

YOU'LL SMILE—
LAUGH—ROAR AT "THE FOOL OF THE SCHOOL!" INSIDE.

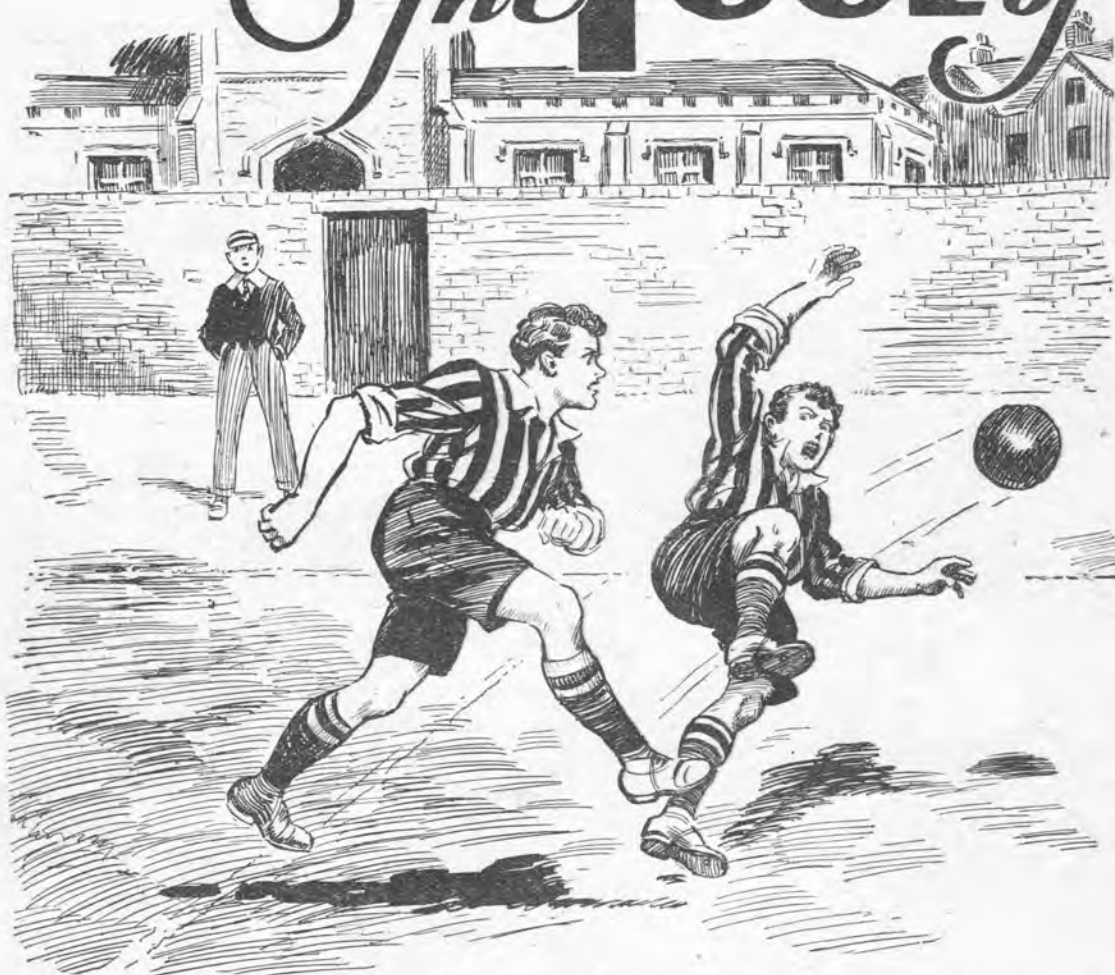
The GEM ^{2^d}



The FOOL of the SCHOOL!

HE CAN'T PLAY FOOTBALL TO SAVE HIS LIFE! HIS SPELLING IS WORSE THAN A FAG'S!
AND HE CAN'T SEE THAT HE'S THE BIGGEST ASS AT ST. JIM'S!

The Fool of



Just as the Shell forwards were attacking the Fourth Form goal, George Alfred Grundy came charging on the field. He was "on the ball" in a twinkling, sending Monty Lowther reeling from a heavy shoulder charge and kicking wildly at the leather.

CHAPTER 1.

Left in the Lurch!

"GIVE Grundy a chance!" Monty Lowther of the Shell grinned as he made the suggestion.

But Tom Merry did not grin; he frowned.

It was a very serious occasion, and not, in Tom's opinion, a time for Monty Lowther's little jokes.

Tom Merry was seated at the study table, with a stump of pencil in his hand and a deep wrinkle in his boyish brow. He looked as if a large part of the world's troubles had descended upon his young shoulders.

Before him was a sheet of impot paper, upon which he had been scribbling a list of names—with many erasures.

Fellows had often envied Tom Merry THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,543.

his position as junior football captain, but it was not all "lavender."

Sometimes he needed an immense amount of tact in dealing with a swarm of fellows who simply couldn't see why they should be left out of the junior eleven. Sometimes he had to make up a team under difficulties. That was the trouble at the present moment.

While Tom knitted his brows over the football list, Monty Lowther tried to look sympathetic. He felt sympathetic enough. But it was a little difficult for the most humorous fellow in the Shell to be serious at any time.

"It's rotten!" said Tom Merry. "Do be serious, Monty! I've never been in such a beastly fix over a match! If it weren't a Form match, we should be all right."

"Right as rain!" agreed Lowther.

"If it were a House match, for instance, we could find plenty of players in the Fourth."

"Lots!"

"If it were an outside match, the same. But it's a Form match, and we've got to get all the players from the Shell."

"The way the fellows have left you in the lurch, Tommy, constitutes a scandal!" murmured Lowther.

"Oh, don't be funny! As a rule, I have to jaw to half the Shell explaining to them why they can't play in the Form matches," said Tom. "Now that I want them, the silly asses are off the scene!"

"Twas ever thus!" sighed Lowther.

"Practically the whole team knocked out!" said Tom, looking dismally at the list. "The usual eleven would be Manners, Lowther, Talbot, Gore, Thompson, Kangaroo, Glyn, Dane, Huggins, Jones, and myself. That's a good Form team from both Houses, and we usually have plenty of reserves."

"Too many!" agreed Lowther.

"Now, Kangaroo's uncle is in England,

GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY IS MORE AMAZING AND AMUSING THAN EVER IN THIS LIVELY
LONG YARN OF FOOTER, FUN AND FROLIC!

the SCHOOL!



By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

and, of course, Kangy has gone off to see him, and taken Glyn and Dane with him. He might really have left it till Saturday. An uncle is an uncle, but a Form match is a Form match!"

"Yes, Kangy's uncle might have chosen a better time to visit England," said Lowther.

"Then Gore is bound to be seedy; I shouldn't wonder if he's been smoking again!" grunted Tom Merry. "Anyway, he's seedy!"

"You will have to shed Gore!" concurred Lowther, with almost an appealing glance at Tom Merry.

But Tom did not even see the pun.

"I shall have to shed nearly all the eleven!" he growled. "Talbot, the best of the bunch, has been invited over to Brookes' place for the afternoon. I suppose Brookes' people didn't know there was a Form match on."

"They couldn't have," said Lowther solemnly.

"Then Manners had to march off with

his silly camera! I shall jump on that camera one of these days!"

"Hear, hear!"

"That's six gone out of the eleven," said Tom. "It wouldn't matter if we had our reserves. Smith and Williamson and Curtis had to catch colds and get shoved into the sanatorium—of course!"

"Of course! It never rains but it pours!"

"Wilkins had to damage his fat-headed ankle, and Gunn had to hurt his arm—just like those two silly duffers!"

"Awfully inconsistent of them."

*If ever a fellow was born to have
his leg pulled and make himself
a laughing-stock, that fellow is
George Alfred Grundy, St. Jim's
prize chump!*

"And the upshot is that I'm blessed if I know what we're going to do!" said Tom Merry finally. "I suppose I can scare up Shell fellows somewhere, but they'll be a scratchy gang. The Fourth will beat us, hands down."

"They've got all their men on tap," said Lowther. "But if you're going to scare up Shell fellows, you'd better get a move on, or they'll be off the scene. A lot of them are going over to see Abbotsford play an important match."

"If I'd seen Manners going I'd have busted his silly camera on his napper!" said Tom Merry crossly. "It's really too bad! Of course, he didn't know about the other fellows all leaving me in the lurch. We shall take a gang of scratchy outsiders into the field at the best. The only good players will be you and me and Thompson of the New House. Blessed if I know where we shall put 'em. As good—or as bad—in one place as another. If that fellow Grundy weren't a born idiot I'd give

him a chance. He's big and heavy, and might be useful at back. But he's such a thumping duffer!"

The captain of the Shell rose and crumpled the list in his hand.

"Better go and look for recruits," he remarked.

There was a knock at the door, and Grundy of the Shell looked in. Tom Merry gave him a grim glance.

George Alfred Grundy was a tremendously powerful fellow, and ought to have been a splendid back. But George Alfred's brains had not developed on the same scale as his body.

Grundy was looking quite affable. He nodded very pleasantly to the captain of the Shell.

"Thought I'd look in," he remarked.

"Thanks!" said Tom. "Good-bye! Come on, Lowther!"

"Hold on!" said Grundy, in surprise. "I've come here to speak to you!"

"Sorry! No time!"

"It's about the footer," said Grundy, planting his burly form in the doorway and blocking it. "I've offered you my services for the Form eleven till I'm tired. You've refused in a silly, fat-headed, obstinate way every time! I've told you, too, that I'm not going to be kept out of the footer as I was out of the cricket. If you don't know a good player when you see one, it's time you learned!"

"Is that all?" asked Tom Merry.

"No," roared Grundy; "that isn't all! I hear that you're in a fix this afternoon for a team, and the Fourth are expecting a walk-over. Well, I think it would be only decent to give me a chance."

"So I would, if you weren't such a thundering idiot!" said Tom candidly. "But I've seen you play footer. I've had some, you see."

"How are you going to make up a team with nearly all the players away, and most of the Form gone out?"

"Goodness knows!"

"Then give me a chance. Now," said Grundy impressively, "I haven't come here to quarrel with you, Merry. I want to be reasonable. You think I can't play footer—"

"I know you can't!"

"I think I can. You're in a fix for players. Well, put me in. If I'm no good, it will prove you are right," said Grundy, with the air of a fellow making a tremendous concession. "While if I show up well, you can admit that you've made a mistake about my play. Nothing to be ashamed of in making a mistake, you know. We all do at times. I've made mistakes myself."

"Go hon!" ejaculated Monty Lowther, in astonishment.

"It's a fact," said Grundy. "I don't mind admitting it. It doesn't often happen, but it has happened. Well, I expect you to own up like a sportsman, Tom Merry, when you see that you've made a mistake."

"So I would," agreed Tom; "but there isn't any mistake in this matter, you see. Try the Second Form; your footer is about on their level. Come on, Lowther, we've got no time to waste!"

"Look here—"

"Sorry; in a hurry—"

"You're jolly well not going out of this study until I've had my answer!" said George Alfred Grundy determinedly.

"But you've had it," said Tom Merry.

"I want a better answer than that. I want it settled that I'm going to play

in the Form match, and I'll show you just what I'm capable of."

"Just what I'm afraid you would do," said Tom Merry. "You're capable of mucking up a whole game, and kicking away our last earthly chance. Buzz off, and don't be funny! Come on, Monty!"

George Alfred Grundy apparently did not understand that the matter was finished and done with, for he did not move from the doorway.

But Tom Merry had no more minutes to spare, and he marched at Grundy; and Monty Lowther marched, too, so, as Grundy did not move, there was a collision in the doorway.

Two bodies were heavier than one—a simple scientific truth which was amply demonstrated by what happened to Grundy.

Grundy went staggering, with a gasp, into the passage.

Tom Merry and Monty Lowther immediately caught him in their grasp—perhaps to keep him from falling. If that was their object, they failed, for in their grasp G. A. Grundy came to the floor with a heavy bump.

Then they walked down the passage, smiling, leaving George Alfred sitting on the cold, unsympathetic linoleum, and gasping in a state of dazed breathlessness.

CHAPTER 2.

Grundy's Chance!

"WHEREFORE that wowwied bwow, deah boy?"

Study No. 6 were adorning the steps of the School House with their persons, when Tom Merry and Monty Lowther came out.

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy asked the question as he noted Tom Merry's thoughtful look; while Blake, Herries, and Digby grinned. They knew the difficulties that beset the captain of the Shell that afternoon.

Tom Merry paused.

"Beastly fix!" he said. "All my duffers cleared off, and left me in the lurch. Of course, we shall beat you, all the same, but it's a bother."

"Beat your grandmother!" said Jack Blake. "Why, we shall simply walk over you. If you were at the top of your form, you wouldn't have much chance."

"Bow-wow!"

"If you can't make up a full team, Tom Mewwy, we can lend you some playahs," remarked Arthur Augustus. "We have lots of good playahs to spare in the Fourth. Young Julian can play wemarkably well—"

"Oh, I'm going to make up a Shell team of sorts," said Tom. "You can depend on getting a licking."

"Wats!"

The two Shell fellows walked on into the quad, looking for recruits. It was really a very unfortunate state of affairs. Most of Tom's reserves were out of reach just when he had been unexpectedly deprived of his best men.

Several fellows who hadn't gone were stopped in the quad, and told that they were wanted for the match, and they assented gladly enough. They were more or less indifferent players; but Tom was determined that the team should be composed exclusively of Shell fellows. It was a Form match—Shell against Fourth—and he did not want to be driven to the necessity of borrowing players from the Fourth.

Tom Merry's list began to fill up.

Monty Lowther made a grimace when he looked at it. The team was de-

cidedly "scratchy," and there were only ten names.

Up and down and round about the two chums hunted, but there was simply not an eleventh man to be had.

The fine weather had tempted the fellows out of doors, and of all the Shell there were only ten fellows still within the school walls, with the exception of those who were crocked.

"Must take in a Fourth Form chap, I suppose," said Lowther.

Tom shook his head.

"Not if we can help it. The young bouncers will make out that we couldn't beat them on their own."

"Rotten to play a man short."

"Let's go and see Gunn; he may be able to play, after all."

"Oh, all right!"

Gunn of the Shell had damaged his arm in a fall, and was crocked. He was not a first-class player at any time, though he could play at back in his own way.

Tom Merry looked for him. Wilkins, Gunn, and Grundy shared a study together, and it was in their study that Tom found them.

The deep, booming voice of Grundy was audible in the passage as Tom and Lowther arrived at the door of Study No. 5.

"I call it rotten. Of course, the Shell will be beaten. Blessed if I can understand why the Shell don't get fed-up with that fatheaded Merry!"

"There's an unsolicited testimonial for you, Tommy," murmured Lowther.

Tom laughed and threw open the door.

Grundy, Gunn, and Wilkins turned their eyes upon him as he came in. Grundy frowned portentously.

"Changed your mind?" he demanded.

"Not exactly," said Tom. "How's your arm, Gunny?"

"Stiff," said Gunn.

"Think you can play back? After all, you won't want your arm."

"I can't leave it in the study," said Gunn.

"Ass! If you think you could play I'll put you in. Every other blessed ass has gone out!"

"Oh, I'll play, if you like!" said Gunn. "But I shan't be much good, I warn you of that. I'm not going to get my arm knocked."

"Oh crumbs! How's your ankle, Wilkins?" asked Tom.

Wilkins grinned.

"Getting on nicely, thank you! I shall be able to play next week."

"Blessed if I don't chuck up captaining a Form of blessed crocks and duffers!" exclaimed Tom Merry, in exasperation. "It looks as if we've got to play a man short."

"Look here," roared Grundy, "do you mean to say you'd rather play a man short than put me in?"

Tom hesitated.

"Well," he said reflectively, "I don't know whether you'd be worse than playing a man short; Grundy!"

"Why, you ass—"

"Give old Grundy a chance!" urged Wilkins. "He's jolly useful at charging. The Fourth Form kids could never stand his weight."

"He's more likely to charge his own players," said Tom. "You know how he plays footer—like a rhinoceros!"

"Look here—" bellowed Grundy.

"You can't leave him out and play a man short," said Wilkins. "Dash it all, give a chap a chance!"

Tom Merry glanced at Lowther, who nodded. The captain of the Shell made up his mind.

"Well, get into your things, Grundy,"



"Yank him off!" shouted Tom Merry. "Leggo! Yoop! Help!" roared Grundy. "You silly asses—yarooooop! Groogh! Oh!" With a rush the incensed Shell juniors whirled George Alfred off the field for a second time, his arms and legs waving wildly.

he said. "I'll give you a chance. For goodness' sake, don't kick the ball through our own goal or charge our players!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy snorted.

"I've a jolly good mind to refuse, if you put it like that!" he said. "But I won't, for the sake of the Form. After seeing my play to-day, perhaps you will have sense enough to play me in House and school matches."

"Perhaps!" grinned Tom. "Well, it's settled. I've put your name down. It's jolly near time to get on the field."

Tom Merry and Lowther quitted the study and went to change. It was high time they were on the ground. Grundy looked at his studymates.

"It's my chance," he said.

"It is!" said Wilkins. "It are!"

"Now, even that fathead will see how I can play! If he tries to keep me out of the House team after to-day, I shall appeal to the committee—after showing what my football is really like, for all St. Jim's to see! What are you sniggering at, Gunn?"

"W-was I sniggering?" murmured Gunn.

"Yes, you were! If you don't think I can play footer—"

"My dear chap, there isn't a fellow at St. Jim's who can play footer as you do!" said Gunn.

"Well, that is so," agreed Grundy. "I'm glad you can see that, Gunn. I wish Tom Merry could see it. Perhaps he will after this match."

"No doubt about that," said Wilkins. Grundy, in a great state of anticipation and satisfaction, went to change. It was his chance at last, and he meant to make the most of it.

Ten minutes later Tom Merry led his team on to Little Side.

The Fourth Form eleven were already there. There were Figgins, Kerr, Wynn, Redfern, and Lawrence of the New House, and Blake, Herries, Digby, D'Arcy, Hammond, and Reilly of the School House.

"You fellows ready?" asked Tom Merry.

"Weady and waitin', deah boy."

"Been ready for ten minutes," said Figgins. "Have you sorted out your cripples? Hallo! What's Grundy in footer rig for?"

"Grundy's playing."

"Oh, my hat!"

"Bai Jove, what a despicable resource!" said Arthur Augustus sympathetically. "Howevah, you wouldn't have had much chance, anyway!"

The two skippers tossed for choice of goal. Grundy tapped Tom Merry on the shoulder.

"You've shoved me in as left-back," he said.

"Well?"

"Of course, I'm a jolly good back," said Grundy. "That's all right. But, seeing that it's such a scratch team, I think I could be more useful in the front line. We don't want to defend all the time. The best defence is attack, you know. Hadn't you better play back and put me at centre-forward?"

"Fathead!"

"I'm as good a forward as I am back, and—"

"Very likely," said Tom. "But you'll do less damage at back. Get into your place, and don't jaw!"

"You mean you want to stick to centre-forward?" said Grundy. "On an occasion like this, I should think you'd

be willing to get out of the limelight for a bit for the sake of a win. But you're captain."

"Has that just dawned upon you?" asked Tom sarcastically.

"But what about putting me in as centre-half instead of that ass Thompson who—"

"I'll put you outside the field if you don't shut up!" exclaimed the exasperated captain of the Shell.

Grundy snorted and retreated to his place. He wasn't at all satisfied with the arrangement of the team; he had no great reliance upon Tom Merry's judgment, while upon his own his reliance was unbounded.

He confided to Huggins, at right-back, that the game was probably a goner. Huggins nodded a cordial assent.

"What the dickens is to be expected with you in the team?" demanded Huggins.

Whereat George Alfred grunted again, more emphatically than before, and told Huggins that he was a New House waster.

Lefevre of the Fifth, who was refereeing, was waiting impatiently. George Alfred having subsided at last, the whistle went, and the ball rolled from Jack Blake's foot. Then the Form match started.

CHAPTER 3. Chucked Off!

THE football match was soon going hot and strong. With so weak a team to uphold the colours of the Shell, Tom Merry's idea was to devote himself chiefly to defence. He had little choice about the matter, for

the Fourth Formers attacked hotly, and from the kick-off the tussle was mostly in the Shell half.

As a rule, there was a goodly crowd to watch the junior matches, but on this occasion the field was almost deserted. Most of the fellows had gone out for the half-holiday; and a Form match, too, was not considered as being of so much importance as a House match or a school match.

Tom Merry was not displeased at the lack of spectators. At the best, the Shell were not likely to put up a very impressive show with so scratch a team.

And when Grundy got to work he was still more pleased that there were few fellows present to see the exploits of his latest recruit.

If Grundy had had a better knowledge of football, and had devoted himself to his duties at back, he could have made himself very useful in defence.

But that was not in Grundy's line.

Grundy had theories of his own; and one theory—a very good theory in itself—was that attack was the best form of defence. That it was not the business of a back to lead crushing attacks upon the enemy was a consideration that did not appeal to Grundy in the least.

Grundy's belief was that, having a decidedly poor captain, and a weak team, it was up to him to do his very best.

If the forwards couldn't get along—why, he could get going. If that ass Thompson, or that duffer Jones, or that fathead Lowther got on the ball and ran in his way, so much the worse for the ass, duffer, or fathead concerned.

Grundy's business, as he worked it out to his own satisfaction, was to win that match for the Shell. That was what he set out to do.

