

"THE KIDNAPPED CRICKETERS!" A Rousing New Long Complete Story
of Tom Merry & Co. at St. Jim's.

THE GEM

2d

EVERY
WEDNESDAY.



"NO BALL!"

LUMLEY-LUMLEY GETS HIS OWN BACK AND "RED JAKE"—

The Kidnapped

*A rousing complete
school story of Tom
Merry & Co.*

By
MARTIN CLIFFORD.



CHAPTER 1. Licked !

"PLAYED, sir!"

"Good old Figgy!"

A ripple of hand-clapping went round Little Side as Figgins, the lanky leader of the New House juniors at St. Jim's, sent the leather flying across to the boundary.

"Score—one-fifty!" chortled Kerr of the New House. "Bit of a shock for Tom Merry, eh?"

"What-ho! Keep it up, Figgy!" roared Lawrence. "New House for ever!"

"Hurrah!"

Excitement was rising high in the New House camp.

Two cricket elevens, representing the School House and New House respectively, were in opposition in a single-innings cricket match on Little Side. Figgins was going great guns, to the vociferous joy of the New House supporters and the unconcealed dismay of their rivals.

It was the tail-end of the innings, Figgins, who had survived from the early stages, being partnered by the last man in, in the person of Fatty Wynn. The School House bowlers found it a

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

(Copyright in the United States of America.)



—MAKES SCHOOL HOUSE "COCK HOUSE" AT ST. JIM'S!

Cricketers!

somewhat formidable "tail," and Figgins was continuing to pile up runs against them in quite an alarming fashion.

Tom Merry, skipper of the School House side, was beginning to look quite worried. The result of a junior inter-House match was usually looked on as a foregone conclusion. School House had never been known to go down. But the result of this game had begun to assume a decidedly doubtful aspect. With a New House score of 150, and Figgins still hitting out, School House prospects looked far from rosy.

"Take over the bowling this end, Talbot?" Tom called out, as the over ended. "Must polish 'em off this over!"

"Right-ho, Tommy! Do my best!" promised Talbot.

He took the ball and faced Fatty Wynn.

That plump and cheerful New House junior had adopted a policy of defence since his arrival, leaving the run-getting to the hard-hitting Figgins. Fatty Wynn, as a bowler, was unequalled at St. Jim's, but as a batsman he had his deficiencies and was willing to acknowledge them.

Talbot sent down what appeared to be a simple ball.

Cautious as he meant to be, Fatty Wynn couldn't resist a cut at that lob. He hit out.

The simple ball turned out then to be not so simple as it looked. Instead of catching the ball fair and square as he intended, Fatty Wynn quite unintentionally "skied" it to mid-field.

There was a yell from the School House supporters.

"Catch!"

"Easy for Lumley!"

Lumley-Lumley ran forward with outstretched arms. Certainly it looked easy for him.

But accidents happen in cricket, as in other spheres. One happened this time.

At the critical moment Lumley-Lumley slipped. His fingers touched the ball, but didn't hold it.

Lumley-Lumley collapsed. The ball rolled away from him.

He had "muffed" it!

To say that the incident caused a commotion among the spectators would be putting it mildly. For a few seconds there was almost a riot, the School House men breathing fire and slaughter, and the New House followers roaring with uncontrollable laughter.

"Butter-fingers!" came a disgusted chorus from the School House.

"What price School House now?" shrieked a dozen New House voices.

"Played, Lumley!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And they call that cricket!" boomed out the strident voice of George Alfred Grundy of the Shell. "Why don't you take up marbles, Lumley—or hopscotch?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was rough on Lumley-Lumley; but right through the game things seemed to have gone badly for that unlucky player.

Lumley-Lumley was an American from far-off Chicago, the city of gunmen and gangsters. Notwithstanding that handicap, he was a fair, all-round cricketer, with a clean, vigorous style at the wicket, and plenty of "pep" as a bowler. But on this particular afternoon luck seemed to have deserted him completely.

Twice now had he missed what appeared to be simple catches, and once had failed to hit the wicket when Figgins was yards from home. Something had gone wrong each time. His luck was out, that was all.

That was the only way Lumley-Lumley could explain it,

anyway. He felt in form, and his three failures were just exceptional mishaps. For him, that explanation was good enough.

It was rather different with the crowd. The School House supporters had begun to look on Lumley-Lumley with some disfavour now, and comments on his play were audible and distinctly pointed.

"What's the matter with Lumley?" was the question that quite a number of School House men were asking—in tones that echoed across the field.

"Turn him off, Merry; he's in the way!"

"Send him down to the fag sports ground for a few lessons!" yelled Wally D'Arcy of the Third.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry frowned, and Lumley-Lumley flushed. And both felt considerably relieved when the New House innings at last came to an end.

That didn't happen at once. Two overs went by before Fatty Wynn was at last clean bowled by Talbot, and the final score was 166, Lumley-Lumley's last fault having cost the School House 16 runs.

Amid round after round of applause from the delighted New House supporters, Figgins and Fatty Wynn returned to the pavilion, and the field broke up.

There was more applause as Tom Merry and his men came in, but it was of the ironical variety; Grundy and one or two other critics were taking the opportunity to exercise their humorous faculties.

"Well played, the corks!" roared Grundy genially.

"Gratters, Lumley-Lumley!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, can it!" said Tom Merry crossly. "They've hit up rather a high score—"

"Might have been worse, of course!" remarked Gore brightly. "Five hundred would have been much worse—or a thousand!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, rats! But we're going to beat it, anyway," said

Tom. "We've had all the bad luck—"

"Not to mention the bad play!" grinned Mellish of the Fourth. "Take Lumley-Lumley—"

"Well, Mellish! Got anything to say about Lumley-Lumley?" asked that junior quietly, coming up behind the critical Mellish. "Because if you have—"

"Nunno, I haven't!" said Mellish, his grin vanishing with surprising suddenness.

"I guess I'll be interested to hear it—"

"There's nothing to hear, old chap!" Mellish assured him. "Matter of fact, I thought you played a jolly good game!"

"Just as well for you, I guess!" smiled Lumley-Lumley.

And he went on to the pavilion, whistling.

Blake and Talbot opened the innings for the School House. And disaster came, swift and sudden.

Fatty Wynn was the bowler. There was a deadly gleam in his little eyes as he took the ball. Talbot had bowled him out with the last ball in the game, and the demon bowler of the New House meant to return the compliment if he could.

"Play!"

Wynn took his customary little run and sent down a " Yorker."

The ball shot in from the off, and Talbot had to step back to it.

He was just a fraction of a second too late, and a sharp "click" behind him told him that Wynn had succeeded.

Click!

Masked Marauder Captures New House Cricketers!

"How's that, umpire?" chortled half a dozen New House players.

"Out!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Played, Fatty!"

"Mop up the floor with 'em, New House!"

The New House supporters were wild with delight at the wonderful opening, while their rivals were correspondingly glum. Talbot was one of the best batsmen on the School House side, and for his wicket to fall at the first ball was quite alarming.

Noble of the Shell, better known as Kangaroo, took Talbot's place. The Australian junior was looking rather grim, as if he felt that a lot rested with him, and the anxious School House supporters were rather reassured at the determined way in which he patted his crease and faced the bowler.

"Kangy will stop the rot!" said Manners confidently.

But Manners spoke too soon. The words had scarcely left his lips before the ball was glancing off Kangaroo's bat right into the hands of Kerr in the slips.

"How's that, umpire?" yelled Kerr, holding the ball aloft.

And the umpire's voice sounded like the sentence of death in Kangaroo's ears:

"Out!"

"Hurrah!"

A howl of triumph went up from the New House spectators round the field.

"Keep it up, Fatty!"

"Hat-trick wanted!"

"Scuttle 'em out in a couple of overs!"

Fatty Wynn grinned cheerfully. He was all out for the hat-trick now; but, to the relief of the sorrowing School House followers, luck changed with the third ball. Tom Merry had gone in, and with his arrival things soon began to assume a different aspect. After stopping two balls, Tom took the measure of the third and hit out for a boundary. The score had opened!

After that the School House side settled down to their task, and the runs began to mount up. The partnership between Tom Merry and Blake produced 50 before Blake was bowled by Lawrence, and after that Arthur Augustus D'Arcy drew rounds of applause from the crowd by scoring freely and gracefully from Wynn and Lawrence alike.

The hopes of the School House partisans began to mount high again; but with the dismissal of D'Arcy when the score stood at 90 there was a temporary collapse, two more wickets falling for 5 runs.

Lowther saved the situation by putting up a fine stand with Tom Merry. When he was at last stumped the score stood at 140.

Twenty-six to tie—27 to win!

School House men began to breathe again now. Surely they could manage that, with Tom Merry still in and three more wickets to fall!

But fresh anxieties were soon upon them. Fatty Wynn, who had been resting, came on to bowl again, and another wicket quickly fell.

Last wicket but one! And, mainly from Tom Merry's efforts, it added another 20 runs to the score. Then Gunn, who was Tom's partner, was caught out.

Six to tie, 7 to win! Wild excitement prevailed now.

Lumley-Lumley was last man in. Quite a host of well-meaning advisers surrounded him as he strapped on his pads, begging him not to hit out, imploring him to leave the run-getting to Tom Merry, and in other ways pointing out what should be done to win the match.

Lumley-Lumley strode down to the wicket, his brow quite furrowed.

He was not nervous; the American junior hardly knew the meaning of nerves. But he was oppressed with an uneasy feeling that his run of bad luck had not yet ended.

That was rather a dangerous state of mind in which to face the bowler as the last hope of his side. Lumley-Lumley realised it, and tried to overcome it, but the feeling of uneasiness persisted.

As things turned out, it was justified. Lumley-Lumley squared up to the bowler, determined to defend, whatever the temptation to hit out. But all good resolutions were forgotten when Kerr, who was now bowling, sent down a medium ball just where Lumley-Lumley could have wished it.

The American stepped out to it and hit, and the ball went sailing away.

The School House crowd had just begun to cheer when there was an excited yell from their rivals.

"Look at Figgy!"

"He'll catch it!"

"He can't!"

"He has!"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

Then a roar.

"Hurrah!"

"New House wins!"

Figgins, in the long field, had brought off a miraculous catch, and the game was over.

New House had beaten School House at last!

CHAPTER 2.

Annoying!

"THAT silly ass——"

"That prize idiot——"

"That foozling fathead——"

These and many other equally uncomplimentary epithets came from the lips of the School House fellows gathered round the pavilion as the cricketers trooped back from the field.

They were referring to Jerrold Lumley-Lumley.

"After all we told him!" groaned Wilkins.

"After a dozen of us had warned him not to hit out!" moaned Digby.

"The silly ass has to do it!" finished Blake. "Result: Match lost, and the biggest crow New House have had over us for a long time. We shall never hear the last of this!"

"Nuff to make the angels weep!" declared Herries. "New House have scored over us once or twice lately in japes, too. They'll soon begin to think we're effete!"

"So we shall be if we keep on playing a chuckle-headed chump like Lumley-Lumley!" snorted Gore. "Let's scrag the idiot!"

"Hear, hear!"

The School House juniors were incensed with Lumley-Lumley. That, perhaps, was understandable with the frantic cheering of their hereditary rivals still ringing out across the field. It was a bitter cup that the School House had to swallow, and, rather naturally, they found an object for their dissatisfaction in the player whom they regarded as having let them down.

Lumley-Lumley came up to the pavilion, lips compressed and brows knit. Quite a howl greeted him.

"Fathead!"

"Bungler!"

"Sorry!" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Sorry, rats!" growled Herries. "If you'd played as we told you——"

"If you hadn't hit out——" almost wept Blake.

"Oh, ease up!" remonstrated Lumley-Lumley. "I did the right thing for that ball. It was much too easy to let pass, and if that long-legged jay Figgins hadn't performed a miracle——"

"But he did!"

"Well, I didn't provide for miracles, and that's all there is to it! I'll allow it was mighty fine play on Figgins' part, but you've got to admit, too, that it was rough luck on me."

"Bosh!"

"No bad luck in cricket," declared Herries, somewhat ungenerously. "Bad play, if you like, but not bad luck!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Stow it, chaps!" said Tom Merry, coming on the scene. "Chap can't always be at the top of his form, and there certainly was a bit of bad luck about it."

"Was it bad luck when he missed running Figgins out?" asked Herries.

"And when he muffed an easy catch from Wynn that cost us the game?" snorted Gore. "Because, if so, it's about time you gave his place in the team to someone more lucky!"

"Well, I suppose you'll see sense at last now, Merry?" Grundy remarked amiably. "Of course, I'm sorry—Ha, ha, ha!—about my own House going down like this. Ha, ha, ha! Still, you'll admit now that you did ask for it."

"Potty?" inquired Tom Merry politely, while the rest glared at Grundy with deadly glares.

Grundy wiped the tears of merriment from his eyes.

"Ha, ha! Not exactly. Of course, you know what I'm referring to, really. I've told you times out of number that you'd never be safe from defeat while you left me out of the team."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry and his chums simultaneously.

Grundy stopped chuckling suddenly, and frowned.

"Why, you silly asses——"

"Carry on, old chap! Don't stop!" implored Lowther. "Know any more funny stories like that?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Lowther, if you try to make a fool of me——" said Grundy.

"I won't, old bean. No sense in trying to do something that's already done, is there?"



"Ow!" gasped Fatty Wynn, as a masked and armed figure stepped out from the bushes. In a flash Fatty recognised him for a Chicago gunman.

That was enough for Grundy. He went from words to deeds, and made a rush at the facetious Lowther.

But before he could get anywhere near that amiable junior, half a dozen pairs of hands had descended on him. Grundy felt himself whirled in the air and brought down with a bump on the turf.

Bump!

"Ow-wow!" came a yell from Grundy. "Look here, you idiots—"

Tom Merry & Co. positively declined to look there. Instead, they turned their faces towards the School House again, and resumed their interrupted journey regardless of George Alfred Grundy. And Grundy was left to sort himself out and express his opinion of things in general, and of Tom Merry & Co. in particular, to the desert air.

CHAPTER 3. Up in Arms!

"WHY not?"

George Figgins asked that question over a late tea in his study. And Kerr and Fatty Wynn promptly echoed:

"Well, why not?"

"'Bout time the New House came into its own," said Figgins, frowning thoughtfully. "Fact is, we've been too modest in the past—too much inclined to hide our light under a bushel."

"Hear, hear!"

"We ought to cut out that false modesty. It's kept us back—prevented us attaining that pre-eminent place in the school which we ought to occupy."

"My hat!"

Kerr and Wynn looked quite overwhelmed by Figgins' flow of eloquence.

"Well, New House is cock House, anyway, if that's what you mean," said Fatty Wynn, munching contentedly at a jam-tart. "I'm in favour of all you've said, anyway."

"Same here," nodded Kerr. "There ought to be more New House men in the Junior Eleven. Four's not enough."

"What I've always said," declared Figgins. "This afternoon's game has finally clinched it, and I've jolly well made up my mind to demand better New House representation for the match at Greyfriars on Saturday."

"Good man!"

"We'll back you up!"

"The entire New House ought to back me up," said Figgins. "Matter of fact, I thought about holding a mass meeting to get their backing. Might impress Tom Merry more if I went with a kind of official mandate. What do you chaps think?"

"Good wheeze, Figgys!" said Kerr promptly. "Nothing like pressure of public opinion for forcing a fellow's hand. Tom Merry might not pay much attention to you on your own, but with the House solid behind you he'd have to sit up and take notice."

"Simply have to," grinned Fatty Wynn. "Call the claps together right away. Nothing like striking while the iron's hot. I'll just finish off my tea—"

"You mean you'll just come along with us, old bean," corrected Figgins. "If half an hour's gorging hasn't satisfied you, then you'll have to remain unsatisfied. Yank him along, Kerr!"

"Pleasure!" grinned Kerr.

"Look here—" protested the fat New House junior, making a grab at the remains of the cake.

But before he could finish his sentence or get within a yard of the cake, Figgins and Kerr had seized him by shoulders and wrists, and rushed him out of the study. And Fatty Wynn regretfully abandoned thoughts of tuck, and turned his attention to the business of the moment.

Figgins & Co. found it an easy matter to get the juniors along to a mass meeting in the New House Junior Common-room. Enthusiasm over the victory was still at fever-pitch throughout the House, and the mere hint that the meeting was for the purpose of demanding better New House representation in the Junior Eleven was sufficient to draw crowds at once.

Redfern and Lawrence and Owen from Study No. 5 jumped up with alacrity as soon as Figgins put his head round their door and explained the idea. Pratt and Clarke and Robinson and Koumi Rao were enrolled in the crowd soon after, and after that the crowd quickly swelled until practically every junior in the New House had joined up.

Figgins marched at the head, and led the way to the Common-room. Amid cheers he mounted a chair and faced the enthusiastic gathering.

"Gentlemen—" began Figgins.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

CHAPTER 4.

Lumley-Lumley Dissents :

"TROT in, fathead!"

Tom Merry called out the cheery invitation in response to a sharp tap on the door of Study No. 10.

The door opened and Figgins and Kerr and Wynn marched in, their faces very determined.

"Evening, Merry!" remarked Figgins.

"Hallo, hallo! They do let you out of your casual ward now and again then, Figgy?" asked Tom Merry genially. Figgins & Co. frowned.

"Well, if it's a question of casual wards—" began Figgins, when Kerr interrupted him.

"No ragging, Figgy; stick to business!"

Figgins swallowed his wrath with an effort.

"We're a deputation, really!" explained Figgins. "We've come straight from a mass meeting of practically the entire junior section of the New House, and that meeting has just passed a resolution in favour of better New House representation in the Junior Team. Got that?"

Tom Merry frowned.

"You don't mean that on the strength of this afternoon's game you want me to start ringing the changes on the Junior Eleven? Because if you do—"

"All serene; I don't," said Figgins pacifically. "I know enough about the game to realise that a lot of eleventh-hour changes would probably muck things up altogether—"

"Oh, you do know that much?"

"That much and a lot more—more than you, even, I expect, Tom Merry!"

"Well, we won't argue the point, old bean," smiled Tom Merry. "But if you don't want that, what exactly is the point of this—or—deputation?"

"Well, we've come to make a specific sort of proposal to you, you see," explained Figgins. "You haven't posted up the team for next Saturday yet, but it's pretty well bound to be the same as the team that played Abbotsford. We want you to make one alteration."

"Trot it out, old bean!"

"Whisper and we shall hear!" grinned Monty Lowther. Figgins came straight to the point.

"We want you to drop Lumley-Lumley and put Lawrence of the New House in instead," he said. "Just that and nothing more."

Tom Merry scratched his curly head. He was a little taken aback for the moment.

"Bit unusual dictating in such terms as this, isn't it?" he asked.

"Perhaps it is, but the resolution passed at our meeting actually uses the names. We've got nothing against Lumley-Lumley individually, of course. He's quite a good chap, I believe. It's his cricket we're kicking against. He played like a complete dud this afternoon. And Lawrence played beautifully."

Tom Merry nodded.

"Granted, but one swallow doesn't make a summer. Lumley-Lumley won his place in the Eleven on the games he has been playing for months—"

"Then he's decidedly off colour now," remarked Figgins. "Possibly, but I don't think so. It was an off day with him, and he had a lot of bad luck."

"Well, you can't get away from the fact that Lawrence could have played him off his feet to-day!"

"Lawrence played very well, certainly," admitted Tom Merry. "Matter of fact, when you came in I was just talking it over with these chaps and considering whether I might give him a trial next Saturday."

"You were?"

Figgins & Co. looked a little disconcerted.

"Mean to say you seriously thought of it before we came along?" asked Figgins, his expression suddenly losing all its truculence.

"Just that. You butted in just when we were chewing it over."

"Oh!"

"Hem!"

Figgins & Co. looked at each other.

"Looks as if Tom Merry's got more sense than I gave him credit for," remarked Figgins.

"Thanks very much. Of course, I haven't decided yet," said Tom.

"Well, we don't mind helping you to decide do we, chaps?"

"No objection whatever," said Kerr.

"Quite a pleasure, in fact!" grinned Fatty Wynn. "Don't forget, Merry, that we represent a meet massing—I mean a matt meeing—"

"Dry up, Fatty, and let your uncle do the chin-wagging," said Figgins. "What he means, of course, is a mass

"Hear, hear!"

"Gentlemen, chaps, and fellows—"

"Get on with the washing!"

