"

"I have answered for you, Stubbs."

"Yes sir!"

"You will obey all the laws and rules of the gang, Stubbs," added John Lincoln, who evidently loved to find something that might surprise Stubbs. "and you will regard all these young gentlemen and the kangaroo as brothers."

"Yes sir!" replied Stubbs.

Then John Lincoln pointed to the sacks and boxes of plate.

"This is the first plunder of the gang, Stubbs," he said.

"Yes sir!" replied Stubbs, eyeing the sacks. "You will get it to the small car, taking charge of the prisoners, and take the lot to High March Castle. Lock the treasure in the strong-room—here is the key—and lock the prisoners in the game larder. I will deal with them in the justice-room to-morrow morning at eleven. See that they have a good breakfast."

"That one that got the knock over the head from the boomerang don't look as if 'e wants any breakfast, sir," answered Stubbs.

"Never mind. Let him have the chance of making one," replied John Lincoln. "It strikes me that 'e won't have a chance of tasting game-pie and York ham again for a long time to come. So do him well!"

Stubbs nodded.

"As it is necessary to take these young gentlemen back to the school," said John Lincoln, "I am taking them in the large car," concluded John Lincoln. "If they are not in their beds by dawn they might fall into the hands of Mr. Teach, their master, and their chances of getting a good thrashing would be not remote."

"Yes sir!" replied Stubbs, shouldering a sack of treasure with a tremendous heave that betrayed its weight.

"It would never do to start our association with the gang by getting best half of it thrashed for playing the wag, would it, Stubbs?" pursued John Lincoln.

"No, sir," replied Stubbs, and there was just a flicker of a smile in his steady grey eyes.

Off he went with the sack, and John Lincoln stirred up his new companions.

"Now, boys!" he said briskly. "There's no time to lose. Bring that kangaroo along!"

Wobby hesitated as they dragged Nobby to the door of the splendid car.

"Let me wipe his tail, sir," he begged. "He's all muddly!"

"Never mind about that," replied John Lincoln. "Stow yourselves away!"

The boys climbed into the great car, Wobby taking off his coat and laying it down on the soft rugs to protect them from the disreputable and muddy kangaroo.

Away they went, purring over the rough roads under the drive of the powerful engines.

"My word, nugs!" said Wobby, as he leaned back on the luxurious cushions. "This is class! This is the real high tone class. We are doing all right. We started with a Ford, and we came home in a Rolls-Royce. We started all on our little own, and we come home with a millionaire and a fighting man in the gang. But what does Mr. Lincoln mean when he talks about taking us into a new enterprise?"

None of Wobby's companions could give any answer to his speculations.

"They say he is speculating off on his big yacht round the world soon," added Wobby. "Oh, nugs! Suppose he's thinking of taking us with him. He's just the sort of chap that might take it into his head. He said in his last speech at the school on Prize Day that travel was the best education that any boy can get!"

But to these speculations his companions could give no answer.

It was plain, by the way that John Lincoln brought them to the school, that he was a worthy member of the gang. He cut off a large bend in their road by running at high speed through his own park, he dodged round back lanes and turnings, and just as the first grey light of dawn was beginning to show in the sky he brought the great, silent, easy-running car steaming round the walls of the school like a shadow.

It came to a standstill just where the boys wanted it. Indeed, John Lincoln might have been one of his own scholars, so exactly did he know the lay of the land for getting in and out of the school unobserved.

"Good-night, boys, or, rather, good-morning!" he whispered, as they got out of the car, hauling a somewhat weary and disgruntled kangaroo after them. "No more night-runnings till Saturday! You will get your invitation all right!"

He shook hands with the boys, and they crept through the laurel hedges into the school grounds. The coast was clear. Nobby was shoved into his stable, where he sank down on his straw, quite exhausted with the excitements of the night.