Huggins simply gasped as his fellow-back shouldered him off the ball and took it up the field. Figgins, of the Fourth Form front line, robbed the obstreperous back of the ball without the slightest difficulty, and the Fourth Formers came on with a rush.

Grundy was lumbering about somewhere on the half-way line, and his place was empty. The attack came through quite easily, and Jack Blake sent in a rasping shot.

Harris, in the goal, was beaten hands down, and the leather lodged in the net.

"Goal!" chorled Figgins.

"Goal! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goal, by gum!" gasped Wilkins, who was looking on with Gunn, very keen to watch Grundy's exploits. "Good old Grundy! He's worth a guinea a box—to the other side!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harris tossed out the ball.

Tom Merry strode up to Grundy, with knitted brows.

"You blithering ass!" said Tom.

"What the thunder did you mean by charging your own partner off the ball, you shrieking idiot?"

"What do you mean by letting them get through?" demanded Grundy, in his turn. "Do you call yourself a footballer?"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Why didn't you back me up?"

"Back you up?"

"Yes. I was getting fairly going, if I'd had any support."

"Support?" stuttered Tom Merry.

"Yes, support! You keep your eye on me, and the next time I get away with the ball, you play up to me."

"Play up to you!" shrieked Tom Merry.

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"Certainly! Those lightning rushes are my strong point."

"You—you—you unspeakable idiot!" yelled the captain of the Shell. "I don't want a back who makes lightning rushes. I want you to defend our goal, and—"

"That's all very well; but a good player's place is where he's needed most," explained Grundy. "The best thing you can do is to pass the word round for the team to back me up."

"Do you want to be kicked off the field?" roared Tom. "If you don't, get into your place and stay there!"

Grundy grunted disdainfully, and went to his place as the eleven lined up for the restart. Lefevre grinned as he blew the whistle.

The junior match was more entertaining than usual, from the Fifth Former's point of view. He was quite interested in Grundy.

"Pheep!" went the whistle.

Tom Merry kicked off. The Fourth Form forwards captured the ball, and at once set up a hot attack. The Shell packed their goal and the leather was kept out.

At length the Shell forwards succeeded in getting away with the ball, but they found the Fourth Form defence sound. Fatty Wynn, in goal, was grinning. He did not seem likely to have much to do.

There was a tussle in midfield, and then Tom Merry got a chance. He received the ball, and, after beating two opponents, passed to Monty Lowther as the right-back tackled him. Lowther sent in a lightning first-time shot.

But Fatty Wynn grinned and fisted out the ball, and Herries cleared to Redfern, who sent it up the field.

Tom Merry was racing back, when he met Grundy. Perhaps, in the excitement of the moment, Grundy mistook Tom for a Fourth Former, or perhaps he felt that the captain of the Shell was in the way. At all events, he charged him over, and Tom bumped on the ground.

Grundy staggered from the shock, and looked round him.

Figgins & Co. were attacking the Shell goal again. And Huggins had been floored. Harris cleared two quick shots, but there were no backs to help him. The leather whizzed into goal again and stayed there.

"Goal!" chirruped the Fourth.

Tom Merry staggered up just as the goal was scored.

"Pretty muck you're making of this game!" said Grundy.

"Ow!"

"What did you get in my way for?" asked Grundy. "Don't you know how to play football?"

Tom Merry gasped.

"You play the fool again, Grundy, and I'll kick you off the field!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Bai Jove! If I had a playah like that, I should wing his neck!" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy remarked to Blake, and Blake chuckled.

The sides lined up again. Grundy was looking very discontented. In spite of his efforts, the Fourth Formers had scored two goals in twenty minutes. It did not occur to Grundy that it was because of his efforts.

Tom Merry was greatly inclined to pitch him off the field there and then, but he resolved to give him one more chance.

A chance was what Grundy was looking for. He was determined that the

game should not go on in this rotten way if he could help it.

As usual, there was an attack upon the Shell goal immediately after the kick-off, and Grundy's chance came. He could have cleared to midfield if he had liked, but he did not like. He kept the ball, and dribbled it away down the touchline.

Figgins and Blake were upon him at once, and he was stopped; he hadn't the remotest chance of getting through.

Grundy kicked the ball away wildly as he was tackled. He might have intended it for a pass, if he had any intention at all. But, as a matter of fact, it whizzed away over his own goal-line. It was the last straw.

"Grundy!" roared Tom Merry, as the whistle went for a corner.

"Hallo!" growled Grundy. "Complaining again—what? I'm getting fed-up with this! Why don't you back me up? I've told you to."

"Told me to!" stuttered the captain of the Shell.

"Yes: told you so plainly."

Tom Merry raised his hand.

"Get off the field!" he said.

"What!"

"I'm sending you off. We're going to play a man short. Understand?"

"No, I don't understand anything of the kind!" snapped Grundy. "I'm certainly not going off!"

"N-not going off!" said Tom, hardly believing his ears.

"Certainly not! The best thing you can do is to get off yourself, and leave me to skipper the team."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get off the ground!" yelled Tom.

"Rats!"

"Are you going off?"

"No, I'm not!"

"Mutiny, bai Jove!" chuckled Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Oh, my hat!" said the referee.

Tom Merry rushed up to Grundy.

"Are you going to walk off, or are you going to be chucked off?" he shouted.

Grundy sniffed.

"I'm certainly not going to walk off, and if anybody tries to chuck me off there will be trouble."

Tom Merry did not waste any more words upon his valuable recruit; he grasped him with both hands and yanked him off.

"Oh, would you?" gasped Grundy.

He returned grasp for grasp, and there was a terrific struggle.

The Fourth Form team looked on and howled with laughter. The Shell fellows were aghast. Lowther, Thompson, and Huggins rushed to Tom Merry's aid.

Grundy was seized by his arms and legs, whirled into the air, and carried, struggling, to the ropes, and pitched over. He sprawled on the ground, breathless and gasping.

Tom, with a flushed face, went back into the field.

"Don't mind us," grinned Blake. "We'll wait while you chuck off half your team if you like."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh rats!" said Tom crossly.

The game went on from the corner kick. The footballers were under the impression that they were done with Grundy.

But that was quite a mistake. They were by no means done with George Alfred yet. He was determined to save the game for the Shell, and nobody was going to stop him!

CHAPTER 4.

Strong Measures!

"HURT, old scout?" Wilkins asked that question sympathetically, as he helped Grundy to his feet. Gunn helped him on the other side. Both of them were trying loyally to suppress any signs of merriment.

Grundy staggered up and stood unsteadily on his "pins." He was feeling decidedly the worse for wear.

"Oh, my hat!" he gasped. "I—I've been chucked off—chucked off the field, you know!"

"Yes, we saw it," murmured Gunn. "Hard cheese!"

"They want to muck up the game," said Grundy. "They don't want a good player."

"Leave 'em to stew in their own juice, old chap. Come and bathe your nose."

"Rot! I'm not going to see the match chucked away if I can help it," said Grundy. "I'm in the team, aren't I?"

"Well, you were," said Wilkins, with a stare. "But now—"

"So you think I'm the kind of chap to allow myself to be chucked off the field?" demanded Grundy.

"Ahem!"

"I'm jolly well going to show Tom Merry that I can't be chucked out. It isn't only that, either. The Shell are getting beaten, and it's up to me to save the match if I can. I'm going back!"

"Going back! My hat!"

"Yes, rather!"

"I—I say, old chap, I wouldn't go back," urged Wilkins. "They'll scalp you if you interrupt the game."

"They'll have all their work cut out to scalp me!" snorted Grundy. "But I'm not going to interrupt the game; I'm simply going to resume my place in the team and play up."

"Oh crumbs! I say—"

"Rot!"

Grundy, having recovered his breath and pulled himself together, strode upon the field, Wilkins and Gunn watching him in utter dismay. They had always known that their studymate could be obstinate, but they had not expected this even of George Alfred Grundy. They waited for the earthquake.

The Shell were getting away at last. The forwards were attacking, and looked like getting through. It was at this critical moment that Grundy rushed on to lend his aid.

The footballers were too keen on the game to see him coming. They did not know that he was coming till he was in their midst with a charge like a bull.

Grundy was "on the ball" in a twinkling.

Monty Lowther went "off the ball" and bumped on the ground, as Grundy's heavy shoulder sent him reeling, and Grundy booted the leather on, right at Kerr, who kicked it clear over the heads of the Shell fellows within a few feet of goal.

The chance of the Shell team was gone—for good. The Fourth Form forwards were scurrying the ball up-field.

Grundy, wondering what had become of the leather, stared round him blankly. Tom Merry caught him by the shoulder and sent him spinning, and then rushed away to help the Shell defence. Grundy sat down.

"My hat!" ejaculated Grundy.

The Fourth Formers were attacking goal hotly, and they had it all their own way. The leather was quickly in the net.



"No, we want to be picked up by the 'Queen Mary'!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to P. Sawyer, 38, Sunnybank, Hull.

"Three up!" chuckled Figgins.

"What a game!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was that idiot, Grundy!" shrieked Lowther. "I had a good chance to score when that chump shouldered me off."

"That fathead—"

"That maniac—"

"Scalp him!"

"Slaughter him!"

The whole Shell team, with the exception of the goalkeeper, pounced upon George Alfred. Grundy roared as their grasp closed on him from all sides. Bump!

"Yaaaaaap!"

Bump, bump, bump!

"Yow-ow-ooooop!"

"Drag him off!" yelled Tom Merry.

"Lock him up somewhere!"

"Shove him in the dressing-room and turn the key!" panted Lowther.

"He'll get out of the window and come back."

"Tie him up!"

"Good egg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat! What an entertainment!" chirruped Blake of the Fourth.

"And these Shell duffers think they can beat the Fourth! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Bai Jove! I wegard this as a wippin' match! Gwunday is a wegulah tewwah!"

"Yank him off!" shouted Tom Merry.

"Leggo! Yoop! Help! You silly asses—yarooooo! Grooogh! Oh!"

With a rush the incensed footballers whirled George Alfred off the field for the second time, his arms and legs waving wildly. They rushed him into the pavilion, and he was bumped down on the floor of the dressing-room.

This time they did not mean to give him a chance of coming back.

Monty Lowther produced a length of cord, and Grundy's wrists and ankles were tied as he wriggled on the floor.

Then the footballers crowded out, and the door was locked on the outside, and Tom Merry took away the key. A roaring voice followed them.

"Yah! Rotters! Come and lemme loose! I'll wallop you all round! Help! Oh, my hat!"

Unheeding the uproarious demands of George Alfred, the footballers returned to the field. They found the Fourth Form team almost in hysterics.

"Oh, cut the cackle and let's get on!" growled Tom Merry.

Tom's temper had been a little disturbed, which was not really to be wondered at. Grundy would have tried the temper of the most angelic football captain.

"Waiting for you," grinned Blake. "Is he coming back?"

"Not unless he can come through a locked door with his feet and hands tied."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The game was resumed, and no more goals were scored before half-time. In the second half Tom Merry succeeded in putting the leather in, and the Shell had the pleasure of breaking their duck.

But it was the only gleam of light. After that they succeeded in packing their goal and defending—a much easier task now that Grundy was not there to help them.

But with a "scratch" team and a man short, the task was heavy, and close on the finish Blake succeeded in putting the ball into the net.

Four goals to one was the result of the match.

The Fourth Formers chirruped gleefully over that result, but the Shell, naturally, were not quite so satisfied. They came off the field, feeling inclined to scalp George Alfred Grundy.

"Might have made it a draw, at least, without him!" growled Thompson. "What the thunder did you put him in for, Tom Merry?"

"Hark at his dulcet tones!" grinned Lowther.

Grundy's voice proceeded from the dressing-room. He was roaring. He had been locked up for more than an hour.

"Will you lemme out? I'll whop you! I'll smash you! Yah!"

Tom Merry unlocked the door.

Grundy was squirming on the floor, vainly struggling with his bonds. He glared furiously at the footballers.

"Oh, you rotters! Lemme loose! I suppose you've lost?"

"Lost?" growled Tom Merry. "Of course!"

"Of course! What did you expect, after shoving me out of the team?" jeered Grundy. "I should think all the fellows were fed up with you by this time, Tom Merry!"

"We're fed up with you!" roared Huggins. "Jump on him!"

"Kick him out!"

"Here, I say, hands off! Why, I'll—yaroogh!"

Grundy's hands and feet were freed and he was dragged to his feet. Then as many football boots as could find room were planted on him from behind, and he went out of the dressing-room like a stone from a catapult.

Bump!

"Dribble him back to the House!" shouted Lowther.

"Oh crumbs!"

Grundy did not wait to be dribbled. He leaped up, dodged the angry footballers, and fled.

It had been Grundy's first—and last—appearance as a member of Tom Merry's team; but it could not be denied that his first—and last—appearance on the football field had been decidedly striking. He had, in fact, enjoyed quite a remarkable amount of limelight.

But, as he morosely remarked to Gunn and Wilkins, in that rotten team there was really no place for a player like him, and he declared that he would



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never play for the Form again so long as Tom Merry was captain. And Gunn and Wilkins agreed that undoubtedly he wouldn't.

CHAPTER 5.

Fed Up!

"TEA ready?"

Manners of the Shell came into the study looking very cheery, with his camera slung on his arm. Manners looked as if he had had a pleasant afternoon.

The aspect of Tom Merry's study was not so cheerful as usual, and Manners looked at his studymates in some surprise.

Monty Lowther was sitting in the armchair, with his trouser-leg rolled up and his sock rolled down, anointing his ankle with embrocation.

Tom Merry was laying the tea-table, pausing every now and then to rub his elbow.

"You don't look very chirpy," remarked Manners.

"Br-r-r-r!"

"I've had a ripping afternoon."

"So have we!" grunted Lowther.

"How did the match go?" asked Manners, remembering that there had been a Form match. While he was photographing, Manners forgot football matches. Indeed, when he had his camera in hand, he forgot everything. "Did you beat the Fourth?"

"Rats; no!"

"You shouldn't have let them beat the Shell," said Manners, with a shake of the head.

"How could we help it, when every silly ass had marched off for the afternoon, and every silly ass who hadn't marched off was crooked?"

"What about Talbot?"

"He was invited to Brookes' place."

"And Kangaroo?"

"His blessed uncle from Australia turned up at the last minute—"

"Well, you have been in bad luck," said Manners. "If I'd known, I'd have stayed. But I've got some ripping photographs!"

"Bow-wow!"

"Some splendid views of Abbotsford, and a snap of the Abbotsford footer match."

"Br-r-r-r!"

"Nice sort of cheery meeting, I must say," remarked Manners. "Have you been getting knocked about by those Fourth Form kids?"

"No, ass! We played Grundy!"

"Great Scott!"

"And had to chuck him off the field!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Lowther got Grundy's foot on his ankle, and I got my elbow banged against his nose," said Tom crossly. "It's hurt my elbow."

"Ha, ha, ha! What about Grundy's nose?"

"Blow his nose!"

"Well, let's have tea," said Manners. "I'll stay in next time, and we'll win."

"Fathead!" was Tom Merry's ungrateful response.

The Terrible Three sat down to tea, and Talbot of the Shell looked in with a cheery smile on his face.

"Come in!" said Tom. "Just in time!"

"Thanks; I will! I hear the match was lost," remarked Talbot, as he came in. "How did you come to let the Fourth beat you?"

"My hat! I suppose every silly ass

is going to ask that question," exclaimed Tom Merry. "Nearly all the team left me in the lurch, and I played Grundy. For goodness' sake let it go at that! I'm fed-up with it!"

Talbot laughed, and let it go at that. But the subject was not to be dropped. There was a tramp of feet in the passage, and the door was thrown open. Kangaroo, Dane, and Glyn looked in—accusingly. They had just come in, and evidently they had learned the result of the footer match.

"What on earth did you let the Fourth beat you for?" Kangaroo inquired.

"A blessed Rag Form!" said Clifton Dane. "Really, you know—"

"Slackers!" said Glyn, with a shake of the head.

Tom Merry glared.

"Ring off!" he shouted. "I'm fed-up! Go and eat coke!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come on, you chaps!" said Kangaroo. "I don't like Merry's manners."

And the three Shell fellows went on their way, chuckling.

Five minutes later French of the Shell looked in. French was a New House fellow, and he had come to make remarks. He did not heed the deadly glare the captain of the Shell turned upon him.

"Nice sort of muck you've made of it," he remarked. "Why couldn't you let me know you wanted a man before I started for Abbotsford?"

"Rats!"

"What on earth did you play Grundy for?"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Well, if these are School House manners, I don't think much of 'em," said French. "About as much as I think of School House footer and School House skippers. Playing Grundy, by gum! Wasn't there a blind or tame lunatic you could have found? Wasn't there any howling idiot you could put in? It would have been better."

"There wasn't," said Tom. "I'd have played any howling idiot rather than Grundy; but you were out."

"Why, you silly ass!"

"And I don't want any jaw! Buzz off!"

"You silly fatheads!"

Whiz!

French closed the door hastily, just in time to escape a jam tart. He slammed the door, and he parted in great wrath. The door opened again a few minutes later, and Crooke, the slacker of the Shell, looked in, grinning.

"I hear you've been playing Grundy."

"Get out!"

"What nice manners!" said Crooke, with a chuckle. "I'd have played if you'd asked me. You seemed to have had a ripping time with Grundy. The Fourth are cackling over it like a lot of hyenas! Ha, ha, ha! Ooooh!"

Crooke was not in time to dodge the jam tart. It caught him in the eye. He yelled, and grabbed at it.

"Groogh! Ow, you rotter! Wooch! I'm all sticky! Groogh!"

Slam!

Crooke fled, and the door caught half a loaf that was intended for his head.

Talbot grinned, and Manners chuckled, and Monty Lowther smiled. Tom Merry breathed hard through his nose.



"Just you wait till next Christmas—I'll knock the stuffing out of you!"

Half-a-crown has been awarded to Miss M. Bremner, 133, Herries Road, Pollokshields, Glasgow, S.1.

"I'll start on the next one with a cricket stump," growled Tom.

"You'd better," agreed Manners.

"Those tarts cost twopence each."

"Oh rats!"

"That villain Grundy ought to be made an example of," said Monty Lowther. "He's jolly nearly lamed me, shoving me off the ball, you know. Charged me from behind."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, it may be funny, but my ankle doesn't feel funny," said Lowther. "Really, it was a bit thick playing that silly ass; and it's no wonder the fellows are surprised."

"Are you going to begin on it?" roared Tom Merry.

"Peace, my son! Don't rag your old pal," said Lowther soothingly.

"You suggested it yourself, too!"

"Did I? That was only a little joke; but never mind. After all, it wasn't a House match, or a school match. These Form matches aren't of much account. Hallo! There's another of 'em!"

Tom Merry looked round for a stump as the door opened. He was more than fed-up with the subject, and wasn't inclined to listen to any more inquiries as to why he had played Grundy.

But, as it happened, it was the great Grundy himself who looked in.

"I've got just one word to say to you, Tom Merry!" said Grundy majestically. "I'm not playing for St. Jim's again so long as the fellows are silly idiots enough to let you remain skipper!"

"You can bet on that!" growled Tom.

"You'd hardly believe how the match was mucked up," said Grundy, appealing to Talbot and Manners. "It was a pretty poor team, but I could have pulled the game out of the fire. All I needed was backing up. Those duffers didn't even understand my play, let alone help it on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've done with them!" said Grundy. "A good footballer is wasted in this school! But don't think I'm going to give up the game on account of misunderstanding and petty jealousy. Nothing of the sort! I'm going to offer my services elsewhere!"

"They'll be jumped at—I don't think!" grinned Manners.

"You've heard of a lunatic asylum

where they play footer?" asked Lowther.

Grundy snorted.

"I don't want any of your funny remarks! I mean what I say! And, mind this, Tom Merry, once I'm playing for an outside team, it will be quite useless to ask me to change my mind! I shall be bound to stick to them. I'm telling you this so that you can't say that I didn't give you fair warning!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anything to cackle at, myself. If you want to know what I think of you," said Grundy, "I'll tell you! You couldn't captain a team of white rabbits! As for you, Lowther, you play footer like a hen on hot bricks!"

"Why, you—"

"Talbot is a bit better, but not much. As for Manners, his footer would make a cat laugh! But with a rotten skipper, the team isn't likely to amount to much, naturally! When the fellows wake up and sack Tom Merry, I may play for St. Jim's again! I don't say I will, but I might!"

"Oh, go away!" gasped Tom Merry. "You're too funny to live, Grundy! Why don't you ask the editor of 'Funny Bits' for a job on the front page?"

"And there's another thing!" roared Grundy. "I was chucked off the field to-day! I owe you a licking for that!"

"Pay up, then!" said Tom, laughing. Grundy's remarks had somehow had the effect of restoring good humour.

"That's what I'm going to do!" said Grundy. "I'm going to wipe up this study with you, not because I bear malice, you know, but because I want to make it plain that I never stand any rot!"

Grundy rushed in.

Tom Merry jumped and met him halfway.

"Mind the tea-things!" yelled Manners.

Tramp, tramp, tramp!

Grundy had started to lick the captain of the Shell. He was a tremendous fellow, and more than a match for most of the fellows in his Form. But he had tried Tom Merry before, and had been a rank failure. He was a still more rank failure this time.

For five minutes the study was the scene of the most terrific struggle.

Lowther dragged the tea-table back, and Talbot kicked the chairs out of the way, and Manners pulled the fender into a corner.

Tom Merry and Grundy were going it hammer-and-tongs.