"Don't interrupt the speaker, Redfern!" grunted Figgins. "Interrupters will be slung out on their neck. To proceed: This afternoon's glorious victory over our old rivals from that glorified reformatory they call the School House—"

"Hear, hear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Has brought to the forefront the question of the totally inadequate way in which the New House is represented in the Junior Eleven," said Figgins firmly. "For ages and ages now there have never been more than four New House fellows in the official Junior Team. Four, you know! Are we satisfied that that state of affairs shall continue?"

There was a yell from the New House crowd.

"No fear!"

"Never!"

"Not likely!"

"Very well, then," said Figgins. "Now is the chance for us to strike a blow for a better New House showing in the Eleven. We have proved to-day that our players, man for man, are as good as, and better, than the School House men. Let us now insist on our rights, and demand from Tom Merry a reconsideration of his team!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Mind you, I'm not demanding anything revolutionary," said Figgins. "I realise, as any cricketer must realise, that a lot of chopping and changing about doesn't make for stability in a team. Give the selected team their due—they've played well so far this season, and they hang together very nicely. But I do think that we're entitled to more consideration in the future than we've had in the past."

"Hear, hear!"

"Lots more," said Fatty Wynn.

Figgins paused for breath.

"To get down to brass tacks," he said, after a brief interval. "My idea is that to begin with Merry might give us one more man in the team that goes to Greyfriars next Saturday."

"Why not two or three?" asked Lawrence.

"Or five or six?" suggested Pratt.

Figgins shook his head.

"No! Play the game. We don't want to let the school down by disturbing the team too much. One more place will do for this occasion, anyway. And I've thought out whose place it shall be. Some of you may have noticed a chap named Lumley-Lumley playing for the School House to-day—"

"Playing the giddy goat for the School House, you mean, I suppose?" said Redfern.

Figgins grinned.

"Well, he didn't exactly shine, that's why I've picked him out. Now Lumley-Lumley has played for the Junior Eleven in every match this year, and unless somebody chips in it's quite likely that Merry will put him down for the Greyfriars match, too. My suggestion is that on the form he showed this afternoon Lumley-Lumley ought to be given a rest. And if he's given a rest, then a New House man ought to take his place in the team."

"Hear, hear!"

"Our regular Junior Eleven members are at present Kerr, Wynn, Redfern, and myself," said Figgins. "I should like to suggest to Merry that he drops Lumley-Lumley and gives Lawrence from the New House a trial. How's that?"

"Jolly good idea!" said everyone enthusiastically.

"Good! And now I'll put this resolution to the meeting," said Figgins. "'That this meeting of New House gentlemen—'"

"Hear, hear!"

"Demands, in view of the form shown in the House match this afternoon, that Lumley-Lumley be dropped from the team selected for the Greyfriars match and his place given to Lawrence." Will all those in favour kindly signify in the usual manner?"

"Ay!" came a great yell from the crowd and a forest of hands flew up.

"And those against!"

Dead silence.

"Nem. con.!"

"Hurrah!"

"Well, that's that!" remarked Figgins, with satisfaction. "Now I propose to trot along right away and interview Tom Merry."

And the leader of the New House, red in the face from his oratorical efforts, descended from his chair to the accompaniment of a storm of cheering.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

meeting. That's the point. It's the considered opinion of the New House that Lumley-Lumley ought to be dropped on Saturday and Lawrence played in his place, and you, Tom Merry, can't afford to ignore us. In these democratic days—"

"Oh, my hat! No need to make a speech about it, old chap," grinned Tom Merry. "I shall never agree that team-choosing is a matter for crowds to vote on, anyway. But in this particular instance I'm inclined to accept the suggestion. Lawrence certainly played a spanking game this afternoon, and Lumley-Lumley for once wasn't up to scratch. I'll do it!"

"Good!" exclaimed Figgins & Co. in chorus.

"That's official, is it?" added Figgins.

"Absolutely. I'll post up the team in five minutes from now."

Figgins & Co. departed, looking very well satisfied with their visit.

Two minutes later the study door was flung violently open again and a dishevelled junior rushed in, breathing hard.

"Hallo, hallo! In a hurry, Lumley?" asked Lowther.

Jerrold Lumley-Lumley ignored Lowther and turned to Tom Merry.

"This right, Merry?" he rapped out.

"What's that?"

"What Trimble told me."

"'Fraid I haven't the faintest notion what Trimble told you, old bean."

"Trimble's got it that you're standing me down for the Greyfriars match, and putting up Lawrence in my place," said Lumley-Lumley in a suppressed voice. "I guess I want to know if there's anything in it."

"So that fat eavesdropper has been listening-in again—"

"Yes or no?" snapped Lumley-Lumley.

"Well, then, yes. But I didn't want you to hear it in this fashion. I was just going to send for you—"

"And you did it on Figgins' request; that right, too?" asked the American junior.

Tom Merry frowned.

"Not at all; it's true that Figgins has been here and we've jawed about it—"

"Good enough. That's all I wanted to know," said Lumley-Lumley sharply. "I guess it amounts to the same thing, anyway. You funked the issue. I reckoned you would, and you have."

"Why, you silly ass—"

Lumley-Lumley snorted.

"I guess it's you who's the silly ass, not me. You were scared of what those New House jays would say if you left me in the team after to-day's game—"

Tom Merry flushed.

"Easy does it, Lumley! I was scared of nothing of the kind."

"It influenced you, anyway," snapped Lumley-Lumley. "New House won the game to-day, and you knew what they'd say over there if you didn't give 'em a better showing. So you did it, and I've got to sit up for it!"

"Nothing of the kind. I'm sorry to have to stand you down, and I know how you feel about it. But you can't deny that you've been very much off-colour to-day—"

"I had bad luck—that's all," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'm not off-colour; never felt fitter as a matter of fact. I'll be as good as I've been in any other school match when Saturday comes. You've been weak enough to drop me in favour of a guy that doesn't play in the Junior Eleven once in a blue moon!"

"I'm sorry—"

"Sorry, rats!" snapped Lumley-Lumley. "What you mean is that you've let this House business get the better of your judgment. You've made a mistake, Merry."

"That remains to be seen."

"It will be seen," retorted Lumley-Lumley. "I don't think much of New House cricket myself. That was a fluke win of theirs this afternoon—"

"Hear, hear!"

"And they couldn't do it again to save their lives! My idea is that eleven School House men could do as well at Greyfriars as the usual team you play. Get that?"

"Yes, but—"

"But nothing. What I want to know is whether that decision of yours is final. It is completely fixed that Lawrence plays in my place next Saturday?"

"'Fraid it is, old scout!"

"Right!" snorted Lumley-Lumley. "You know what I think about it, anyway. Now I'm off to tell Figgins what I think of him. So long!"

And the American junior departed from Study No. 10 like a tornado.

There was no doubt whatever that Lumley-Lumley dissented!

CHAPTER 5.

Lumley-Lumley's Resolve!

"HALLO, hallo! Look who's here!"
"School House outsider!"
"Scrag him!"

A crowd of juniors gathered on the steps of the New House greeted Lumley-Lumley with a yell as he came rushing on the scene from the direction of his own House.

Lumley-Lumley scarcely heeded them. His jaw was set and his eyes were gleaming. Righteous indignation seemed to radiate from him as he rushed up the steps.

"Where's Figgins?" he asked.

"Where's Lumley-Lumley, if it comes to that?" asked Pratt. "And the answer is that at the moment his mouldy School House number nines are contaminating hallowed New House ground!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Bump him!"

"Make him take his shoes off to show his respect!" yelled Owen.

A grinning crowd made a move to surround the invader, and Robinson, who was nearest, reached out to grab him. A fraction of a second later the same Robinson was sitting on the steps, howling, having arrived in that position as a result of a powerful tap on the chest from Lumley-Lumley.

"Plenty more for anyone else who tries to stop me!" remarked Lumley-Lumley. "Now where's Figgins?"

"Why, you cheeky rotter—"

"Think you can come over here doing this kind of stuff with us?" yelled Redfern excitedly. "Collar him, chaps!"

"What-ho!"

The indignant New House juniors made a rush.

Lumley-Lumley seemed inclined for a moment to meet it. But wiser counsels prevailed, and he turned and ran up the steps instead.

(Continued overleaf.)

Souvenirs of the Great Fight for the Ashes

28 STICKY BACK PHOTOS and a Superb ALBUM GIVEN AWAY

to readers of the Magnet

Photos of

**HOBBS SUTCLIFFE
WOODFULL and
RICHARDSON also
The ALBUM**

FREE TO-DAY



Every boy will want to collect these wonderful photos of the most popular cricketers of to-day. To make certain of all these, give a regular order to your newsagent.

The MAGNET

The Popular School Story Paper

Now on Sale. Buy a copy To-day 2d.

Into the New House building ran Lumley-Lumley. After him streamed an indignant crowd of New House juniors fairly thirsting for his gore.

Lumley-Lumley streaked up the stairs three at a time. He knew where Figgins' study was, and made for it by the shortest available route. The mob was at his heels every inch of the way; but Lumley-Lumley was a first-class sprinter, and he had no difficulty in warding them off.

He reached the junior studies at last, and made a flying leap for Study No. 4 where Figgins dwelt with Kerr and Wynn.

Crash!

The door of the study flew open under the weight of his body, and from within came an agonised howl.

"Yarooooooh!"

Fatty Wynn had been standing near the door and had caught the full force of it on the back of his head. Figgins and Kerr, who were fortunately out of the firing-line, so to speak, jumped up in alarm.

"What the thump—"

"Sorry!" said Lumley-Lumley coolly. "Now, Figgins, I've come to talk to you!"

"Serag him!" came a yell from the doorway, as a dozen New House juniors entered from the passage.

"I've come to tell you just what I think of you, George Figgins," said Lumley-Lumley. "You've been over to see Tom Merry this evening!"

"Oh! And you don't like it, I suppose?" grinned Figgins.

"You've said it; I don't! It seems that you've got a little idea in your cabeza that a silly jay you've got over here called Lawrence can play cricket better than I can."

"Well, so he can!" said Figgins.

"Hear, hear!"

Lumley-Lumley snorted.

"You're welcome to your opinion, and in the ordinary way you could go on thinking like that till further orders. But when you get beyond the thinking stage and start forcing Merry's hand in dropping me from the Junior Eleven, then I sit up and take notice. Savvy?"

"Well, what are you going to do about it? Bash me?" grinned Figgins.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mercy!" gurgled Redfern. "Spare him, Lumley; he's not very strong, you know!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lumley-Lumley did not smile.

"I'm not going to bash you, Figgins—" he began.

"Oh, thank you, kind sir!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But I'm just going to tell you exactly what I think of you," said the American junior calmly. "It's this—that you're a goldarned, meddling, interfering son of a gun—"

"Eh?" said Figgins.

"With as much tact as a prairie bison, and no more brains—"

"What!" yelled Figgins.

"And as much idea of cricket as I've got of Sanskrit—and that's not much!"

"You—you—"

"I'm here to put it on record," said Lumley-Lumley, "that I can play your nominee Lawrence off his feet with one hand tied behind my back, and that I can't learn much more than you'd write on your thumbnail from the best cricketer in this one-eyed shanty of yours, whoever he may be!"

"Why, you howling idiot—"

"Finally, I want to give you a warning," said Lumley-Lumley. "Next time you or anybody else belonging to this House attempts to get me slung out of the Junior Eleven there's going to be trouble—big trouble. I'm the fellow that's going to raise it, and the man who tries to get me booted out is the man who's going to get it. That clear?"

"M-m-my hat!"

"If it's not, it ought to be!" said the American junior. "I've done my best to get down to your intelligences, anyway. That's about all I've got to say just now, I guess. So long!"

The New House juniors watched him in almost petrified silence for a moment. Then Figgins woke out of his stupor.

"You—you— Stop him!" he yelled.

"What-ho!" came a yell from the New House juniors.

Lumley-Lumley, who felt a little relieved at unburdening himself to Figgins, was not quite so truculent now. Instead of fighting his way out, he tried to dodge.

It was a little difficult, however, to dodge a dozen juniors in the space of something like a dozen square

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

yards, and though Lumley-Lumley did his best he didn't get anywhere near success.

"Let up, you jays!" he yelled, making a last wild rush towards the door. "I guess—"

That was as far as he got. Before he could say another word a score of hands had descended on him.

"Hold the cheeky ass!" said Figgins.

"We've got him!"

"Of all the nerve—" Figgins paused, for a moment, at a loss for words. "Tell me what he thinks of me, indeed! I'll jolly well tell him what I think of him!"

"Good egg!"

"Rub it in, Figg!" grinned Fatty Wynn. "We'll rag him when you've finished!"

"Good enough! Now, listen to me, Lumley-Lumley—" began Figgins.

"I guess—" gasped Lumley-Lumley, struggling furiously in the hands of half a dozen New House juniors.

"You keep quiet; this isn't a guessing competition! I've heard what you think of me; now hear what I think of you. You're a bumptious, conceited ass, without the foggiest notion of how to play cricket or any other game worth playing!" said Figgins, thereby deviating slightly from the strict truth.

"Hear, hear!" came a delighted yell from the New House crowd.

"Then, of course, you're an American—can't say much worse than that about you, I suppose?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And like all the Americans you think that tall talk and Chicago frightfulness is good enough to win through anything. You've got to learn, my son, that you can't pull that stuff off at St. Jim's—not in the New House, anyway!"

"No fear!"

"I guess—"

"Finally, you haven't a sense of humour," said Figgins severely. "If you had, you'd have taken things a little more calmly to-night, instead of rushing over here like a transatlantic gunman on the warpath!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Trying to put the wind up us!" finished Figgins. "Now, think all that out, Lumley. You're not a bad chap really, I know, but you're a conceited American ass! You can't play cricket for nuts, and you haven't a sense of humour; see? You can sling him out now, you men!"

"Pleasure!" grinned Owen. "Kim on!"

"Look here, you silly jays, if you touch me— Yaroooh! Yoooooh!" finished Lumley-Lumley, as he felt himself yanked off his feet and rushed none-too-gently out of the study.

And after that a good many other similar sounds proceeded from the lips of the transatlantic junior. He was rushed along the passage, rushed down the stairs, rushed through the Hall, and rushed down the steps; and the process, if somewhat exhilarating, was not at all pleasant.

Finally he was rushed across the quad to the School House and up the School House steps, to be finally deposited with a fearful bump just inside the Hall.

Bump!

"Whooooooh!" roared Lumley-Lumley.

A number of School House juniors, attracted by the din, came running up to the door. They stared in astonishment as Lumley-Lumley came flying through the doorway.

"What the thump—" ejaculated Jack Blake.

"New House wottahs!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "It's a wag, by the look of things. Aftah them!"

But the New House ragers were already half way across the quad again, and pursuit was out of the question. The juniors turned their attention to Lumley-Lumley instead.

"What happened?" demanded Jack Blake.

Lumley-Lumley scrambled to his feet, groaning.

"Ow! My fault for going over there, I suppose; but I didn't like that journey back. Ow!"

"Getting a bit thick, this New House Eizney," remarked Blake, frowning. "They're scoring over us in rags, at cricket, and every other blessed thing lately; seems to be no stopping 'em. Can't someone think out a wheeze for scoring over them, just by way of a change?"

"I fancy I can," said Bernard Glyn, the inventor of the Shell, who was standing near. "I'm making some cricket balls at present that explode when they're hit and scatter ink and soot all over the place. New House might appreciate them!"

"Oh, my hat! Sounds good!" grinned Blake. "Anyone else?"

"Yes; little me!" answered Lumley-Lumley, with a grim smile. "They've put me on my mettle to-night. Figgins has lost me my place in the Eleven; told me I can't play cricket, and accused me of lacking a sense of humour."

"Great pip!"

"I guess I'm going to surprise Figgins pretty soon," said Lumley-Lumley. "I'll show him that I can play cricket and that I've got a sense of humour. And, what's more, I'm going to show him that School House is still cock House at St. Jim's! Now you watch out!"

And Lumley-Lumley went upstairs for a much-needed wash and brush-up, leaving the juniors wondering.

CHAPTER 6. The Gunman!

"STOP!"

The command rang out like a pistol-shot through the silence of Rylcombe woods.

Fatty Wynn stopped; simultaneously he gasped.

"Ow! What the thump—"

It was the day after the School House defeat at cricket on Little Side, and Fatty Wynn had just been down to Rylcombe to order some cricket kit from the sports outfitters. He had taken the short cut through the woods, and was just nearing the road again when the interruption came.

"Put 'em up! I guess I got the drop on you!" rang out the same sharp, high-pitched voice.

Then there was a rustle in the undergrowth, and the speaker came into full view.

"Ow!" gasped Fatty Wynn again.

Really, the newcomer was enough to make anyone gasp. To begin with, he was armed with a vicious-looking automatic; to add to the effect created by that weapon he wore a black mask; and, to complete the picture, he was garbed from the crown of his soft green hat to the tips of his pointed tan shoes in the habiliments of a typical American gunman or thug.

Fatty Wynn recognised the guise at once. He had seen it on many occasions on the screen in moving-pictures dealing with gangsters, bootleggers, racketeers, underworld kings, and other heroes of American life. This man seemed to be a combination of all those heroes and then some, so to speak. In the peaceful glade of the quiet Sussex wood, he cut quite an extraordinary figure.

"Put 'em up, I tell you, or there'll be daylight drilled into you in several places before you can yawp for your mommer!" snarled the masked gentleman, as he advanced on the astonished New House junior.

"Well, my hat!"

Fatty Wynn obeyed. He didn't dare do otherwise, with that menacing automatic directed at his head. A pair of fat hands went up in the air, and the gunman grunted.

"Just as well for you, sonny! I've shot up many a man for less than that! Now, you're from the college up the road—huh?"

"You mean St. Jim's; that's right," said Fatty Wynn, blinking at the automatic very uneasily. "I say, old chap, can't you point that pea-shooter of yours the other way? I don't like it!"

"You'll like it quite a lot less if I have to pull the trigger!" snarled the gunman. "I point this gun whar I like! Get that?"

"Oh crikey! Quite!" gasped Fatty Wynn. "Still, I wish you'd point it away from me. I won't escape!"

"It won't pay you to try, I guess!" said the transatlantic gentleman, with a grim laugh. "But quit yawping and listen to me! I'll tell you each time I want you to open your mouth. Know a guy named Lumley-Lumley? Go to it!"

"Lumley-Lumley? I should jolly well think I do! But—but how the thump do you know his name?" asked Fatty Wynn, in surprise.

The gunman laughed.

"I guess I've got good reason to know him—and he'll have good reason to know me when you tell him Red Jake's hanging around!"

"M-m-my hat! Is that your name?"

"That's what they call me—Red Jake, the toughest guy



Kerr and Wynn tramped over the recumbent Baggy Trimble, and finally Figgins wiped his boots on the fat junior!

in the Middle West!" snarled the American. "Perhaps it's news to you that Lumley-Lumley isn't Lumley-Lumley to everybody, either. When I knew him he was the Chicago Kid, the underworld's youngest crook!"

"What?" gasped Fatty Wynn incredulously.

"That sure surprises you—huh? I guess some of the bunch way back in U.S. would be surprised, too, if they knew the Chicago Kid was taking lessons at a swell school in this li'l ol' island. Keep your hands up, darn you!"

"Ow! Right-ho; don't shoot!" gasped Fatty Wynn. "And look here, Red Jake, you're not really serious, are you—about Lumley-Lumley, I mean?"

"Ain't I? You got another guess coming to you, son! Why do you think I came to England—for the benefit of my health?"

"Haven't the foggiest! I jolly well wish you hadn't come to England, anyway!"

"Waal, you can take it from me that I took this trip for the purpose of squaring up accounts with the Chicago Kid. He double-crossed me over our last deal, and I've been

after him ever since. Now I've found him, and pretty soon I reckon there's going to be shooting around here!"

"Great pip!"

"You're the first guy I've met from the school," said Red Jake. "An' you're going to have the honour of showing me jest how I can find the Chicago Kid. Where is he now? Spill the beans!"

"Dashed if I know where Lumley-Lumley is, if that's who you mean!" replied Fatty Wynn. "I suppose you don't expect me to carry him about with me?"

"Say, son, if you're wise, you'll cut out back-chat!" snarled the gunman. "Tell me where the Chicago Kid hangs out before I make butcher's meat of you! Red Jake's talking to you—the guy that chews t-con for his breakfast every morning!"