"Nobby's had about enough of us!" said Wobby, with a grin, as he secured the door of the loose-box. "He's glad enough to hit the hay, and he's fed-up with running with nugs. Now we'll go and hit the hay ourselves, lads. It's the first time I've ever been to bed by way of the chimney!"

Up the fire-escape and on to the roofs the boys climbed. Wobby was beginning to feel sleepy now.

He led the way along the leads till he came to the stack of chimneys, and, climbing

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2!

up by the iron foot-grips, he sat on the edge of the stack, looking at the first faint glow of day in the mist.

"We are like Cinderella!" he whispered.

"We've just got home in time!"

He swung his legs over the edge of the chimney, and began to descend.

"Don't follow me down too close, boys," he said.

He found the grips inside the chimney all right with his feet, and down he went, Jim following after him at a respectful distance.

Wobby was very sleepy now, otherwise he would have noticed that, whereas the chimney up which they had climbed from the box-room was entirely free of soot, this chimney by which he was descending was filled with soot, which increased the farther he got down it.

The strain of the night's exertions were telling on Wobby now. He was almost nodding as he climbed down the chimney, and he did not notice that he was climbing down a good deal farther than he had climbed up. When one is very tired, everything in the way of distances seems to increase.

So Wobby was quite unprepared for what was to come.

He saw a faint light beneath his feet.

"Good egg!" he muttered to himself.

"Here is the hearth at last!"

Wobby descended on to the great hearth of the fireplace.

He was stooping, and about to step out from the hearth, when he suddenly paused with a thrill of horror, for the hearth on which he stood was not the hearth of the box-room attached to Dormitory No. 4, from which he and his chums had started on their night's excursion.

There, in the dim light that was filtering through the blinds, stood a bed. And from the bed came a snore. And from the pillows of the bed projected a bushy black beard.

It was Blackbeard Teach lying on his back, dreaming. The boys had mistaken their chimney, and had dropped straight into the Pirate's Den!

Wobby was swift to act. He jumped to the first iron up the chimney. Jim was coming down hand over fist. He could hear him feeling with his foot for the iron ramp above.

"Cave, Jim!" whispered Wobby, in agitated tones. "Stop the chaps. We've come down the wrong chimney! This is the Pirate's Den!"

Jim was almost on his head, and Wobby had to descend again to the hearth.

He stooped, and looked at the bearded figure in the bed. Blackbeard was still sleeping, but he was very restless.

"Oh, sleep my baby!" almost growled Wobby. "Sleep my baby, or we are done!"

He could hear a bit of wrangling up the chimney, where Lung and Stickjaw, who did not understand the trouble, were having a bit of an argument whilst they blocked the chimney. Then, to Wobby's horror, there was a rumble and a rush in the great chimney, and something like a sackload of soot fell down plump on his back.

Through the cloud he saw Blackbeard start up in bed, rubbing his eyes. But before Blackbeard could rub twice, Wobby was up the chimney and out of sight.

His friends had realised the situation, and were climbing up again.

Wobby hung in the darkness of the chimney wondering what was going to happen. Then he heard a stamping in the room below.

"A fall of soot!" growled the voice of Blackbeard Teach. "Confound that sweep! That lazy ruffian said that he had made a job of it! The second fall of soot within a month! I'll haul him over the coals to-morrow! No good trying to clear up the mess; I'll leave it to the janitor in the morning!"

To Wobby's intense relief, Blackbeard stamped back to his bed. He could hear the mattress creak as the master's weight descended on it.

He hung in the chimney for another few minutes, to give Blackbeard a chance of getting to sleep again.

"Oh crumbs!" he ejaculated. "What a night!"

There was no stir in the bed. Blackbeard had settled down again. Slowly, and with infinite care Wobby climbed up after his companions. They had gained the chimney-stack again, and were sitting on the top of it, more or less begrimed.

When Wobby put his head up they laughed

so much that they could hardly sit on the chimney.

"Shut up, you fools!" said Wobby fiercely.