But at the end of five minutes George Alfred Grundy lay half in and half out of the doorway, quite finished. Tom Merry was looking a little groggy, but George Alfred Grundy was a wreck.

Wilkins and Gunn came and helped him back to his study. Tom Merry finished tea, with a swollen nose and a darkened eye, but he was feeling much better. Licking Grundy was a consolation for the loss of the Form match.

CHAPTER 6.

Grundy Knows What to Do!

"**A**DVERTISING!" said Grundy. Grundy made that remark quite suddenly at tea in Study No. 5, a couple of days after the Form match.

Grundy had been looking thoughtful. Wilkins and Gunn noticed it. He was so thoughtful that he hardly touched the sardines or the cake. Indeed, Wilkins and Gunn had nearly finished

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both by the time Grundy came out of his reverie with that somewhat surprising remark.

"Advertising?" repeated Wilkins, with a stare.

"That's the idea!" said Grundy.

"Oh, that's the idea, is it?" said Wilkins, wondering what on earth Grundy was driving at.

"Yes. Practically everything can be done by advertising in these days," said Grundy. "It's a great thing. Suppose you make a patent medicine. If it's no good, you advertise it extensively, and sell it by the gallon, you know. Well, I'm going to advertise."

Wilkins put down his teacup and stared at Grundy in great astonishment. He had thought that he was past being surprised by anything that G. A. Grundy said or did, but Grundy had succeeded in surprising him again.

"You don't mean to say that you're going to make a patent medicine and advertise it?" ejaculated Wilkins.

"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Grundy. "Of course I don't! I was only giving you an illustration. Advertising is the thing. You know, it was said a long time ago that a prophet is never honoured in his own country. That's how it is with me."

"But—but you aren't a prophet, are you?" stammered Wilkins.

Grundy laid claim to so many qualities and gifts that Wilkins would not have been really surprised if he had claimed to be a prophet among other things.

"You ass!" said Grundy witheringly. "Who's talking about prophets? What I mean is, I'm a footballer—a splendid footballer, though I say it myself—and I'm not understood or appreciated in my own school."

"Oh, I see!"

"So I'm going to advertise," said Grundy. "I'm going to put a notice in the 'Rylcombe Times.'"

"My hat!"

"There must be lots of footer teams in this part of Sussex who'd be glad to have a really good and reliable player," explained Grundy. "Lots of papers put in those notices, you know. Fellow wants to join a football club in his district, so he puts a line in the local paper. Lots of fellows do. Well, I'm going to do that, but I shall make it rather a special advertisement. Of course, some club in the neighbourhood will snap me up at once."

"Ahem!"

"Don't you think so, George Wilkins?"

"Ye-es, of course—bound to."

"Then the fellows here will see what they've lost," said Grundy. "Perhaps it will be a club that plays St. Jim's. In that case I shall have to play against Tom Merry's team in the matches. I should be sorry, of course, to play against my own school; I'd rather St. Jim's should win matches. But they haven't left me any choice. You admit that?"

"Quite so!"

"You see, I can't be expected to chuck footer because there's a lot of fatheadedness and jealousy about. That would be asking rather a lot. And if I enter into engagements with another club, of course I shall have to give St. Jim's the go-by—for this season, at least. But I've given Tom Merry fair warning, and he can't say there's anything underhand in it."

"Oh!"

Grundy pushed the tea-things aside and took a pencil and paper and sketched out the advertisement for the "Rylcombe Times."

THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,543.

Wilkins and Gunn watched him in silence. They could not exactly see George Alfred Grundy being snapped up by any football club. But they did not argue with him. Grundy always had to be given his head.

"There!" said Grundy, as he finished scrawling. "Look at that! If you can suggest any improvements, I shall be glad to hear 'em."

Grundy's tone implied that any improvements to his efforts were quite outside the range of possibility. His study-mates read the advertisement and gasped a little. It was striking, especially the orthography:

"NOTICE TO FOOTBAL CLUBBS.

"A Publick School chap is willing to play for any football Clubb within a reezonable distince of St. Jim's. Furst-class player, in any position—excellent goal, relyable back, stedly half, but espeshully good at centre-forward. Willing to captane the team. Allso willing to koche players. Thurro nollodge of the gainm. Write or call after half-past fore.

"G. A. GRUNDY,

"School Howse,

"St. Jim's."

"Well, what do you think of that?" asked Grundy, as Wilkins and Gunn made no remark.

They seemed overcome.

"R-ripping!" stammered Wilkins. "But—but what have you put a German word in for?"

"There isn't any German word in that, is there?"

"Koche, that looks like a German word."

"What rot!" said Grundy. "Coach is an English word."

"Oh, coach!" said Wilkins. "I—I see! Is coach spelt with a 'k'?"

"Of course it is!"

"Oh, I thought a 'c'—"

"You never could spell, Wilkins! I noticed the other day you spelt 'trouble' without a double 'b.'"

"D-did I?"

"Yes, you did. I think that advert will do the trick," said Grundy. "I'll take this down to the office on my bike, and it will come out in this week's local rag. Next week I shall be inundated with offers, I expect."

"I—I say, are you going to spell it like that?"

"What's the matter with the spelling?" demanded Grundy warmly.

"Yes; I'm going to spell it like that. You can't spell. You're ignorant, George Wilkins."

"But—"

"I'm a born speller," said Grundy. "Some fellows are. It's nothing to brag of, and I don't brag of it. It just happens that way, that's all—just as it happens that I'm a good, all-round footballer. I notice lots of mistakes in other people's spelling, even in the daily papers. I don't understand how people get their jobs. Spelling comes quite easy. I've always found it so."

"But—but the printer will alter that, I suppose," said Gunn.

"He'll jolly well get ragged if he does," said Grundy. "I shall tell old Tiper that that advertisement is to go in just as I've spelt it, letter for letter. I'm not going to have his bad spelling printed under my name, not if I know it. Old Tiper can't spell for nuts. Why, in last week's 'Rylcombe Times' I saw 'grocer' spelt without a 'w.'"

"Did you really?" gasped Wilkins.

"Yes, I did; and he spelt 'front' with an 'o.'"

"How the thunder should he have spelt it?"

"With a 'u,' of course! Frunt—front," said Grundy. "I should think the pronunciation would tell you that, though, of course, that isn't always a reliable guide in English. Frinstance, 'shoulder' is pronounced shoulder, but it's spelt s-h-a-u-l-d-e-r."

"Is—is it?"

"Of course it is! Well, I think I'll get off with this advertisement, and catch old Tiper before he closes," said Grundy, rising. "Ta-ta!"

Grundy left the study and went for his bike, and was soon pedalling away briskly to the office of the "Rylcombe Times."

Gunn and Wilkins grinned at one another when he was gone.

"My only hat!" said Wilkins. "If that advertisement comes out in that spelling—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The whole blessed House will yell over it. Let's go and tell the fellows what to expect," chuckled Wilkins.

And they did. And by the time George Alfred Grundy came back from Rylcombe, the whole School House was chuckling over his advertisement.

George Alfred understood quite well that he was the subject of the chuckling, but he only snorted disdainfully.

On the morrow his advertisement would appear, and then he would be inundated with offers from football clubs anxious to secure such a player. After that, he told Wilkins, the silly asses would laugh on the other side of their fatheaded mouths.

There was not the slightest doubt in George Alfred's mind that his valuable services would be snapped up. In other minds there were very considerable doubts.

CHAPTER 7.

Gussy's Idea!

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"He, he, he!"
"Bai Jove! Ha, ha, ha!"
I wegard this as vewy funny,

deah boys!"

"Good old Grundy!"
A merry group of juniors stood by the steps of the School House, craning over one another's shoulders to view a copy of the "Rylcombe Times."

Monty Lowther had the local paper open at the advertisement page. In a prominent position on that page appeared Grundy's celebrated advertisement.

Evidently the printer had carried out Grundy's very particular instructions and had not meddled with the spelling.

Mr. Tiper probably did not care how his advertisements were spelt so long as they were paid for. The advertisement appeared in Grundy's own original orthography, and the St. Jim's fellows simply howled as they read it.

Probably a good many of the local footballers would see it. What the "Football Clubbs" would think of it could not even be imagined, but it was safe to predict that neither skippers nor secretaries would rush to avail themselves of the services of the advertiser.

A fellow who was a "relyable" back, a "steddy" half, an "excellent" goal-keeper, but "espeshully" good at centre-forward might, as Monty Lowther pointed out, be suspected of being a conceited ass, and no good at all as a footballer.

Grundy had forgotten the excellent old adage that self-praise is no recommendation. True, he firmly believed that he was stating facts, and that no

false modesty ought to be allowed to keep him from stating plain facts. But the readers of the advertisement were likely to draw their own conclusions, all the same.

The advertiser's offer to captain the "team," too, would probably not recommend him to football skippers. Football skippers, as a rule, were not looking out for offers of that kind.

The really generous offer to "koochie" players was perhaps more likely to put fellows' backs up than to bring a rush of applicants for coaching.

Therefore, the St. Jim's juniors concluded that nobody was likely to write to G. A. Grundy, or to call "after half-past fore."

They grinned and chuckled over that advertisement to their hearts' content, and more and more fellows gathered round to see it and hear it read aloud till half the School House seemed to have gathered round Monty Lowther and his newspaper.

Figgins & Co. spotted the crowd, and came over from the New House to inquire, and joined in the yells of merriment.

"By Jove, this beats the band!" chuckled Figgins. "We don't spell like that in our House!"

"No fear!" said Kerr, with a shake of the head.

There was a sniff from Blake of the Fourth.

"Admitted you don't spell like Grundy," said Blake. "You play footer like him, though."

"Why, you ass—" began Figgins, very wrathful at the suggestion that he played footer like Grundy.

"Hullo! Here he comes!" said Manners.

"See the corn-crushing hero comes!" chuckled Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy seemed surprised at the sight of the crowd as he came out of the School House.

"Hullo! Anything in the paper?" he asked.

"Lots!" said Monty Lowther. "Something new in advertisements! You remember what Shakespeare says—'Sweet are the uses of advertisement'? I think Shakespeare said 'adversity,' but that's more up to date. There's an advertisement here that's worth a guinea a box. Like to hear it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, I see!" said Grundy, frowning. "That's my advertisement. Well, you'll see from that that I mean business. I'm sorry to have to take this step. I'm loyal, and I don't want to deprive my own school of my services, but I've been forced into this by jealousy—I may say a general conspiracy. I leave the responsibility chiefly to Tom Merry."

Tom Merry wiped his eyes.

"I'll try to stagger along under it," he said.

"But when you're playing for Tottenham Hotspur or Manchester City you'll let us come to see you, won't you?" urged Manners.

"And we'd like to see that crowd of skippers and secretaries who are going to call after half-past four," grinned Blake. "We ought to get a brass band to welcome them!"

"Yaas, wathah! Ha, ha, ha!"

"None of your larks with my visitors!" said Grundy severely. "I'm expecting some callers this afternoon. I don't want any larking, I can tell you."

"You're really expecting some callers from this advertisement?" ejaculated Tom Merry.

"Certainly! Some will write, but some will call very likely."

"There's going to be a rush, you see,"

explained Monty Lowther. "This advertisement will set all Sussex in a buzz. If this paper circulated in the North they'd have to run a special train down from Manchester—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Better ask the Housemaster to reserve the visitors' room for you this afternoon, Grundy," advised Blake, "and Toby can be told to put the visitors in a queue in the passage, like a pit crowd at a theatre, you know, and let 'em in one at a time."

Grundy snorted.

"You can cackle!" he remarked.

"Thanks, we will! Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll cackle a bit differently when I come here some day with an outside team and lick you on your own ground."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

That suggestion simply doubled up the juniors. They roared.

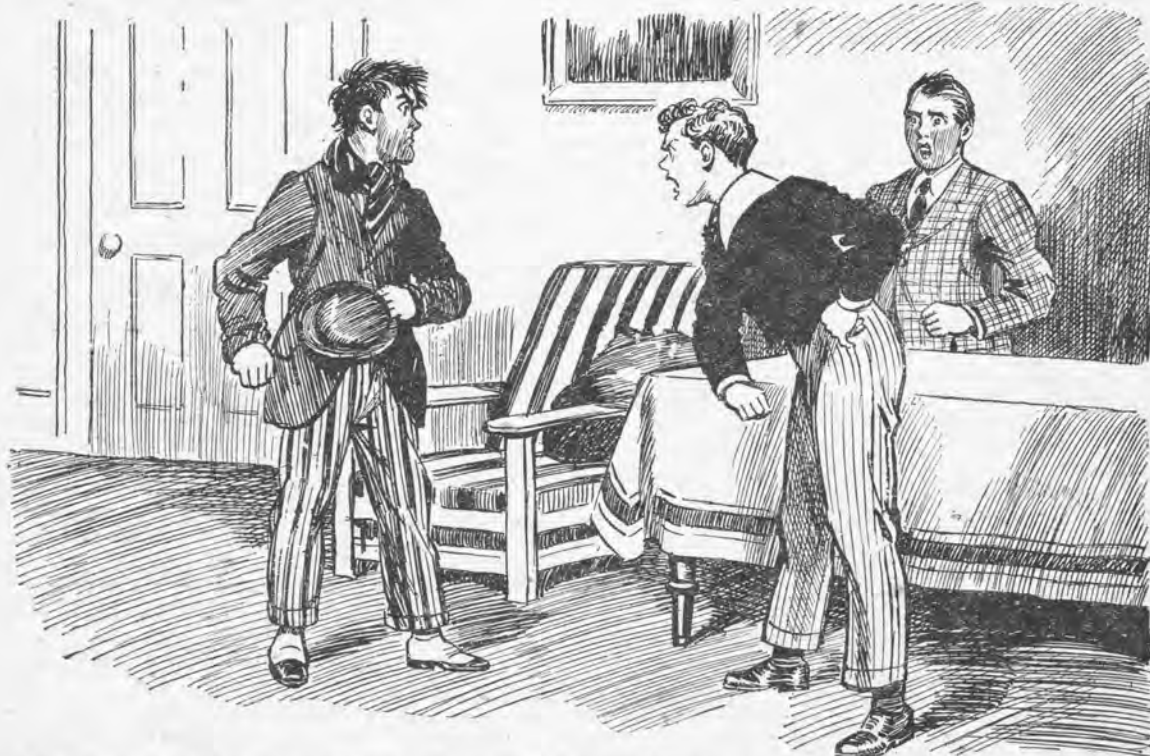
Grundy sniffed and walked away with his nose in the air. That Grundy took his own football seriously was a never-ceasing cause of surprise, but that he should expect any result from his advertisement, excepting general merriment, was more surprising still.

But Grundy evidently did, for later in the afternoon Levison of the Fourth heard him asking the Housemaster's permission to use the visitors' room—a permission that Mr. Railton accorded.

Then Grundy interviewed Toby, the page, and instructed him to show at once into the visitors' room any callers who asked for Master George Grundy.

And a little later still Grundy was spotted sitting at the window of that apartment, apparently waiting for the influx of visitors.

Study No. 6 spotted him as they were sauntering in the quadrangle, and they burst into a chuckle, which drew a stony glare from George Alfred.



"Do you think anybody wouldn't know you, you ass?" roared Grundy. "Did you think you could take me in?" "Bai Jove! Lowthah, you wotiah, you have given me away!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus. But it was Gussy who had given away the fact that he and Lowther were impostors!

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus remarked. "That uttah ass is weally expectin' callahs to come and secure his services, you know!"

Blake nodded.

"Quite dotty!" he said. "He's refused to go out with Wilkins and Gunn. Told them he would have business on hand this afternoon."

"Bai Jove!" Arthur Augustus halted suddenly in the quad, his eye gleaming behind his eyeglass. "I've got an ideah."

"Go and bury it!" said Blake. "Let's go and put in some footer practice."

"Wats! I wepeat that I have an ideah. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Great Scott! Are you understudying an alarm clock?" demanded Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies, I'm not doin' anythin' of the kind. I'm laughin' at the wippin' joke I am thinkin' of."

"Finished?" asked Digby. "If you have, we'll get along to the footer."

"Weally, Dig—"

"Come on!" said Blake.

"I wefuse to come on, Blake. I wepeat that I have an ideah—a wippin' joke on Gwunday—the joke of the season!" said Arthur Augustus impressively.

"Grundy's the joke of the season himself," said Blake. "You can't make him any funnier than he is. It's like gilding refined gold, or painting the giddy lily!"

"Yaas, but this is simply wippin'. You see, Gwunday is expectin' a footah captain or secretaw to call and secure his services."

"Well?"

"Well," chuckled Arthur Augustus, "it's wathah a pity to disappoint him. Why not let one call and secure his services?"

"Eh? Nobody would be ass enough. The advertisement shows anybody that he's a born idiot!"

"Yaas, but I mean a spoof footah captain," explained Arthur Augustus, grinning. "Gwunday is such a howlin' ass that anybody could pull his leg. Suppose I call on him? You know what a wippin' hand I am at disguisin' myself—"

"Disguisin' yourself—"

"Yaas, wathah! Without bwaggin', I think I may say that I am wathah elevah at it, you know. I've had a lot of practice in amatuah theatricals. I can make myself up another chap, you know, and call on Gwunday as a footah captain, and pull his leg no end, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yaas, I thought you would laugh when I told you the joke," said Arthur Augustus, beaming.

"That's not what I'm laughing at!" howled Blake. "I'm laughing at you!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"You frabjous ass, Grundy would spot you at once!"

"Wubbish!"

"You'd be seen through on the spot, fathead!" said Herries.

"Wats!"

"Kerr might be able to do it, or Lowther," said Blake. "But you—oh, my hat! You couldn't disguise your beautiful accent. You couldn't put false whiskers on your voice, I suppose?"

"You uttah ass—"

"But it isn't a bad idea," said Blake. "You couldn't do it, of course. But Lowther might be able to; he's done a lot of acting. It would be funny."

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"I wefuse to have my wippin' ideah bowwowed in this barefaced mannah."

"Oh, rats! Let's go and see those Shell bounders!"

"I wefuse—"

"Come on!" said Blake, chuckling; and he headed at once for Tom Merry's study, with Herries and Dig.

Arthur Augustus rushed after them. The swell of St. Jim's was simply brimming with indignation at having his great wheeze collared in this high-handed way.

"Blake, you ass, I pwotest! Do you heah me? I will not allow— Stop, you wottahs! I tell you I wefuse—I weguard you as uttah boundahs!"

And Arthur Augustus kept up his remarks, crescendo, in a kind of accompaniment, as Blake, Herries, and Digby continued on their way, and they arrived together at Tom Merry's study.

CHAPTER 8.

Levison Helps!

THE Terrible Three were discussing plans for the afternoon when Study No. 6 came in.

Tom Merry favoured football, Manners a photographic excursion, and Monty Lowther a "jape" on the New House fellows. The arrival of Blake & Co. interrupted the discussion.

"We've got an idea!" announced Blake.

"It's my ideah, Blake," came Arthur Augustus' voice from the passage.

"That ass, Grundy," pursued Blake, unheeding, "is sitting in the visitors' room, waiting for visitors. We've thought of a chap getting himself up as a visitor and calling on him, and pulling his leg, you know."

Monty Lowther's eyes sparkled.

"Jolly good idea!" he agreed.

"Yaas, wathah; and I'm goin' to do it!" said Arthur Augustus warmly. "You fellows are aware what a wippin' hand I am at disguisin' myself."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't see anythin' to cackle at. I wefuse—"

"My idea is that Lowther could take it on, as he's such a dab at theatricals," said Blake. "He's not so good as Kerr, but we don't want those New House bounders to think we can't work a wheeze on our own."

"Why, you ass," said Lowther, "I could knock any New House bounder into a cocked hat in that line!"

"I wefuse to allow you to do it, Lowther! I am goin' to cawwy out my own ideah myself!" shouted Arthur Augustus.

"Now, do lie down, Gussy!" urged Blake. "You don't want to spoil a good jape by playing the giddy ox."

"I insist upon cawwyin' it out myself, Blake, because it wequiah tact and judgment, and I cannot twust it to anybody else," said Arthur Augustus firmly.

"Bow-wow!"

Monty Lowther jumped up and made for the "property box" at once. He was quite keen to carry out that ripping idea.

Tom Merry and Manners gave up the idea of football and photography at once. They were "on." How could a half-holiday be better spent than in pulling George Alfred Grundy's egregious leg?

"A sandy wig and a red face," suggested Blake. "Disguise yourself as a good-looking chap if you can!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wepeat, you fellows—"

"Gussy, old man," said Blake,

"you're making us tired. Run away and play."

"I wepeat that I insist—"

"Go and take Towser for a run," suggested Herries.

"I wefuse to take Towsah for a wun!"

"Go and buy some new fancy ties, then," said Dig.

"I decline to do anythin' of the sort."

"Great Scott! Haven't you a strait jacket you can put him into for a bit?" exclaimed Manners.

"Mannahs, you ass—"

"Lend a hand, Gussy, and don't jaw," urged Blake. "You see, you couldn't do it. You are an ass, you know, and Grundy will spot you at once. Listen to the advice of your uncle. Cheese it!"

"I pwotest—"

"Well, there's no objection to that," said Blake. "But protest and get it over, and then dry up!"

Slam!

Arthur Augustus, in a state of great indignation, retired from the study and closed the door after him with a terrific concussion.

Blake chuckled.

"We'll soothe Gussy afterwards," he remarked. "Let's get on with japing Grundy now."