"Oh crikey! Well, I don't know where he is now, anyway. Of course, I know where he lives——"

"Spill it, then; an' as soon as I know, I'm there, gunning!"

Fatty Wynn shuddered.

"Strikes me that's a very good reason for not telling you—— Oh, my hat! Thank goodness!" he finished up.

The fat junior had just heard footsteps approaching from the direction of the road, and very thankful he felt at the knowledge that he was no longer alone with this ferocious member of the Chicago underworld.

"What's on?" demanded Red Jake.

"N-n-nothing——"

Red Jake laughed.

"What you think you're giving me? Got an idea I've lost my hearing, or suthing? Say, I feel almost like drilling a hole through you!"

"Ow!"

"But I guess you ain't worth it, so I'll let you go, and mosey along; I ain't shooting up a whole crowd jest now."

"My hat, I should hope not!" gasped the greatly-relieved Fatty.

Red Jake lowered his automatic and turned on his heel.

"When you see the Chicago Kid, son, jest tell him that Red Jake's on his trail, will you?" he snarled over his shoulder. "Say, with my compliments, that I'm going to square accounts with him if I have to shoot every kid in his swell school to get at him! Get that?"

"Ow! Yes, rather!" stuttered the perspiring Fatty.

"Waal, don't forget to spill it when you see him!"

With that Red Jake made a dive into the undergrowth and disappeared completely. Almost immediately afterwards two juniors wearing St. Jim's caps, came round the bend of the footpath, and Wynn recognised none other than his own chums, Figgins and Kerr.

The two stared at the spectacle of their fat colleague standing immobile in the middle of the footpath.

"Hallo, hallo! Seen a ghost, Fatty?" asked Figgins.

"Oh dear! Something worse than a ghost!" gasped Fatty Wynn. "Did you fellows see him?"

"See who?"

"Red Jake!" almost groaned Wynn. "The Terror of the Chicago underworld, you know!"

Figgins and Kerr jumped.

"The—the terror—— What the thump are you talking about, fathead?" asked Figgins.

"Sounds like a joke, I know," said Fatty Wynn. "But you wouldn't have thought him much of a joke if you'd seen him as I saw him—black mask and green hat and an awful-looking revolver——"

"My only hat! You've seen a masked man with a revolver here?" asked Kerr.

"Not only seen him—I've been held up by him. And—and he's a pal of Lumley-Lumley—from the Chicago underworld!"

"What the thump——"

"I'll tell you just what happened," said Fatty Wynn. And he proceeded to do so.

Figgins and Kerr listened, bewildered and utterly amazed. When their fat chum had finished they looked at each other breathlessly. It seemed too steep altogether, for the moment.

"Sure you haven't dreamt it?" asked Figgins, turning to Fatty Wynn again.

"Ass! It's as true as I'm standing here! I know it sounds wild——"

"Sounds like a giddy nightmare to me!" remarked Kerr. "And you say he was after Lumley-Lumley?"

"Absolutely! He said Lumley-Lumley used to be the Chicago Kid at home, and that he was a crook."

"Great pip! Well, I know he used to be a bit wild and woolly when he first came to St. Jim's," remarked Figgins. "Never imagined he was as bad as that, though. It sounds quite serious."

"It jolly well is serious!"

"What can we do, then?" asked Kerr. "Obvious thing, of course, is to report it to Ratcliff."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

"And have the whole school gated till the chap's found?" queried Figgins, with a shake of his head. "Don't much care for that. Let's see Lumley-Lumley first and see what he says about it."

Neither Kerr nor Wynn fancied the prospect of being "gated" indefinitely at the best time of the year, and the suggestion was accordingly voted a good one. The three returned to St. Jim's with all speed, and sought out Lumley-Lumley.

The American junior was out when they looked in the School House, but they spotted him coming through the gates as they crossed the quad again, and hastened to pour their story in his ears.

Lumley-Lumley listened with great interest. Finally, to Figgins & Co.'s disgust, he laughed, as though the news of Red Jake's coming was not at all a matter for serious concern.

"And is that all you've got to say about it?" asked Fatty Wynn indignantly. "You mean to say you know this awful villain——"

"I guess I know Red Jake all right!"

"Yet you're ready to laugh about him?"

"I guess I can account for him without a lot of trouble!"

"Well, my hat! Here have I been held up and faced death by a crook pal of yours from Chicago, and all you do is laugh! This chap wants scragging, you men!"

"He'll jolly well get it!" grunted Figgins. "We thought we were doing you a good turn, Lumley; as it doesn't seem to be appreciated, you can do without our help after this. And you can have a bumping in the bargain, just to show you what's what! Collar him, chaps!"

The chaps collared him, and Lumley-Lumley's cheerful sang froid quickly departed from him as he was bumped again and again on the hard, unsympathetic gravel path.

Figgins & Co. then marched off, still breathing indignation. And Lumley-Lumley, however undisturbed he might previously have been concerning Red Jake, felt, as he picked himself up, that there certainly were disturbing features about that villainous gentleman's arrival.

CHAPTER 7.

The Jape that Misfired!

"OW! Groooogh! Ow-wow!"

"Hallo, hallo! Somebody been pig-sticking?" asked Figgins, as he rounded the corner of the chapel with Kerr and Wynn, on his way to cricket practice. "Why, it's Trimble!"

"Same thing!" remarked Kerr. "Who caught you pinching his cake this time, Trimble?"

"Ow! I didn't pinch Glyn's cake!" groaned the Falstaff of the Fourth. "Anyway, it was a dud one—no currants in it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beasts! Ow! Glyn's a rotter! I say, you chaps——"

"Sorry, stony!" said Figgins briefly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hold on; I didn't want to borrow anything from you!" spluttered Trimble indignantly.

Figgins & Co. halted.

"Well, my hat!" remarked Figgins. "What with Chicago gunmen and one thing and another we're getting some surprises lately; but this really is the limit. Trimble actually doesn't want to borrow from us!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Beast!" snorted Trimble. "Think I'd borrow from rotten New House bounders? Besides, I know you wouldn't lend me anything, anyway. What I really wanted to say was, look out for yourselves to-day when you get down to the nets!"

"Eh?"

"Look out for yourselves when you get down to the nets," repeated Trimble, glancing cautiously over his shoulder to make sure that he was not overheard. "Of course, I'm not giving the jape away——"

"What jape?"

"The jape Glyn's going to play on you. Naturally, as a School House man, I couldn't think of giving the game away. If I say that Glyn may have prepared some imitation cricket balls that smother a chap with ink when he hits 'em with a bat, I'm merely supposing what might happen, of course—not giving the game away!"

"Great pip! You mean that? You really mean Glyn has made some fake cricket balls for us?"

"He, he, he! I didn't say so. All I said was that he may have made 'em. Whether he has or not, it's not for me to say!"

Figgins & Co. grinned. Trimble's conscience in matters connected with House patriotism seemed to be extremely elastic.

"So that's the little game, is it?" chuckled Figgins.

"Well, we've had it all our own way lately, and I rather expected 'em to try to score over us pretty soon. I have an idea that this try is going to be remarkably unsuccessful!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're much obliged to you for the news, Trimble," continued Figgins, turning to the Falstaff of the Fourth again. "All the same, we consider you're an unspeakable worm, don't we, chaps?"

"What-ho!" said Kerr and Wynn emphatically.

"In fact, personally I think you ought to be trodden on, and I'm pretty sure these two feel the same. Tread on him, chaps!" concluded Figgins, suddenly upending the Falstaff and depositing him on the ground.

Kerr and Wynn, nothing loth, trampled over Trimble's recumbent body to the accompaniment of howls of rage and pain from Trimble himself. Finally, Figgins wiped his boots on the fat junior, and the New House trio, having thus shown their appreciation of Trimble's assistance, walked off arm-in-arm to cricket practice.

A large crowd of School House juniors had assembled at the nets, and practice was in full swing. There was a lull in the play when Figgins & Co. came on the scene, and smiling faces were turned on the heroes of the New House from all directions. For some reason the School House contingent seemed unusually glad to see Figgins & Co.

Figgins & Co. smiled back with the utmost cheerfulness. They had an idea what that reason was.

"Hallo, hallo! Waiting for us to come along and coach you?" asked Figgins.

"Matter of fact, Figgy, we were waiting to see you demonstrate that late cut you were talking about the other day," smiled Tom Merry. "There's a couple of wickets vacant if you and Kerr would like 'em. We can bowl to you."

"Pleasure!" said Figgins, his eye straying to four cricket balls which lay just inside a bag bearing the initials "B. G." "You willing, Kerr? Fatty can see fair play!"

There was a subtle inflection in the tones of Figgins' last sentence which was lost on the School House players, but which Kerr and Wynn detected instantly.

"All serene!" said Kerr. "Don't mind watching, Fatty?"

"Not a bit!" grinned Fatty Wynn. "Perhaps I can do a bit of bowling. These belong to you, Glyn?"

"Use 'em, by all means, old chap," said Glyn. "You may find 'em rather special!"

There was a chuckle from the School House spectators. Quite a crowd gathered round the nets where Figgins and his ally took up their respective stands. It was quite evident that they anticipated a thoroughly entertaining time when the bowling started.

Fatty Wynn bent over Bernard Glyn's cricket-bag and performed a deft sleight-of-hand operation which consisted of exchanging two of the cricket balls in Glyn's bag for two he already had in the pocket of his blazer. Wynn could be quick on occasions, and he was quick this time—too quick for the School House crowd, who remained in ignorance that anything was going wrong with their plans.

The other two balls Wynn picked up with great ostentation, and then crossed over to the nets, discarding his blazer as he went, and transferring the balls to the empty pocket in the process, so that by the time he had taken off the blazer all of Glyn's four "special" cricket balls were reposing in the two pockets of that garment.

There were plenty of spare balls lying about near the nets, and Wynn was able to place the blazer over three that lay together near Figgins' net without arousing any suspicions. Finally, he picked up two of the three genuine articles, and sauntered to the bowler's crease wearing a cherubic smile on his fat countenance.

Fatty Wynn bowled to Figgins, and an exultant School House crowd waited for the anticipated catastrophe.

But no catastrophe came. Figgins gave the ball quite a smart tap; but, instead of exploding ink and soot all over him, it simply sailed back to Fatty Wynn again! Glyn and his colleagues couldn't understand it.

Meanwhile, Tom Merry had taken the remaining balls from Glyn's bag. He now bowled to Kerr.

Nothing in the nature of a calamity came to pass. Kerr hit the ball fair and square, but it just whizzed back to the bowler.

The School House juniors began to direct rather peculiar looks towards Glyn, who simply stared. It was quite beyond

(Continued on next page.)

Our Great FREE GIFT Distribution.

IS YOUR NAME HERE?

If your name is in this List You are entitled to a FREE GIFT!

F. Anderson, 49, Elgin Street, Hunslet, Leeds; L. A. Andrews, 49, Prince John Road, Eltham, S.E.9; D. Beard, 21, Durham Hill, Downham, Bromley, Kent; J. Birchall, 16, Alfred Street, St. Helens, Lancs.; A. Blakemore, 8, Denstone Road, Pendleton, nr. Manchester; C. Brookings, 11, Hurlington Road, Chesterfield; H. J. Buckingham, 84, Woodhouse Street, Ipswich; J. Campbell, 96, Haypark Avenue, Belfast; J. Clear, Keelings Cottages, Dengie, nr. Southminster, Essex; L. Cotty, 55, Pier Road, Littlehampton, Sussex; J. Derby, North Street, Moniaire, Dumfries; P. Dowell, 31, Brown Street, Camelon, Falkirk; J. Downey, 65, Upper Ground Street, Blackfriars, S.E.1.; C. D. Edwards, Bohmstone Farm, Bockhampton, Dorchester; K. Flavell, 34, Charles Street, Griffithstown, Mon.; S. Goodwin, 99, Westgate Street, Gloucester; D. Hewlings, 5 Triangle, Teignmouth; Miss J. M. Hogg, 11, Charlotte Street, Ayr; N. K. Hustwait, 88, New Street, Aylesbury, Bucks; H. W. Ibbotson, 11, George Street, Driffield; N. Ince, 26, Cockerill Terrace, Barrow, Blackburn; J. Ingham, 197, St. Leonards Road E., St. Annes-on-Sea; V. C. Jones, 52, Princess Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham; N. Lambert, 6, Gordon Road, Tolworth, Surbiton; A. W. Lines, 2, Park Road, Stratford-on-Avon; R. G. Marsh, The Cot, Princess Road, Weybridge, Surrey; J. T. Menhinick, 23, Mountney Road, Eastbourne; D. W. Orchard, 3, Barton Crescent, Mannamead, Plymouth; R. A. Pankhurst, 55, Victoria Street, Sheerness; H. Pearson, 182, Varley Street, Miles Platting, Manchester; W. J. Radford, Mill House, Priory Street, Ware, Herts; L. S. Rusack, 17, Rosebery Street, Aberdeen; A. Scott, 32, Danube Terrace, Whitehall Road, Leeds; G. Scott, 6, Cheyne Street, Edinburgh; S. S. Scott, Beckingham, Lincoln; A. Steele, 12, Norn Hill, Basingstoke, Hants; R. Tapp, 26, Cambridge Road, Southampton; V. A. Thompson, Primrose Bank, Grove Road, Ventnor, I.O.W.; G. Turner, 11, Leo Terrace, Waterloo Street, Hull; A. Ugle, 2, Princess Road, Maybury, Woking; J. Vickery, 87, Bedminster Down Road, Bristol; J. Vincent, The Cross, Lymm, Ches.; J. T. Walker, 116, Lansdowne Road, Hackney, E.8; J. Waller, The Hall, Oulton, Lowestoft; S. F. Wildman, 48, Ayresome Street, Middlesbrough; F. G. Wilson, 4, Chandos Crescent, Edgware; G. H. Worthington, 64, Lombard Street, Fairfield, Liverpool; Miss A. Young, Shady Grove, Alsager, Stoke-on-Trent; L. Young, St. John Street, Coleford, Glos.; B. Zeller, 146, Hornsey Lane, Highgate, N.6.

All claims must be sent to "GEM GIFT CLAIM," 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4, to arrive by Thursday, July 17th, after which date the Gifts claimed will be forwarded and no further claims be recognised.

OVERSEAS READERS. Any reader overseas whose name appears in the list, or reader who has since gone abroad, should note that the closing date for overseas claims is 1st October, 1930.

THIS IS THE CLAIM COUPON YOU MUST SIGN AND SEND IN IF YOU ARE IN THIS WEEK'S GIFT LIST.

CLAIM COUPON No. 13

"GEM" FREE GIFT SCHEME

My name appears in this week's "Gem" Gift List, and I hereby claim the Free Gift allotted to me.

Name.....

Address.....

Ask two chums, to whom you have shown your name in this list, to sign in the space provided below.

Name.....

Address.....

Name.....

Address.....

him for the moment. Then Fatty Wynn brought his reserve ball into play, and Tom Merry also bowled his second. Still there was nothing untoward.

But the spectators were not long left in ignorance of the explanation. Fatty Wynn suddenly took it into his head to get out his handkerchief from his blazer. And as a result of that little interlude the four cricket balls which had originally been in Glyn's bag were sent rolling along to the other nets.

Lowther picked up one to bowl to Noble, Blake picked up another to bowl to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Talbot, who was bowling against Wildrake, took the third. And the Fourth Fatty Wynn retrieved himself.

A minute later catastrophe came swiftly and suddenly and without warning to three School House batsmen.

Bang, bang, bang!

Three dull explosions sounded on the summer air as three bats collided with three very unusual cricket balls.

Then:

"Whoooooop!"

"Yawwooooh!"

"Gerrooooooh! What the thump——"

"Glyn's cricket balls!" shrieked Jack Blake. "Oh, ye gods!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a roar from Figgins and Kerr and Wynn.

The spectacle that Noble and D'Arcy and Wildrake presented to their respective wickets just then was certainly enough to have excited mirth in a graven image. A moment before those three batsmen had been immaculate in their white shirts and creamy flannels. Now, by the miracle of Glyn's magic cricket balls, they had been transformed into excellent imitations of coalheavers or chimney-sweeps.

Glyn's little wheeze had worked wonderfully. Ink and soot fairly covered the hapless trio from head to toe. The only drawback from the School House point of view was that the wrong people had suffered!

"How—how on earth——" stuttered Glyn.

"What the merry dickens——" gasped Tom Merry.

"It's a plant!" howled Jack Blake. "That awful villain Wynn wangled it when he went to his blazer!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Grooooooh!" came an agonised chorus from Noble and Wildrake.

"Gewoooooh! Ow! Bai Jove! Gwoooooh!" spluttered Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Dished!" said Lowther. "Dished, diddled, and done!"

"Oh dear!"

"Who's cock House at St. Jim's still?" chortled Figgins.

And Kerr and Wynn responded with a roar of:

"New House!"

After which, deeming it advisable to put as great a distance as possible between themselves and their incensed rivals, Figgins & Co. hurriedly departed.

So Glyn's great jape misfired, after all, and in the tents of the School House warriors was woe and lamentation. Evil days had certainly come to them, and in all parts of the House the juniors longed for something to happen that would restore their lost prestige.

They remained ignorant of the fact that one of their number, who possessed inexhaustible nerve and an abundance of originality, was already planning a coup that would bring back with interest all their vanished glories!

CHAPTER 8

The Gunman Again!

"THERE he is!"

Fatty Wynn pointed a trembling hand across the Close as he spoke.

Figgins and Kerr looked. A strange figure was advancing towards them, and in a flash they noted the green, soft hat, the tan shoes, and, above all, the black mask which their fat colleague had described to them two days before. Instantly they knew who the newcomer was.

"The gunman!" exclaimed Figgins.

"Red Jake!" nodded Fatty Wynn. "He's spotted us, you men. Run for it!"

"Hold on! This is St. Jim's, Sussex, not Chicago, Illinois," said Figgins. "I'm not running from any American gunman just yet."

"Nor I," grunted Kerr. "Let's tackle the rotter."

It looked as if Red Jake meant to tackle them, anyway. The gunman was coming towards them with swift strides, and as Kerr spoke he broke into a run. The automatic that Wynn remembered only too well flashed in his hand just as it had in Rylcombe Wood two days previously.

"Put 'em up!" he commanded.

"Go for him!" growled Figgins, taking a step forward; but with the barrel of the automatic levelled towards him, even Figgins hesitated, and finally decided to refrain from precipitate action, after all.

"Put 'em up!" repeated Red Jake menacingly.

Figgins & Co. put up their hands, glaring as they did so.

"Well, what's the idea?" demanded Figgins.

Red Jake fixed his eyes on Fatty Wynn.

"You again, huh?" he remarked. "Waal, here I am, as you see. Perhaps you can take me to the Chicago Kid now—Lumley-Lumley, as you call him. Whar is he?"

"Find out!" grunted Fatty Wynn.

"And what the thump do you think you're doing here waving your gun about, anyway?" added Figgins. "If you think you can pull off that Chicago stuff in England you've made a big mistake. Before you're very much older you'll be in the hands of the police!"

The gunman laughed.

"Don't make me laugh, sonny; your police are easy. I wanna know whar to find the Chicago Kid in this little outfit of yours. You kids are gonna show me. Get that?"

"What happens if we take you to him?" asked Figgins.

"Then there's sure gonna be some good shooting. That's our way in the U.S.—swift and sudden. Savvy?"

"I've heard so before," nodded Figgins. "It's pretty hard to believe that your country is as bad as it's painted, but I can quite believe it when I look at you!"

Red Jake laughed again.

"I guess there's millions of 'em like me in God's Own Country. Two-gun men, ready to shoot anyone on sight, jest for the love of it. Why, they don't know any other kind way back in Chicago!"

"My hat! America must be even worse than we imagined it!" exclaimed Kerr.

"And that was bad enough!" grunted Figgins. "It's less than a week ago when I told Lumley-Lumley that he couldn't terrify us with his blessed Chicago stuff here. You can take the same tip, with my compliments!"

"No back-chat!" snarled Red Jake. "And keep your hands up, or I'll pull this li'l trigger and make butcher's meat of you. Now, whar does the Chicago Kid hang out?"

Figgins & Co. were silent. Lumley-Lumley was not exactly

Potts, the Office Boy



a friend of theirs at the moment, but they certainly didn't intend to put him at the mercy of this apparently desperate scoundrel.

"Nothing doing," said Kerr, after an interval.

"You're not answering, huh?" grunted Red Jake. "Waal, I guess I can find out myself all right from what I know already. Where's the shanty they call the School House? Answer up!"