"Oh crumbs! What's the matter? Take a look at yourself!" spluttered Stickjaw.

"You're as black as a crow!"

Wobby groaned as he climbed out of the chimney and looked at his clothes.

"My word!" he exclaimed. "I'll have to spend the rest of the time getting myself clean before anyone's stirring. What silly asses you chaps are! You might have told me when you saw that I was going for the left side of the chimney-stack instead of the right. It's only our luck that old Blackbeard didn't get the lot of us. The fat would have been in the fire then!"

"You seem to have been in the fire by your boots!" said Stickjaw. "Look at them!"

"My clothes and boots are ruined!" replied Wobby complacently. "There's nothing to be done but to bury them. I've provided for that. That's just where my forethought comes in. I've got the double of every suit I own in my box, so that if I do get in a mess like this, nobody can be any the wiser. Now let us get down the right chimney this time."

Wobby was wide awake now. He slipped this time into the chimney that led to the box-room of Dormitory No. 4. In the fireplace he dumped off his sooty clothes before he made for the bath-room.

Here his companions fell upon him and soaped him and scrubbed him. The clothes were tied up in a parcel to be buried in the woods at a convenient opportunity.

The whole dormitory remained sound asleep during these operations, and the five weary boys crept to their beds feeling that they had had a most successful and enjoyable night, and had cut it about as fine for time as they possibly could have done.

There was not much time for sleep now. Wobby dozed off for a stone. His dreams were restless. He thought that he was driving a motor-bus down the Smugglers' Punch-bowl with the whole school sitting and roaring on the top, when he was aroused by a vigorous shaking.

Wobby Schemes.

HE opened his eyes, and his heart sunk.

There was Blackbeard Teach standing over his bed shaking him by the shoulder.

"Blackbeard knows all!" thought Wobby.

"Wake up, you lazy young rascal!" roared the voice of Blackbeard, with a strange amiability. "Here you are sleeping like a slugard after ten hours of the happy sleep of careless boyhood, whilst I, after burning the midnight oil, have been assailed by evil dreams, and a fall of soot in my room!"

"Dear me, I am very sorry to hear that, sir!" said Wobby, sitting up in bed and digging his fists into his eyes.

Then he thought to himself, "Ten hours of the happy sleep of careless boyhood! Yes, I don't think!"

"I have looked in on you, Mr. Wobby," said Mr. Teach, tugging at his black beard, "to ask you if you and Ready will be good enough to lay the trail for the harriers this afternoon. I want a good stiff trail laid where you like, so long as it takes the fat off some of these lazy fellows who prefer to hang about the tuckshop stuffing their gross bodies with cakes and pies, instead of partaking in a nifty, organised game. I am going to turn out the whole school for the run this afternoon. Give them something that they will remember—a run to talk over all the rest of their lives—when old St. Beowulf-gather together. Do you understand?"

"Rather, sir!"

replied Wobby, and Mr. Teach left the dormitory well satisfied.

"What was Blackbeard after?" demanded Stickjaw, coming in from the bath-room with a rather troubled face.

"It's all right, gentle youth!" replied Wobby easily. "Old Blue Mug hasn't smoked us. He's after me to lay a trail with Jim for the harriers this afternoon. He's going to turn out the whole school, and wants the trail a stiff one. So we'll want lots of confection. I'm going to take you, Stickjaw, for third hare!"

Stickjaw groaned.

"I can't run for toffee, after last night," he said. "I feel like a boiled egg."

"Better run with the hares than run with the boulders," replied Wobby. "Old Blackbeard is on the warpath to sweat some of Mother Gums' pastry out of the chaps. He'll follow up on his hike across country as whippers in to the pack. You'd have to run anyhow, and it will probably do you good!"

Wobby did not think it worth while to mention to Stickjaw that he wanted his bag for special purposes not unconnected with Lady Castlewood's jewels.