The chums of the School House set to work, all lending Monty Lowther a helping hand. It was not difficult business for Lowther, who was an adept in making up, and quite a leading light in the Junior Dramatic Society.

With a sandy wig and a reddened complexion, a stiff collar, a red tie, and a suit of check clothes, Monty Lowther's appearance was greatly changed.

Then he added artistic touches, giving his mouth a slightly elongated appearance, and his upper lip a dusty shade that hinted of an incipient moustache, and tinting his eyebrows and eyelashes.

The juniors watched him in great admiration. They hardly knew Lowther themselves at the end of ten minutes. It was pretty certain that George Alfred Grundy would not know him.

Meanwhile, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had retired to Study No. 6 in a state of great wrath.

It was not merely the borrowing of his great wheeze that exasperated him. He had no faith in anyone else's powers to carry out the jape successfully, and he felt that Lowther would make a "muck" of it. The ripping idea would be wholly wasted, through not being left in the able hands of Arthur Augustus. Naturally, that was very exasperating.

"Hallo! What's the trouble?" asked Levison, meeting Arthur Augustus in the Fourth Form passage.

"I have been tweated with gwoss disrespect," said Arthur Augustus. "But I am jolly well going to show those boundahs that I'm not goin' to be left out of my own ideah. You can come in and help me if you like, Levison. You are a wathah elevah beggah at theatricals."

"Theatricals," said Levison, with a yawn.

The cad of the Fourth was on his way to his study for a smoke, and he did not feel inclined to waste time on theatricals. Amateur theatricals seemed tame to Levison.

"Yaas, it's a jape, you know," said Arthur Augustus. "A jape on that ass Gwunday. He is waitin' for a visitah, and I'm goin' to visit him in disguise and pull his leg, you know."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Levison.

"Wippin' joke—what?"

"Simply a scream!" grinned Levison. "I'll help you with pleasure!"

He followed Arthur Augustus into Study No. 6, quite keen to lend a helping hand.

As a rule Arthur Augustus did not care much for the black sheep of the Fourth. But just now he was indignant and exasperated, and it was a relief to find somebody, at least, who would back him up. So he was very benevolent to Levison.

"Thank you vewy much, Levison!" he said graciously. "I shall be glad of your help. That ass Lowthah is goin' to do it, but I am sure that he will muck it up. Those Shell boundahs haven't got any bwains, you know!"

"They haven't!" grinned Levison. "I've got lots of things here," said D'Arcy, opening a box. "Pway help me to select a weally wippin' disguise. I know you know all about it."

"Wely on me," said Levison heartily. Levison proceeded to make a selection. Arthur Augustus changed his clothes, and Levison helped him to make up.

"This wig is simply ripping—" "It's wathah big," said Arthur Augustus doubtfully. The wig was one used by the amateur actors for the character of Hamlet.

"That makes it all the better as a disguise," explained Levison. "You'll look a rather long-haired chap, but lots of chaps wear their hair rather long, you know. Grundy would never suspect it was you."

"Pewwaps you are wight, Levison." "Oh, yes, rather! There, that looks ripping! Now, I should suggest a muffler instead of a collar—this one with crimson stripes—"

"That looks wathah stwikin'!"

"Yes; but as it isn't like anything you usually wear, it will be first-rate as a disguise."

"Yaas, quite so. I nevah thought of that."

"Now, about your face?" said Levison. "Your handsome Greek nose would be known anywhere—"

"You are wathah flattewin', deah boy."

"Not at all. Better redden it at the end; it will look like sunburn, you know, and quite distinct from your usual appearance."

"Vewy good."

"Better make your eyebrows very dark—"

"Bai Jove! You are makin' them quite black," said Arthur Augustus, blinking in the glass. "That gives me wathah a foweign look."

"Yes; but as you don't usually look foreign, that's all the better for your disguise."

"Yaas, I—I suppose so," said Arthur Augustus unsuspectingly.

"Now a bluish shade on your chin, as if you had a beard coming—"

"Isn't that wathah orahdoin' it, Levison?"

"I think not. You see, the idea is to make you look quite distinct from your usual appearance. Splendid!"

Arthur Augustus looked in the glass again and nodded.

"Is it all wight behind?" he asked. "I can't see the back of my head."

"I'll attend to that."

Levison did attend to that. He was busy for some minutes. It did not occur to the unsuspecting D'Arcy that Levison was bent upon pulling his leg and not Grundy's.

Unseen by the swell of St. Jim's,

Levison pinned a card on his back, and scratched on it in large letters with a pencil:

"THE WILD MAN FROM BORNEO!"

"There, that's all right," said Levison, with owl-like seriousness. "I don't think that can be bettered. It's taken rather a time, but it was worth it."

"Thank you vewy much, Levison!" "Not at all."

Arthur Augustus, after a final look in the glass, quitted his study on his mission.

Levison controlled his feelings till the swell of St. Jim's was gone. Then he rolled in the armchair and yelled.

CHAPTER 9.

Two Jaspers!

"G E N E L MAN to see you, Master

Grundy!"

There was a suppressed grin on Toby's face as he opened the door of the visitors' room with that announcement. Perhaps Toby was aware that the "genelman" had come from the Shell passage, and was not from outside St. Jim's.

Grundy jumped up at once. He had been waiting a long time, and no visitors had materialised. He was very glad to receive a caller at last.

Toby showed in the visitor. He was a short, somewhat stout fellow, and looked about eighteen, but hardly tall enough for his age. His complexion was very ruddy, his hair sandy, and his eyebrows reddish. His clothes were of a somewhat loud check pattern.

Under that exterior, few would have dreamed of recognising the somewhat elegant and fastidious Montague Lowther.

"Mr. Grundy?" the visitor asked, in a deep bass voice, not at all like the tones of the humorist of the Shell.

"That's right!" said Grundy eagerly. "Very glad to see you. You've come about the advertisement in the 'Rylcombe Times'?"

"Exactly. I have the paper here,"

said the visitor. "You are the first-class player described here?"

"Just so!" assented Grundy.

"A reliable back, a steady half, and a good goalkeeper, and a specially good centre-forward?"

"Yes. I think I can lay claim to all that," said Grundy modestly. "I'm not a chap to blow my own trumpet, you know. But facts speak for themselves."

"Ahem! Yes, of course. Might a chap inquire why you are not playing for your school, with all those qualifications?"

"It's a case of jealousy," explained Grundy. "You see, at Reddyliffe—my old school—we played football, played it, you know. Here they don't play much of a game—not in my style, at all. I (Continued on the next page.)

"ME SAAVE PLENTY PENNIES AND GET VELLY BIG BANG-BANGS ON NOV 5th"

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played for St. Jim's the other day, and our skipper mucked up the match. I simply hadn't a chance. I've decided not to play for St. Jim's any more till general changes are made. A player of my class can't fool about with a lot of bungling fags."

"Oh, my hat! I—I mean, quite so!" stammered the visitor. "Your play is quite above their heads, I suppose?"

"You've hit it."

"And you're willing to place your services at the disposal of the Oakshott Ramblers?"

Grundy's eyes sparkled. He had heard of the Ramblers, a well-known local team at a place some miles from St. Jim's.

"Quite willing," he replied. "That's not a school team, is it?"

"No; an amateur team, average age about eighteen," said the visitor. "But a player of your class would find himself quite at home in an older team."

"Oh, certainly!" said Grundy. "In fact, it would suit me better. Fag teams are not quite up to my weight, really. I mentioned it to Kildare—he's our school captain—that my right place was in the first eleven, among the seniors, you know. He acted in a violent manner. I shall certainly never mention it to him again. I'll play for the Ramblers with pleasure."

"Good!"

"I suppose you're the secretary?" asked Grundy.

"I've come here to see you as the secretary," said the visitor. "When can you go over and see our skipper? You'd have to see him. I dare say you've heard his name—Charley Clincher."

"I've seen it in the local paper reports," said Grundy. "I'll bike over to-day and see him, if you like. He lives at Oakshott, I believe?"

"Yes, Briar Cottage, Oakshott. He will simply jump at getting a chap like you in his team. You mentioned in your advertisement that you were willing to captain the team. You'll mention that to him?"

"Certainly!"

"Just tell him that you understand that the Ramblers haven't had much luck so far this season, owing to want of a good skipper, and that you're going to take the job off his hands. He will welcome you like a long-lost brother."

"I shall be glad, of course. Hallo!"

Grundy paused as the door opened to admit another visitor.

He stared blankly at the extraordinary figure that came in. At the first glance it looked like an unshaven young man of about twenty-one, with long hair, a glaring crimson-striped muffler, jet-black eyebrows, and a very red nose.

At the second glance it was evidently Arthur Augustus D'Arcy got up as if for the purpose of giving a comic turn in a circus.

Solomon in all his glory was certainly never arrayed like the swell of St. Jim's at that moment.

Grundy stood rooted to the floor with astonishment. The Oakshott secretary—if he was the Oakshott secretary—stood aghast.

"Good-aftahnnoon!" said the extraordinary object.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Grundy.

"Oh, my hat!" murmured his companion. "That silly villain, he's mucked up the whole game now!"

"You are Mastah Gwundy, I pwe—"

"Wha-a-at!"

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"You are the chap who advertised in the 'Wylcombe Times'?"

"M-my word! Is he dotty?" murmured Grundy.

"I've called in answer to that advertisement," continued the latest visitor.

"I desiah to secure your services, Gwunday."

"Eh?"

"I twust that nobody has been before me," said the new visitor, with a glance of great disfavour at the other visitor. "I twust, Gwunday, that you will accede to my wequest."

"You silly ass!" roared Grundy.

"What are you got up like that for—and what's the game?"

"Weally, Gwunday—"

"He's potty!" gasped Grundy. "Get out, D'Arcy, you silly ass!"

"Do you hear? Get out, or I'll jolly well boot you out!"

"Gweat Scott!" The new visitor simply jumped as Grundy called him by his name. "You—you are aware—Weally, you know, I—I—"

"Do you think nobody wouldn't know you, you ass?" roared Grundy. "Did you think you could take me in?"

"Bai Jove! Lowthah, you wottah, you have given me a way!" ejaculated Arthur Augustus, with burning indignation. "I wegard that as wotten!"

"Lowther!" yelled Grundy.

He looked round the room for Lowther. He noted—he could not help noting—that D'Arcy's eyes were fixed accusingly upon the secretary from Oakshott.

Grundy almost staggered. His brain was not a quick one, and he was never given to suspecting when his leg was being pulled. But D'Arcy's disguise gave him the clue to Lowther's; and the fact that D'Arcy called the Oakshott visitor "Lowther" could not leave even George Alfred Grundy in doubt of his identity.

"Lowthah!" repeated Grundy, with a gasp.

"Lowther! Oh, my hat!"

"Lowthah, you ass—"

"D'Arcy, you silly idiot—"

"I wefuse to be called an idiot, Lowthah! You have no wight to come here cawwyin' out my wheeze! And you have less wight still to warn Gwunday that I was comin'!"

"You thumping ass, I didn't warn Grundy!" howled Lowther.

"Then how did he know me?" demanded Arthur Augustus incredulously.

"Oh, you fathead!"

"So there's a pair of you?" shouted Grundy. "You swindling rotters! I'll teach you to try to jape me!"

"Bai Jove! Hold on! Yawwooh!"

"Hands off!" yelled the unfortunate Lowther.

Grundy rushed at them, hitting out furiously.

There was a yell of laughter from the passage, where several juniors threw the door open to look in.

Lowther and D'Arcy were fairly

driven through the doorway under Grundy's terrific attack.

Bump! Crash!

Lowther sprawled in the passage, with Arthur Augustus sprawling over him.

Grundy stood in the doorway and brandished his fists.

"Now, you rotters, come and have some more—"

"Wow-wow-ow!"

"Grooogh!"

Slam!

Grundy closed the door on his visitors. Arthur Augustus and Monty Lowther sorted themselves out, and sat up on the floor, gasping, and the juniors in the passage yelled with laughter. They could not help it.



There was a roar of laughter from the fellows in the quad as they came back. "D'Arcy!" It was a voice of thunder from Mr. Rail. "You insane, boy?" went on the Housemaster. "How dare

The jape had not ended as designed, certainly; but the ending seemed funny to all but the two unfortunate japers directly concerned.

CHAPTER 10.

Not a Success.

TOM MERRY wiped his eyes.

"Oh, my hat!" he gasped. "Gussy, old man, you'll be the death of us!"

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Rather a failure, Monty, old chap," said Manners.

"That silly ass!" panted Lowther.

"I was getting on swimmingly when that idiot came in and gave the whole game away. Grundy hadn't a suspicion, the fathead! But that born idiot—"

"I am convinced that Lowthah must have given me away," said Arthur Augustus. "Othahwise, it would have been quite impos for that ass Gwunday to have recognised me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You ass!" shrieked Blake. "You're got up like a funny man in a circus. Look at that card on your back!"

"The wild man from Borneo!" chuckled Digby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"And you're got up for the part!" howled Herries. "If there ever was

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Monty Lowther staggered to his feet. He was feeling hurt, and in a decidedly bad temper. His great jape had been utterly "mucked up," and the crowd of juniors were laughing at him instead of at Grundy. That was not in the programme.

He shook his fist at Arthur Augustus and limped away. D'Arcy groped for his eyeglass, and jammed it into his eye, and blinked at the hilarious juniors.

"I can see nothin' whatever to laugh at in this," he said severely. "The jape has not come off, aftah all, owing to that ass Lowthah. I wegard you as asses!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Augustus walked away with a sniff, leaving the juniors howling. He went in search of Levison.

He found that cheerful young gentleman in his study, talking to Mellish. Both of them were laughing loudly, evidently enjoying the joke.

They shrieked as D'Arcy came in in his extraordinary disguise.

"There he is! The wild man from Borneo!" gasped Mellish. "Look at his nose! Look at his hair!"

"And his muffer!" yelled Levison. "And his chivvy! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Levison, you uttah wottah—"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Levison. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"You have been playin' a wotten twick on me, when I was undah the impresson that you were helpin' me!" roared Arthur Augustus.

"Go hon!" said Levison.

"And I am goin' to give you a feahful thwashin'!"

"Here, keep off!"

Levison dodged round the table as Arthur Augustus charged at him. Arthur Augustus was enraged, and he was hitting out.

Mellish was in the way; Levison dodged round him. There was a terrific yell from Mellish as he caught D'Arcy's right with his eye and his left with his chin.

"Oh crumbs! Yah! Oh!"

Mellish rolled on the study carpet and Levison bolted from the study.

"You feahful ass!" yelled Arthur Augustus. "What did you get in the way for? You have barked my knuckles with your chin, you howlin' ass!"

"Oh dear! Ow! Oh!"

Arthur Augustus sped in pursuit of Levison. Mellish sat up and yelled remarks after him.

Levison was sprinting down the passage, and he descended the stairs by way of the banisters.

Arthur Augustus was not to be denied. He caught sight of the fugitive streaking out into the quadrangle, and sped down the stairs and along the hall after him.

In his excitement, it did not occur to him that it was somewhat imprudent to venture into the public gaze in his peculiar get-up, neither did he guess that Levison was purposely leading him out into the quad.

There was a yell from the fellows in the quad as Arthur Augustus appeared in sight.

"Oh, my hat!"

"The wild man from Borneo!" yelled Wilkins. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"D'Arcy!"

It was a voice of thunder from Mr. Railton's study window.

Arthur Augustus came to a sudden halt. The School House master was standing at the open window, and his eyes were fixed upon the swell of St. Jim's with a terrifying expression.

"Yaas, sir!" gasped D'Arcy.

"Are you insane, boy?" thundered the Housemaster. "How dare you appear in the quadrangle in that ridiculous fashion? What have you been doing to your face?"

"Oh cwumbs! I—I forgot! I—I—" "Come here!"

Arthur Augustus approached the Housemaster's window, and stood there under the stern eyes of Mr. Railton, quailing. He was only too keenly conscious at that moment of his ridiculous appearance.

"You will kindly explain, D'Arcy, why you are disfigured in this extraordinary manner!"

"It—it was a joke, sir!" stuttered Arthur Augustus.

"I quite fail to see the joke! I regard it as utterly absurd! Go in and clean your face at once, and remove that ridiculous wig, and take five hundred lines!"

"Oh deah!"

Arthur Augustus limped into the School House and disappeared.

Vengeance upon Levison had to wait. But vengeance, as it happened, was on Levison's track in another form.

He was chuckling over Arthur Augustus' discomfiture when Grundy bore down on him in the quad.

It was tea-time now, and Grundy had given up at last expecting a visitor. The advertisement, apparently, required more-time to produce its effect upon the football "clubbs" of the neighbourhood.

"Oh, here you are!" said Grundy. "I understand that you helped D'Arcy in playing a rotten jape on me!"

"I was only pulling his leg, you know," said Levison, backing away in alarm. "Simply a joke on the duffer, you know—not on you. Yaroooooh!"

Levison was not given time to get any further with his explanation. Grundy seized him by the collar, and proceeded to dust up the ground with him.

"There!" said Grundy, glaring down at the furious and breathless Levison as he lay gasping on the grass. "Now you won't be in such a hurry to help jape me again, I fancy! There's some more where that came from when you feel inclined to be funny again!"

And Grundy stalked away.

Levison sat and rubbed his nose and eye. George Alfred Grundy was rather too big for Levison to lick.

"Yow!" mumbled Levison. "The rotter! Ow! I'll make him sit up for that! Yow-wow-wow!"

CHAPTER 11.

Lowther to the Rescue!

"GOOD Little Georgie was a nice boy!"

Monty Lowther made that statement in the study a few days later.

Tom Merry and Manners regarded him inquiringly.

"Off your rocker?" asked Manners.

"Not at all. You remember the time

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They saw Arthur Augustus with the ridiculous notice on his back as he ran past the study window. "Yaas, sir!" gasped D'Arcy. "Are you appear in the quadrangle in that absurd fashion?"

a wild man from Borneo, you look just like him."

"A c-card on my b-back!" stuttered D'Arcy, grabbing wildly over his shoulder. "Oh, gweat Scott! That wottah Levison—"

"Did Levison make you up?" shrieked Tom Merry.

"Yaas. I thought it was vewy obligin' of him."

"Ha, ha, ha! He was pulling your leg all the time, you fathead!" said Blake, almost weeping. "You look as if you've escaped from a circus."

"Bai Jove! I shall look for Levison and give him a feahful thwashin'!"

when Blenkinsop of the Fourth gave out good little books for good little boys to read? Young Reilly showed me his one. It was the history of 'Good Little Georgie, Who Loved His Kind Teacher, and Always Helped His Schoolmates.'"

Algernon Blenkinsop was a simple youth who often issued tracts containing helpful advice to his schoolfellows.

"Well?" said Tom, puzzled.

"He was a nice boy!" said Lowther. "When a schoolmate who had been rude to him was disappointed about getting a present, Little Georgie gave him his new marbles."

"You silly ass—"

"I've always considered that quite ripping of Georgie," said Lowther calmly; "and, as I'm a nice boy, too, I'm going to follow Georgie's footsteps."

"I suppose you mean it's a wheeze!" said Tom, after a moment's thought. "What's the idea? Up against the New House? It's time we made Figgins & Co. sit up again, or they will forget that we're Cock House of St. Jim's!"

"Never mind Figgins & Co.; I'm thinking about Grundy."

"Oh, blow Grundy!" said Tom Merry and Manners together, quite heartily. "We're fed up with Grundy."

"That's where Little Georgie has the pull over you," said Lowther. "Little Georgie never got fed up. He was always willing to be a little prig at a moment's notice. Now, I've been thinking what Georgie would do. Grundy has been advertising for a distinguished post as an amateur footballer. Marvellous to relate, he hasn't had any answers, except the calls that were made on him last Saturday—Gussy and myself."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grundy can't quite make it out. I feel for him," said Lowther. "When a chap spends five bob on an advertisement he naturally wants an answer. Now, my idea is that Grundy didn't word his advertisement correctly."

"He didn't spell it correctly, at all events," grinned Manners.

"Under the circumstances, Little Georgie would turn it over in his mind, and he would say to himself: 'My dear schoolmate Grundy has been disappointed. He has not received any answers to his advertisement. I must rectify this. I must put in another advertisement for dear Grundy which will bring him lots of answers, and then he will be happy.'"

"What the merry dickens—"

"That's what Little Georgie would say to himself," said Lowther firmly; "and he would put in an advertisement for his dear schoolmate, and pay it out of his own pocket. He wouldn't mention it to Grundy, because he's so modest. He would simply overwhelm his dear schoolmate with obligations, without saying a word."

"Dotty!" said Manners.

"I'm going to follow in Georgie's footsteps," said Lowther. "Now, look at this advertisement that I've drawn up for Grundy. I'm sure it will bring him lots of answers. He'll have the visitors' room simply crammed."

Monty Lowther had been scribbling upon a sheet of impot paper.

He pushed it across the study table, and Tom Merry and Manners looked at it in considerable astonishment. Their astonishment increased as they read the advertisement Monty Lowther had drawn up—for his dear schoolmate.

"You ass!" gasped Manners.

"You fathead!" ejaculated Tom Merry.

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Monty Lowther looked pained.

"Isn't that advertisement likely to bring a lot of answers?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes."

"And isn't that what our dear school-fellow wants?"

"Yes. Ha, ha, ha!"

The Terrible Three chuckled in chorus over the advertisement. It ran:

"Wanted.—Lessons in English orthography, by a backward youth.—Apply personally to G. A. Grundy, School House, St. Jim's."