"That's the School House over there," answered Kerr, nodding his head in the direction of the New House building, the roof of which was just visible from where they stood.

"You lie! I can tell it by your eyes! But you can't trick me. Is that the School House—the big building through the archway?"

Figgins & Co. made no reply, and the American chuckled. "I guess that's it, right enough. I'm calling there for the Chicago Kid, anyway; I got an account to square up with him. Stand back, you!"

This to Kerr, who had just made a move forward, thinking for a moment that there was a possibility of taking the man off his guard.

Kerr stood back—hurriedly. The Scots junior was not lacking in pluck, but the menacing attitude of this visitor from a place where the taking of human life was reputed to be treated rather lightly was sufficient to daunt the bravest.

The masked gunman scowled at Kerr for a moment. Then, apparently deciding that Figgins & Co. were no longer worthy of his attention, he swung round and tramped off through the archway towards the School House.

Figgins & Co. lowered their hands and stared at each other, with startled faces.

"What can we do?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"Must do something," said Kerr, between his set teeth. "That man's a thug from Chicago, where they stop at nothing. He'll shoot, without hesitation."

"Good heavens! It's—it's awful!" said Figgins. "We must follow him up, anyway. If he starts any shooting, then we'll have to pile into him, gun or not!"

"Simply have to!" nodded Fatty Wynn. "Let's follow, then!"

"March!" said Figgins.

They marched, keeping a respectful distance behind the man with the gun.

Red Jake tramped straight to the School House. Once or twice he glanced back and scowled at his three followers, but greatly to their relief made no move to level his automatic at them again.

Before he had reached the School House building Red Jake found that his followers had increased from three to three score, or more. A masked man wearing eccentric clothes and carrying a lethal weapon was a rarity at St. Jim's and fellows whom he passed mostly jumped, then stared, and finally joined up with Figgins & Co. in the rear.

Mr. Linton, the master of the Shell, was standing in the doorway of the School House when Red Jake came up the steps. He started violently on seeing the unusual visitor, which, in the circumstances, was not to be wondered at. Red Jake, rather peculiarly Figgins & Co. thought, replaced the automatic in his pocket before he got anywhere near the master and tramped past him rather hurriedly, leaving Mr. Linton with a half-dazed expression on his face.

"Upon my soul!" said Mr. Linton.

After which he, too, joined up with Figgins & Co. and followed the man from Chicago up the stairs.

"Hurry!" gasped Figgins, sprinting up the stairs three at a time. "He's making straight for the Fourth passage. Seems almost as if he knows the way!"

"Hope to goodness Lumley-Lumley's out!" panted Kerr.

A crowd of fully fifty was now pouring up the stairs. The word had gone round like lightning that the desperado was after Lumley-Lumley of the Fourth and there was general anxiety for the American junior's safety. Lumley-Lumley, despite his lapse from grace over the recent House match, was fairly popular and nobody wanted to see him come to harm.

The crowd streamed along the Fourth passage and Figgins burst open the door. Lumley-Lumley was not at home and Durrance, his study-mate, jumped up in alarm as half the School House with a sprinkling of New House fellows swarmed in the doorway.

"What the thump—" gasped Durrance.

"Lumley in?" asked Figgins.

"No; he went out of the study half an hour ago; still in the house, I believe. I fancy he went up to the box-room to look over some old junk he keeps there."

"Just where that gun merchant must have gone!" said Figgins. "Up the stairs, chaps!"

And he raced down the passage and led the way up the flight of stairs leading to the box-rooms.

Across the landing leaped Figgins and into the first box-room. There, in the doorway, he drew up, with a gasp of relief.

"Thank goodness! Then he didn't get you!" he said.

Lumley-Lumley, looking quite cool though a little surprised at the mass intrusion, was bending over a travelling-case, sorting out some of his possessions. Lumley-Lumley stood up, staring.

"Say, is this a new game, you folk?" he asked.

"More serious than a game, old bean," replied Figgins.

"Have you seen Red Jake?"

"Red Jake? Search me!"

"He's here in this House, looking for you, anyway."

Lumley-Lumley yawned.

"Well, I guess I can take care of him any time he comes near me. Nothing to worry over, you men!"

Figgins breathed hard.

"You made light of this merchant the time Fatty met him in the wood, Lumley-Lumley. Well, the rest of us have seen him now and you can take our word for it that he's no joke. Your best plan just now is to make yourself scarce while the rest of us search the House for the rotter."

"I guess I'd rather join in the search with you," grinned Lumley-Lumley. "Lead on, Macduff!"

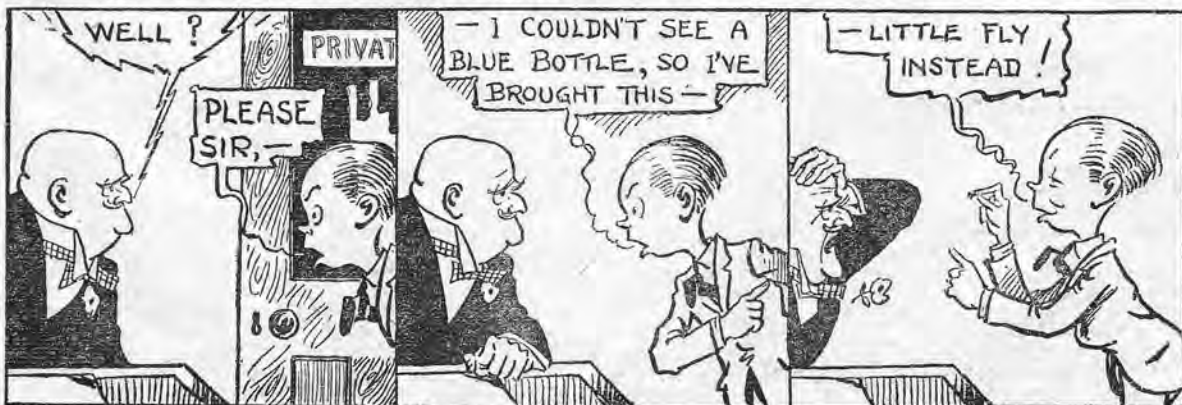
Figgins & Co. glared at the cheerful American junior. His flippancy in the face of the grave danger which threatened him and which they had already shared was extremely exasperating. But they didn't argue over the matter and Lumley-Lumley joined in the search with the rest.

Strangely enough, Red Jake seemed to have disappeared completely. The School House building was searched from roof to basement without any result whatever. It was puzzling and rather disturbing, but the searchers eventually came to the conclusion that he must have escaped out of the window that led to the roof of one of the outhouses.

At that point, the search was abandoned. The School House fellows dispersed, and Figgins & Co. returned to the New House feeling very dissatisfied over the whole business and decidedly annoyed with Red Jake's intended victim.

(Continued on next page.)

The Boy who put the Bee in Bonnet.



They made up their minds that despite Lumley-Lumley's lack of concern they would make it their business to see that Red Jake was placed under lock and key before he could carry out his nefarious plans.

As for Lumley-Lumley himself, he went back to his study smiling in quite a care-free way. For a fellow whose life was being threatened by a desperate outlaw the junior from Chicago seemed to be almost unnaturally cheerful!

CHAPTER 9.

Trapped!

THE day of the match with Greyfriars dawned, bright and mild, with a touch of mist in the early morning air that gave a promise of heat later on.

In honour of an important First Eleven fixture that was being played on Big Side the Head had decreed that lessons should conclude at first break and the junior team and their supporters were therefore able to get away long before dinner-time.

Tom Merry and the School House contingent marched off to the station in good time to catch their train.

Figgins & Co. should have gone with them. At the last moment, however, they were delayed by a very annoying contretemps.

The whole of their cricket gear had disappeared from the pavilion!

The New House cricketers searched high and low for quite a long time without finding it, and were just on the point of setting out for Greyfriars as they were, chancing to huck to be able to borrow the necessary equipment from their hosts at Greyfriars, when a fag came running up from the gates with the news that the missing bags had been discovered outside the porter's lodge. Who had deposited them in such an unheard-of place was a complete mystery.

"Good job they're found, anyway," remarked Figgins, after they had inspected the bags down at the lodge and found them all in order. "Though who the thump could have played such an idiotic trick—"

"No time to argue about it now, old bean, anyway," said Kerr, consulting his watch. "We've just time to get to the station if we hurry. Otherwise, it's a case of taxis!"

"Jump to it, then!" nodded Figgins, and the New House players and their supporters picked up their impedimenta and marched off through the gates without further delay.

In the circumstances it was natural enough that they should take the short cut through the woods to the village. No thought of Red Jake from far-off Chicago crossed their minds as they struck off for the lane. Nothing had been heard or seen of that desperate individual since his sensational visit on the previous day, and, temporarily, even Figgins & Co., who had better cause to remember him than any of the others, had forgotten his existence. King Cricket claimed all their attention for this day.

The New House crowd tramped through the woods in high spirits. The weather was perfect, they had five of their number in the junior team—an unusually high number—and they were looking forward to a good game, and, of course, a good victory at Greyfriars.

Then came a sudden cessation of the cheerful talk that had so far enlivened the way.

A sinister figure was seen suddenly moving swiftly through the bushes near by—a figure wearing the green hat and black mask that most of them had seen before.

Half a dozen juniors spotted it at the same time and halted.

"The gunman again!" said Kerr.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Is he after us?" asked Lawrence.

"Looks like it—making straight for us!" groaned Fatty Wynn. "Run for it!"

That seemed the best way out. If they were to catch their train there was no time to stop for Lumley-Lumley's shady acquaintance.

Without further hesitation the whole group broke into a run.

But, swift as they were to act, the enemy was swifter. He fairly raced through the scattered trees and bushes to the bend in the footpath towards which the juniors were travelling, and arrived there just before them.

"Stop!" he ordered in a rasping voice.

Simultaneously, his hand went to his hip-pocket, and Figgins & Co. saw again the glitter of that evil-looking automatic.

Kerr gripped his teeth.

"We won't stop! Rush him!"

"Stand back, I say, or you'll be dead mutton before you've got time to say 'Good-bye!'" roared the gunman.

The GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

Kerr took a step forward, and Red Jake's hand went up. Figgins made a dive.

"Kerr! Don't! He'll shoot, you fool!"

"Just as well one of you's got some horse sense!" growled the gunman. "Put your hands up, all of you!"

Cricket bags were dropped on the path and the juniors' hands went up. Figgins & Co. eyed their captor almost wolfishly.

"Well, what do you want now?" asked Figgins. "If it's Lumley-Lumley—"

"You've said it, son. It's the Chicago Kid I'm after. He slipped me yesterday, but he ain't gonna get away much longer. What is he?"

"On his way to the place where we want to get to, if you want to know!" answered Figgins. "We haven't got him here, anyway, so you might as well put that gun down. We're in a hurry."

"You don't say?"

"Geel! So you're in a hurry, are you?"

"Yes," said Figgins, "we are!"

"Waal, ain't that just a shame now? Here's you, all in a hurry, and me hangin' you up, so as you'll miss your appointment. Now, ain't that just too bad?"

Figgins & Co. had seen Tom Merry and the others setting off with their cricket bags, and they had a shrewd idea that Lumley-Lumley had gone off with them as a spectator.

But they were not likely to give this information to Red Jake.

"Now, look slippy," said Red Jake. "He's gone to Greyfriars with the other fellows, hasn't he?"

"Er—er—"

George Figgins stammered. "We're in a hurry to get along."

"So am I, sonny—in a hurry to square up accounts with the Chicago kid! So he's gone with the crowd that went along before you to the ball game, huh?"

"That's it. Now put that weapon away, and we'll get off. We've got a train to catch."

"Waal, I guess you ain't going to catch it then. I'm the fellow that's catching that train, if the Chicago Kid's on it; and I ain't permitting any of you guys to spoil my plans. Savvy?"

"No, I don't quite. How do you think you're going to stop us catching the same train if we want to?" demanded Figgins.

The bandit laughed.

"Waal, if that ain't funny! How else do you think but by locking you up out of the way?"

"What?"

"Easiest thing in the world!" said Red Jake. "Stand back there, boys. I'd be real sorry to use this gun jest when I'm learning to like you; but, believe me, I wouldn't think twice about it if you forced me to it. Pick up them bags!"

"You—you—Where do you think you're going to lock us up, then?" asked Figgins.

Red Jake laughed again.

"I got jest the dandiest place you ever saw, all fitted up for you. You'll be able to make yourselves cosy there for hours—days, if necessary. But let me take you to it. Pick



up them bags, and ankle along. I'll keep an eye on you from the back and tell you whar to go!"

Kerr, and even Figgins this time, made a rebellious move. But the gun swept up again in another threatening gesture, and they fell back again. It was hopeless. To attempt force with this armed scoundrel was suicidal. It was maddening to have to miss the Greyfriars match, but even the Greyfriars match, important as it was, was not so important that they felt like facing death for it.

"Nothing else for it, chaps!" groaned Figgins. "Pick up the bags!"

The New House juniors picked up their cricket-bags.

"Left!" ordered their captor harshly.

They struck off from the footpath through the bushes. Red Jake walked behind them, his automatic held breast-high. Now and again the juniors looked back, hoping to

doorway, reluctant to the last. A suspicion of a smile appeared on the lips of the gunman.

"Sorry I got to do this; but you'll be nice and cosy inside, and I've left some grub for you. Stand back a little while I close the doors!"

"If I could only get at you, you scoundrel——" muttered Figgins, his rugged face white with rage.

"Aw, don't lose your temper and spoil things! Stand back!"

A moment later Red Jake slammed the door shut.

Click!

There was a sound of the lock being turned.

The New House juniors were prisoners!

The gunman eyed the locked door for a moment, his lips twisted into a peculiar smile.

Then he turned swiftly on his heel, and went back into the woods.

CHAPTER 10.

Lumley-Lumley's Chance!

"**W**HERE are they?"

"Where are the silly duffers?"

"Where have the frabjous asses got to?"

A score of St. Jim's juniors were asking the same question in a score of different ways.

Tom Merry and his players and followers had arrived at Greyfriars, had had dinner, and gone down to the cricket pavilion adjoining the Junior Eleven pitch.

But, so far, Figgins and the other New House players and their followers were conspicuous only by their absence.

It was more than annoying. It was disturbing. Tom Merry was beginning to feel quite alarmed, in fact.

"Of course, we didn't expect them to be here early," he remarked to an anxious crowd of St. Jim's players. "Having missed the train at Rylcombe and the connection at Wayland, they were bound to be late. But surely the duffers could have got here by this time!"

"Time to have done the journey twice!" grunted Jack Blake. "Hallo, hallo! Here's Lumley-Lumley! Where did we lose you?"

"Missed the Rylcombe train, so I went to Ashford by taxi, and caught the train from there," answered Lumley-Lumley. "Figgins and his lot turned up?"

"They jolly well haven't. Have you seen them?"

"How should I have seen them?" asked Lumley-Lumley, elevating his eyebrows. "What are you going to do about it then, Merry?"

Tom frowned.

"Blessed if I know what to do! Can't understand it at all. Even if they'd lost the train, I should have thought they'd have got here a long time before this."

Harry Wharton, skipper of the Greyfriars team, came up at that moment and nodded to Lumley-Lumley.

"Seen anything of your missing men?" he asked.

Lumley-Lumley laughed.

"Exactly what Tom Merry has been asking me. I should have thought they could have looked after themselves; but they're not a particularly bright lot in our New House, so there's no telling."

Harry Wharton smiled. He had heard something of the rivalry between the two Houses at St. Jim's before.

"Well, I hope they'll turn up soon, anyway," he said.

"We'd counted on starting before this."

"What happens if they don't turn up at all, Tommy?" asked Jack Blake.

"Only one thing, I suppose. We shall have to rope in five fellows from the crowd that's come along with us. But they must turn up!"

"Simply must!" agreed Blake, though it couldn't be said that he sounded very certain about it.

"Can't possibly keep our Gweyfwiahs twiends waitin' much longah, anyway, deah boys," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I suggest that if Figgins and the others don't turn up in five minutes we start the game. In the meantime, Tom Mewwy, it would pewwraps be advisable to select five weserves to take the places of the missin' men."

"Good idea!" said Blake.

Tom Merry nodded and looked about him.

"Levison will have to come in, for one, anyway. And you, Manners. You're rather useful with a bat, Herries—better count you in."

"What about Dig? He's come on quite a lot at bowling lately," said Blake. "Need someone to take Fatty Wynn's place."

"Right-ho, then! Digby's down."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

The black mask came away from Red Jake's face, revealing features far younger than Figgins & Co. had expected. "Lumley-Lumley!" gasped Figgins.



see some sign of his relaxing attention. But his gleaming eyes and scowling face gave them no hope of that.

They reached the end of the woods at last. Before them was a cornfield, and to the right an old barn.

"Right!" ordered the gunman, and they knew then where he intended to imprison them.

Figgins uttered a groan at the sight of the solid old building. Once they were locked in there was no hope whatever of escape, apart from the remote chance of somebody discovering them and going for assistance.

He turned round to the gunman.

"Is it any good appealing to your common sense?" he asked.

"None!" came the swift answer. "You guys are in my way, and I'm jest going to put you where you'll remain nice and quiet for an hour or two. Step in, boys; you'll find the door open!"

The juniors hesitated at the thick oak door of the old barn. To be imprisoned here in this remote old barn while the School House contingent was on its way to Greyfriars seemed utterly awful.

"Make it snappy!" snarled Red Jake, and their hesitation came to an end. There was no arguing with that gun.

They carried their bags into the barn and stood in the

Tom Merry looked around and started as his eyes fell on Lumley-Lumley.

"My hat! Forgetting you, Lumley! You'll have to play, of course. No objection, I suppose, after—"

"After your turning me out to make way for a second-rater from the New House?" asked Lumley-Lumley politely. "Well, of course, if I'm really needed—"

"Stow it, ass! You know you'll be needed if those New House idiots don't turn up. You're down, anyway, and that makes up the team we shall have to play if Figgins and his pals don't soon put in an appearance."

Tom Merry cast another anxious glance towards the gates. Still there was no sign of Figgins & Co.

"Looks as if they're not turning up now," remarked Blake.

"Pretty hopeless, certainly. Must have been an accident or something. I'll ask Wharton about borrowing some cricket clobber for those of you chaps who aren't already in flannels."

And Tom Merry, looking extremely worried, as was only natural in the circumstances, walked over to arrange matters with the Greyfriars captain.

The problem of borrowing kit for the St. Jim's reserves was soon solved. Greyfriars fellows who were not playing were very willing to help the visitors in their dilemma, and as they were, on an average, of the same height and build as their guests very little difficulty was experienced in finding flannels and shirts and cricket boots to fit Tom Merry's reserves.

Lumley-Lumley, strangely enough, needed nothing, having brought all his cricket clobber with him. That circumstance struck Tom Merry as a little odd when he heard of it, but he was too occupied with problems of how to get the best out of the very mixed team with which he had now been landed to think much about it, and he soon dismissed the matter from his mind.

Lumley-Lumley approached Tom just before the start of the game.

"Well, I'm to play after all, then, in spite of what you decided, Merry?" he remarked. "Funny how things happen, isn't it?"

"Wish it hadn't happened, anyway," said Tom. "Without Fatty Wynn bowling and Figgins batting we've lost half our strength."

A somewhat peculiar gleam came into Lumley-Lumley's eyes.

"I guess that's a matter of opinion," he said. "You recollect that I expressed the opinion the other night that eleven School House men might put up just as good a show as the team you selected. We shall see to-day whether I was right or wrong, for we've got a hundred per cent School House team now."

"Fraid I'm not thinking much about that aspect of it at present. Still, it would be a score against the New House if we did pull it off without 'em. I wonder—"

"It can be done," said Lumley-Lumley.

"Can be, I suppose. But Greyfriars are a pretty hot lot this year. Still, we've got to do our best."

Lumley-Lumley set his teeth.

"I'm going to do mine, anyway, Tom Merry. On the strength of that House match you chose to leave me out of the Eleven. Now I've got my chance to show you what you left out. I'm going to do it to-day. And, what's more, we're going to win the match."

Tom Merry smiled.

"Well spoken, Lumley! If all you reserves feel the same about it, then we're going to have a thundering good try to win the day, anyway. Stick to it!"

Lumley-Lumley meant to stick to it.

CHAPTER 11.

Victory!

TOM MERRY lost the toss. That was a bad beginning, but it couldn't be helped. Harry Wharton elected to go in first.