How the lads tumbled into their cold baths. They felt a bit better afterwards as they made their way into Hall for breakfast.

"What I want is tea, Jim," said Wobby, pinching his chum's arm. "I want lots of good strong tea to banish sleep. How do you feel after our night's adventures, fair cousin?"

"Rotten!" replied Jim, drowsily.

They felt better after breakfast, but worse in the middle of the morning when monsieur took the French lesson.

Wobby, who was having a comfortable sleep behind the lid of his desk, was suddenly surprised by Froggy, who caught him and hauled him out from the class.

"Ha, Monsieur Wobbe!" exclaimed monsieur. "You tink you learn ze beautiful French language whilst you are asleep. Ha, my friend, I will wake you up! You will write me two undred lines to-night of Moliere."

"Lines about Molly's hair, sir?" asked Wobby, yawning wearily.

"Ha! Insolent!" retorted monsieur, his eyes rolling. "You pretend that you do not know the greatest playwright of ze wor-ld!"

"We haven't heard about him in Australia yet, sir," replied Wobby nonchalantly. "We know all about Ned Kelly, Jack Dempsey, Billy Hunter, and Charlie Chaplin—but Moliere is nix to the peps!"

"What you say?" demanded monsieur, who was always easily mystified by Wobby's deformities of the English language.

"Nix to the peps, sir—nothing to the population, sir!" explained Wobby. "They haven't got wise to Moliere yet in our parts. They put their bank on Doug. Fairbanks. Doug is the peach in the garden!"

"Zen you shall write f'ree undred line, you and your Ned Kelly an' your Dempsey!" retorted monsieur.



Wobby was about to step out from the hearth, when he suddenly paused with a thrill of horror, for in front of him stood a bed. From the bed came a snore, and from the pillows projected a bushy black beard. It was Blackbeard Teach who lay in the bed!

And this is what we Australians fought the Great War for!" muttered Wobby, in disgusted tones. "Three hundred lines for being awake all the night!"

"You ave too-see!" demanded monsieur, with sudden wrath.

"Not exactly toothache, monsieur," replied Wobby daintily. "But I had a very dis- gusted night!"

"Good!" replied monsieur relenting. "You shall not write se line, Monsieur Wobbee. Since you are so ignorant of the greatest of Belle France, I shall come to me and I will give you special instruction in our glorious literature."

Wobby groaned. This was worse than the three hundred lines. But luckily monsieur, at the end of the class, heard that there was to be a record turnout of the harriers, and he became so excited that he forgot all about Wobby's further education.

"Ha! We 'unt se foxes!" he asked, rubbing his hands. "Ze 'ole school turn out, two 'undred an' fifty strom, an' 'e chase se fox!"

"No, sir," explained Wobby. "You don't chase fox. You lay a trap of paper and you follow the paper where ever it goes."

"Ha, I see!" exclaimed monsieur. "We play what you call 'Unt se paper'! But zat is too easy!"

"It is a kid's game, isn't it, monsieur?" agreed Wobby carelessly. "Are you going to run with the hounds?"

"Of course!" agreed monsieur. "I shall be the dog!"

Wobby chuckled as he packed the haversacks the hares were to carry with paper.

"Froggy thinks he's going to play 'kiss in the ring,'" he said to Jim. "We'll carry six bags between us, Jim, and mind the good and right, and then them to last, and when we're finished with the paper we've got to have the stuffing in us to make a good run home with a bit of weight."

"Why a bit of weight?" asked Jim.

"My dear, simple boy," replied Wobby. "Don't you smoke me? We are going out with the paper, but we are coming home with the Countess of Castledow's jewels!"

Laying the Trail!

NEVER had St. Beowulf's turned out such a pack of harriers as on the eventful afternoon when Jim Ready, Wobby, and Stickjaw took the field, with their haversacks stuffed with confetti.

Blackbeard Teach had made up his mind that there was too much pastry being consumed at St. Beowulf's, and that half the school was growing purty and fat.