"Wanted.—Instruction in the game of football, by a youth totally ignorant of the game.—Apply personally, G. A. Grundy, School House, St. Jim's."

"Wanted.—Lessons in manners and deportment, by a youth whose training has been neglected.—Apply personally, G. A. Grundy, School House, St. Jim's."

Monty Lowther seemed very pleased with that advertisement. Certainly, there was no doubt that, if it appeared in the columns of the "Rylcombe Times," there would be plenty of

as well as a jape that didn't come off," argued Lowther. "And he lost the Form match for us. Besides, he wants all these things, doesn't he? Lessons in spelling, lessons in football, lessons in manners and deportment. He wants them all badly."

"Ha, ha, ha! Yes."

"Then let's bike down and see Mr. Tiper."

"But, I say—"

"No time for 'buts,' or the printer's will be closed," said Lowther briskly, jumping up. "Come on!"

"Yes; but—"

"Oh, come on, and don't jaw, old chap!"

Monty Lowther left the study, and his chums followed him rather doubtfully.

The humorist of the Shell had an overpowering sense of humour, and when he was on the track of a jape it was useless to argue with him.

Grundy was chatting with Wilkins and Gunn on the steps of the School House as the Terrible Three came out. Lowther paused to speak to him.

"Had any answers yet?" he asked affably.

Grundy frowned.

"As it happens—no," he replied. "My advertisement must have been passed over, somehow. However, it appears again this week."

"Then there'll be a rush!" suggested Manners.

"You'll see what you'll see," replied Grundy. "I fancy I shall prove to you that some people can appreciate a good footballer better than you can."

"I shouldn't wonder if Grundy gets some callers," said Lowther. "I'm sure I wish you luck, Grundy. I hope you'll get a crowd."

Grundy snorted.

"I don't want any more of your rotten practical jokes," he said. "You couldn't take me in, anyway. I spotted you at once."

"You jolly well wouldn't have spotted me if that ass D'Arcy hadn't given it away!" exclaimed Lowther warmly.

"Rats! You couldn't jape me for toffee!" said Grundy disdainfully. "My dear chap, you haven't the brains."

"Why, you ass—"

"You couldn't jape a white rabbit!" said Grundy. "Try your next jape on a kid in the Second Form. You might bring it off then."

"I'll jolly well show you whether I can jape you or not, you ass!" exclaimed Monty Lowther warmly. "I'll jolly well—"

"Oh, bow-wow! You try it again, and I'll boot you out, same as I did before!" grinned Grundy. "Pretty picture you looked! Ha, ha, ha!"

Tom Merry and Manners dragged Lowther away, or there would probably have been a scrap on the steps of the House. Monty Lowther was breathing indignation.

"The silly ass!" he ejaculated. "Can't jape him for toffee, can't I? Why, he was born to have his leg pulled! I'll jolly well show him! Wait till this advertisement comes out—"

"Look here, old chap—"

"Oh, rats! It's up to me now!" said Lowther. "He's challenged me, hasn't he? Let's get down to Tiper's."

And Monty Lowther, deaf to argument, wheeled out his bicycle. The Terrible Three rode down to Rylcombe, and the advertisement was duly handed to Mr. Tiper.

Monty Lowther was grinning gleefully as he rode back to St. Jim's. It remained to be seen whether he could

(Continued on page 18.)



answers; Grundy would not go begging this time.

"Just think how happy Grundy would be, with visitors pouring in to apply personally!" said Lowther. "Last Saturday he sat in the visitors' room alone in his glory, and nobody came but Gussy and myself. The fellows have been chipping Grundy no end about it. They won't be able to chip him next Saturday, with visitors rolling in in their millions."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

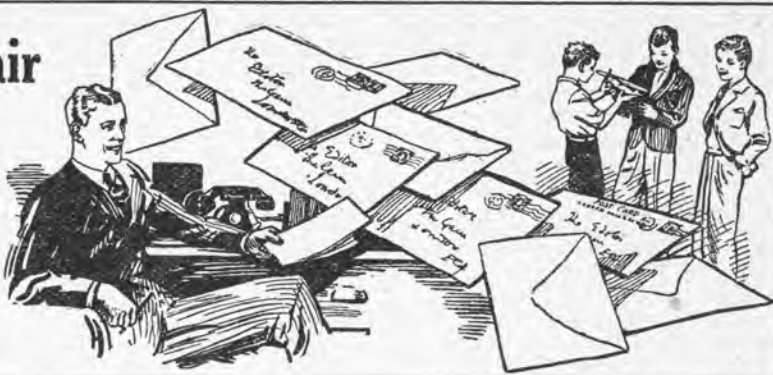
"Just time to bike down to Rylcombe and get this advertisement in," said Lowther. "Grundy's repeating his advertisement this week, I hear. He can't make out why he had no answers from last week's, and he's going to give the football clubs of Sussex another chance. So he will be expecting visitors—he expects a lot of things, you know. My dear friends, how happy we ought to feel to be able to make our schoolfellow happy at the small expenditure of five shillings."

"You ass!" grunted Tom Merry. "It's too bad."

"I owe Grundy a bruise on the ankle,

The Editor's Chair

Let the Editor be your pal.
Drop him a line to-day,
addressing your letters:
The Editor, The GEM,
Fleetway House, Farring-
don Street, London, E.C.4.



HALLO, Chums! I mentioned two weeks ago that, judging by "Pen Pals," a large number of readers are interested in stamp collecting, and that it had given me an idea. Well, I've followed up my idea keenly, and very soon now, I hope to announce a splendid new stamp feature, handled by an expert, which will be starting in the GEM. Not only this, but I have several other grand things up my sleeve—special features, great stories, and something else extra-good. During the next few weeks I shall have some wonderful news for readers, so keep your eyes on this page.

"THE SILENT WITNESS!"

This is the title of the tip-top St. Jim's yarn in next Wednesday's number. It deals with a sudden craze for photography which sweeps over the juniors, and the fun and trouble caused thereby. The "Weekly Snap," a photographic journal, is offering a prize of five pounds for an original and striking snap—hence the juniors' interest in photography.

Fun is fast and furious as the juniors go about seeking unusual pictures; but trouble starts when someone snaps Mr. Selby falling into a muddy ditch!

Owing to a previous offence, Manners is suspected. The film in his camera is developed, and among the negatives are three showing the Third Form master's unfortunate accident! Manners swears that he is innocent, but the evidence against him is overwhelming. Is he guilty or not guilty? Look out for this gripping yarn next week, chums!

"NOT WANTED AT GREYFRIARS!"

Mark Linley's arrival at Greyfriars has been the reverse of welcome, to say the least, and it's not very encouraging for the Lancashire millboy who has had to work so hard for a place in the school. Bulstrode & Co. continue to make things as unpleasant as possible for Linley, with the intention of hounding him out of Greyfriars. But Mark can take it on the chin, and come up smiling, which is more than Bulstrode can when it comes to a show-down between the Remove bully and the scholarship boy!

Readers will enjoy immensely the next stirring chapters in Frank Richards' powerful story. See that your GEM is reserved for you.

A REMINDER.

Before I deal with my correspondence I should like to remind readers of the unbeatable value offered in the "Holiday Annual," now on sale, price five shillings. Personally, I consider the 1938 edition is the best of the nineteen volumes which have been published, and there's no doubt

that it will sell like hot cross buns on a Good Friday.

I'm sure all GEM readers would like to read more about the adventures of their old St. Jim's favourites, as well as meeting again the chums of Greyfriars and Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood. So don't forget your "Holiday Annual," chums.

IN REPLY TO YOURS—

M. Murphy (Co. Kildare, Ireland).—Offering to bet anyone a quid that the GEM is the best paper on the market proves that you are a very enthusiastic reader. I am pleased to hear that you haven't missed a copy since first taking the GEM. The Greyfriars senior football and cricket teams are chosen from Wingate, Gwynne, North, Coker (minor), Faulkner, Sykes, Walker, Blundell, Fitzgerald, Greene, Potter, Reynolds.

H. Savage (Wisbech, Cambs.).—Thanks for your story suggestion, but a "double" series has recently appeared. Your first joke was rather too gruesome, while the other was similar to a joke which has appeared in the GEM. Hard luck. Keep pegging away.

F. Addis (Walsall).—The Fourth Form at St. Jim's is equivalent to the Remove at Greyfriars. Cutts' age is 17 years.

A. J. Moss (Retford, Notts.).—Glad to hear you have become a GEM reader. As I have said before, if the stories in the old paper were repeated I should get thousands of complaints from readers. The two most unpopular masters are Mr. Ratcliff and Mr. Selby. I definitely recommend the "Magnet," which is the GEM's companion paper. It is on sale Saturday, price 2d.

Miss R. Hines (Houndsditch).—Talbot will be starred again soon. If you sent in a "Pen Pal" notice it will appear in due course. Thanks for your good wishes.

C. Estenson (Middlesbrough).—No, Vavasour never went to Greyfriars, but a junior of the same name is at Highcliffe School near Greyfriars. I don't suppose Tom Merry's double will ever have the "nerve" to show himself near St. Jim's again. Judging by readers' letters, the "British Isles" series was very popular. Grundy is featured again this week. Another scouting yarn will probably appear in the near future. Try again to win half-a-crown.

B. Hoy (Belfast).—The character you mention will make his appearance in due course. I am trying to get Monty Lowther to work again. Thanks for your congratulations.

H. Jones (Coventry).—Tom Lynn is a servant at St. Jim's. He won a Servitor scholarship, which entitles him to take

lessons. The August issue of the "Schoolboys' Own Library"—No. 398—contained a story of the chums of Rookwood. It is called "Jimmy Silver Resigns!" I should like to see your school magazine. Send it along.

J. Stannage (55, Stratford Road, Thornton Heath, Surrey).—Yes, you have my hearty approval in starting a St. Jim's and Greyfriars Club, and I wish you every success! As you probably know, there are many such clubs in existence. I have given your full address so that if other readers in your district are interested they can write to you. I will also put a notice in "Pen Pals" in due course.

Miss B. Lambert (Cambridge).—Frank Richards is no relation to Hilda Richards. The chums of St. Jim's recently spent a holiday at Gussy's home, Eastwood House. Sorry your joke didn't make the Jester smile. Try again.

Miss D. Young (Shoreham, Sussex).—Glyn is 15 years 6 months; Noble, 15 years 10 months; and Dane, 15 years 8 months. Glad to hear you always look forward to GEM day. Thanks for your good wishes.

Miss J. Aitchison (Springwell Colliery, Durham).—Yes, it will be some considerable time before Johnny Bull and Lord Mauleverer put in an appearance at Greyfriars. Fags do not indulge in pub-haunting. Pigott of the Third is the only one who might possibly be guilty of it. You will read in due course how Bunter becomes a ventriloquist.

G. MacDonald (Edinburgh).—Coker of the Sixth is the minor of Horace James of the Fifth. Kerr is 15 years 5 months. The Famous Five have spent a holiday at the home of Hurree Singh in Bhanipur. They might visit India again some time in the future.

R. Paine (Capetown, S. Africa).—Glad to hear you have become a GEM reader. Kildare is 17 years 3 months and six feet in height. Darrell is 17 years 6 months and five feet ten inches. Sorry your joke failed to score. Have another shot.

Miss R. Bowen (Wolverhampton).—I do not put "Pen Pals" in touch with one another. Write direct to that South African reader.

B. Price (Tenby).—I am pleased to hear that you are keenly interested in the companion papers; but I am sorry I cannot let you have that plan you want. St. Jim's is about sixty miles from Greyfriars.

K. Samuels (Coventry).—Sorry, old chap, but the office-boy grabs all the foreign stamps! But there will be some good news for stamp collectors soon. Watch the GEM. Your "Pen Pals" notice will appear in due course.

PEN PALS COUPON
11-9-37

THE EDITOR.
THE GEM LIBRARY.—No. 1,543.

jape Grundy or not. He fancied he could, and that the result of his advertisement would more than keep up his reputation as a humorist.

CHAPTER 12.

A Tip on the Telephone!

"CLINCHER will be here at six," Levison of the Fourth pricked up his ears.

It was Kildare, the captain of St. Jim's, who made the remark, and he was speaking to Darrell of the Sixth.

The two seniors were discussing a visit from Charley Clincher, the captain of the Oakshott Ramblers. There had been some talk of a fixture between Oakshott Ramblers and St. Jim's.

Levison had no difficulty in guessing that the Ramblers' skipper was coming over to the school to see Kildare about the fixture.

Levison sauntered away, with a thoughtful wrinkle on his brow. He spent some time in reflection under the elms in the quad, chuckling softly. Then he strolled away towards the New House.

Figgins & Co. were in the Hall, and they looked at Levison as he came in.

"Pax!" said Levison. He was not looking for a House rag. "Where's your Housemaster?"

"Gone out," said Figgins. "He's with the Head, I believe."

"Oh, good!"

"What do you want with Mr. Ratcliff?" asked Kerr.

"Nothing. I want to use his telephone, that's all."

"My hat!"

Figgins & Co. stared after Levison as he slipped into Mr. Ratcliff's study. There were few fellows who would have had the nerve to borrow Mr. Ratcliff's telephone without asking his permission. But Levison was never at a loss for nerve.

He entered the study coolly, closed the door, and rang up the exchange. As he sat at the telephone he kept an eye on the study window, to spot Mr. Ratcliff if he came back from the Head's house.

With perfect coolness, he asked for a number. The number he gave was that of the telephone in the prefects' room in the School House.

Burr-burr! Burr-burr! Burr-burr! The telephone-bell rang in the prefects' room in the School House.

Langton of the Sixth was in the room, talking football to Kildare, who had just come in.

"Hallo! There's the phone!" said Langton.

Kildare nodded, and crossed to the telephone and took up the receiver.

"Hallo!"

"Is that School House, St. Jim's?" came an inquiry over the wire.

"Yes."

"Can I speak to Grundy of the Shell?"

"Well, yes, I suppose so. Hold the wire."

"Thanks!"

"Somebody wants to speak to Grundy," said Kildare, looking round. "Blessed cheek of these fags, but it may be important. I suppose he can speak."

On important occasions the juniors were allowed to use that telephone. But it was very unusual for a junior to be rung up.

Kildare, however, was good-natured. He put down the receiver and looked out of the prefects' room. A fag was passing, and Kildare called to him to fetch Grundy.

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George Alfred Grundy came very quickly. He was very curious to know who wanted him on the telephone.

"Somebody wants to speak to you," said Kildare. "You can go to the telephone."

Kildare and Darrell strolled out of the room as Grundy picked up the receiver. Greatly elated, Grundy started his conversation over the wires.

"Hallo!"

"Hallo! Is that Grundy?"

"Yes."

"G. A. Grundy, who had an advertisement in the 'Rylcombe Times'?"

"That's it," said Grundy, his elation increasing. "You've seen the advertisement—what?"

"Yes. I'm Clincher—Charley Clincher. I dare say you've heard my name?"

"Oh, yes! Rather! Skipper of the Oakshott Ramblers?"

"That's it. If your offer's still open, I'd like to bag you for my team."

"Right-ho!"

"Will you be in if I come over to see you? I can get to St. Jim's at six o'clock."

"Certainly!"

"Then I'll come. I want to have a talk with you, and ask your advice about a match that's coming off on Saturday."

"I'll be delighted to help you in any way," said Grundy. "I'm quite at your service. I'll play for you with pleasure."

"Done, then! As I don't know you by sight, you might wait at the school gates for me and meet me at six."

"I'll be there."

"Just one word more—you've got a chap at your school named Lowther, I think?"

"Yes," said Grundy, in astonishment.

"He's in my Form."

"Is he a practical joker sort of chap?"

"Yes. A regular silly ass!"

"That's the chap, then. Has he ever played such a trick as disguising himself as somebody and paying a call, and that kind of thing?"

"Yes; he played a fool trick like that on me last Saturday, making out that he was secretary of your club."

"Then there's no mistake about it. I got to hear of this, but I hardly believed it. After what you've said, however, I've no doubt about it. That chap Lowther, or a friend of his, I'm not sure which, will be playing just such another trick to-day. He's going to call at St. Jim's got up as me."

"My hat!"

"I thought I'd warn you so that you can spot him."

"I'll spot him right enough," said Grundy. "I'm glad you gave me the tip. I'll jolly well hammer him."

"He's going to come there calling himself Charley Clincher—got up to look like me, you know. If he thinks you've spotted him most likely he'll ask for somebody else instead of you—Kildare, perhaps. As you don't know me by sight I'll let you know who I am as soon as I see you, and then you'll know whether you're speaking to the right party. You wait at the gate, and as soon as you see me just say 'Good-afternoon, Charley! Will you lend me twopence?' You see, that's a password, and it will show you if it's the right party you're speaking to. If the chap doesn't know it it will show that he's the practical joker, and you can deal with him."

Grundy chuckled.

"What a jolly good idea!" he exclaimed. "Depend on me, Clincher. I dare say I should spot him, anyway. I'm pretty keen, but that will make it a cert. But how did you get on to it?"

"Oh, this chap Lowther has been around here, in—in Oakshott, getting to know what I look like. To make up like me, you know, and I found out—Hallo, I've got to go! Good-bye!"

The telephone rang off.

Grundy hung up the receiver and walked away, grinning. He was in high feather.

Not only had he received an offer from the skipper of the Oakshott Ramblers, but that skipper was taking the trouble to come over specially to see him, and had warned him of an intended jape by Monty Lowther. If he met that japer passing himself off as Charley Clincher, Grundy knew how to deal with him.

Grundy was smiling so widely as he left the prefects' room and strolled out into the quad that a good many fellows noticed it. The Terrible Three spotted him, and inquired:

"Had an offer from Tottenham Hotspur?" asked Monty Lowther.

Grundy glared at him. The warning he had received over the wire was fresh in his mind.

"So you're at it again!" he exclaimed.

"Eh?"

"Let me catch you at it, that's all!" said Grundy.

And he stalked away.

Monty Lowther rubbed his nose thoughtfully.

"He can't have got on to my advertisement—it's not out yet," he said. "What was he driving at, you chaps?"

"Give it up," said Tom Merry.

And Monty Lowther had to give it up, too. Evidently Grundy was suspicious; but Lowther, as it happened, was quite innocent this time.

Levison came out of the New House and passed Grundy in the quadrangle. He smiled as he passed him, and noted that Grundy was taking up a position at the school gateway.

But Grundy had no eyes for Levison.

He adorned the stone pillar of the gateway with his bulky person and waited for the Oakshott captain to arrive.

The password that had been arranged over the telephone made it all secure. If "Charley Clincher" did not recognise that password he would be an impostor—Monty Lowther, or some practical joker got up for the occasion. Then Grundy would know what to do. He clenched his big fists in anticipation.

Six o'clock rang out from the tower, and Grundy watched the road anxiously. A sturdy fellow came walking briskly up to the school gates.

Grundy watched him keenly. He guessed easily enough that this was Charley Clincher or the practical joker he had been warned about. The password would soon settle all that.

"Charley Clincher?" Grundy asked, as the stranger came in.

The visitor nodded.

"Good-afternoon, Charley!" said Grundy.

The visitor stared. He was a fellow of about eighteen, and his manner indicated that he had a good opinion of himself. For a junior to greet him as "Charley"—a junior he had never seen before—was surprising. He stared blankly at Grundy.

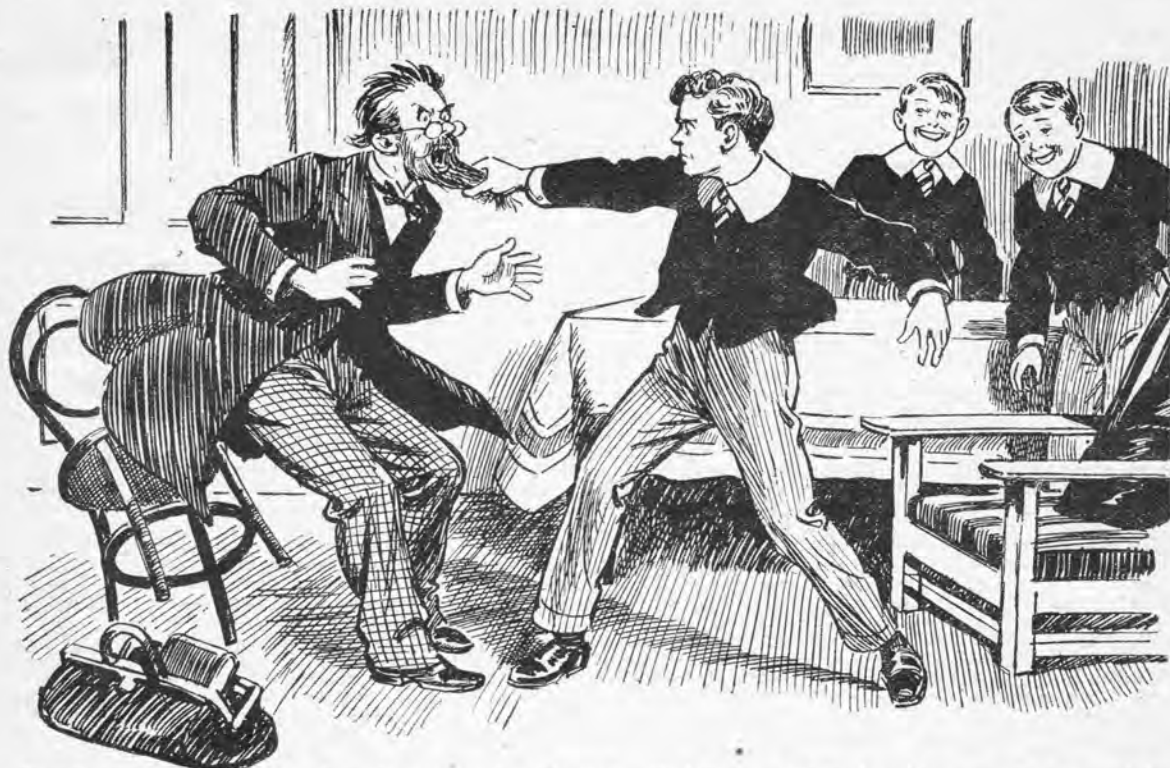
"What?" he ejaculated.