The St. Jim's team took to the field, and Tom Merry put on Talbot and Noble to bowl.

Bob Cherry and Tom Redwing opened the innings for Greyfriars.

Noble bowled the first ball of the match to Tom Redwing, and the sailorman's son of the Remove at Greyfriars contented himself with merely stopping it. The second ball he just tapped, and the third, which went a little wide, he passed. Then, at the fourth ball, he stepped out and made a mighty hit far away to the boundary for four, and there was a cheer from the Greyfriars supporters.

"Good old Redwing!"

The scoring had opened.

Two more twos were hit in the remainder of the over,

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

then Bob Cherry had his chance against the bowling of Reginald Talbot, and opened well by scoring three off the first ball.

Redwing faced Talbot for the second ball of the over, and hit out at it. It looked a safe enough hit, though it went a little high, and Redwing was just beginning to run when a white-clad figure seemed to shoot out from nowhere, and fairly leap at the ball.

There was a yell from the crowd:

"Oh, caught, sir!"

"Good old Lumley!" roared Jack Blake.

It was certainly a fine catch, and the Greyfriars crowd, as well as the few supporters left from the School House at St. Jim's, applauded generously.

Vernon-Smith took Redwing's place at the wicket, and opened sensationally by hitting two boundaries off the first two balls. Then there was another sensation of a different kind. A third time Vernon-Smith hit out; but this time the ball didn't reach the boundary. Instead, it was held by Lumley-Lumley at mid-on, and returned to the wicket like lightning.

Crash!

"Oh, my hat! Played, Lumley-Lumley!"

"How's that, umpire?"

And the answer was "Out!" with Bob Cherry as the victim.

Greyfriars became a little steadier after that. Harry Wharton came in to partner Vernon-Smith, and the two stalwarts began to pile up the runs between them. Twenty was passed, then 30, and 40. The score stood at 48 when Vernon-Smith was at length dismissed by a fine ball from Talbot.

Vernon-Smith was followed by Hurree Singh, the dusky Nabob of Bhanipur, and a notable stand followed, both Harry Wharton and the Indian junior scoring freely at both ends.

A prolonged cheer from the Greyfriars crowd announced that a 100 runs had been scored. Tom Merry began to look a little worried. A 100 runs for three wickets. This was bad. Unless something happened soon St. Jim's would be confronted by an impossible task.

"Like to give me a chance at bowling, Merry?" asked Lumley-Lumley, at the change of an over.

Tom Merry considered for a moment. Lumley-Lumley had caught out Redwing, and run out Bob Cherry. He seemed to be in form in the field. Was there a chance that he might be equally in form at bowling? Tom Merry decided to give the American junior a trial, anyway.

"Carry on, next over, then!" he said.

"Thanks!"

Lumley-Lumley's eyes gleamed again, for a moment. Now was his chance, if ever! He made up his mind to make the most of it.

Noble bowled through another over without dislodging either of the obstinate Greyfriars batsmen. Then came Lumley-Lumley.

The ball whizzed out of his hand, broke beautifully a couple of yards from the stumps, and seemed to shoot past Wharton's bat, just grazing the top of the stumps and sending the bails flying.

"Oh, well bowled, Lumley!" cried Jack Blake.

Wharton was already walking away from the wicket without waiting for the umpire's verdict.

Frank Nugent took his place. Lumley-Lumley eyed him with a gleaming eye and sent down another fast ball.

Click!

He had done the trick again! Frank Nugent's wicket was spreadeagled, one of the stumps being whipped clean out of the ground. The School House supporters roared applause.

"Go it, Lumley-Lumley! Hat-trick wanted!"

And the hat-trick was given! Lumley-Lumley was fairly in his stride now, and the ball he sent down for the new-comer was almost too fast to be seen. There was another "click" and a regular howl from the St. Jim's crowd.

"Hat-trick! Played, Lumley!"

"Bravo!"

It was the beginning of the end for the Greyfriars team. No more stands like that between Wharton and Hurree Singh were witnessed, and not many more runs were scored. Lumley-Lumley bowled as though inspired, and two more wickets fell to him before Greyfriars were all out.

The final score was 135, and, taking all the circumstances into consideration, Tom Merry felt satisfied. It was quite formidable enough, of course, and the odds were against the weakened St. Jim's team doing so well, but they did stand a sporting chance.

After partaking of a sit-down tea with their hosts, the St. Jim's visitors started their innings by sending Talbot and Blake down to the wickets.

(Continued on page 18.)

Here [the Editor and the famous old Oracle hold their weekly conference. Queries large and small, wild and woolly, are dealt with, so if there is anything puzzling you try it on Your Editor or the Oracle—or both. Every poser answered.



HOW MANY BEANS MAKE FIVE?

THERE was another cart-load of queries from GEM readers waiting for me when I reached the office this morning, and the dear old Editor was frantically going through them, trying to find something that would get the old grey matter really groggy. But as he truthfully remarked: "You can't get one over on our whiskery wonder, he knows how many beans make five, bet your life! And talking of beans," added the Ed., "how many beans are there, fungus-face?"

"Five," I said, taking my lunch carefully from under my hat.

"We know five beans make five," said the Editor, snappily, "but a reader living at Littlehampton wants to know how many there are. Beans, that is."

"Depends how many he's got." I noticed a dangerous glint in the Editor's optic so I hurried on. "First of all there's the broad bean, a plant that has been cultivated from prehistoric times on account of its nourishing properties. Then there's the kidney bean, sometimes called the haricot bean, and the runner bean, or scarlet runner, which, as you know, grows on bean-sticks, and has scarlet flowers. Fourthly, we have the soya bean. The soya bean is grown in China and Japan, and a tasty sauce is prepared from the seeds. The seeds also yield useful oil, and the plants are used in India for fodder. Number five is the calabar bean, a bean that has often been eaten with fatal results."

"Is that all?" snapped the Ed.

"By no means," I replied, rubbing the old dome of my head for a moment. "I could tell you a couple of columns about that bean. It grows in tropical Africa, and climbs to a height of fifty feet. The pods are about six inches in length, and each pod holds two or three seeds. Its taste and smell are quite pleasant, but none the less it is highly poisonous, and it yields a drug which is very valuable to eye-doctors, called physostigmine—" I then picked my false teeth up from the carpet of the sanctum.

"That makes five," said the Editor, "but you've forgotten one, and that's the has-been."

"And what's a has-been like?"

"A has-been," said the Editor, "has a completely bald cranium and long white whiskers, a top hat he brings his lunch to the office in, and a set of false teeth that occasionally fall out on to my carpet."

I was about to make a cutting retort, when the Editor picked up another letter.

"Do you know anything about quaggas?" he asked.

"Yes, there aren't any. Quaggas

used to be found in vast herds on the South African plains, between the Cape Colony and the Vaal river. They were allied to the zebra, and had stripes on the head and neck, while the under part of the body and the legs were almost white. They were called quaggas because of their shrill barking neigh. There are still plenty of zebras in Africa, but the quagga is extinct."

"Can you tell George Hester, of Torquay, what pieces of eight were worth?"

"Pieces of eight were Spanish coins, worth about four shillings. They were coined of silver. It may interest George Hester to know that in 1797 the Bank of England suspended payment, and millions of these coins were put into circulation. They were stamped with a small oval bust of George the Third."

"Can you tell a Hornsey reader the name of the first battleship to be fitted with turbines?"

"The Dreadnought, in 1906."

"Which metal expands most under heat?"

"Zinc."

"Can you tell G. Kirby, of Stratford, which trees come into leaf the earliest?"

"The birch, elm, and hawthorn."

"Is it correct that the red deer has the largest horns?"

"No, the largest horns are found on the moose deer, which have been known to measure seven feet from tip to tip, and to weigh sixty pounds."

"Mary Walker, a Plumstead girl reader, has been enjoying a tale about castles and feasting in the ancient days of yore."



Here's a moose deer, chums, the horns of which measure seven feet from tip to tip and weigh sixty pounds.

"What d'you mean? Days of my what?"

"Days of your youth, of course," said the Editor, chortling. "About three hundred years ago, roughly. Mary, anyhow, has read about the servants of the baron's castle bringing in a scuttle and putting it before him on the table. And she wants to know what they would do that for?"

"Mary Walker obviously imagines that they put a coal-scuttle on the table," I said. "Actually, a scuttle, in those days, was a term for a broad, flat dish, or platter. It comes from a Latin word—scutella—meaning tray. No doubt, if they'd put a scuttle of coal in front of the bold baron, they would have been told to scuttle off."

"Here's a puzzler for you," said the Editor, opening his face in a wide smile.

"P. Plunkett, of Holyhead, wants to know what a zloty is."

"A zloty, sir, is the new money unit of Poland. It was introduced in 1924, after the collapse of the Polish mark. It was reckoned to be the same value as the old franc, that is, tenpence. If you ever go to Poland, sir, take plenty of zlotys."

"Why?"

"To put in the zloty machines. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop that hideous noise," snapped the Ed. "Tell me what dry batta is?"

"Dry batta is the name for allowances paid to soldiers in India in place of rations."

"Where is the fastest lifeboat stationed?"

"At Dover. It travels 17 knots, and is driven by 750 h.p. motor engines."

"K. Wynot, of Hull, wants to know why the tower of Big Ben is sometimes lit up at night, and sometimes not?"

"The tower of Big Ben is illuminated when Parliament is sitting."

"Can you tell a Colchester reader what a skua is?"

"A thing you stick through meat."

"You petrified sausage, I said skua, not skewer," said the Editor.

"A skua is a bird. It is found in Iceland, and in the Shetlands. The skua lives mainly by preying on gulls. It lays dark, olive-coloured eggs. The plumage is dark brown above, lighter beneath."

"Which is the bigger, a stoat or a weasel?"

"The stoat. A weasel will kill mice but a stoat will go for a rabbit."

"A Reading reader asks what tree in the world has the largest leaves?"

"The answer to that conundrum is the Inaja Palm, which grows on the banks of the Amazon, and has leaves fifty feet long and twelve feet wide."

"I must get a couple of those," said the Editor, gurgling gleefully. "They'll do to cover your whiskers up with."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

The Kidnapped Cricketers!

(Continued from page 16.)

It was soon seen that it was going to be a close game. Thirty runs were scored before Talbot was caught out, and Tom Merry, who was next man in, added another twenty before he was clean bowled by Hurree Singh. After that the runs piled up steadily; but the wickets fell steadily, too, and the excitement grew as the game progressed. Lumley-Lumley was seventh man in when the score stood at 105.

Then came sensation after sensation. For the second time that afternoon the hat-trick was performed on the junior cricket-field—this time by Hurree Singh for the home team. Another wicket fell for the last ball of the same over, and utter dismay began to spread through the ranks of the St. Jim's players and their followers.

Digby went down to the wicket. Last man in and 33 runs needed to win! It seemed hopeless.

But not altogether. With the change of overs came a change in the luck.

Lumley-Lumley came into the limelight again.

The first ball he sent straight to the boundary. A well-placed hit for two followed. Then another boundary.

Hope came slowly back to the St. Jim's fellows; but it was still only a faint hope. The Greyfriars bowlers were still at their best, and every ball was on the mark.

It fell to Digby to face the bowling, and they watched him in almost an agony of anxiety. Digby was not a first-class batsman, and unless he could survive, all Lumley-Lumley's brilliance would be unavailing.

But Digby knew what was required of him, and he gave it. Each ball that Harry Wharton sent him he stopped, till one came wide of the mark, enabling him to score a single.

Lumley-Lumley played again, and a roar went up as he scored another boundary—then another roar for yet another boundary.

Everything depended on Lumley-Lumley now. The St. Jim's fellows could hardly contain themselves for excitement as he scored time after time.

Three runs to win and Lumley-Lumley facing Hurree Singh! A breathless hush fell on the field.

Hurree Singh, imperturbable as ever, took a short run and bowled.

Click!

Silence for a moment. Then a roar.

Lumley-Lumley had made a glorious boundary hit!

The hundred-per-cent School House team from St. Jim's had won!

CHAPTER 12, Cock House Still!

"HURRAH!"

"Played, Lumley?"

"Bravo, deah boy!"

"Who said he couldn't play cricket?" roared Jack Blake.

Players and supporters alike swarmed round Lumley-Lumley, cheering wildly. Never before had visitors from St. Jim's created such a scene on an opponent's ground. But they felt justified. Lumley-Lumley had been magnificent, and mainly through his wonderful efforts the formidable Greyfriars team had been defeated. The St. Jim's juniors fairly roared applause.

The hero of the match returned to the pavilion, looking flushed and delighted, and bore his blushing honours with becoming modesty.

"Well, we've pulled it off!" he remarked.

"Thanks chiefly to you, old bean!" said Tom Merry.

"I guess that's nice of you, Merry. I'm pleased, anyway. I've justified my contention that I wouldn't let you down if you played me in this match!"

"Justified it right up to the hilt, bai Jove!" remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"And, more than that, I've proved the truth of what I told you when you dropped me—that a hundred-per-cent School House team could beat Greyfriars just as well as the mixture!"

"My hat, yes! I rather fancy this is where School House scores over New House at last!" grinned Manners.

"Hear, hear!"

Lumley-Lumley smiled.

"I guess it's a bigger score than you fellows realise at the moment. Now that the game is over I've got a little surprise for you. Remember Red Jake?"

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

"You mean that hold-up merchant that's supposed to be after you? Can't forget him!" grinned Herries.

"Well, what would you say if I told you the reason the New House folk haven't turned up to-day was that Red Jake held them up and imprisoned them before they could get to the station?"

"Eh?"

"What the thump—"

"That's what happened, anyway," said Lumley-Lumley. "They took the short cut through the woods and Red Jake got 'em. I'm not kidding!"

"Well, my hat! But how do you come to know this, anyway?" demanded Tom Merry, in amazement.

Lumley-Lumley's reply made his listeners fairly jump.

"Because I am Red Jake!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Rather surprising, eh?" grinned Lumley-Lumley. "But it's true, all right. Lumley-Lumley and Red Jake are one and the same person. Get that?"

"You mean to say that you've been disguising yourself as a blessed Chicago gunman?"

"Just that," said Lumley-Lumley calmly. "It's all a jape on the New House, you see. I started by holding up Fatty Wynn in the woods, just to introduce myself."

"My hat!"

"I carried on by scaring the life out of Figgins and Kerr and Wynn when I raided the School House yesterday—pretty slick, the way I changed back in the box-room, eh?"

"Great pip!"

"And I wound up the programme to-day by holding up the New House players and their crowd and locking 'em all in a barn so they couldn't get to Greyfriars!"

The St. Jim's juniors stared at Lumley-Lumley almost dazedly.

"Then—then all this talk Figgins told us about the Kid was just bunkum?" stuttered Blake.

"Bunkum, pure and simple!" said Lumley-Lumley calmly. "But it was good enough for Figgins and the others. One night this week, you men, Figgins told me that I was a Chicago terrorist, that I hadn't a sense of humour, and that I couldn't play cricket."

"Bai Jove! I wemembah your tellin' us all that, deah boy!"

"Well," said Lumley-Lumley, "I've proved that I can play cricket—"

"Hear, hear!"

"I've given him a good enough impression of a Chicago terrorist to teach him that I'm not quite like that—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I think I've shown him that I've got a sense of humour—"

"My hat, yes!"

"And finally, I've scored over New House as they haven't been scored over for a long, long time!" said Lumley-Lumley.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors roared.

"Biggest blow they've ever had!" said Tom Merry. "Of course, what you did was pretty high-handed. If we hadn't won to-day—"

"Well, if we hadn't won, I guess I'd have gone back to the States and never been seen again," grinned Lumley-Lumley. "But I took a chance and it came off; we did win!"

"Hear, hear!"

"By the way, how did you know they were going to be on their own?" asked Blake curiously. "If they'd been with us this afternoon as arranged—"

Lumley-Lumley laughed.

"That arrangement wasn't coming off, anyway. They were delayed by their cricket kit vanishing, if you remember. Well, I did that!"

"Oh, ye gods!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I just want to put the finishing touch to the whole jape now," said Lumley-Lumley. "When we get to Rylcombe I want you fellows to release the New House guys while I become Red Jake again—I've hidden the disguise in a woodman's hut near the barn. Then Figgins and his men can capture me!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess I'll lead 'em a chase first—perhaps as far as St. Jim's—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So that the denouement can come in public and Figgins and his pals get as much kudos as possible. All agreed?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, rather?"

And that matter having been settled the cricketers turned into the pavilion to prepare for the return journey.

A somewhat rueful crowd of Greyfriars fellows headed

by Harry Wharton & Co., accompanied the St. Jim's contingent to Friardale and sent them off with a rousing cheer, to which Tom Merry and his men responded with hearty good will.

After that the thoughts of the St. Jim's men turned to Rylcombe Woods and the prisoners in the old barn, and they looked forward with keen interest to the termination of Lumley-Lumley's great jape.

The journey passed all too slowly, but they reached Rylcombe at last and hurried off to the woods. Lumley-Lumley showed them the barn and handed over the key to Tom Merry, then dived into the bushes in the direction of a little woodman's hut on the outskirts of the woods.

A grinning crowd of School House men marched off to the barn. As they approached it they could hear sounds of a weeping and a wailing and a gnashing of teeth from within the barn.

"Help! Let us out!"

"Rescue!"

Then a hammering and a banging on the great oaken door of the old structure.

Tom Merry went up to the door and gave a shout.

"Hallo, hallo! That you, Figgy?"

"Thank goodness!" came somebody's voice from within the barn, then a hollow sort of cheer went up from the rest.

Tom opened the door. Immediately, a wild-eyed and dishevelled crowd of New House juniors came tumbling out.

"Oh! Thank goodness!" gasped Figgins. "We thought we'd never see daylight again. That building must have been a prison one time. How did you know we were here?"

"Got the key from your pal, Red Jake!" answered Tom Merry, quite truthfully.

"Is Lumley-Lumley safe?"

"Safe as houses! You'll see him soon. Sorry you couldn't turn up at Greyfriars, Figgy. Of course, it made no difference—"

"What?" yelled a dozen indignant New House voices.

"We licked 'em with a scratch School House team, you see!"

"You—you licked Greyfriars without me and Fatty and Kerr and the others in the team?" hooted Figgins. "Then who the thump made the runs?"

"Lumley-Lumley!"

"G-g-great pip! And who took all the wickets?"

"Lumley-Lumley!" grinned Tom.

Figgins and his followers stared at Tom Merry almost in dismay. After all they had said concerning Lumley-Lumley's cricket and after all they had done to replace him with a New House man, he had won the game for St. Jim's! This was something like a blow!

"Well, that beats Barney!" muttered Figgins. Then he looked up towards the woods and uttered a sudden yell:

"The gunman!"

"Get him!" roared Kerr.

"Slaughter him!" howled Fatty Wynn.

Hours and hours of wearisome imprisonment in the barn had made the feelings of Figgins and his chums towards Red Jake almost homicidal. Before their imprisonment they had "jibbed" at facing the desperado's gun. Now, in their rage, they would have faced a machine-gun to get at him.

The New House fellows broke into a run.

Red Jake looked at them for one instant then turned on his heel and also ran for it.

The School House juniors, grinning delightedly, brought up in the rear.

A merry chase followed. Red Jake, alias Lumley-Lumley, was a good runner and was able to keep his pursuers just at the right distance behind him. Through the woods and up the lane he sped, then through the gates of St. Jim's towards the School House. And at his heels raced a yelling crowd of enraged New House juniors.

Lumley-Lumley pulled up at last and faced the enemy, and in a couple of seconds they were upon him.

But before they could lay hands on him a majestic figure in cap and gown came hurrying on the scene, and the stern voice of Dr. Holmes boomed out.

"Boys!"

"The Head!" exclaimed Figgins. "Just in time, sir!"

"Oh, Jiminy!" said Lumley-Lumley. This was not according to programme.

"We've caught him at last, sir!" said Figgins cheerfully.

"He's given us a good run, but we've got him now. Shall I ring for the police?"

"What—what—who is this man?" demanded the Head, eyeing the "thug" in amazement.

"It's Red Jake, sir!"

"R-R-Red Jake?"

"The Terror of Chicago, sir!" said Fatty Wynn. "A fearful villain—shoots at sight—"

"Nonsense!"

"It's true, sir!"

"Utter nonsense!" roared the Head. "Remove your mask, my man!"