Blackbeard had great liking for organised sports, and he was of opinion that cross-country running was the very best form of sport for a large school.

There were some rather doleful faces hanging about the school as the hares prepared to start, particularly those of Bully Slurk and his companions.

These had made up their minds for a quiet afternoon at the club.

The club was a lurking place amongst the thick gorse-bushes on the cliffs.

Here, in an old rabbit-run, Slurk and his friends had a cache of fags and light books, and they loved nothing better than dodging the playing-field and loafing up here, smoking and card-playing.

They had invited Manders, a new boy, with more money than sense, to join their party this afternoon, and Slurk had looked to making a nice little revenue out of Manders. But this little scheme was knocked on the head when the order went round that the whole school was to run with the pack, and that the run would begin and end with "call over."

There was no chance of dodging the column. There was not even a chance of shamming sick.

"Yah!" snarled Slurk, as, with his long, thin legs sticking like pipe-stems out of his running shorts, he approached our three friends, wishful to get some idea of the line of country they were going to take. "You fellows have got a lot of paper there!"

"Yes," replied Jim Ready, grinning. "We are going to give you a good run for your money!"

"Which way are you going?" demanded Slurk.

"Don't know, Slurky!" replied Wobby, with his engaging smile. "But, which ever way we go, we are going to lay the trail so that you lame dogs won't be able to cut across and strike the home side before you've been over the outward bound!"

"Clever, ain't you?" yapped Slurk, finding that his ruse did not come off. "I believe it's you smart Alicks have put Blackbeard up to this nonsense!"

"Stopped your fags and shove 'apeeny games for this afternoon, I suppose," replied Wobby calmly. "That's what's got you snake-headed. You won't be able to clear Fathead Manders out of his pocket-money up at the old club—you and your little clique! But if you want to know who put Blackbeard up to the game of hare and hounds, here comes Blackbeard himself! As a hint!"

But Slurk had no desire to meet Blackbeard. He slunk off.

Wobby grinned at his chums.

"Slurky don't want to run!" said he. "He knows that he's perished his wind with all those tonsil-tearers, lung-scorchers, coffin-nails and much tickle 'e's wars smoking. But we'll lay him out something that will expand his chest. Here comes Blackbeard!"

Blackbeard bustled up.

"You fellows ready?" he asked.

"Yes, sir!" replied Wobby.

"You'll never be able to get away with all that paper! said Blackbeard, looking at the bulging haversacks with a twinkle in his eyes.

"We'll want a lot of paper for the run we are planning out, sir," replied Jim Ready.

"That's the ticket!" said Mr. Teach, well pleased. "I don't care how stiff you make it! It will pull off the gross fatness of a lot of these heavy Fifth-Formers who are too fond of the flesh-pots of Egypt. Some of them drip butter and raspberry-jam! And monsieur is coming with us. He is going to lead the pack!"

And again Mr. Teach's eyes twinkled.

Wobby saw a chance of putting in a request.

"Please, sir," said he, "the bags are a bit bulky. But I was thinking that if I could take Nobby, my kangaroo, he could carry the spare bags, and we'd be all right."

"What about that beast of yours? Is he dangerous?" asked Mr. Teach doubtfully.

"Not a bit, sir!" replied Wobby promptly.

"He'll come and eat out of your hand if you've got anything to eat in it."

"What about children?" asked Mr. Teach.

"Loves 'em, sir!" replied Wobby. "Where he was brought up, he used to be taken out in the pram with the baby, and he was always swigging out of the baby's bottle!"

"All right! Take him!" replied Blackbeard, laughing. "Perhaps he'll make the pace for you!"

The boys ran off to the stable, where Nobby was resting from his fatigue of the previous night, and they found their pet lively and cheerful, sitting on his great tail and looking up to them with pleading eyes that asked for a run.

