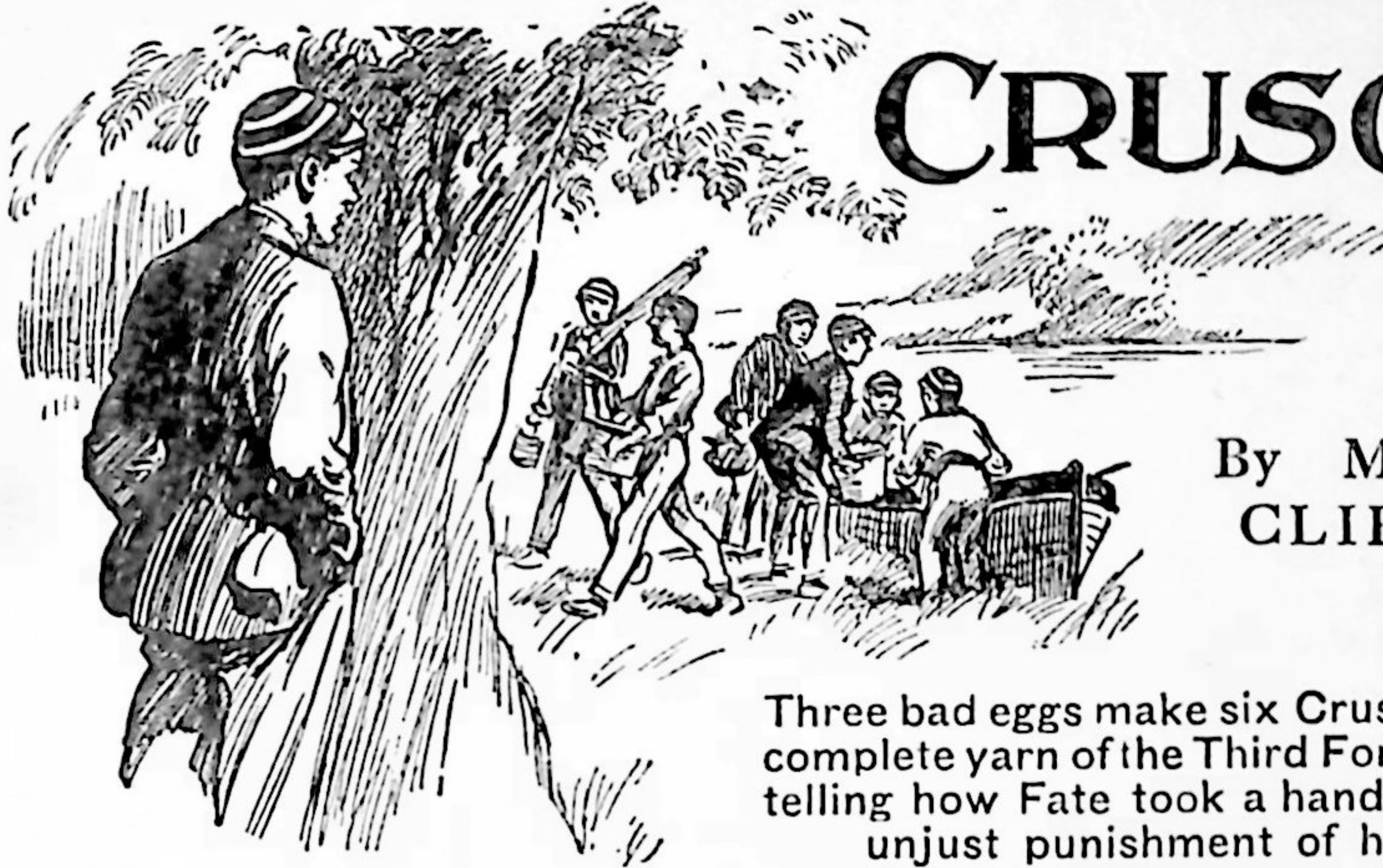


# THE THIRD FORM CRUSOES



By MARTIN  
CLIFFORD

Three bad eggs make six Crusoes! A lively complete yarn of the Third Form at St. Jim's, telling how Fate took a hand in a master's unjust punishment of his Form!

## THE FIRST CHAPTER Cardew Butts In.

"CAVE!"

A dozen voices sounded the warning cry in the Third Form-room at St. Jim's.

But it was too late. Mr. Selby, the Form-master, was already at the door.