Red Jake hesitated, then obeyed. The black mask came away from his face revealing features far younger than the New House juniors had expected. For a moment Figgins & Co. stared at those youthful features. Then their jaws dropped.

"Lumley-Lumley!" gasped Figgins.

"What the thump—"

"It's Lumley-Lumley disguised!" yelled Redfern. "Then—then—"

"We've been had!" groaned Figgins. "There's no such person as Red Jake. It was Lumley-Lumley all the time!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a yell from the School House crowd. Despite the august presence of the Head they simply couldn't help it. Tom Merry and a score or more of School House juniors howled with uncontrolled mirth, while Figgins and his followers, their faces red with embarrassment, continued to stare at the japer who had perpetrated this really tremendous hoax.

Even Dr. Holmes must have seen the humorous side of the affair, for he held up his handkerchief to his face for a moment in a manner that left no doubt as to what kind of an expression he was hiding. But when he withdrew the handkerchief he was looking severe enough, and Lumley-Lumley realised that he had to face the music.

That, of course, was inevitable. Such an escapade could not be passed over without punishment, and the Head took him off at once, still wearing the eccentric garb of the imaginary Red Jake, and gave him, in Lumley-Lumley's own words, "six of the best."

But the results were worth all that, and when Lumley-Lumley emerged from his ordeal to find himself surrounded by a cheering School House crowd, he very quickly forgot his aching palms.

Lumley-Lumley was chaired all round the quad to the stirring strains of "For He's a jolly Good Fellow!" The triumphal procession finished up at the foot of the New House steps, and at that point Lumley-Lumley fairly "brought down the house" by solemnly presenting to Figgins & Co. the automatic with which he had brought off his great coup—the said automatic transpiring to be nothing more deadly than a five-shilling toy pistol.

"And now look here, Figgins," said Lumley-Lumley, addressing the New House leader, "you said I was a Chicago terrorist, that I hadn't a sense of humour, and that I couldn't play cricket."

"I—I—I—" spluttered Figgins.

"Well," continued the American junior, "I've proved that I can play cricket. I've given you a good impression of a Chicago terrorist, and I think I've proved that I've got a sense of humour. And, to crown all this, I've scored over you measly New House lot. Anything to say?"

Poor Figgins hadn't. Words failed him. Together with his chums, he entered the New House to hide his diminished head.

A yell followed the New House juniors.

"Who's cock House now?"

The answer echoed to the farthest corner of St. Jim's:

"School House!"

And really there didn't seem to be much doubt about it!

THE END.

(Now look out for next week's GEM and another rollicking fine story of Tom Merry & Co., entitled: "GLYN'S SUBMARINE!" Boys, you'll be on a real treat of a yarn here, so be sure you order your copy WELL IN ADVANCE.)

THE WORLD'S BEST CYCLE

26 DOWN

& 15 MONTHLY PAYMENTS OF 5/10

JUNO

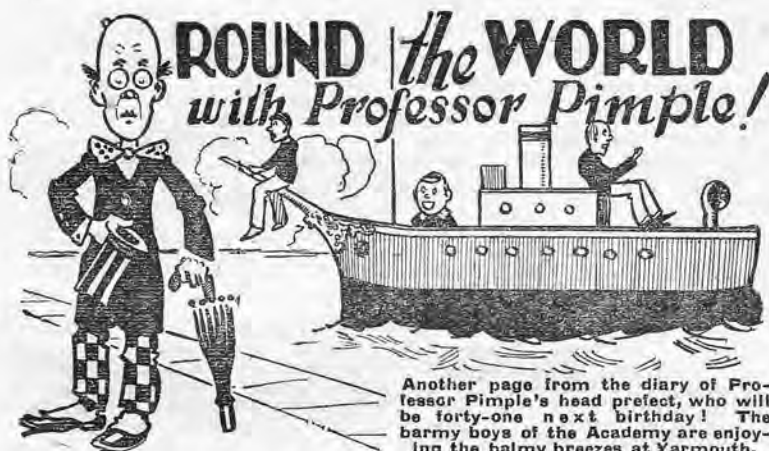
The JUNO "ROYAL"

BROOKS SADDLE, DUNLOP GORD TYRES, RENOLD CHAIN, 14 DAYS' FREE TRIAL.

All British. Superb Quality Guaranteed for ever. Direct from Factory to you. Packed and Carriage Paid. Wonderful easy terms to suit you. Chromium Plated Models if desired. Write for Free Art List.

JUNO CYCLE CO. (Dept. U.2), 248, Bishopsgate, London, E.C.2.





Another page from the diary of Professor Pimple's head prefect, who will be forty-one next birthday! The barmy boys of the Academy are enjoying the balmy breezes at Yarmouth.

BUSTER BROWN and I were going into Yarmouth to spend the money Buster's uncle had given him, when we turned round and saw Sniffy following us. We began to discuss how we could dodge him, and walked on, pretending we were ignorant of his existence, only stopping here and there to look for a tuckshop. But what with being in a strange town and going round corners to dodge Sniffy, we soon found we were hopelessly lost, and there were no tuckshops where we were, only rows of cottages, and men standing outside counting the holes in their fishing-nets.

Then Buster said he thought we ought to go back, or they'd go off round the world without us, so he asked a man in a jersey if he knew the way to his uncle's, and the man laughed and said yes, there was an uncle's at the top of the street, and the fellow was a fair sort of chap.

So we went to the top of the street, and found a man in a little shop with partitions in it; but the man wasn't fair, he was dark, and had a big, hooked nose. He said: "What 'ave you got?" And Buster said we hadn't got anything, but we were looking for uncle's. Then the man said: "Well, you've found him. What 'ave you got?" Buster said he'd got an uncle who cured herrings. "Is that so?" said the man. "Well, I've got a sister in the Jericho fire-brigade. She'll be here in a minute—p'raps you'd like her to put you out!"

He looked so fierce we decided to hurry off, and when we turned the corner we ran into Sniffy. "You and Buster lost yourselves?" Sniffy asked, grinning like a giddy haddock. "What's that got to do with you?" said Buster. "Nothing," said Sniffy; "but I know where there's a bonzer tuckshop, and I know the way back to your uncle's—see? I've got better bumps on my head than you have!"

It was as much as we could do to control our wrath; but we remembered that Sniffy was supposed to have a head like Christopher Columbus, so we let him lead us to a tuckshop, him knowing the way. When we got in we saw a crowd of chaps sitting at a long table, and a kind-looking gentleman at the top. "Why," said Buster, "there's Tom Merry & Co., of St Jim's!" When the kind-looking gentleman saw us, he said: "You're Professor Pimple's boys, aren't you? I'm Mr. Martin Clifford." So we shook hands, and seeing two empty chairs, we sat on them quick, to stop Sniffy coming in. But Mr. Clifford put Sniffy at a table with tons of tuck piled up on it, and told him to go ahead; so

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

Sniffy grinned more than ever, and I could hear Buster grinding his teeth with rage.

We asked Mr. Clifford if Tom Merry & Co. could come with us round the world; but he said he didn't think so, because readers wouldn't like it if they were left out of the GEM stories, which we thought was quite true, as you can't imagine the GEM without Tom Merry & Co. in it. Then a fat chap came in, and when he came closer we saw it was Baggy Trimble, and he yelled out: "Who's this insect at my table?" pointing to Sniffy. Sniffy turned very white, and all the St. Jim's chaps shouted out: "Turn him out, fat man!" And Baggy Trimble, who was almost bursting in the anguish of his feelings, charged at Sniffy, and they fell head-long on the floor, with the jam-tarts and cream-buns, and all the rest of the tuck, on top of them.

They rolled about on the floor until they were both smothered in squashed cake and jam and stuff; and finally Mr. Clifford separated them, and told us we had better take our friend away and have him cleaned up. So we seized Sniffy by the legs and shoulders and carried him out. As he was now at our mercy, we discussed the best way of cleaning him up, and Buster suggested finding a horse trough and throwing him in. But I thought that was not painful enough, so I said we ought to find a fisherman who was boiling lobsters, and get him to boil Sniffy as well, that being the only way to get him properly clean.

When Sniffy heard this suggestion he wriggled furiously, but without avail. Then Sniffy started hollering, so we bumped him up and down a few times on the pavement which made him much quieter. Of course, we made him tell us the way. He refused at first, but after Buster had dragged him a few yards by the legs he gave in. We followed his directions until we found ourselves crossing a big field, full of caravans and tents, like a fair. Suddenly we heard a fierce growl, and saw a lion a few feet away, glaring at us, so we dropped Sniffy and ran for our lives. We heard the lion give a terrific roar, and we ran on, filled with terror. Then we saw a big cage in front of us, with the door open, and in our fright we rushed into the cage and slammed the door. The lion came up and started prowling all round the cage, until a little man dressed in red tights appeared with a big whip. When he saw us, he grinned through the bars. "You're the fellow who read my bumps," he said, looking at me. "Very well, my lad, you can stop there and read my lion's bumps for me. I'll send him in to you!"

After Buster and I had collapsed in the lion's cage we listened in terror to the growls of the lion outside, unable to move, because the lion-tamer, who was wild with me for what I said about his bumps, had threatened to send the lion in to us.

At last I managed to talk to the lion-tamer through the bars, and I told him that I was too old for his lion, being the eldest prefect, and that Sniffy was somewhere in the field, and the lion would like Sniffy much more, as he was a kid, and would be easy to eat. Then the lion-tamer told us that he'd changed his mind, and would keep us alive for a bit as part of the circus, and a few days in the cage would fatten us up.

It was quite impossible to get out, and Buster told me a story about someone who lived a long time ago, named Anne Drockles, who saved his life by taking a thorn out of a lion's foot, so the lion wouldn't eat him. This seemed a good idea, and we waited for the lion to get a thorn in his foot, and argued which one would take the thorn out. But the lion kept walking round the cage, and didn't seem to be going to tread on any thorns. Then Buster had a brain-wave, and remembered he still had a ginger-beer bottle that he had been keeping to take back to the shop, so he broke the bottle into several pieces and dropped the broken glass on the ground outside.

Presently the lion came along and trod on one of the bits of glass, whereupon he let out a tremendous roar and rushed off between the caravans and things, with one paw in the air. All the people in the circus came rushing out, including the lion-tamer and his wife, who had hit me on the head with her parasol when I read her husband's bumps on the sands. When she saw me, she said she would hand me over to the police for turning her lion out of his cage, and that I was a heartless monster who deserved all he got, and her husband said quite right, and he'd see I got it.

In the distance we could hear the lion roaring with the pain of his foot, and everybody rushing about with lanterns and sticks, trying to find the lion. Then we saw a group of people coming from the other end of the field, and when they got nearer we saw, to our astonishment, that Sniffy was leading the lion back with him, and the lion's paw was bandaged up with a big white handkerchief. Buster and I groaned with rage when we saw this, 'cos we knew that the handkerchief was one Pimple had given to Sniffy that morning, as Pimple was tired of seeing Sniffy wiping his nose without one.

When Sniffy came up with the lion the lion-tamer shook him by the hand, and the lion-tamer's wife actually kissed him in front of us and said he was a little hero! It made Buster and me writhe. And then, to make matters worse, that pestiferous little worm Sniffy saw us sitting in the cage.

"Why," he said, "there's Buster and old Baldy! Professor Pimple will be proud to think that two of his prefects are in your menagerie!"

Then the lion-tamer winked at Sniffy and grinned, and said we ought to draw a big crowd.

Alas for the lion-tamer's hopes, however, for Professor Pimple arrived at that moment, and said that, owing to a suspected case of measles in the Academy we were to be immediately released and placed in quarantine with the rest of the party. Needless to say, this knocks on the head all hopes of continuing our journey round the world with Professor Pimple, for the time being, at any rate.

By Cecil Fanshaw.



Nick o' the Highway!

CHAPTER 1.

Nick Helps a Cully!

"PLAGUE take all highwaymen, landlord! Cowardly rogues they are, without spirit or courage, and, by my life, it gives me rare pleasure to see one dangling on a roadside gibbet. And right soon I hope to sentence Swift Nick, by thunder!"

So saying, Mr. Justice Humphreys, one of his Majesty King George II.'s judges, took snuff from a gold box, and laughed grimly across the parlour table at burly John Dunn, landlord of the Fox and Hound coaching inn.

"They are hardly lacking in courage, my lord," faltered burly John, who wore black knee breeches, a white shirt and stockings, and was as powerfully built as a blacksmith.

"I say they are poltroons!" barked the hawk-faced judge maliciously. "And the worst o' the lot is this rascal called Swift Nick. Too long has he cheated the gallows, flitting hither and yon like a skulking night-bird, only pouncing on easy prey."

"Well said, my lord!" obsequiously nodded four other belated travellers, resting at the inn. "Plague take Nick!"

"But, i' faith, he is daring enough!" laughed one.

"Not he!" snarled Judge Humphreys. "I warrant I could rout him with a dummy pistol! Zounds, he shall soon hang!" he added, rubbing his bony hands together. "I've warned all Runners to take him alive, for shooting's too good for him. I'll send him to Tyburn Tree—no mercy for tobymen!"

At that, burly John Dunn, the innkeeper, felt mighty worried, for he had often befriended Swift Nick and hidden him when hard-pressed by Runners. He liked Nick, and secretly admired him, knowing he was really a mighty bold and dashing Gentleman of the High Toby. But it would be an ill day for Nick if he ever stood in the dock before Justice Humphreys, who was known as the "hanging judge."

Justice Humphreys was on his way to hold the county assizes, and grimly looking forward to condemning several malefactors, of which he particularly wished Swift Nick was one. He travelled with a retinue of four mounted servants, as well as his coach postilions. The fact that one of his horses had cast a shoe had caused him to make a brief halt at the Fox and Hound Inn.

But suddenly to the lamp-lit parlour came the rumble of wheels, clatter of hoofs, and jingle of harness, indicating that the coach was ready again.

Rising, Mr. Justice Humphreys caught up his gloves, his cocked hat, and flung his cloak about his gaunt frame.

"Hasten with your reckoning, landlord," he barked, "for I dine at the Grange with Squire Hudson to-night, and am plaguily late! 'Tis a dark night—a night for cowardly highwaymen, to boot!" He laughed sourly. "But, i' faith, those gentry keep close to their lairs when I make my circuits!"

The grim, bloodthirsty judge quitted the inn-parlour, and soon the rumble of wheels and clatter of many hoofs was fading up the Great North Road. Shortly afterwards the other travellers left, and burly John began to collect their empty glasses and long clay pipes.

"I hope Swift Nick lies low awhile!" he muttered uneasily. "I wish I knew where he was!"

"Here, cully," quoth a laughing voice. "And so yonder old hawk could rout me with a dummy pistol, could he? Ha, ha!"

Burly John spun round, then gasped, for there, at his elbow, stood Swift Nick himself, black-masked, booted and spurred, and wearing his dark blue riding-coat.

"Zounds!" gasped the astonished innkeeper. "Where ha' you sprung from, Master Nick?"

"That panel behind you, John," Nick laughed, indicating an open panel which revealed the entrance to a secret passage.

"Then you heard everything?"

"By my life, I did! Yon grisly night hawk's challenge—I'll take it up!"

"What mean you, Nick?" Burly John gasped.

"I mean to bid Mr. Justice Humphreys 'Stand and Deliver!' Swift Nick laughed grimly. "He has hanged more than one cully of mine, and I'll clean him out, by thunder, and make him late to hold his assizes! A poltroon, am I? I'll show him!"

Burly John gripped Nick's cuffed sleeve in amazement and dismay.

"You'll stop the judge's coach, Nick?" he gasped. "'Tis madness! Impossible! The judge has four armed servants as well as his postilions! You'll be caught for sure!"

"I lay I'm not! And I'll bring you the judge's snuff-box

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

The Judge Who Boasted— And the Highwayman who Brought Him to His Knees.

in token!" Nick smiled grimly. "'Tis lucky I came here to overhear yon old demon's plans."

In vain burly John protested. Swift Nick was determined to hold up the grim old judge somehow, and he quitted the Fox and Hound Inn by way of the secret passage up which he had entered. Then, chuckling grimly, he went to the shadowy stables at the back, swiftly saddled and bridled his black horse, Sultan, and swung up.

Five minutes later he was trotting up the road, with two loaded barkers in his pockets, two more in his holsters, his three-cornered hat pulled low, and his high coat collar turned up to his ears.

"Who can name so merry a game,
As the game of all games?—High Toby!"

Nick, laughing, sang softly; then added:
"But how the plague to singe old Humphreys' whiskers?
He travels with a regiment!"

In fact, even Swift Nick knew he would have a mighty tough job to fulfil his boast; but the idea of robbing the hanging judge of all people, appealed to his adventurous nature. It would be mighty difficult and dangerous however, and Swift Nick was not a fellow to run blindly into a hornets'-nest.

He had heard that the judge was to dine at the Grange before driving on to the county town, and racked his brains for a plan to interrupt the journey. Never before had Nick undertaken such a reckless job.

It was a dark night, however, with clouds scudding across the moon. Hardly was Nick visible on his black horse, Sultan, and trees and hedges were like blurred smudges. There was no sound, either, except the bleating of some sheep in a field and the barking of a farm dog. But suddenly Nick heard a wild drumming of hoofbeats behind him.



A Series of Murders

What sinister mystery lies behind the sensational series of murders at a quiet country house in the South of England? What is the identity of the terrible killer whose startling crimes thrill the country? SEXTON BLAKE finds himself faced with a problem of the most baffling description in this exciting story. Here is an amazing case full of tense and gripping situations which make it a novel of outstanding dramatic interest.

Ask for No. 247 of the

SEXTON BLAKE
LIBRARY Now on Sale **4d.**

"What's up?" he snapped excitedly. "Back, Sultan!" And he reined back his horse to the shadow of overhanging trees.

Nearer and nearer sounded the drumming clatter, a tornado of sound. Nick sat his horse like a statue, gripped a pistol in his right hand, and glared down the road through the slits in his black mask.

Of a sudden he saw a horseman come whirling up the road towards him, dust billowing in his wake. Nick gasped in surprise, for, like himself, the horseman, who was slight of stature, wore a three-cornered hat, long riding-coat, and black mask.

"By thunder, a brother of the High Toby!" gasped Nick. "And hotly pursued!"

The approaching horseman was obviously a highwayman, and a sudden chorus of howls and whoops told Swift Nick that he was being pursued. A second later the pursuers stormed into view, a motley crew of farmhands on rough nags, brandishing cudgels and reaping-hooks, with one of two townsfolk waving big horse-pistols.

Bang, bang! The fleeing highwayman turned in his saddle, to fire twice, and yells of pain told that his bullets took effect. But on came the thundering pursuers, and Nick saw that the fugitive's horse was weary and sweat-lathered. The beast stumbled and almost fell within a dozen yards of the hidden Nick.

"A tobyman! We got 'un!" rose delighted whoops.

"I faith, you have not!" Swift Nick chuckled grimly.

Easily could Nick have escaped notice by remaining motionless where he was. But he never shirked danger—despite Judge Humphreys' sneering remarks—and he was not the sort to leave a fellow highwayman in peril. He clapped his heels to Sultan's sides, and forth from the shadows leapt the big black horse to bar the way.

"Right on, cully!" Nick shouted to the fugitive. "I'll hold this rabble for you."

At that the flying highwayman uttered a cry of relief. But he, too, proved to be a stout-hearted fellow, and reined up and whirled his horse round as Nick made at the pursuers.

"Come on, then! Have at 'em, cully!" Nick whooped.

Instantly farmhands and townsfolk were thrown into confusion, for Swift Nick's sudden appearance surprised and dismayed them.

"'Tis Swift Nick himself!" they yelled, recognising his famous horse with the white scar on its forehead.

"Ay!" roared Nick. "Back, numskulls, or come on at your peril!"

Sight of two masked highwaymen riding at them proved too much for some of the yokels, who broke and fled. But the remainder came charging on in a bunch, howling and whooping; then pistols barked and flung cudgels came whistling through the air. Nick saw that the other highwayman's mount was in no condition for further flight at the moment, so spurred recklessly forward.

Bang, bang! His pistols flashed and roared. A second later the two highwaymen were in the thick of a desperate fight.

CHAPTER 2.

A Plot is Hatched!

CRACK! Nick felt the thwack of a bludgeon on his thigh, saw angry and excited faces before him. But he spurred Sultan forward, and laid around mightily with his pistol barrel. He slashed at cocked hats, at fur caps, and with all the strength of his lusty arm beat at yelling faces.