"Come on, old cobber!" said Wobby. "We are going to make a kangaroo hunt of it!"

Nobby sat still whilst the spare haversacks were strapped on him, and a shout went up from the school as they saw the hares start off, accompanied by the kangaroo, Nobby sticking close to his master and sailing over the first hedge in fine style.

Twenty-five minutes' grace was allowed to the hares, and Wobby made straight for the woods. He laid the trail over a thick hedge of holly, and made straight for the marsh by Juicy Brook.

Wobby grinned as they ran down the slopes of the woods towards the marshland.

"This is where we put a quarter of an hour or so on our start and take the steam out of the field," said he. "And this is where we souse Froggy in the mud!"

He stopped in his run, and picked up one of the long jumping-poles which they had used on a previous occasion to jump the dykes.

"Where we go, they've got to follow!" said he, with a laugh. "Come on, Jim!"

The three, who had had a lot of practice at pole-jumping on the occasion of the memorable otter-hunt, easily cleared the wide dyke of mud and slime, leaving a good dab of paper on either side to show which way they had gone.

"Want to delay the run in every way possible, nugget?" puffed Wobby in explanation, as the kangaroo came flying across the dyke with a splendid bound. "There are some good runners in the school, and we don't want to get run down just when we are doing the bit of business I've come out for. We will work in as many of these nuggets as possible. And there is the red bull!"

"I say! You aren't going to lay the trail across the marsh where that red bull is, are you?" asked Stickjaw, with some apprehension.

"I was reckoning on that bull!" said Wobby, as they ran along, trailing their long poles. "He's worth over ten minutes to us."

They nipped over a couple more wide dykes, and Wobby chuckled as they crossed them. They were only just able to jump these with the long jumping-poles. What monsieur would look like when he had crossed one, Wobby could not imagine.

"I'd give money to see old Froggy skipping through this mud!" said he, as he dusted down the trail clearly. "Now for the bull!"

"What have we got to do?" asked Jim.

"You stay where you are, between those bushes and the river, whilst me and Nobby and I take on with the red bull," said Wobby. "Those bushes are his lurk. The scoundrel lies in wait there to see who's who on his marsh! But I'll tickle him up."

Wobby skirted along the safe side of the dyke prospecting for the red bull, who was hiding amongst a couple of alders and willows. He drew a catapult from his jersey and fitted a stone in the sling as he trotted along, closely followed by the bounding kangaroo.

Jim and Stickjaw waited for him between the bushes and the river, keeping on the safe side of the dyke. They had already seen enough of the red bull not to want a closer acquaintance with him.

"I don't like this bull!" said Stickjaw, as he waited Wobby's manoeuvres. "He is a nasty, ill-tempered, ill-conditioned brute—ought to be cut up into steaks and wing ribs! But what is Wobby up to now?"

Wobby had reached the fringe of bushes, and had taken a good deal of red colour of the bull through the branches.

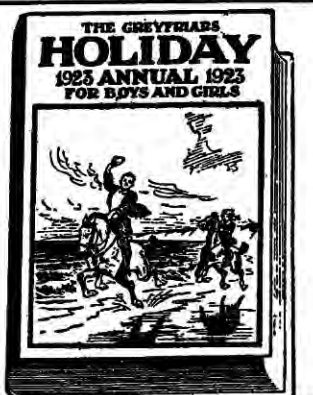
He drew his catapult as an archer draws the bow.

"Whang!" went the catty, and an angry fellow answered the smack of the stone.

"It's all right, nugget!" cried Wobby. "Oo! Silverside's at home. Over you go, Nobby! tease him!"

Wobby made a sweeping motion with his arm across the dyke, and the kangaroo, pricking up his ears, bounded nimbly across the wide dyke, landing with a crash amongst the bushes.

(Next week's instalment of this grand serial will be more exciting than ever. A safe lure of reading it by ordering your GEM early.)



"DOWN AND OUT!"