"Good-afternoon, Charley!" repeated Grundy. "Will you lend me twopence?"

"My only hat!"

"You heard me?" said Grundy.

"Yes, I heard you! Who are you? Are you dotty? Ow!" yelled Clincher suddenly, as Grundy hit out.



Grundy grabbed hold of the professor's grey beard and tugged. He fully expected the beard to come off and reveal the features of Monty Lowther. But it held fast, and Professor Pooter let out a fiendish yell. "Why, it—it's growing!" gasped Grundy. "It isn't false at all!"

He had not recognised the password, that was evident. Therefore he was the practical joker passing himself off as Charley Clincher—that was clear to Grundy's mind.

And Grundy dealt with him promptly and efficaciously. He let out his right, and it caught Charley Clincher on the point of the chin.

Bump!

"Yoop!"

The Oakshott skipper sat in the dusty road, and Grundy brandished his fists over him.

"Now get up and have some more!" roared Grundy. "I'll show you whether you can pull my leg! Gerrup, you rotter!"

CHAPTER 13.

Quite a Mistake!

"WHAT the thunder—"

Kildare of the Sixth came racing down to the gates.

He had caught sight of Charley Clincher from the House, and was starting to meet him when the dramatic scene occurred. Kildare could scarcely believe his eyes as he saw Grundy knock the Oakshott captain into a heap in the road.

He simply tore upon the scene and grasped the warlike Grundy by the shoulder and dragged him back.

"Grundy, are you mad? What—"

"Yow-ow-ow!" came from Charley Clincher, as he nursed his chin. "Yow-wow!"

"Lemme go, Kildare!" exclaimed Grundy, struggling. "I'm going to lick him!"

"It's Charley Clincher!" exclaimed Kildare, tightening his grip on Grundy. "You cheeky young fool!"

"It isn't Charley Clincher!" yelled Grundy. "It's Monty Lowther!"

"What?"

"He's got up like that to pull my leg."

"You silly ass!" roared Kildare, shaking Grundy till his teeth rattled. "I'll lick you black and blue for this! Clincher, old chap, I'm sorry! This silly young idiot is dotty, I do believe!"

The Oakshott captain staggered to his feet, still nursing his chin.

He was astounded and he was angry. Certainly he had not received a courteous greeting on his first visit to St. Jim's.

"What—what's the game?" he gasped. "What did that young lunatic land out at me for? Is he mad?"

"I think he must be," said Kildare. "He'll get the licking of his life for this!"

"I tell you he's an impostor!" roared Grundy. "Clincher rang me up on the telephone and gave me the tip. That isn't the real Clincher."

"You young fathead!" shouted Kildare. "I know Clincher well enough! Somebody has been japing you on the telephone!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"Oh, my hat!" said the Oakshott captain.

"Rot!" howled Grundy. "You know I was rung up, Kildare: you sent for me. It was Clincher speaking. He said he'd seen my advertisement, and wanted me to play for the Ramblers."

"You—you dummy!"

"And he warned me that a practical joker, most likely Lowther, was coming along, got up to look like him—same as he did last Saturday. Wow-ow-ow! Leave off shaking me, Kildare, you silly ass!"

"You see how it is, Clincher," said Kildare apologetically. "This fellow is half-daff—"

"What?" ejaculated Grundy.

"The kids pull his leg no end, because he's such a chump," said Kildare.

"Some joker has telephoned him to make him play the fool like this! I'm awfully sorry you've been the victim. I'll teach him to be more careful next time. Come on, old fellow! I hope you're not hurt much!"

The Oakshott skipper grunted, dusted his clothes, and came in. Grundy was marched off to the School House with Kildare's finger and thumb firmly fixed upon his ear.

A grinning crowd watched him go. It was a humiliating position for the great Grundy, but there was no help for it.

It had dawned upon Grundy's powerful brain at last that he had been japed, and that the practical joker was not the fellow who had come to the school calling himself Charley Clincher, but the fellow who had spoken on the telephone and arranged that precious password.

But that knowledge came too late.

Kildare marched him into his study and selected a cane.

"Sit down, Clincher! I shan't be long with this young idiot!" remarked the captain of St. Jim's.

Clincher burst into a laugh.

"Let him off," he said. "He seems to be a born idiot. I don't mind. Kick him out and let him go."

Kildare paused.

"But he hit you," he said.

"Well, it was a mistake."

"Of—of course it was!" stammered Grundy. "I—I've been taken in! Some awful beast was telling me whoppers on the telephone!"

Clincher grinned.

"If you hadn't been a born idiot you wouldn't have been taken in like that," he said. "Let him off, Kildare; it was a mistake."

"Well, as you ask it," said Kildare, putting down the cane. And he added briefly to Grundy: "Cut!"

But Grundy was not in a hurry to cut.

"I say, Clincher, I'm awfully sorry!" he exclaimed. "I had no idea, you know."

"That's all right!"

"And—and it wasn't you who spoke to me at all on the phone?"

"You young ass—no!"

"And—and you haven't seen my advertisement in the 'Rylcombe Times'?"

"Ha, ha, ha! So you're that chap!" roared Clincher. "Yes, I've seen that. Why doesn't your headmaster send you to a home for idiots?"

"Why, I—I— Look here, Clincher, I'm willing to play for your team."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"There's nothing to laugh at!" said Grundy. "I tell you— Keep off, Kildare! Let my ear alone, will you? My hat! Why—yaroooh!"

Kildare led Grundy to the door by the ear, twirled him into the passage, and planted a heavy boot behind him.

George Alfred Grundy departed in a great hurry, and in a state of great wrath, and the door slammed after him.

"Well, my hat!" ejaculated Grundy, picking himself up and rubbing his ear. "The fellow must be a silly ass, after all. If he'd seen my advertisement, why didn't he ask me to play in his team? Blessed if I see anything to cackle at myself!"

And Grundy went to his study to pour the story into the sympathetic ears of Wilkins and Gunn.

Wilkins and Gunn tried hard to be sympathetic, but they had to yell.

"Oh, you frabjous ass!" gasped Wilkins. "You ought to have guessed."

"How was I to guess?" hooted Grundy. "How could I tell that some silly idiot at Oakshott would ring me up for a rotten joke?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gunn. "Oh, you duffer, you weren't rung up from Oakshott! It was some japer here, using one of the school telephones."

Grundy jumped. That thought had not yet occurred to his mighty intellect. "Lowther!" he yelled.

"Very likely. Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy whipped out of the room and rushed along to Tom Merry's study. The Terrible Three were sitting down to tea when Grundy came in like a whirlwind.

"Lowther, you rotter!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Lowther.

"I'll teach you to play tricks on me on the telephone!"

"Here, keep off! Oh crumbs!"

Lowther went down in a heap under Grundy's heavy weight.

Tom Merry and Manners seized the burly Shell fellow and dragged him off.

"Lemme get at him!" yelled Grundy. "He's been telephoning me!"

"You frabjous ass!" shrieked Lowther. "I haven't!"

"Eh? You haven't? Who did, then?"

"How should I know, you shrieking ass? Nobody who knows what a blithering idiot you are! Jump on him!"

"I—I say, if I've made a mistake, I'm sorry."

"We'll make you sorrier, you dangerous lunatic!"

Bump, bump! Splash, splash!

Grundy struggled for the door. But before he escaped from Tom Merry's study he had the tea down his neck, the butter in his hair, and the jam on his face. He staggered back into his own study and sank down into a chair, gasping.

"It—it wasn't Lowther!" he gasped. "Who do you think it was, you chaps? What are you cackling at?"

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But Gunn and Wilkins could not reply; they were in hysterics.

CHAPTER 14.

Callers at Last!

"THERE'S bound to be somebody this afternoon," said Grundy.

Morning lessons were over on Saturday, the day following the publication of the "Weekly Rylcombe Times."

Grundy spoke confidently to his chums; he was fully expecting "somebody" that afternoon.

The previous week's advertisement had brought no answers. But Grundy had paid for two weeks' insertions, and he had no doubt that the second time the advertisement would "do the trick."

That rush of football captains and secretaries might yet come off, and overwhelm with confusion the grinning duffers who maintained that any footer captain who knew his business wouldn't come within ten miles of Grundy.

Gunn and Wilkins smiled assent to Grundy's remark. It was quite useless to disagree with Grundy.

"And I'll tell you what," added Grundy. "You fellows can wait in the visitors' room with me, and we'll play dominoes while we're waiting."

Had G. A. Grundy a secret foreboding that his afternoon would be spent in vain waiting, as on the previous occasion? It really looked like it.

Gunn closed one eye to Wilkins, and Wilkins winked at the elus in the quad.

"Oh, we'll stay with you!" said Gunn.

"Till tea-time," said Wilkins generously.

And after dinner the chums of Study No. 5 were installed in the visitors' room, which Grundy had permission to use once more for his many callers.

They played dominoes while they waited, and Wilkins and Gunn anticipated playing dominoes the whole of the afternoon, unless they were interrupted by some japer like Monty Lowther, or Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

But, as it happened, Wilkins and Gunn were wrong, and Grundy was right; there were callers.

About three o'clock Toby opened the door and showed in a gentleman in a black frock-coat, who carried a little black bag in one hand and a rusty silk hat in the other and an umbrella under his arm.

"Gentleman to see Master Grundy," said Toby.

Grundy looked in surprise at his visitor. It was not the kind of visitor he had expected. This gentleman of at least sixty, with a grey beard and gold-rimmed glasses, could hardly belong to a youthful football club.

"Hem!" coughed the visitor. "Master Grundy?"

"That's me!" said Grundy promptly and ungrammatically.

"You are the young gentleman who advertised in the 'Rylcombe Times'?"

"Yes," said Grundy.

"Very good! I have called in answer to your advertisement."

"The dooce you have!" murmured Grundy, while Wilkins and Gunn stared.

"I am Professor Pooter," explained the visitor. "I shall be very pleased to undertake your instruction."

"M-m-my instruction!" ejaculated Grundy.

"Certainly. I understand that you are backward in spelling."

"Eh?"

"I have brought my books with me,"

said the professor, opening his black bag. "I shall be pleased to give you some instruction at once, and if you are satisfied I will discuss terms. What Form are you in here, Master Grundy?"

"The Shell. But—"

"Ah, I suppose you have been placed in the Shell because you are too old for a Lower Form, although your attainments would not justify it," said the professor. "But that is easily remedied. Place yourself in my hands, and I will undertake to make you spell with exactitude and without fail. First of all, let us see how far you are advanced."

"But—but—"

"You can spell, of course, such easy words as cat, dog, horse—"

Wilkins and Gunn chuckled.

Grundy began to glare.

"Look here, what are you getting at?" he demanded.

"Let us take horse," said Mr. Pooter, looking slightly surprised at Grundy's excited manner. "How do you spell horse?"

"Do you think I can't spell horse?" demanded the amazed Grundy.

"H-a-u-s-e, of course!"

Another chuckle from Wilkins and Gunn. They found this more entertaining than dominoes. The professor coughed.

"Ahem! That is not quite right," he said. "I can see that we shall have to begin at the beginning. Now, cat."

"What?"

"Cat!"

"What on earth do you mean—cat?" roared Grundy.

"Spell cat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Wilkins and Gunn.

There was a chuckle from the passage. Grundy glared towards the door. He could guess that there were juniors outside enjoying the scene.

"So this is another jape, is it?" he roared. "I suppose you're Monty Lowther in a new rig. I'll jolly soon have that beard off!"

"What?"

Grundy rushed at the professor, grabbed hold of the grey beard, and tugged.

He fully expected the beard to come off and reveal the features of Monty Lowther. But the beard held fast, and there was a fiendish yell from Professor Pooter.

"Yowwwwwwwww! Let go! Oh! Help! Oh!"

"Why, it—it's growing!" gasped Grundy. "It isn't a false beard at all!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ow! The boy is mad!" shrieked the professor.

"Great Scott!"

Grundy, in his amazement, let go the beard.

Professor Pooter, crimson with pain and wrath, whirled his umbrella in the air, and smote the Shell fellow across the head with a smite that nearly broke the umbrella.

Grundy staggered back, with a roar.

Professor Pooter streaked for the door. He had had enough of Grundy. Fully convinced that he had to do with an insane person, the alarmed professor rushed out of the visitors' room into a crowd of juniors in the passage.

"Hallo! What's wrong?" exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Let me pass! The boy is mad—mad—dangerous—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Wun like anythin', old fellow!" shrieked D'Arcy.

The professor ran. He disappeared out of the School House in record time. Grundy, rubbing his head, glared at the hilarious crowd in the passage and slammed the door.

"Now, what does that mean?" demanded Grundy of his chums. "That old villain has nearly busted my napper with his broil. What did he come here for?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Blessed if I know!" gasped Gunn. "Perhaps he thought from your advertisement that you needed lessons in spelling. Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why should he think so, you ass? Calling himself a professor, and he can't even spell horse!" hooted Grundy.

Wilkins and Gunn suppressed their chuckles under Grundy's glaring eye, and they sat down to their dominoes again, Grundy still rubbing his head occasionally.

In the passage outside there was quite a gathering, and the gathering seemed to be a merry one.

Monty Lowther's improvement in Grundy's advertisement was known to all the fellows by this time, with the exception of Grundy & Co.

They wondered if there would be any more visitors, and what George Alfred would do with them.

There were more. The dominoes were interrupted again as the door was opened by Toby, who showed in a young man this time.

The young man was of powerful build, and he wore a cap, which he did not remove. He certainly looked as if he might be a footballer, and Grundy greeted him quite cheerfully.

"Good-afternoon!" he said. "You've called to see me?"

"If you're the advertiser in the 'Rylcombe Times,' I 'ave," said the young man. "You're G. A. Grundy?"

"That's right."

"Schoolboy—wot?"

"I'm in the Shell here," said Grundy.

"And you want to take up football?"

"Exactly," said Grundy, feeling that the right man had come at last.

"You've read the advertisement?"

"I 'ave," said the young man, "all of it. I've come about the football. You look as if you could play, if taught. My name is Pottle. Professional last winter, but I haven't fixed up with a club so far this season. I've got plenty of time on my 'ands, and I shall be glad to give you lessons. What are you paying?"

"Paying?" repeated Grundy.

"Yes. You don't expect to be taught for nothing, I suppose?" said Mr. Pottle, with a stare.

"Taught?" said Grundy.

"Yes; that's wot you want, ain't it?"

"Certainly not!" said Grundy. "I'm looking for a football club to join. I know the game from beginning to end. I'm the best junior footballer in this school; in fact, I think I may say the best, seniors included."

"Strike me pink!" ejaculated Mr. Pottle. "Ain't I come 'ere in answer to your blooming advertisement? Now you don't want no lessons! You'll 'and me 'arf-a-crown for the time I've wasted!"

"Rats!"

"A 'arf-crown!" shouted Mr. Pottle.

"Bosh!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Wilkins.

"There's going to be a circus. Grundy, old man, give him half-a-crown."

"I'm jolly well not going to do anything of the sort!" said Grundy. "Like his cheek to come here to give me lessons! As if I want lessons in footer—



me, you know! You clear off, Pottle!" Instead of clearing off, Mr. Pottle pushed back a pair of somewhat dirty cuffs.

"Will you 'and me that 'arf-crown?" he inquired.

"I'll hand you a thick ear, if you bother me!" said Grundy.

"Then 'ere goes!"

Mr. Pottle was justly exasperated. He did not mean to have that long walk for nothing. He went for Grundy.

Grundy put up his hands at once.

There was a wild and whirling hammering and punching and trampling for a couple of minutes. The young man from Wayland was too much for G. A. Grundy, however, big as George Alfred was. Grundy was knocked right and left, and he wound up under the table.

Mr. Pottle turned a ferocious glare upon Wilkins and Gunn, who backed away in alarm. Then he pulled his cuffs down and strode out.

He bestowed another glare upon the swarm of yelling juniors in the passage. He seemed inclined to give them some of what he had given Grundy. But his face relaxed as Monty Lowther pressed a half-crown into his hand.

"Thank you kindly, sir," he said, and he walked away quite satisfied.

"I think he earned that," Monty Lowther remarked. "He's given Grundy a lesson; not the kind that was advertised for, but a pretty good one, all the same."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy had crawled out from under the table. He was feeling far from happy. He sank down in a chair and gasped.

"Must be a lot of lunatics about this neighbourhood," he mumbled. "Fancy two lunatics coming here like that! Oh, my nose!"

"Let's cut, and not see any more of them, if they come," suggested Wilkins.

"Oh, rot!"

And they waited for the next.

CHAPTER 15.

Enough for Grundy!

LADY to see Master Grundy!" Grundy simply jumped as Toby opened the door with that announcement.

"A—a—a lady!" gasped Grundy.

Grundy had heard of female footballers, but he had never expected one to answer his advertisement.

A young lady came into the visitors' room—a young lady of somewhat

powerful build, with a determined jaw.

"Master Grundy?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am," said Grundy.

"I have called in answer to your advertisement."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Wilkins.

"My advertisement?" said Grundy.

"Yes. I am Miss Hooper."

"M-Miss Hooper!"

"I hope you will find me suitable," said Miss Hooper, with a smile. "I shall be very pleased to do my very best with you."

"But—but you aren't a footballer, are you?" gasped Grundy.

Miss Hooper stared.

"Are you joking?" she asked. "Of course I am not a footballer. I play croquet."

"Crook-crook-croquet?" ejaculated Grundy.

"Yes. Croquet is a very useful and graceful exercise. Do you play croquet?"

"Eh? I wouldn't be found dead playing croquet!" said the amazed Grundy.

"That is a somewhat strong expression. I understand that your training has been neglected, Master Grundy."

"What!"

"I shall be very pleased to give you instruction in manners and deportment."

"Will you, by gosh!"

"In the first place, you must not use such expressions," said Miss Hooper.

"The statement in the advertisement was evidently quite correct. I shall teach you some graceful exercises in the first place, which will, I hope, remove the—shall I say gaucherie? of your manner."

"Look here!" roared Grundy. "If you think there's anything wrong with my manners, it's jolly bad-mannered to tell me so!"

"Goodness gracious!"

"When I want to be taught manners, I'll ask. Until then, I wish you a good-afternoon, ma'am! If you were a man, I should say something else, I can tell you!"

"You do not want lessons in deportment?" exclaimed Miss Hooper.

"No, I don't!"

"Or in manners?"

"No!" roared Grundy.

"You certainly need them," said Miss Hooper. "I have never seen anybody who needs them more than you do."

"Why, I—I—"

"If you do not require my services, why did you bring me here?" asked Miss Hooper, her jaw growing squarer. "Do you think I have whole afternoons to waste, applying personally for nothing?"

"I didn't bring you here," howled Grundy. "and I didn't want to see you! I suppose you've been put up to this?"

"What!"

"I've spotted you!" howled Grundy wrathfully. "It is Monty Lowther this time—got up as a girl, by gad! No girl could have feet that size."

"What!" shrieked Miss Hooper.

"I jolly well know you!" shouted Grundy. "And I'll have that wig off—"

The young lady's feet certainly were large, and perhaps justified Grundy's suspicion. But if he had been a little less excited, perhaps he would have thought twice before catching at Miss Hooper's hair. However, he did catch

(Continued on page 28.)

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FROM LANCASHIRE COTTON-MILL TO PUBLIC SCHOOL! IT'S MARK LINLEY'S BIG CHANCE—IF HE CAN OVERCOME HIS NEW FORM-FELLOWS' OPPOSITION!

NOT WANTED AT GREYFRIARS!

Snubbing the Snobs!

HARRY WHARTON, the captain of the Remove at Greyfriars, looked astonished. He was alone in Study No. 1, sitting under the window, engaged in lacing up a football, when the door opened and Bulstrode came in. There were no two fellows in the Remove on worse terms than Wharton and Bulstrode, so the visit was surprising in itself, but there was more to follow.

Bulstrode was looking serious and important, and there was nothing hostile in his manner this time. After him, four or five fellows came into the study, all of them looking just as serious and important as Bulstrode. They all belonged to the Remove—the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars.

Harry Wharton laid down the football and looked at the visitors. They did not look as if they had come for a "rag," but he could not imagine any other purpose for their visit.

"It's all right," said Bulstrode hastily, reading Harry's thought in his face. "We haven't come for a row."

"Not a bit of it," said Snoop. "Quite the reverse!"

"Exactly the reverse," said Trevor. "We want your help, Wharton."

"Don't jaw, you chaps," said Bulstrode. "I can do the talking. The fact is, Wharton, you and I haven't been on good terms lately—"

"Never, I think," said Harry.

"Quite so," assented Bulstrode. "But there are times when fellows who are not on good terms can forget their little differences and stand by one another for the good of the Form they belong to."

Harry Wharton could not help looking amazed.

"That's quite true," he said. "But, excuse me, Bulstrode, you're not exactly the kind of fellow I expected to hear that from."