He was aware of the other highwayman fighting grimly at his side, and ducked and smote furiously.

Down to the dusty road tumbled two yokels, but up they scrambled again, to leap for Sultan's bridle. Nick brought his heavy pistol thudding down on their heads, however, and they staggered back bawling and yelling.

All this happened at lightning speed. In fact, so furious and vigorous was the onslaught of the two highwaymen that yokels and townsfolk were taken by surprise. Their own numbers and the darkness also confused them, so that they dealt each other some lusty blows. Horses plunged and reared, unseating their unskilful riders.

Then Nick rammed Sultan at a shouting townsman, to send horse and rider crashing to the ground. A moment later the two highwaymen burst through, leaving a confused and bewildered party of men behind them.

Nick, however, knew that the chase would be on again directly the fellows recovered their wits, and set Sultan at a five-barred gate.

"Follow me, cully!" he laughed joyously. "I know the woods about here, and I lay we soon lose yon numskulls!"

The rescued highwayman followed Nick over the gate. Then, laughing and waving their hats defiantly, both drummed away across a dim field, soon to pull up in a pine-wood where no sounds of pursuit reached their ears.

Laughing but breathless, bruised, and bleeding from a cut cheek, Swift Nick turned to the fellow he had rescued. The latter had removed his mask, and Nick saw that he was quite a lad, slimly built, but with a square jaw and a bold, reckless air.

"Faith, 'twas a pretty scrap!" laughed Nick.

"It was," grinned the other, panting. "And, by thunder, I owe you my life, Swift Nick."

Nick laughed, then frowned.

"'Twas all i' the night's work!" quoth he. "And it ill becomes one tobyman to desert another in trouble. But, hark 'ee, pal, riding the High Toby is a dangerous game, and you look mighty young for it. How are you named?"

"Roy Stanford," replied the lad.

"Then take my advice and leave the road, Roy," warned Nick earnestly.

"'Tis a wild, merry life, but most of us end up at Tyburn, and you were nearly caught back yonder."

Somewhat to Nick's dismay young Roy shook his head.

"I took to the road for a jest—" he said.

"A jest i' faith!"

"Ay, I held up a coach with a cully for a jest," Roy nodded grimly. "But he was scoundrel enough to betray me to the Runners, and I had to bolt. By my life, Swift Nick, I mean to stick to the High Toby and ask nothing better than to ride with you."

In vain Nick tried to dissuade the lad, pointing out all the risks of life as a highwayman. But the lad was determined, vowed he would continue to ride alone if Nick would not have him for a pal, and finally Nick gave in.

"Faith, then, Roy, you shall be my pal," he laughed. "And maybe I can help you to avoid trouble. But I've set myself a rare hard nut to crack this night."

"What's that?" Roy burst out eagerly.

"I mean to hold up old Humphreys!"

"The hanging judge!"

"Ay, cully!"

"'Tis impossible!" gasped Roy. "He travels with four outriders!"

"And we'll outwit him!" laughed Nick.

"Methinks I've hit on a plan to take, not only his purse, but, with your help, his coach and himself as well! 'Twill serve him right, for he says that all highwaymen are cowards and vows he longs to hang me."

At that Roy laughed delightedly.

"Kidnap old owl-face Humphreys and his coach!" cried the lad, slapping his thigh. "A merry jest indeed! But how on earth?"

"He dines at the Grange to-night," Nick grinned, eyes sparkling through his mask-slits. "Suppose we take his postillions' places while he dines, cully! Then I lay we take him for a merry ride after supper and dump him in the woods somewhere. I' truth, his servants are a danger—and we may be recognised, but the game is worth the risk. Ho, ho!"

Roy delightedly agreed, and the new-made pals promptly shook up their horses, then headed for the Grange across hedges and ditches and stout fences. Roy wondered how on earth they could take the postillions' places, but trusted Swift Nick to pull the trick somehow.

Half an hour's ride brought the adventurous pair to the Grange, the home of Squire Hudson, where, as Nick knew, the grim judge was dining before proceeding on his way to the county town to hold the assizes.

Clearing a last fence, the pals found themselves in a large park, and could see the house itself, surrounded by tall elm-trees. A fine mansion was the Grange, built of grey granite, and having long, diamond-paned windows. It was now bathed in silvery moonlight, and, to their delight, Nick and Roy saw lights at the window of a room on the ground floor.

"Dinner is served," grinned Nick. "We will hide our horses in this park, cully."

Swiftly the pair dismounted, to leave black Sultan and Roy's well-trained nag hidden in a dark clump of pine-trees, then they stole towards the big house afoot.

Both knew they were on a mighty dangerous errand, and trod softly across the lawn in their heavy riding-boots, keeping to the shadows. But both carried loaded pistols in the capacious pockets of their long riding-coats, and their eyes



The postilion found a bone-hard arm wrapped round his throat and a hand clapped over his mouth.

flashed excitedly through their mask-slits as they thought of the fury and amazement of the hanging judge if their scheme came off. It would mean death for both if it failed!

Past the moon-bathed mansion they stole, and then on up the steep drive towards the stables, which were nearly a hundred yards away from the house and surrounded by tall trees. Now a rising wind tugged at the highwaymen's coats, and drowned the sounds of their footsteps on the gravel.

Stooping, they advanced in the shadow of a wind-tossed laurel-hedge, and fortunately, the moonlight came and went. At last they reached a big archway and could peer into the stable-yard.

There was no one about. Nick and Roy could see the judge's big coach in the centre of the dim, stone-flagged yard, could faintly hear horses stamping in their stalls and loose-boxes. Plainly, the judges' postillions and outriders were down at the house, merrily supping in the servants' quarters, little guessing that Swift Nick and his young cully were about.

"We'll into yon stables, Roy," whispered Nick. "My plan is to hide alongside the coach-horses, and grab the postillions when they enter. I warrant they come up before the outriders, having the coach to harness."

"And then?" breathed Roy, his nerves thrilling.

"Faith, we must gag the postillions and dump them under the mangers," grinned Nick. "If all the servants come up together, 'twill be a difficult matter; but we'll get the postillions somehow. Come on!"

Under the arch and into the dim stable-yard stole the two masked highwaymen, then they passed through a door on their left. Now they could dimly see the stalled horses, hear them rustling in the straw and munching their oats, and it didn't take Swift Nick long to discover which were the judge's coach-horses, having seen them before at the Fox and Hound Inn.

"Here they are, four bays, cully!" chuckled Nick. "We'll get into this nearest stall and await our quarry."

So they crept into the nearest stall, patted and soothed its occupant, then remained motionless, listening to the wind outside, ears strained for sound of the approaching postilions.

Not long had Nick and Roy to wait, though it seemed ages. At last they heard hurrying footfalls—heard the voices of two men approaching, and Nick delightedly realised that the postilions were coming ahead of the other servants to harness up the coach.

"Hurry up, Tom!" quoth a harsh voice. "Old Hawk-beak is in a blazing bad temper to-night, drat him!"

"And he'll soon be in a worse one!" Nick chuckled grimly.

Then the stable door was flung open, and there loomed up the figures of two men, wearing peaked caps like a jockey's, and riding clothes. One carried a barred lantern, and for a second they struggled with the door; then the wind banged it behind them as they entered. Crouching in a stall beside a big bay coach-horse, Nick and Roy felt their hearts thumping against their ribs. Discovery before they could out both postilions would mean disaster.

The postilions saw nothing suspicious, however, and the man Tom hung his dim lantern on a peg amidst rows of saddles and harness on the stone wall. Then he entered the stall containing the hidden highwaymen.

"Get over, there! Move, will yer?" he barked at the coach-horse. "What the—"

His voice snapped off abruptly, for Swift Nick rose like a shadow from the straw and gripped him. The postilion found a bone-hard arm flung round his throat, a hand clapped over his mouth, and he struggled vainly to shout. Hearing the commotion, thinking the horse was giving trouble, the other postilion looked round into the stall. Promptly Roy hit him.

Thud! It was a straight left to the jaw, and down went the man in a crumpled heap. The same instant Nick flung Tom by a clever wrestling trick; then it didn't take the two pals long to bind both postilions with lengths of spare harness, and to gag him with strips of their own clothing. Then they snatched their peaked caps, rolled both men under a manger in an empty stall, and covered them with straw.

"Haste now, cully!" Nick laughed triumphantly. "If yon outriders spot us before we're harnessed up, the game will be up indeed!"

The pals worked with speed. Stuffing their masks into their pockets, their three-cornered hats under their coats, they swiftly donned the postilions' caps. Then they slung harness on to the judge's coach-horses and trotted them out two at a time.

In no time, chuckling grimly, Nick and Roy had the wheelers in place, and Nick darted back to fetch the leaders. But, even as he reappeared with the prancing horses, the harness flapping on their quarters, his coat-tails flying in the wind, there sounded hurrying footfalls under the yard archway. Then the judge's outriders loomed up at a run, holding on to their cocked hats.

"You've been powerful quick, Tom," shouted one, seeing the dim figure of Nick in the postilion's cap.

"Ay. Hurry up, pals!" Nick cried harshly, disguising his voice. "Old Hawk-beak's in a blazing bad temper to-night, drat him!"

"That he is!" came the shouted reply from out of the gloom.

Then the outriders vanished into the stables to saddle up their horses. Nick and Roy could hear them stamping about and shouting, hear the jingle of bits, and hurriedly harnessed up the coach-leaders. At last all was ready, and the two highwaymen made to swing up.

But at that instant came a shout from within the stables. "What's this?" roared a surprised voice. "Faith, here's a boot in the straw and a leg inside it! 'Tis Tom and Jarge! Who 't plague are those rascals outside?"

"They've found the postilions!" Roy gasped in dismay.

CHAPTER 3.

The Kidnapping of "Hawk-Beak"!

IT was plain the real postilions had been discovered, and angry shouts mingled with the pawing of hoofs and stamps. There was not an instant to lose, for Nick and Roy had left their own fast horses hidden in the park, and at that moment furious faces showed in the stable doorway, as the outriders made to dash out.

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,169.

But, quick as lightning, Nick leapt away from the coach. Swiftly a bell-mouthed pistol appeared in each of his hands. "Who is it?" he laughed grimly. "Why, Swift Nick, cullies! Back with you!"

So astounded were the men to see the famous highwayman before them, that they fell back, eyes bulging and mouths agape. They were covered by the pistols and read determination in Nick's flashing eyes. Before they could recover their wits, Nick leapt for the big door, slammed it in their faces and bolted it on the outside.

There arose instantly a terrific uproar from inside the stables, shouts and yells, and a pounding of boots and pistol butts on the stout door. But Nick reckoned it would hold long enough, and dashed back to Roy at the heads of the plunging coach-horses.

"Up with you, cully!" he cried. "I lay that door will take some breaking, and the stable windows are barred."

Up swung Roy to the back of the near leader; Swift Nick vaulted to the near wheeler's saddle, then they shouted and whooped and the horses plunged forward with the big coach. The uproar redoubled inside the stables, but was drowned and carried away by the wind, and forth from the stable-yard rolled the judge's coach, with Nick and Roy urging the coach-horses.

Down the long drive towards the house thundered the coach with its highwaymen postilions, wearing their borrowed peaked caps and cracking their whips. The two pals were blurred, shadowy figures as they sat their saddles with their caps pulled low and their coat collars turned up to their ears, and they rumbled up to the front door of the house and reined the coach-horses back on their haunches.

The door was open, and they could see the gaunt, cloaked figure of Mr. Justice Humphreys outlined against the lamp-lit hall. His harsh, hawk-like face was just visible between his three-cornered hat and his white cravat, and with him was Squire Hudson, a burly, rubeund man wearing a brown periwig tied with a bow at the back, and a long plum-coloured coat and satin breeches.

"Plague take ye!" roared the judge at his seeming postilions. "Wouldst keep me waiting all night? Where are my outriders?"

"Coming, my lord!" Nick replied in harsh, disguised tones, hoping they weren't.

"Deuce take 'em! But I've no fear of cowardly highwaymen." The judge laughed grimly to the squire, and scrambled into his coach, expecting to see his retinue come

hurrying down the drive.

The wind had drowned all sounds from the stables, but even as the coach door slammed, there sounded wild shouts, then a volley of hoofbeats. Out from the coach window, the judge thrust his head, to see the dim figures of galloping horsemen, to hear warning shouts.

"They've got out!" gasped Nick, and up came his whip. "Wait! What the deuce!" roared the judge.

But Nick and Roy weren't waiting, and clapped home their heels and cracked their whips above the coach-horses' backs. Forward plunged the animals, the traces tightened, and away from the Grange whirled the coach, leaving Squire Hudson dumbfounded with amazement.

But the two pals were aware of their peril, and sat down to ride like mad, urging the horses to top speed. Down the long drive they thundered, the wind whistling in their ears, the shadowy elm-trees flying past. At full gallop raced the four coach-horses, manes and tails streaming in the wind, harness jingling, and in the rear thundered the high coach, swaying and rocking on its big leather springs.

"Stop! Stop! Plague take ye!" roared the judge. "Are ye mad, fools?"

He thrust his hawk-like face out of the window, thinking his postilions had taken leave of their senses. But the louder he yelled and raved, the faster rode Roy and Swift Nick, to thunder out between the lodge-gates, then go hammering down the London road.

But the pursuit was not far behind. Knowing they would catch it hot when the truth came out, the judge's four retainers came spurring and yelling along pell mell, waving their pistols, but not yet daring to shoot.

Hot was the pace, and the wheels of the coach and roar of hoofs made a sound like thunder. Never before had the big coach-horses been thus driven, nor run so wild with excitement, and never before had Mr. Justice Humphreys been thus driven on his way to the assizes.

But he could do nothing, having only his sword and a bell-mouthed blunderbuss on the seat beside him. His sword was useless, and he hesitated to shoot his postilions. In fact, he dare not shoot them, for the coach was now

Collect the superb
STICKY-BACK PHOTOGRAPHS
of the
**AUSTRALIAN and ENGLISH
TEST MATCH CRICKETERS**
Now being
GIVEN AWAY FREE WITH THE "MAGNET"

going at a mad hand-gallop, swaying perilously, and would certainly be wrecked if the horses were riderless.

Swift Nick had banked on the judge not daring to shoot; but a glance showed him two of the outriders spurring up on the near side, and the other two not far behind. With a storm of whoops and howls, the nearest riders put on a spurt, came rushing up, then opened fire.

Bang, bang! Pistol balls hummed near the highwaymen's heads, but both ducked. Then Nick straightened up, snatched a pistol from his deep pocket, twisted round, and let fly.

Down in the dust crashed a horse, flinging its rider over its head, shot through the brain. Nick hated to shoot a horse, but now there was nothing else for it. The other horseman fired again, only to shoot away Nick's cap, then spurred up alongside, slashing and smiting with his empty weapon.

Followed a running fight along the road, blows were exchanged, and the horseman tried to grab Nick's bridle. But Nick brought his pistol butt thudding down on the fellow's head, and he, too, toppled from his saddle.

Then again they were drumming on full pelt, but still two horsemen remained in the rear, and Nick's pistols were empty, and he had no chance to reload them. The situation was still grave.

As for the judge, his face was set and grim as he rolled to and fro on his cushions. He was still unable to understand things; but he was a stout-hearted old tyrant, and by no means dismayed.

"I lay some knave has bribed my postillions to prevent me holding assizes," quoth he. "But the trick will not work! The scoundrels will have to stop at the toll-bar, and then I'll deal with 'em." And he gripped his blunderbuss in his bony hands.

But Swift Nick knew that a toll-bar, bristling with spikes, blocked the turn-pike not far ahead. He had no intention of being stopped in this joyous ride, however, and laughed gleefully as he shouted to Roy to swing the leaders into the woods when they rounded the next bend.

Roy signalled with his whip that he understood, and a moment later the coach thundered round a bend in the road on its off wheels. Here was visible a soft, muddy lane leading off into dark woods, and the chuckling highwaymen swung up it to continue their mad career through the trees.

The sound of the wheels was muffled on the soft earth, and in vain the judge shouted furiously, for the wind carried his voice away. A few seconds later the remaining riders drummed round the bend, never dreamt of the coach being in the woods, thought it was away ahead of them down the dark road, and stormed on in a wild goose chase.

"Fooled 'em, by thunder!"

Swift Nick and Roy whooped with delight, but not yet did they stop. With the captured coach bumping and swaying behind them, and the kidnapped judge shouting threats, they crashed on into the depths of the woods.

"We've nabbed old hawk-beak, himself!" they whooped.

That instant an axle broke with a dull crack and the coach almost turned turtle. The door flew open, and out into a swampy patch shot the judge, his blunderbuss flying from his hand.

He was up again, quick as a tiger, even as the coach lumbered to a halt, leaning over at a perilous angle. But Nick and Roy were off their sweat-lathered horses quicker, and had him covered.

"Stand and deliver, my lord!" Swift Nick laughed grimly.

The judge glared, thunderstruck, for he had never before seen Nick's face, and was expecting to see his own postilion. He gulped in fury, then barked:

"Who the blazes are you, rascal?"

"Swift Nick and another gentleman of the High Toby," the reply came with a mocking bow.

Spellbound, hardly able to believe his ears, was the judge, but he swiftly recovered.

"Swift Nick! I have long wanted to meet you, villain!" he barked. "You shall suffer for this outrage, by thunder, for I'll double the reward for you myself."

"Faith you may treble it, my lord," Nick laughed gaily. "Coward and poltroon, am I? You could rout me with a dummy pistol? I' faith, to-morrow folk will learn how Swift Nick relieved the hanging judge of his coach and horses as well as his purse! Turn your pockets out, hawk-beak!"

The furious judge saw his position was hopeless, and



The axle of the coach broke, the door flew open, and out shot the judge into a swampy patch.

handed over his gold snuff-box as well as his purse, though not without many fierce threats. To these Nick and Roy made no reply, but pocketed the booty. Then they slashed the horses' traces, turned two free, and then mounted the pair with saddles. Finally they whipped out and donned their black masks and three-cornered hats, then they rode off, leaving the stranded judge shaking his bony fist after them.

Two hours later, having recovered their hidden horses from the park of the Grange, Swift Nick and Roy rode silently up to the Fox and Hound Inn, to enter by the back door after stabling Sultan and Roy's chestnut nag.

Burly John Dunn, the innkeeper, was genuinely relieved to see Nick safe and sound, though looking somewhat battered.

"Another wild night, master Nick," he frowned, shaking his head. "But at least, since you have returned, I take it you thought better of your mad plan to hold up t' hanging judge! I' would ha' been—"

"Ay, much better, honest John," laughed Nick. "For I and my new cully here decided it would be poor sport to take merely the judge's money. So we took him, and his coach and horses as well. And here's what I promised you."

And down on the parlor table before the pop-eyed innkeeper, Swift Nick planked Mr. Justice Humphreys' gold snuff-box, his watch with a bunch of seals, and purse bulging with guineas.

"And where is the judge?" gasped burly John.

"Where we left him," grinned Nick. "Footing at through the woods to hold his assizes."

(Be sure you read next week's thrilling yarn of Nick o' the Highway—it's the real goods!)

ROBERT MURRAY'S THRILLING ADVENTURE YARN CONTINUED.



THE STORY SO FAR.

Chick Chance and his two chums, Horace and Herbert, and Lobula, a native guide, are searching for Eustace Latimer, who has come into a fortune. He is believed to be a prisoner, together with his daughter, in Black City, in the heart of Central Africa. If Latimer does not return to England within a given time the money will go to Burk Roscoe, a scoundrel, who is at present a captive aboard Chick's fast plane. Chick and his pals eventually arrive over Black City where they are taken before the king of the Amazeli by Matturis, the head man. Latimer, strange to say, is unwilling to return to England. Seizing the opportunity, De Selvas, a fugitive from justice, tries to bribe Chick to leave Latimer and the girl behind, and sneak off with him and the king's treasure. The young airman, however, refuses. Later, De Selvas and Matturis murder the king of the Amazeli and place the crime on Chick's shoulders.

(Now read on.)

Prisoners!

DE SELVAS stepped boldly to the front, a sneering smile of exultation on his yellow face.

"You poor fool!" he gibed. "Why didn't you accept my offer when you had the chance? I will give you just one minute to throw your pistols into the centre of the room. It is useless to resist. I have only to say the word and these Amazeli will tear you limb from limb, and fling your remains from the top of Lion Rock. They are fatalists. They do not fear death. You might shoot a few of them, but the remainder—"

Chick jerked up his automatic. His eyes blazed over the sights as he drew a bead dead in the centre of the Belgian's narrow forehead.