(Continued from page 15.)

your father in the meantime, and explain matters to him. I hope you may do well elsewhere, Levison. In any case, I recommend that at your next school the headmaster should be acquainted with the facts. You may go, Levison."

"Very well, sir!" said the Fourth-Former quietly. He left the study.

He came down the passage with his head erect; but his face was pale, and he looked almost worn. Levison's school-days had been full of vicissitudes; in his old days, as the black sheep of his House, he had escaped the "sack" narrowly more than once. His luck had been wonderful. That was all over; and now that it was all over, the blow had fallen, and the end had come, and there was no more hope.

Tom Merry caught him by the arm. He read Levison's expression only too clearly.

"What's the verdict, old chap?"

"I trust—" began Arthur Augustus.

Levison smiled wearily.

"Levison," breathed Clive, "you—you're not—"

"It's the sack."

"By gad!" muttered Cardew.

"Wotten!"

"Not quite so bad as that, though," said Levison. "I'm going quietly, without any fuss—dropping out at the end of the week. It's a bit better, after all, than the way I left Grevfriars. I suppose it was only to be expected. My luck's out!"

He walked on quietly. The chopper had come down, but Levison had the nerve to face what had happened to him without flinching.

Tom Merry & Co. looked at one another blankly.

Levison was to go!

He had righted himself in the eyes of his schoolfellows. His strange silence was explained. There was not a fellow who was not willing to give him the right hand of fellowship. But the cost had to be paid! A few more days, and Levison of the Fourth would be known at St. Jim's no more—the struggle was over, and Levison of St. Jim's was down and out!

THE END.

(What will be the future of Ernest Levison? Be sure you read the last of this splendid series of Levison stories, entitled: "Levison's Chance," by Martin Clifford, which will appear in next week's issue of the GEM. You will value this one of the finest stories you have ever read. So make sure and order your GEM well in advance.)



The Sporting Pit-Lads!

A Wonderful New Story of the North—

By JAMES S. MELLALIEU,
appears in our world-famous Companion Paper.

"THE BOYS' FRIEND."

On Sale Every Monday. Price 1jd.
Why not get a copy of the "Boys' Friend" to-day!

12'9

Monthly

is all you pay for a superbly made Mead Gramophone with massive, highly polished solid oak cabinet; gigantic richly coloured horn; extra large silent running motor, unusually loud rubber insulated Sound Reproduction; brilliantly nickel-plated seamless tapered tone arm and all other up-to-date improvements. Sent packed free and carriage paid with 26 Tunes and 400 Silver Steel Needles on 10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL. Fully warranted. Money refunded if dissatisfied. Exquisitely designed Portable Hornless, Table Grands and Drawing Room Cabinet Models at 40/- below shop prices. Write TO-DAY for the biggest and most beautifully illustrated gramophone catalogue in the world.

Mead

Company (Dept. 2108),
Balsall Heath,
Birmingham.

WITH
26
TUNES



11-IN-1 HANDY TOOLS

Hammer, Saw, Chisels, Gimlet, Gauge, Nail Lifter, Bradawl, Screwdriver, Bito. (Ins. Case encloses 19 & forms handy for all 11) Only 3/6. Postage 1d. 6. Worth Double Delight or Money Back. New Catalogue Free. Big Bargains, 7d. to 70/-.



1/3

PAIN'S Presents House, Dept. 9T, HASTINGS

WHY BE SHORT?—If a few extra inches are what you need, commence the Girvan Scientific Treatment at once. Carried out in your own home, quite privately. Your friends will be astonished at the improvement in your appearance. Students report from 2 to 5 inches increase. You will work, eat, and sleep better. Send P.O. for particulars and £100 guarantee to ENQUIRY DEPT. A.M.P., 17, STROUD GREEN ROAD, LONDON, N.4.

MAGIC TRICKS, etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's Instrument, Invisible. Imitate Birds. Price 6d. each, 4 for 1/-.—T. W. Harrison, 239, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.