"I don't expect you to do me justice," said Bulstrode. "But never mind that. The fellows chose you for captain of the Remove, and you ought to be in this—ought to take the lead, in fact, and that's why we're here."

"Take the lead in what?"

"In the matter we've got on hand. It concerns the honour of the Remove," said Bulstrode, rather grandly. "If you don't take it up we shall act without you."

"Here, draw it mild, Bulstrode!" said Hazeldene. "You haven't given him a chance yet."

"Don't you interrupt, Vaseline. This is how the case stands, Wharton. There's a new kid coming into the Remove."

Harry Wharton laughed.

"Nothing amazing in that," he remarked. "We were all new kids once. Are you thinking of getting up a reception for the new kid?"

Some of the Removites grinned, and Bulstrode frowned.

"Well, as a matter of fact, we are," he said. "A warm reception, you understand?"

"No, I don't think I do, quite. I don't see how you can have anything up against the new fellow till you see him, anyhow."

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By Frank Richards.

(Author of the grand long yarns of Greyfriars appearing every Saturday in our companion paper, the "Magnet.")

"That's because you don't know anything about the matter."

"Well, I'm willing to learn," said Harry Wharton patiently. "Suppose you explain?"

"It's one of those rotten Mowbray scholarships," explained Bulstrode. "I dare say you know that Bishop Mowbray was a governor of Greyfriars once—blessed if I know when—but it doesn't matter."

"Reign of Edward VI," said Barr.

"Yes, that's right. But, as I said, it doesn't matter. You know the old boulder founded some rotten scholarships to help poor boys to the benefits of a college education and the rest of it—"

"I don't see that they're rotten scholarships. It was jolly decent of the bishop!"

"Oh, I might have expected you would say that, Wharton!" sneered Bulstrode. "I never knew a more contrary chap than you are. I shouldn't wonder if you set yourself up against us in this, out of sheer obstinacy."

"Oh, give him a chance!" said Hazeldene.

"Shut up, Vaseline! Well, we've had all sorts of fellows here on the scholarships, but they've passed the limit this time. Who do you think is coming to

**"Go back to Lancashire! We bar mill-hands in the Remove!"
That's the snobs' welcome for Mark Linley, the new scholarship boy!**

Greyfriars on the Mowbray Scholarship now?"

"Blessed if I know—or care!"

"A mill-boy!" said Bulstrode impressively. "A chap who has worked for his living."

"Horrid!" said Harry gravely. "I suppose it's a fearful disgrace to work for one's living. Though I don't know how the world would get along if everybody chucked work."

"Oh, don't be funny! I've heard all about this chap from Carberry, the prefect—he was there when Dr. Locke was explaining to Wingate. Carberry is just as much down on it as we are."

"Yes, he would be," said Harry Wharton scornfully. "Carberry is a cad and a pub-haunter, and he has a lot of right to look down on anybody! Rats!"

"I told you he would be against us from the start," said Bulstrode, looking at his followers.

"Don't be in a hurry," said Hazeldene. "You haven't explained yet."

"Oh, shut up, Vaseline! I've heard it all from Carberry. He says the

Head doesn't see anything wrong in it."

"He wants you chaps to open his eyes, I expect."

"Well, we all know the Head is a bit of a fossil," said Bulstrode. "I hear that this kid who is coming into the Remove—Linley is his name—has worked in a mill since he was a nipper. He used to buy books with his odd tanners, and study of an evening, and some local curate up there helped him on to get this scholarship—like his cheek! And the long and short of it is that he's coming to Greyfriars—and coming into the Remove."

"Well, what about it?" demanded Harry Wharton. "Suppose he is? If a chap did what you say this chap has done, I suppose that isn't anything against him? A fellow who has as much grit as that ought to be encouraged."

"I knew he would take that line," said Bulstrode. "There's one thing you can always depend on with Wharton—he won't agree with anyone else."

Harry Wharton turned red. His temper was perhaps a little uncertain sometimes, but it was his generous heart that prompted him to speak now as he did.

"I don't want to be contrary," he said, "but I don't think you ought to be down on the chap until he's done something to deserve it. Nobody but a fool would say it's a disgrace to work for a living."

"Thank you!" said Bulstrode, with a sneer. "I suppose I'm a fool, then, as I certainly don't intend to associate with a mill-hand."

"You mayn't be asked to. He may be a little particular himself."

Some of the Removites chuckled, and Bulstrode's brow grew darker.

"I suppose, then, that you're going to back up this outsider against the Form, Wharton?" he said savagely.

"Nothing of the sort. I don't even know him. But I do say that you won't get me to be down on a fellow who has done what anybody else might be proud of doing."

"Oh, rats! Of course, he's a rough rotter—nothing like us."

"Well, you are rather a cad yourself, you know, Bulstrode."

And the Removites giggled again. They rather liked Wharton's plain speaking.

"Well," said Bulstrode, bringing his fist down on the table with a thump that made the ink spurt out of the inkpot, "what I say is, we're not going to have this cad thrust upon us like this, and I'm standing up for the honour of the Form. Most of the fellows are with me, I warn you. If you don't like to join us, you can stand aside; but it won't make any difference to what we're going to do."

Harry Wharton shrugged his shoulders.

"And what are you going to do?"

"We're going to show this mill-kid that he's come to the wrong place. We'll explain to him first that he's out of his class at Greyfriars. If he likes to go, that will settle it. If he sticks to it, out—"

"He will, if he's got any pluck."

"Very well, if he sticks it out, we'll

YOU'LL BE ENTHRALLED THROUGHOUT THIS POWERFUL STORY OF A MILL-BOY'S STRUGGLE TO HOLD HIS OWN AGAINST THE GREYFRIARS SNOBS!



As Snoop went to lay his hands on Linley's trunk, Mark's eyes glinted. "Let that skip alone!" said the lad from Lancashire, and he gave Snoop a push. Snoop staggered back and trod on Hazeldene's foot, and there was a yelp from the latter.

make his life jolly uncomfortable for him till he decides to go."

Harry Wharton rose to his feet.

"And you've made up your minds about this," he said, "without even having seen the chap—or without even a chance to know whether he's a cad or not?"

"Well, he's a rotten outsider, anyway."

Harry Wharton laughed scornfully.

"As a matter of fact, Bulstrode, whatever this mill-fellow is like, he can hardly be such a hooligan as you are proving yourself to be at the present moment."

"Oh, you needn't preach to me! I told the fellows you would be up against us."

"If the new chap is a rotter I shan't back him up in any way. If he's a cad I shall be as much down on him as anybody. But if he's a decent fellow I won't have a hand in ragging him because he started life worse off than we did. To be plain, Bulstrode, what you are playing now is a cad's game! That's plain English!"

"By Jove, it is!" said Barr. "You needn't amplify it, Wharton. So you're up against us?"

"I don't say so. I don't know anything about the new chap. But I should say he's pretty decent to work for a scholarship and win it, and get a clergyman to help him. And if he's decent he won't have me against him. That's all. And now you can get out! I'm not particular, but I don't like rank snobs in my study!"

And Wharton turned his back on Bulstrode and his party, and walked out.

The Lancashire Lad Arrives!

THERE he is!"

It was Bulstrode who uttered the exclamation. A little crowd of Greyfriars juniors stood at the entrance to the platform

of Friardale Station. A train had just clattered to a standstill, and Bulstrode and his friends looked eagerly among the alighting passengers for the new boy.

"There he is!"

Bulstrode pointed at a lad of about fifteen who had alighted from a third-class compartment. The stranger did not look much like a Greyfriars junior, but Bulstrode was certain enough of his identity. All the other passengers were grown-up people, but this was the only individual who could possibly be coming to Greyfriars. But at his appearance the juniors sniffed expressively.

He was not dressed in Etons, nor did he wear a topper. He wore a cloth cap and a tweed suit of a pattern that was not of the quietest. His shoes had evidently been designed rather for use than ornament, and they showed traces of long wear.

But the boy, whatever shortcomings he might have in personal attire, had a sturdy, well-set form and a pleasant face. His eyes were dark and very keen and earnest in their glance.

He did not look towards the crowd of juniors at the gate. The moment he stepped from the train he strode along quickly towards the guard's van.

"Be careful with that skip, please!" he said.

The guard was bundling out a large cane basket. The boy looked anxious as it bumped on the platform, as if he feared that it would be damaged. It looked, however, as if it would stand a great deal of knocking about, and as if it had stood some already. The Friardale porter came along with a trolley, and yanked the cane trunk upon it.

The trolley trundled along the platform to the barrier, and the lad took out his ticket. He gave it up at the gate, and followed the trolley, and then for the first time noticed the Greyfriars group.

Bulstrode winked at his friends, and

the half-dozen juniors took off their caps, with solemn faces.

"Master Linley, I believe?" said Bulstrode.

The newcomer nodded.

"That's my name," he said in a pleasant voice, which had a musical trace of the Lancashire accent in it. "Do you belong to Greyfriars?"

"Yes; we have that honour," said Bulstrode. "You are the new kid—the young gentleman from Northumberland, I believe?"

And Skinner, Snoop, and Barr cackled.

"I'm from Lancashire," said Linley simply.

"Ah, yes! I knew it was somewhere in the Arctic regions," said Bulstrode, with a nod.

Linley stared at him.

"Are you trying to be funny?" he asked.

"Not at all. We've come down to meet you. We thought you'd like to see some of us before you got to Greyfriars."

"Shall I put this in the cab, sir?" asked the porter.

"Yes, please."

"You can't lift that, old man," said Bulstrode. "We'd better come and lend you a hand."

"Thank you kindly, sir; but—"

"Not a word. We're going to help!"

And Bulstrode & Co. laid hold of the cane trunk and helped. Of course, it came to the ground with a crash, and if it had not been strongly made it would have burst open the lock.

Mark Linley ran forward, with an anxious face.

"Here, be careful with that trunk!" he exclaimed. "I don't mind a joke, but I can't afford to have my things smashed up. I'll help the porter."

"Rats!" said Snoop. "We'll help the porter! Get back!"

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And Snoop went to get hold of the cane trunk again. A glint came into Mark Linley's eyes, and he pushed Snoop back. It was only a push, but there was force in it, and Snoop staggered back and trod on Hazeldene's foot. Hazeldene gave a yelp, and shoved him off violently, and Snoop sat down.

"Let that skip alone!" said the lad from Lancashire.

"That which?" demanded Bulstrode.

"That skip."

"What on earth's a skip?"

"That!" said Linley, pointing to the huge cane trunk. "Have you never heard of a skip before?"

"Ha, ha, ha! Then I suppose you're a skipper?" asked Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Linley smiled at the feeble joke, and helped the porter place the skip on the cab.

"Don't be in a hurry to get off, Linley," said Bulstrode. "We haven't finished talking to you yet."

Mary Linley hesitated.

"I've had a long journey," he said. "I've travelled all the way down from Lancashire since this morning. I think I shall go in the cab."

"But we came down specially to meet you."

"That was very kind of you!" said Linley, in a frank way. "I suppose you know about me—that I'm coming to Greyfriars with a scholarship?"

"Yes, rather!" said Bulstrode.

"I know there can't be many fellows at Greyfriars who began life as I did," said Linley, the colour coming into his cheeks a little. "I hope it won't make any difference."

"There's none at Greyfriars; you're the first."

"Then it's very kind of you chaps to treat me like this. A good many folks at home thought that a fellow who worked in a mill would have a rough time at Greyfriars."

Bulstrode chuckled.

"They were right," he remarked. "As a matter of fact, young shuttler—Were you a shuttler when you worked in a mill?"

Mark Linley laughed.

"I was a minder," he said.

"Well, it's all the same," said Bulstrode. "You are right in thinking that a minder would be out of place at Greyfriars."

"I—I suppose so," said Linley quietly.

"Oh, shut up, Bulstrode!" muttered Hazeldene. "Don't be a cad, you know!"

"Hold your tongue, Vaseline, or I'll jolly soon make you! Look here, young shuttler, or whatever you are, we came down to meet you to have a little talk with you before you get to Greyfriars."

"Yes," said Linley quietly.

He was beginning to understand now that the meeting was not intended to be a friendly one.

"It's very clever of you," said Bulstrode, in an airy way, "to win a scholarship, and to get to this college by your own efforts—"

"You couldn't have done it!" remarked Skinner.

"Oh, shut up, Skinner! It's very clever of this young shaver to educate himself in the intervals of shuttling a loom, or looming a shuttle, or whatever he did for a living! But Greyfriars wasn't founded as a home for the meritorious poor! We don't want mill-hands there!"

Mark Linley's eyes glinted, but he did not speak.

"We don't want to be hard on you,"

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said the bully of the Remove, quite magnanimously, "but we bar mill-hands in the Remove at Greyfriars! You might find a fellow or two to back you up, but the rest of the Form would be down on you. All the other Forms would be down on you. It would be very rough. Now, we want to do the fair thing. If you like to go back to Yorkshire at once—"

"Lancashire," said Mark quietly.

"Ah, yes, Lancashire! If you like to go back at once, we'll raise a subscription to pay your return fare, and leave you something over for yourself. What do you think of that?"

"Do you want me to tell you what I think?"

"Yes, of course!"

"Very well, then. I think you're a snob and a cad!"

And Mark Linley stepped into the cab. The vehicle was driving away on the road to Greyfriars before Bulstrode could find his tongue.

His companions were grinning. Ready as they were to back him up in ragging the Lancashire lad, there was little sympathy between them, and they enjoyed the discomfiture of the Remove bully.

Bulstrode gritted his teeth as he gazed after the station cab.

"So that's how he takes it!" he exclaimed. "We'll try what more forceful methods will do next! He's had his chance and thrown it away! I'll make him sorry he ever came to Greyfriars!"

Not a Warm Welcome!

MARK LINLEY stepped from the cab inside the gateway of Greyfriars, and watched with a careful eye while his skip was delivered over to the tender mercies of Gosling, the school porter. Then he asked the cab-driver his fare.

"I'll leave it to you, sir," said the driver.

The boy looked troubled. He could guess that the man was accustomed to liberal fares from the richer boys of Greyfriars. But Linley's means were too limited for him to pay any more than his due.

"Please tell me how much the fare is!" he said.

The driver snorted.

"Arf-a-crown!" he said.

Mark felt that he was being overcharged, and he glanced at Gosling. But the school porter's face was unsympathetic. What right had a poor person to come to Greyfriars? was the way Gosling looked at it.

There was no help for it. Mark handed the driver a half-crown, and had the comfort of learning later that the proper fare was eighteenpence, with twopence extra for the skip. Gosling looked at the skip, and grunted.

"Eavy weight, sir!" he said.

"I'll help you carry it, if you like," said Mark mildly.

"I can manage it," said Gosling sourly. "I don't mind carrying things for young gentlemen as is gentlemen, sir. Master Wharton always gives me a shilling when I carry up his box."

"Wharton probably has more money than I have," said Mark quietly.

And he turned and walked on, with a somewhat heavy heart. And Gosling snorted again.

"Tuppence, I'll bet!" he muttered. "Tuppence for carryin' up that thing! And what a trunk to bring to a college like this 'ere, too! Wot I says is this 'ere—let 'im stay where he belongs if he can't afford to act like a gentleman!"

A depressing feeling of loneliness settled upon the lad from Lancashire as

he crossed the great Close towards the school buildings. The grey old edifice, the facade of ancient windows, the ivied tower, the quiet, green Close had a curious effect on the boy.

How quiet and old world it seemed! How removed from the strife and bustle of a Lancashire town! The whirr of the looms was still in the ears of the mill-boy. Greyfriars struck him with a feeling he could hardly define—pleasant, and yet a little melancholy.

The fellows in the Close took little notice of him. Some glanced his way, and he saw one or two giggle. He coloured painfully. He had already observed that his clothes did not in the least resemble the Greyfriars cut.

Upon those same clothes his mother had expended many an anxious hour— anxious that her boy should cut as good a figure as possible at the great Public school. But poor Mrs. Linley could not impart the magic cut of the good tailor.

A group of fellows belonging to the Upper Fourth—the next Form above the Remove—were standing under the elms, and they looked at Mark with great interest.

Mark stopped to speak to them. He wanted information.

"Excuse me," he said. "Can you tell me where to find Mr. Quelch?"

Temple winked at his friends, and took upon himself the role of spokesman. "Mr. Quelch?" he said. "Who is he?"

"The master of the Remove."

"The Remove? What is that?"

"The Lower Fourth Form, I think," said Mark Linley, looking a little puzzled.

He did not know, of course, that the Upper and Lower Fourth at Greyfriars were on terms of rivalry, and the ignorance of these fellows on the subject of the Remove amazed him.

"Ah, yes, I think I've heard of them!" said Temple. "A set of inky little beasts who sneak about in corners and consume jam tarts!"

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"And what do you want with the master of the Remove, my son?" asked Temple in a honeyed tone.

"I'm going into his Form, and I have to report my arrival to him."

"Then you are a new Removite?"

"Yes, I suppose so."

"Another kid for us to lick into shape," said Temple. "Bump him!"

Mark Linley started back, but it was too late. Half a dozen hands seized him and he was promptly bumped. This ancient and time-honoured ceremony consisted, at Greyfriars, of squashing the victim to the earth, rolling him violently over, and leaving him wondering whether he was on his head or his heels. Mark made the bumping worse by struggling—a rash thing to do with three or four fellows grasping him.

He was suddenly released, and he sat up in bewilderment. His cap was gone and his hair was ruffled. His coat, over which Mrs. Linley had taken so much trouble, was muddy and dirty in a dozen places. His boots were muddy all over. It had been a wet morning, and the Close was very sloppy.

The Lancashire lad staggered to his feet. Temple, Dabney & Co. were walking away, laughing, and were already at a distance. Mark's eyes glinted. He was strongly inclined to dash after them and call them to account, although the odds were so heavily against him. But he restrained himself.

He guessed that it was only a piece of rough horse-play, and he must be prepared for that sort of thing. He

resolved to be a little more on his guard as he dusted down his clothes and removed as many of the mud-stains as he could with his handkerchief.

"My hat! Where did you spring from?"

Mark looked round. It was Levison of the Remove who addressed him. Levison was laughing.

"Been using yourself as a duster to wipe up the mud?" he asked. "You look like it."

"I've been rolled over by those fellows," replied Mark. "I suppose it was a joke."

"Ha, ha, ha! Are you the new chap who is coming into the Remove?"

"Yes. Can you tell me where to find Mr. Quelch?"

Levison pointed past the gymnasium—nearly opposite to the direction Mark should have taken.

"Go straight on, turn to the right, past the gym, and then to the left, and go through the garden," he said.

"Knock at the door."

"Thank you."

"Not at all," grinned Levison.

Mark went in the direction indicated. He turned to the right, past the gym, and then to the left, and came to a garden gate. A fat junior in spectacles was leaning on the gate, apparently wrapped in meditation. Mark Linley tapped him on the shoulder, and the fat junior looked round.

"I say, Cherry—"

"My name is not Cherry," said Mark, with a smile. "It is Linley."

"Oh!" said Billy Bunter, blinking at the new boy through his spectacles. "You are the new chap in the Remove."

"Yes. Will you let me pass. I have to go to see Mr. Quelch."

Billy Bunter stared. "Well, Mr. Quelch isn't in the Head's garden," he said. "You'll get into a row if you go to the other side of the gate."

"I was told—"

Mark paused. He remembered that Levison had worn a curious grin while giving him directions.

Bunter chuckled.

"Somebody was rotting you," he said. "You can't go into the Head's garden. I'll show you the way to Mr. Quelch's study, if you like."

"Thanks! I wish you would."

"Certainly," said Bunter, without making any movement from his comfortable position against the gate, however. "You're the chap who worked in a bike factory, aren't you—or a coal-mine, was it?"

"A cotton-mill," said Mark quietly.

"Oh, was it a cotton-mill? Most of the fellows have decided to cut you. They think you're not good enough to speak to. Of course, as a matter of fact, I suppose they're right. Still, I don't believe in being down on a fellow who can pay his footing. By the way, I'm expecting a postal order to-night, and I'd like you to lend me a couple of bob off it, if you could. Of course, you'll have the tin back this evening without fail, as my postal order is coming by the next post for certain."

Mark Linley hesitated. He had been taught to be careful with his money, and he had often had bitter enough need to be careful during his hard-working days as a factory hand.

But it seemed ungracious to refuse to lend, especially as the promise of repayment was so prompt, and as the fat junior had already offered to oblige him. He felt in his pocket and took out two shillings.

"There you are!" he said.

"Thanks!" said Bunter. "Come along!"

And he moved off quite briskly. Mark Linley imagined that they were going in the direction of Mr. Quelch's quarters, but that was far from Billy Bunter's intention. He was making a direct line for the school tuckshop. Near the door of the shop he stopped and pointed through the growing dimness of the Close towards the School House.

"There you are," he said. "Go over there and in at the big door and inquire again. I'd come with you, only I've got to go in here on important business."

And leaving the Lancashire lad standing uncertain, the fat junior disappeared into the tuckshop, and Mark Linley's two shillings were soon going at express speed in sausage-rolls, buns, tarts, and ginger-beer.

Mark walked slowly away towards the big doorway Billy Bunter had pointed out to him, and paused on the top step. He was beginning to feel discouraged. A fellow of about his own age came to the doorway and glanced at him.

"May I help you?" he asked.

His tone was very pleasant.

Mark glanced at his face, half-fearing another practical joke at his expense; but a single glance at the handsome face was enough.