"You'll be the first to go!" he hinted ominously. "I've half a mind to plug you now, De Selvas! I can see through your game, you treacherous cur! You and Matturis set this trap for us. You murdered the king because he was a squire-shooter, and intended to play the game with me. Matturis wants to step into the king's shoes and rule the Amazeli. You want the diamonds and your freedom."

De Selvas never flinched, though he could not have found it pleasant to gaze into the unwavering muzzle of Chick's pistol. Quick as a striking snake he suddenly ducked, and with a sweep of his arm struck the weapon from the young airman's hand. In a black wave the Amazeli hurled themselves upon the plucky adventurers!

It was a fight against hopeless odds. Herbert's pistol exploded harmlessly as an iron-hard hide shield was dashed in his face, and a heavy spear-butt thudded down on the top of his head.

"Take them alive!" shouted De Selvas, taking care to keep well clear of the furious struggle.

Chick Chance set his teeth, and struck out right and left. Two of the giant warriors went down like ninepins beneath his flailing fists. The weight of numbers was too great. Muscular hands clutched at him from all directions, but still he fought on, panting for breath, heedless of the blows that rained down upon him.

A desperate rush carried him almost to where De Selvas was standing. Herbert went down, still shouting defiantly, as a dozen brawny blacks piled themselves on top of him. Horace, his monocle still intact, was engulfed by a wave of straining bodies. Chick's knees sagged beneath him as the flat of a spear-blade struck him a crushing blow on the side of the head. Sparks flashed before his eyes, and he went suddenly weak as his arms were twisted behind his back and his wrists lashed together with strips of tough leather. Helpless as a log he was

dragged to his feet, his head swimming, and a trickle of blood running down his chin.

Matturis strode forward, his eyes red with hatred, as he clenched his fist and drove it brutally into the airman's face.

"You yellow cur!" spat Chick contemptuously.

Lowering his head, he butted the man in the chest with a force that sent him crashing against the opposite wall. Snarling with rage, Matturis recovered his balance, and whipped a long-bladed dagger from his belt. Calmly De Selvas struck it from his hand, with a sharp word of reproach.

The Belgian spoke glibly to the captain of the Amazeli. Chick was too dazed and exhausted to know exactly what was happening. Strong hands grasped him by the arms, and, with a spear-point jabbing him warningly in the back, he was hustled half-way up the next flight of steps, and along a dark passage, hewn out of the solid rock.

The leading Amazeli carried a blazing torch of some resinous, sweet-smelling wood that threw a blood-red glare on the smooth, black walls, and lit up the pale, defiant faces of Herbert and Horace.

"This way to the Tower o' London!" chirped the irrepressible Herbert. "Personally conducted tour to the dungeons sump extra! Lummy, that was a real rough house while it lasted, Chick!"

"But it didn't last long enough!" muttered the young airman, rubbing his broken knuckles. "I'd like to have given De Selvas one real good sock before I went under!"

The Amazeli had halted, and two of them slid to one side a seemingly solid portion of the wall, revealing a narrow, black aperture like the mouth of a vault.

One by one the three lads were thrust roughly inside. The block of stone slid shut with a hollow thud, leaving them in pitch-darkness and amid a silence that could almost be felt!

Welcome News!

"KEEP a stiff upper lip, you fellows!"

Chick Chance's voice sounded stifled and flat in the enshrouding blackness. The atmosphere was warm and dry, and solid rock rang beneath his feet.

"A stiff upper lip!" exclaimed Horace, with attempted jocularly. "I've got a nice healthy thick lip if you want to know the truth. The nigger who socked me must have been second cousin to Jack Johnson!"

"The nigger who socked me," remarked Herbert, with deep satisfaction, "is minus one ear. I've got it here in my hand. Sorry, my mistake; it's a bit of his blessed lion-skin kilt!"

Chick closed his eyes, to accustom them to the darkness. He opened them again, to find that they were not altogether without light. High above them was a narrow slit in the rock, through which there suddenly struck a golden shaft of sunlight, that revealed their prison as a stone-walled chamber, little more than twelve feet square. The walls were as smooth as glass, and the lofty ceiling was invisible in the overhead gloom.

Chick stared at his two chums, and a gasp of surprise escaped his lips.

"Where's Roscoe?" he exclaimed. "He's not here!"

Burk Roscoe certainly was not with them. Chick did not remember having seen him once the trouble had started. He might have escaped during the struggle, or been struck down and badly injured. Chick shook his head uneasily. He was more inclined to believe that Roscoe had been shrewd enough to throw in his lot with the enemy. It was a disquieting thought, for more reasons than one.

"Let's get our hands free," suggested Herbert gruffly. "Turn round, Chick. I think I can do the trick."

They stood back to back, and Horace's active fingers speedily unknotted the leather thongs that bound his friend's wrists. It was an easy matter for him to release them in turn.

"My hat, talk about the black hole of Calcutta!" muttered Horace, as he walked round and round the restricted space, searching in vain for the block of stone that hid the entrance. "I don't want to blight your youthful hopes, Herbert, but we seem to have come a real cropper this time."

"Carry on, Uncle Cheerful!" snapped Herbert. "Tell us a nice bed-time story. The next pal I make's going to be a nice happy bloke, like an undertaker."

"You wot be needing an undertaker from what I can

see of it!" declared Horace gloomily. "We're already buried, and alive at that. It would take a ton of dynamite to blow a way out of here."

"Cut the cackle, for the love of Pete!" exclaimed Chick, as he seated himself cross-legged on the stone floor, and fumbled in his pocket for a stray cigarette. "We're up against it. Squat down and put your brains to work."

"Brains! Huh!" grunted Horace. "If the brains of an earwig were worth a penny, Herbert's wouldn't fetch enough to buy a ha'penny bun."

"If sheer ignorance was worth anything," parried Herbert, "you'd be a multi-millionaire!"

Chick gazed hopelessly around at the four confining walls. He was wondering what had become of Eustace Latimer and his daughter. Everything else was perfectly clear to him Maturis and De Selvas had combined forces, and played their cards with diabolical cunning. Deliberately and callously they had murdered the King of the Amazeli, in order to attain their own ends.

Maturis wanted the throne—and Jessie Latimer! In return for his assistance Dr. de Selvas had probably been promised his freedom, and as many diamonds and precious stones as he cared to carry away with him.

Left to the tender mercies of Maturis, Chick could imagine what the fate of himself and his companions would be.

"There's just one hope," mused the young airman shrilly. "De Selvas will probably make another attempt to strike a bargain with me. He can't get away from here without the plane, and he can't fly it himself. He may offer us our lives if we agree to help him in his getaway. I'll see the scoundrel to blazes first, but if I pretend to consider his offer it may lead to an opportunity to turn the tables on him."

On one point Chick Chance was determined. Under no circumstances would he leave Black City without Eustace Latimer and his daughter.

"Listen!" grunted Herbert suddenly. "There's someone coming. It's probably the maid with our shaving-water."

"Probably the executioner with his blinking axe?" suggested Horace. "Come in! Don't knock!"

There was a low, rumbling sound as the cunningly-concealed block of stone slid smoothly to one side. In the aperture appeared a tall figure, silhouetted against the ruddy glare of a flaming torch.

Chick started to his feet in surprise. It was Burk Roscoe who confronted him, a mocking smile on his face and a heavy automatic held cautiously in one hand. Over his shoulder peered the yellow countenance of Dr. de Selvas.

"I hope you find your quarters quite comfortable?" drawled Roscoe. "You will probably be occupying them for a long while to come. I told you crazy fools that you would regret the day you crossed my path."

"Cut out the dramatics!" said Chick shortly. "What's the idea, Roscoe? Trying to save your hide by kow-towing to that white-livered dago behind you?"

De Selvas leered maliciously as he stood holding a flaming torch above his head.

"Roscoe and I have come to say farewell to you," he said suavely. "In another few hours we will have started on our flight back to Lakola."

"Flight!" Chick started. "Why, you can't fly the plane!"

Burk Roscoe laughed derisively.

"Why, my dear Chance, have you forgotten that I am quite an accomplished aviator? I am piloting Dr. de Selvas back to Lakola. And we are taking with us a couple of million pounds' worth of diamonds. I don't know that I shall trouble to collect the paltry few thousands that are waiting for me in London, and which our mutual friend, Professor Latimer, will never live to claim!"

Chick Chance stood dumbfounded, the blood slowly draining from his cheeks. His last hope had gone. He had completely overlooked the fact that Burk Roscoe was capable of handling the big monoplane. No wonder he and De Selvas had joined forces. The way was clear for them to escape from Black City, leaving the young aviator and his companions at the mercy of the unscrupulous Maturis!

"Roscoe! You scoundrel!" Chick's voice was hoarse with dismay. "Are you man or fiend? You wouldn't dare to abandon us in this place?"

"I would dare anything for a million pounds!" declared the man gibingly. "You had your chance, and turned it down. Now you can stay here and rot! A long farewell, Mr. Chance. At least you have the satisfaction of knowing that you did find Professor Latimer!"

Chick uttered a shout of fury and desperation. Blind to the consequences, he hurled himself across the floor. But he was a fraction of a second too late. Roscoe had

stepped back, and the massive block of stone slid into place with a hollow thud.

For a moment the young airman lost his head. He shouted like a madman, kicking and battering against the smooth stone with his bare fists. It was as solid as the rock of Gibraltar. He might just as well have tried to pulverise the Pyramids with a toothpick.

"Steady on, Chick!" said Horace soothingly. "You'll only break your knuckles on that blooming wall. Take it easy! We ain't dead yet."

"You're right, Horace! I'm a crazy fool!" Chick dropped his hands and commenced to pace fiercely up and down the dark room. "But it looks as though we've come to the end of our tether, boys. Roscoe and De Selvas have got us properly snookered. Once they get away with the plane—"

"But they won't get away with the plane!" declared Herbert, with a dry chuckle.

Chick and Horace eyed him puzzledly.

"There's nothing to stop them!" jeered Chick. "Roscoe can fly."

"But he can't fly our old crate," assured Herbert mysteriously. "He'll find that out as soon as he tries to start the motor. Talking about brains, your Uncle Herbert ain't such a mug as he looks."

"That's a mighty good job!" growled Horace. "What the dickens are you trying to get at, you animated wart? Why can't Roscoe fly the plane?"

"Because," explained Herbert triumphantly, "before I left the old bus I removed all the sparking-plugs from the motor and hid them inside one of the spare tyres for the landing-wheels! Roscoe won't get a cough out o' the engine!"

"Herbert, you're a marvel!" Chick slapped the little man on the back until his head nearly fell off. "By gosh, I'd like to see Roscoe's face when he tries to switch on!"

"Huh!" Horace rubbed his long nose, and threw a grudging glance of approval at his chum. "An' supposing anything had happened to you, you two-legged tadpole? How'd Chick and I have known what had become of them plugs? However, things have turned out all right, so give us your fist, you poor sap."

"There it is, you big ham!" grinned Herbert, doubling the lanky fellow up with a hefty punch to the solar plexus.

Herbert's welcome news had put an entirely different complexion on affairs. Once he discovered his inability to start the motor it was a thousand to one that Burk Roscoe would be compelled to seek the aid of Chick Chance and his companions. He was entirely dependent on the plane to make his escape from Black City.

"He's bound to come back here and try to strike a bargain with us," declared Chick. "We'll bluff him that we can't do anything unless we give the old crate a thorough overhaul. If he falls for that we may get the chance to tap him on the head and get away—"

The young airman faltered, and his face fell.

"I didn't mean that," he said grimly. "We can't leave here without Latimer and his daughter. I wonder what has become of them? That scoundrel Maturis is probably holding them prisoners."

He had scarcely spoken when there came the low rumble of the massive stone that blocked the doorway being slid to one side. The aperture yawned black and forbidding, framing a shadowy figure that certainly was not that of either Burk Roscoe or Dr. de Selvas.

"Quick! This way!" came a low, urgent whisper.

Chick's heart gave a great jolt.

It was the voice of Jessie Latimer!

Miss Latimer to the Rescue!

CHICK CHANCE knew that he could not be mistaken. Though he had heard Jessie Latimer speak only once, her voice was one that he could never forget.

Three long strides carried him across to the shadowy figure that stood framed in the entrance to their prison. His groping hands clutched slender, rounded arms that shrank nervously beneath his touch.

"Miss Latimer! It's you, isn't it? How on earth did you get here?"

The girl uttered a little gasp of relief as she recognised Chick's voice.

"I knew they had brought you and your friends here," she explained. "My father and I know every inch of this rock. We have had plenty of time to explore it during the past year."

There was a hint of tragedy in the words. It spoke of the terrible loneliness of the months this girl had spent imprisoned in Black City, with no other company save

that of her father; with nothing to do save wander along the terraces and through the labyrinth of passages that tunneled the Lion Rock from base to apex.

"Quick, come this way! You are not safe here," she whispered, grasping Chick's arm. "I will explain later. Listen! I think I can hear someone coming now!"

Chick held his breath, to calm the wild thumping of his heart. Far away in the distance he could hear a low rumble of deep voices, and a padding of bare feet. A hundred yards away along the passage the light of a torch suddenly flamed crimson through the darkness.

"It is the Amazeli! They are coming to fetch you!" gasped Jessie Latimer. "I am only just in time. Tell your friends to hurry!"

At a word from Chick, Horace and Herbert shot out through the doorway like rabbits from a warren. In single file, with Chick holding lightly to the girl's sleeve, they moved quickly away along the dark tunnel, in the opposite direction to where the ruddy glow of the torches were glowing brighter and brighter.

A sudden bend in the tunnel hid the torches from view. They were now in pitch darkness, but Jessie Latimer held unflinchingly on her way, never faltering or hesitating. Behind them a sudden roar of voices boomed and vibrated on the still air.

"That's done, it! They've discovered we've mizzled!" exclaimed Horace. "They'll be yelping at our heels like a pack of hounds in a minute."

The tunnel sloped at a sharp angle, and seemed to veer steadily to the left. Chick guessed that it wound round and round the interior of the great rock in the same way as the stone steps spiraled the outer wall.

"You have heard, of course, that the king is dead?" whispered Jessie Latimer over her shoulder. "He—he was our only friend."

"He seemed a decent enough old bird," agreed Chick. "But I wouldn't trust Maturis any farther than I could swing an elephant by its tail. Where's Professor Latimer?"

"I am taking you to him," assured the girl. "We have been lying in hiding ever since we heard that the king was dead and Maturis had taken his place."

She suddenly stopped, and for the first time switched on the beam of a small electric torch. Cautiously they ascended a flight of worn, crumbling steps, and passed through an immense chamber that was ankle deep in the dust of ages. The light of the torch revealed crude and strange carvings on the walls, hieroglyphics, and bas-reliefs depicting scenes that Chick had no time to examine.

"There are secret rooms and tunnels here in the heart of the rock that even the Amazeli do not know of," declared Jessie Latimer. "My father discovered a plan of the whole place engraved on a tablet of stone."

She halted before a seemingly solid wall. At a touch of her hand a rock, that must have weighed over a ton, revolved smoothly on a hidden axis, and enabled them to pass through into an adjoining chamber. The stone swung into place again, and the hitherto silent Lobula uttered a yell of alarm as a ghostly figure loomed in front of them, holding a flickering light above its head.

"Steady on! It's only Latimer!" cried Chick, as he recognised the bent, shrivelled form of the old explorer.

Eustace Latimer peered through his spectacles, and set down the lantern he was carrying. There was a look of

genuine contrition on his face as he came forward, and held out his hand.

"Chance," he said huskily, "this is all my fault. What an ungrateful, pig-headed old fool I have been. I wish to Heaven I had accepted your offer this morning, and got my daughter away from this accursed place when we had the chance! And now, I suppose, it is too late?"

"It is never too late," assured Chick, with a confidence he was far from feeling. "Thanks to your daughter's pluck, we still have a fighting chance of getting out of this mess."

Latimer shook his bald head moodily.

"King Zernes is dead. Maturis will never allow us to get away from here. The infernal scoundrel! I did not know, until Jessie told me, that he had been forcing his attentions on her."

"I forced a bit of my attention on him," smiled Chick, gazing appreciatively at his bruised knuckles. "But Maturis isn't the only enemy we have to deal with. Dr. de Selvas and Burk Roscoe have joined forces, with the idea of seizing our plane and flying back to Lakola alone."

"Seize your plane!" faltered Jessie Latimer, with a catch in her voice. "Then—then we won't be able to get away from here?"

"Nor will Dr. Selvas, unless he agrees to my terms," assured Chick. "The plane is useless until we replace certain essential parts of the motor that have been hidden away."

"Maturis is the man we have most to fear," said the girl, with an uneasy shake of her pretty head. "He is all-powerful now that the king is dead. When he discovers that we have disappeared he will have the Amazeli search every inch of the rock. We might evade them for days, but they are bound to find us in the end."

"If only we were armed!" muttered Chick regretfully. Professor Latimer tapped his forehead with his bony knuckles.

"I had two automatic pistols and a hundred rounds of ammunition hidden away in one of my specimen-cases," he ruminated aloud. "Now what did I do with them—"

"You gave them to me to hide, in case Maturis should find them!" cried Jessie Latimer eagerly. "They are right at the top of the rock, hidden in the cave where I lit that signal-fire when I saw the aeroplane this morning. We can easily get them. In any case, we will be safer there than we are here."

"Good idea. I'd like to see a bit of daylight for a change," said Chick briefly. "And I shall feel a hundred per cent better in health and spirits when I get my fingers around the butt of a gun."

"I shall feel a hundred per cent better when I get a square meal inside me," muttered Horace forlornly. "By gosh, I'm as empty as a collection-box on a Scotch flag-day."

Seizing the flickering lantern, Eustace Latimer led the way through a maze of winding passages, where the air was close and dust-laden, and there was no sound save the scuffle of their own feet. It was evident that Jessie Latimer had not been boasting when she had claimed that she and her father knew every inch of the honeycombed interior of the Lion Rock.

(It's a slice of luck for Chick and his pals that Miss Latimer has popped up in the nick of time. But they're not out of the wood yet by long chalks. Don't miss next week's instalment of this great adventure serial whatever you do, chums.)

ONLY 2/6 DOWN YOU CHAPS

Why be without a bike when you can have this one NOW. A guaranteed bike your friends will envy—yours for 2/6 down and nothing to pay for another month. 15 days free trial. Money back if dissatisfied. Write us to-day for fully illustrated catalogue of modern cycles—it's free to all readers.

Mead

(Dept. B551) BIRMINGHAM

from
£3-19-6
cash



LOWY-AR-TO-IST-OU-AR-ED-AN-ICH

OUTFIT & "BOY KING" PKT. FREE!!

Album, 25 Bohemian, pocket case, etc. 2d. post for approvals.

LISBURN & TOWNSEND (U.S.), LIVERPOOL.

£2,000 WORTH OF GOOD, CHEAP PHOTO MATERIAL AND FILMS. 12 x 10 Enlargements, any photo or film, 8d. Samples Catalogue Free.—HACKETT'S, July Road, LIVERPOOL.

HANDSOME MEN ARE SLIGHTLY SUNBRONZE. "SUNBRONZE" remarkably improves appearance. 1/6, 2/6, 5,000 Testimonials. (Booklet, stamp.)—Sunbronze Laboratories (Dept. A.7), Colwyn Bay, Wales. (Est. 1902.)

XMAS CLUBS

Chocolates, Toys, Fancy Goods

SPARE TIME AGENTS WANTED.

Excellent Commission. Art Catalogue and Particulars FREE.

SAMUEL DRIVER, LTD., Burton Road, LEEDS



THE "SPUR" FRENCH RACER.

55/-

Guaranteed for ever. Usual retail—£4-4-0. Frame enamelled in various colours.

Genuine Clincher Popular Cord Tyres. Deposit 1/- and 12 monthly payments of 4/9

WRITE FOR COMPLETE LIST.

GEO. GROSE & CO., 8, NEW BRIDGE ST., LONDON, E.C.4

FREE PASSAGES TO ONTARIO, CANADA, for

Apply:—ONTARIO GOVERNMENT, 345, STRAND, LONDON.

300 STAMPS FOR 6d. (Abroad 1/-). including Airport, Bar-

Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, L.Y.E. Stratbridge.

All applications for Advertisement Space in this publication should

be addressed to the Advertisement Manager, UNION JACK SERIES.

The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.