MOVIES AT HOME.—Projectors and Real Cinema Films. Liata Free.—Desk E. DEAN CINEMA CO., 94, Drayton Avenue, West Ealing, London, W.13.

NERVOUSNESS

is the greatest drawback in life to any man or woman. If you are nervous, timid, low-spirited, lack self-confidence, will power, mind concentration, blush or feel awkward in the presence of others, send three penny stamps for particulars of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment, used in the Navy from Vice-Admiral to Seaman, and in the Army from Colonel to Private. D.S.O.'s, M.C.'s, M.M.'s, and D.C.M.'s. **GODFREY ELLIOTT-SMITH, Ltd.**, 527 Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C.4.

FREE FUN! Our Funny Novelty, causing roars of laughter, FREE to all sending 1/- for 70 Cuts Conjuring Tricks, 12 Jolly Joke Tricks, 8 Catchy Color Tricks, 5 Quoting Card Tricks, 5 Mystifying Magic Tricks, 20 Riddles, 18 Games, 10 Funny Readings, 5 Funny Recitations, 21 Monologues, 75 Toasts, 52 Wealth Secrets, Easy Ventriloquism Secrets, for 1.001 Stupendous Attractions. Thousands delighted! Great Fun!—C. EUGENES, 15, Wood St., Edgbaston, Birmingham.

YOU CAN BE TALLER

Get more attention, respect, and admiration from the opposite sex. You can add 2, 3, or more inches to your height. It's simple, harmless. Write for full particulars FREE.—C. B. Edison, 51, Church St., South Shore, Blackpool.



YOURS for 1!

This handsome full-sized Gent's Lever Watch sent upon receipt of 1/- after approval send 1/- more, the balance may then be paid by 6 mo. thy installments of 2/- each. Guaranteed 5 years. Chain off and free with every watch. Cash returned in full at disbursement. Send 1/- now to Simpson's Ltd. (Dept. 2) 94, Queen Rd., Brighton, Sussex

CHAIN FREE.

STAMMERING. "HOW TO CURE YOURSELF." Book FREE.—FRANK E. HUGHES, 7, Southampton Row, LONDON, W.C.1.

1,000 EXCITING SAMPLE FILMS! Send P.O. 9d. for our 35 ft. film, in neat tin box. Ask for **Marvelous Kinks of Cinemas and Film**.—A. E. MAXWELL (Dept. 1.8.), George Street, Hastings.

BLUSHING.—Famous Doctor's recipe for this most distressing complaint, 6d. (P.O.). Never fails. Testimonials daily.—MA. P. GEORGE, Fairview, Clevedon, Somerset.

FUN FOR ALL! Ventriloquist's Voice Instrument. Invisible. Astonishes, Mystifies, Entertains. Imitate Birds, Beasts, etc. 1/- P.O. (Ventriloquist Treatise included).—Ideal Co., Clevedon, Som.

CUT THIS OUT

"The Gem." PEN COUPON. Value 2d.

Send 7 of these coupons with only 2/9 direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 110, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. You will receive by return a Splendid British Made 14-ct. Gold Nibbed Fleet Fountain Pen, value 10/6 (Fine, Medium, or Broad Nib). If only 1 coupon is sent, the price is 3/9. 6d. being allowed for each extra coupon up to 5. (Pocket Clip, 4d.) Satisfaction guaranteed or cash returned. Special New Offer—Your own name in gilt letters on either pen for 1/- extra.

Lever Self-Filling Model, with Safety Cap, 2/- extra.

DO YOU WANT
£25?

See Our New Com-
petition on page 11
of this issue.

The GEM LIBRARY

1½d

Every
Wednesday.



The St. Jim's Portrait Gallery



PHILIP RUSHDEN. *A Sixth Former and a
Prefect.*
(Another Splendid Art Portrait Study Next Week.)