"Yes," he said; "thank you. I'm looking for Mr. Quelch's room."

"Come in and I'll show you."

Mark joined the junior, who led him along the flagged passage, speaking cheerily as he went. Although a glance at him was sufficient to tell that he was at least as good as anybody at Greyfriars—socially speaking—there

was no hint in his manner that he felt he was talking to one of a lower station in life. Mark Linley felt his heart warming towards the fellow as he walked on.

"Are you the new chap in the Remove?" the junior asked.

"Yes," said Mark. "I'm coming here on a scholarship. I dare say you've heard about it—Bishop Mowbray's Scholarship—"

The other nodded.

"Yes. Your name is Linley?"

"That's right. I'm from Lancashire—I worked in a mill."

There was a hint of defiance in Mark's manner as he said it. But the other only nodded, as if factory hands were not at all uncommon at Greyfriars.

"Yes, I've heard about it. Awfully clever of you to go in for the scholarship and get it. I've heard that it's very hard."

"It was hard," said Mark. "I think I scraped through. I was determined to do it if I could, but I had never had much time for study."

"I suppose not. Here's Mr. Quelch's room. By the way, my name is Wharton. I'm captain of the Remove. Every Form has its captain here, as well as the school captain, old Wingate. If I can help you in any way, I shall be glad. I dig in Study No. 1 in the Remove passage."

"Thanks very much," said Mark.

"You are very kind."

"Oh, rot!" said Wharton. "Give us your fist!"

And he shook hands with the new boy and walked away, and Mark Linley tapped at Mr. Quelch's door and entered.



The door opened and Bulstrode looked in. "I hear you've got a factory hand here—Ow! Ooooch!" Bob Cherry hurled the pat of butter with deadly aim, and it caught Bulstrode fairly in the eye!

Wharton Decides.

"HALLO, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as Harry Wharton entered Study No. 1.

"You're late for tea!"

"Sorry!" said Harry Wharton, throwing his cap into a corner. "What have you got for tea? I'm hungry."

"Bread-and-butter," said Bob Cherry, with a grand wave of his hand over the study table. "For those who prefer it, there's butter and bread. You can, however, have the bread without the butter, or the butter without the bread, if you pine for variety."

Harry Wharton laughed.

The tea-table in Study No. 1 was indeed very bare that evening, although it was usually as well provided as any in the junior Forms.

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Hindu chum, who was popularly supposed in the Remove to live on air, was contentedly dissecting a banana, and consuming small helpings.

Bob Cherry and Frank Nugent had not yet commenced on the bread-and-butter. They were hungry, but they were thinking of bacon and chips, sausages and mashed, and other things more solid than bread-and-butter.

"We could have bread-and-scraps in Hall, without going to the expense of providing our own tommy," Bob Cherry remarked. "If we have a tea of bread-and-butter, the Head ought to make us an allowance in cash for it. We were waiting till you came in to see if there was any wind to be raised. Inky was too hungry to wait, so he has started on his large tea."

The Nabob of Bhanipur grinned.

"The hungerfulness was slight," he remarked, in his elegant English. "But

the honourable banana is sufficient foodfulness for the inward regions of my esteemed self."

"Well, it isn't sufficient for mine, if I can get anything more solid," said Bob Cherry. "Where have you been wasting your time, Harry, and leaving your chums to slow starvation?"

"I've just met the new chap—Linley, you know," said Harry Wharton. "I showed him to Quelch's study. I heard Levison telling Stott that he had sent him wrong, and I was going to look for him when I met him at the door."

"Good Samaritan!"

"Well, I can't see much of a joke in sending a stranger wandering about the place. The new chap seems a decent fellow. Not exactly like us—"

"Well, that couldn't be expected of a common mortal," said Bob Cherry gravely.

"Oh, don't rot! I mean, he's a bit strange to our manners and customs, but I can't see that he's any the worse for that. He struck me—"

"Where—on the nose?"

"Ass! He struck me as being a very decent and quiet chap, and very civilly spoken."

"I hear that Bulstrode & Co. are going for him baldheaded," said Nugent. "They're trying to get the whole Form to take it up."

"They came here to see me about it," said Harry Wharton, frowning. "I refused to have a hand in anything of the sort. I hope you fellows will do the same."

"When Wharton says turn, we all turn," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, don't be funny! It's a cad's game to rag a stranger, anyway, just

because he's had to work for what we got for nothing."

Bob Cherry chuckled.

"Keep your wool on, old son! I'm not going to rag anybody, even though you left me to starve while you were walking with this new chap about Greyfriars. If you like, I'll take the new chap on my knee, and kiss him on his baby brow, and talk to him about the sweet and happy days of childhood, when the honeysuckle and the rose entwined—"

"Oh, do shut up!" said Wharton, laughing. "Let's have tea now. Where's that fat villain Bunter?"

"I say, you fellows—"

"Here he is!" exclaimed Bob Cherry, as a fat face and a pair of big spectacles glimmered at the door. "Where have you been, porpoise? But I needn't ask. I can see a smear of jam on his chivvy."

"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Have you brought in anything for tea?"

"Certainly not. I'm surprised at the question. A chap lent me a couple of bob off my postal order this evening, and I've just had a snack at the tuckshop to keep up my strength. I'm willing to cook anything you like for tea, and I'll fetch it from Mrs. Mimbles."

Harry Wharton fished a postal order for five shillings from his pocket.

"Ask Mrs. Mimbles to cash this," he said. "I've just had it through the post. You can lay out half of it for tea, and bring me the change. If you don't bring me the change, I'll skin you!"

"I hope I can be trusted with a little cash, Wharton," said Billy Bunter, blinking at the captain of the Remove, with great dignity.

"Yes, I hope you can, this time, or I shall take it out of your hide," said Wharton. "I want the money. Cut off!"

"If you would like to lend me the odd half-crown off my postal order—"

"Oh, get off!"

"The post's in!" grinned Bob Cherry. "Your postal order must be in the rack downstairs, Bunter."

"I think there must have been some delay in the post—" began Bunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! The postal order will be here to-morrow morning all right. But, apart from that, I suppose you fellows know that 'Answers' football competition is up?"

"Yes; but we want our tea now!"

"Just a minute. As I'm getting the first prize in the competition, I shall shortly be having a pound a week for six months. When I get that, I intend to settle up several old accounts, and I can clear this off, too. I suppose I can have the half-crown, Wharton?"

"You can have a thick ear, if you don't buzz off!"

"I'm sorry that you can't trust an old acquaintance, Wharton. I've been trusted to-day by a perfect stranger—"

"That's the reason he trusted you," grinned Bob Cherry.

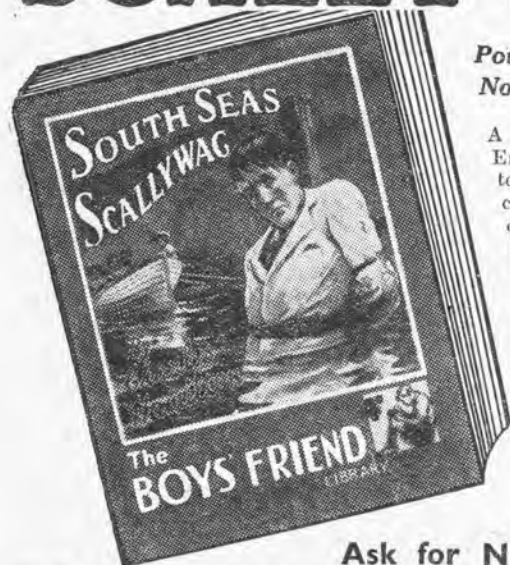
"Oh, really, Cherry—"

"Cut off! Buzz! Bunk! Get!" roared Wharton. And as he was reaching for a ruler, the fat junior thought it best to "buzz off."

"That young porpoise grows fatter and more fatuous every day!" Bob Cherry remarked. "I think I'll walk along and see that he doesn't scoff the provisions bringing them back. You chaps can get the kettle boiling."

Bob Cherry followed Bunter, and Nugent jammed the kettle on the fire and stirred the embers under it. The

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nabob contentedly munched his banana. Harry Wharton was standing with his hands thrust deep into his trousers pockets, a thoughtful frown on his face. "Penny for your thoughts, Harry," said Nugent, looking up from the fire. Wharton came out of his reverie with a slight start.

"I was thinking about that new chap," he said abruptly. "It's a rotten position, really. The fellows seem to think that I've refused to back them up against him out of sheer contrary temper."

"Well, your temper is a little uncertain at times, old chap," grinned Nugent. "You must excuse my saying so, but a chap sometimes doesn't really know how to take you."

Wharton coloured. "Oh, don't pile it on!" he exclaimed. "I suppose you agree with me that it would be caddish to jump on this new chap just because he's worked in a mill?"

"Oh, yes, rather!" "Well, I've been thinking. He's strange here, and precious few of the fellows will help him out in anything. I'm captain of the Form, and I think I ought to look after him a bit. What do you think?"

"I think that, if you do, the fellows will all say you're doing it just to set yourself up against the Form," said Nugent promptly.

"Yes; that's what I was thinking," said Wharton. "I don't deny that my temper hasn't always been exactly what it should have been, but I was trying to live that down. I know very well that if this new chap is at all decent, I ought to help him out. What's a fellow captain for, if he allows himself to be scared from doing his plain duty by a set of carping, snobbish rotters?"

"Oh, draw it mild! Bulstrode and his lot may be snobbish rotters, but most of the Remove are all right. They just act without thinking."

"Well, they shouldn't. Anyway, they've no right to find fault with me because I think before acting!" said Wharton hotly. "Look here, there's this new chap, now. He's gone in to see Quelch. He's got in pretty late, and tea will be over in Hall. Well, why shouldn't we have the kid in here to tea?"

Frank Nugent looked very grave. "I've nothing to say against it," he said quietly. "But it's setting this study against the rest of the Remove. And it may be that Bulstrode is right; the new chap may be a rank rotter, for all you know. It stands to reason that he's mixed up with a pretty rough lot in his time."

"That wasn't his fault, I suppose?" "I don't say it was. But if you touch pitch you get defiled, whether it's your own fault or not."

"I understand what you mean, Frank. But we've no reason to suppose that the new kid has any rotten ways till we know him better. I can't see anything wrong in being civil to a stranger. I don't say I shall chum up with him. I'm not the sort of chap to chum up with anybody very quickly."

"Well, have him in to tea. It's all right," said Nugent. "If the Form doesn't like it, the Form can go and eat tinctaks!"

Wharton laughed, and quitted the study.

A Guest in Study No. 1.

MARK LINLEY came out of Mr. Quelch's study after a brief interview with the Form-master, feeling somewhat encouraged. The Remove master's

manner had been kind, though formal, and Mark saw very plainly that he would get on with Mr. Quelch if he worked hard; and that was what he had already resolved to do.

For the boy who had worked long days in the mill, and had swotted at his studies by candlelight in the evening, hard work had no terrors. The daily work of a junior at Greyfriars was child's play to the lad from Lancashire.

There were many fellows in the Remove who groaned in spirit over the hardness of their tasks; but Mark Linley was looking forward to the same work as to a long rest after labour.

He stopped and looked about him in the wide, dusky passage. He felt very strange and lost, and was glad to see Wharton coming towards him.

"Find Quelch all right?" asked Harry cheerily.

"Yes, thanks! He was very kind." Linley paused, and coloured a little. "Can you tell me where I can get some tea? I suppose it's tea-time?"

"It was tea-time nearly an hour ago," said Wharton. "I'm afraid it's all over now. But that's all right. I came to look for you to ask you to have tea with us in Study No. 1, if you will. We're feeding a bit late, and we shall have a passable feed. Will you come?"

Linley hesitated. "I should be glad to," he said. "I know no one here, and I can't say how I feel your kindness. But—but—"

He broke off. "But you don't want to come," said Harry, laughing. "It's all right. Don't make any bones about saying so, you know. We don't stand on politeness in the Greyfriars Remove."

Linley coloured. "It's not that, Wharton. But a good many fellows have already shown me how they feel about having a factory-hand in the school. This isn't the sort of place for a fellow like me, I suppose. I think you will very likely make the other fellows angry with you if you have me in to tea, and your friends there may not like it, either."

"My friends haven't any objection, or I shouldn't ask you, Linley," said Harry quietly. "As for the other fellows, they can go and eat coke! Will you come?"

Linley smiled a little. "As I said, I shall be glad to, if you bear in mind what I've said, and you don't mind what the others think."

"They can do what they like! Come along!"

And Mark walked off with Harry Wharton to Study No. 1. Wingate of the Sixth, the captain of Greyfriars, passed them in the passage, and stopped to speak.

"Are you the new Remove kid?" he asked.

"Yes," said Mark, colouring a little. "Good! I wanted to see you. You'll find yourself in strange quarters here at first, but you'll get used to it. If you make it a rule to play the game all the time, you'll be all right. That's all you've got to remember."

And Wingate walked on.

"Who is that?" asked Mark, glancing after the captain of Greyfriars.

"That's Wingate, our captain—a ripping chap!"

The juniors entered Study No. 1. Nugent shook hands with Linley carelessly enough, but that carelessness put the boy at his ease. Hurree Jamset Ram Singh greeted him cheerily.

"Here's Bunter with the grub!" said Harry Wharton. "Buck up with tea, Bunt!"

"I say, you fellows, I wish you wouldn't let Bob Cherry hang about

me like a shadow when I'm doing the shopping. He seems to have an idea that I should bolt the grub before I got it here."

"I jolly well know you would!" said Bob Cherry. "Nugent's got the frying-pan greased all ready, and so you can shove the sausages on. I'm hungry."

The sausages were soon sizzling over the fire. Bob Cherry shook hands with Mark, suppressing any surprise he may have felt at finding him in the study. The Famous Four always backed one another up, in any circumstances.

The scent of warming sausages filled the study, and it was a very grateful scent to Mark Linley. He was very hungry, though the excitement of his coming to Greyfriars had caused him hardly to notice the fact until now.

Levison looked into the study as Bunter was serving up the sausages. He stared blankly at the new boy.

"Come in!" said Wharton. "Oh, no! I see you've got a visitor," said Levison. "I won't intrude."

And the juniors heard him chuckle as he went down the corridor.

Mark Linley turned red and felt very uncomfortable.

"Buck up with the sosses, porpoise!" said Bob Cherry. "I believe you're hanging it out because you know I'm on the point of expiring."

"Oh, really, Cherry—" "I hope you like sausages, Linley," said Wharton, serving the succulent dish. "They're rather ripping, and I can answer for the cooking."

"Yes, rather!" said Mark. "I'm jolly hungry, too! Thanks!"

"You play football, Linley?" Bob Cherry asked, as the juniors began their late tea.

"Yes, rather!" he said. "I was in the factory team." He coloured again. "I used to play Rugger whenever I got the chance."

"Rugger? Soccer's the game here. Ever played Soccer?" asked Wharton. "No, but I can learn."

"Good! You'll soon have a chance. Football is compulsory here on Wednesdays and Saturdays, and any fellow who is worth his salt plays it every other day, if he gets a chance, too."

At that moment the door opened and Snoop looked in. He grinned at the juniors.

"Hallo!" he said. "I hear you've got a visitor from the factories here."

"Get out!" said Harry Wharton angrily.

"Certainly! I'm rather particular who I associate with," said Snoop. "I bar mill-hands, and you can keep him all to yourself."

And Snoop went out—just in time to escape a pat of butter which Bob Cherry had picked up to hurl at him.

Mark sat with a crimson face. The wanton insult from a fellow he had never injured, and did not even know, stung him to the quick and gave him a dreary impression of what life was like in the Remove.

But the door remained closed only for a few moments. Bulstrode was the next to look in, and he grinned sneeringly at the tea-party.

"I hear you've got a factory-hand here—Ow! Ooooh!"

The pat of butter caught Bulstrode fairly in the eye, and he staggered back with a gasping yell. And the Famous Four yelled, too—with laughter.

Bulstrode wiped the butter out of his eye furiously and glared at them.

"You—you—rotter—"

"Are you going," asked Bob Cherry

calmly. "or will you have the marmalade next?"
Bulstrode went.

A Loan for Bunter!

THE lad from Lancashire rose to his feet. His face was very white and strained. Wharton looked at him quickly.

"You are not going!" he said.
Linley nodded.
"I think I'd better," he said quietly.
"I can't have you fellows annoyed like this on my account. Besides—"
"The annoyfulness is nothing, and the fatheredness of the honourable rotters is terrific," said the Nabob of Bhanipur.

But Mark shook his head.
"I've finished my tea," he said.
"Thanks awfully, you chaps. You've treated me very decently. I hope you won't have to suffer for looking after me like this."

And Linley left the study.
He left the chums of the Remove silent, looking at one another. They were all feeling awkward and constrained. Wharton was angry. His guest had been insulted in his study, and he inwardly resolved to call the rascals to account for it.

"Well, it's rotten!" said Bob Cherry.
"The rottenfulness is terrific."
"He seems a decent chap," Nugent remarked; "and he's not ashamed of where he comes from, either. A snob would try to keep the factory dark."
"He's all right," said Harry Wharton.

abruptly. "I'm going to back him up, for one. Those cads shall see that they can't bully me into playing the cad, too."

"Right-ho! I'm with you!"
"Same here!" said Bob Cherry.
"The backfulness is terrific!"

"I say, you fellows, it's not a bad idea, and the best way to back a fellow up is to stand him a good feed."

"Oh, shut up!" said Nugent. "And look here, don't you start cadging off the new chap. He hasn't as much money to waste as we have."

"I'm hardly likely to start cadging off anybody, I hope," said Billy Bunter, with a great deal of dignity. "I've never taken money in my life without putting it down on the account."

"Lot of good that does the lender," said Bob Cherry, with a grunt.

"I shall settle up all my accounts when I get 'Answers' prize of a pound a week for six months," said Bunter. "It's announced this week, and when you see the name of William George Bunter at the head of the list—"

"When we do you can chatter about it, but do shut up now, Bunt."

Bunter blinked indignantly at Bob Cherry and left the study. He hurried after Mark Linley and overtook the latter on the stairs.

"Is that you, Linley? I say, about that couple of bob you lent me—"

"Had your postal order?"

"Well, no, as a matter of fact, I haven't," said Bunter. "That's what I wanted to speak to you about. I've been disappointed about that postal order, and it won't be coming till

to-morrow morning. When it comes, it will be for ten bob. Could you let me have the other eight now, and have the postal order when it comes? That will really be cashing it in advance."

"I'm sorry, I haven't got eight bob," said Mark.

Billy Bunter sniffed.

"H'm! It's rather annoying," he said. "Still, if you can let me have another three, and take half the postal order to-morrow morning, it will do. I can manage."

"Yes, certainly!"

Linley handed over the three shillings. Billy Bunter could hardly believe his eyes. The Removites knew him too well ever to lend him anything, and it was only a perfect stranger who could have any faith in his repaying a loan.

"Thank you, Linley. I shall let you have this back to-morrow morning, for certain. So-long!"

And Bunter hurried away.

Mark Linley walked on, keeping a cheerful face, but feeling a little downhearted. He passed the open door of the Junior Common-room, and there was a howl as he was sighted.

"Hallo, here's young factory!"

"What price cotton, young shaver?"

"How do you shuttle a loom?"

Mark turned away. A yell of laughter followed him.

(The snobs of the Remove are making things unpleasant for Mark, but worse is to come. Make sure you don't miss next week's powerful chapters.)

The Fool of the School!

(Continued from page 21.)

at it, and, as he fully expected, it came off in his hand.

"By gum, it is a wig!" exclaimed Wilkins.

"It's not Lowther, though!" gasped Gunn. "Oh, Grundy, old man, you've done it this time!"

Grundy stood rooted to the floor. There was a wig in his hand—a curly wig. But the head that was revealed by the removal of the wig was not the head of Monty Lowther. It was a head adorned with a little fringe of grey hair; and Miss Hooper had suddenly turned from a young lady into a middle-aged one.

"Oh crumbs!" stuttered Grundy. Miss Hooper shrieked. The juniors in the doorway shrieked, too, with merriment. They had never dreamed of this. It was the climax.

Miss Hooper made a jump at Grundy. She clutched the wig from him, and then brought down her umbrella on Grundy's head. Then she fled.

Grundy sat on the floor and gasped.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Tom Merry & Co. "Grundy, you've done it this time!"

"It—it—it was a woman, after all!" gasped Grundy. "I—I thought it was that beast Lowther got up! Oh, my hat! Oh, my ear! Oh crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wonder what the next caller will be like?" grinned Wilkins.

Grundy scrambled up.

"Great Scott! There's not going to be a next! I'm off!"

And Grundy fled, followed by a yell of laughter.

There were several more callers that afternoon; but Toby had to report to them that Master Grundy could not see them.

Master Grundy was fed-up.

The extraordinary result of his advertisement astounded Grundy; and he was surprised, too, at the way the whole school howled over it.

It was not till he saw a copy of the "Rylcombe Times" that he was enlightened. Then he understood why the callers had come to teach him spelling and football and manners.

And even Grundy had to admit that Monty Lowther had been eminently successful in pulling his leg. But, as he told Wilkins and Gunn, it would be all right. There would be plenty of answers yet to his genuine advertisement.

He waited for them; but evidently he was not so successful an advertiser as Monty Lowther. Probably he is still waiting.

(Next Wednesday: "THE SILENT WITNESS!" Look out for this yarn telling of the fun and trouble caused when a craze for photography sweeps over St. Jim's. Order your GEM now.)

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