Frank Levison stopped in his tracks, but he had gone too far. He was within a yard of Mr. Selby's chair—and what lay upon it!

Everyone stood where he was—except Cardew, of the Fourth. Cardew sat on a desk, one leg swinging. He was screened by some of the crowd, and Mr. Selby did not perceive him.

"Levison!"

The master's voice was like thunder.

"Yes, sir."

"What are you doing?"

"Nothing, sir," answered Frank meekly.

Mr. Selby drew nearer, his face full of suspicion. He looked down at his chair.

His eyes flashed balefully. Three eggs, tinted in such a manner that they harmonised with the colour of the padding, lay on that chair!

"Do you deny that you put those there, Levison?" he snapped.

"Yes, sir."

"What do you mean by that? Are you admitting your guilt?"

"No, sir. I didn't put them there."

In point of fact, Frank had been just about to remove the eggs.

The Third did not regard a practical joke upon their Form-master with virtuous disapproval. They made no pretence of liking Mr. Selby. But there are limits, and to Levison minor it seemed that someone had gone beyond them.

"Then who did?"

At that query from the master the lip of Ralph Reckness Cardew curled in contempt, and D'Arcy minor gave a half-muffled snort. For in the St. Jim's code it was not to be expected that Frank would tell, and for Mr. Selby to ask him to play the informer was not cricket.

Also, Frank did not know. Only one person there knew the truth—and Reuben Piggott, the black sheep of the Form, was not the kind of fellow likely to make a confession to save anyone else!



It was no habit of Piggott's to play jokes on his Form-master. In a general way he did all he could to "suck up to Selby," as the Form put it.

Mr. Selby could not be said to have favourites. He disliked all boys. He disliked Piggott less than he did Wally D'Arcy or Frank Levison; but he had chanced to be down on Piggott of late, and the black sheep had planted those eggs on his chair secretly, out of revenge.

Frank Levison stood silent, his mouth firmly set.

"Who did?" repeated Mr. Selby, his voice rising.

"I don't know, sir."

"I cannot believe that, Levison!"

From somewhere well in the background came a hiss. The Third held that Mr. Selby should know that a decent fellow does not lie to get himself out of a scrape.

"It's true, sir."

"Unless you tell me who the guilty party is, Levison, I shall be compelled to assume that you are he, and to take measures accordingly."

"He doesn't know, sir!" exclaimed Wally D'Arcy.

"Silence, D'Arcy minor! Levison!"

"I've nothing more to say, sir."

Mr. Selby, glowering, reached for a cane.

Cardew slipped from the desk.

"Excuse me, sir," he said, "but I can answer for it that Levison minor does not know."

"What are you doing in my Form-room, Cardew?" snapped Mr. Selby, noting the Fourth-Former for the first time.

"Isn't that rather my affair, sir? I'm breaking no school rule."

"You should now be in your study, the hour of preparation having begun."

"I beg your pardon, sir." Cardew drew out his watch. "There are two minutes and twenty seconds left—ample time for me to comply with regulations."

"I am master here, Cardew!" retorted Mr. Selby. "I order you to go at once!"

"Very well, sir."

Cardew lounged to the door, and halted just outside it.

The master had turned his back upon him. Cardew propped himself against the wall, and waited.

"I give you one more chance, Levison!"

"I didn't put the eggs there, sir, and I don't know who did."

"I do not believe you. Hold out your hand!"

Frank obeyed.

Swish!

It was a vicious stroke. Frank winced, but no sound came from him.

Swish—swish—swish! Three times more the cane fell. Frank had to set his teeth hard.

"Shame!"

The cry came from Cardew. It was echoed by Wally D'Arcy, Reggie Manners, Curly Gibson and a few more of the Third.

Mr. Selby swung round, pale with wrath.

"Was that you, Cardew?" he thundered.

"It was."

"How dare you?"

The hot, rebellious spirit of Ralph Reckness Cardew flared up.

"I've a right to protest against gross injustice!" he retorted.

"You have no right to be here! It is sheer impertinence on your part to interfere in a matter of discipline between I and my Form, and——"

"Why, you tyrannical old acidulated drop——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The splutter of laughter from the Third drowned the rest of Cardew's speech—if, indeed, he said any more. He had already said too much.

"You will come with me to the Head at once, Cardew!" rapped out Mr. Selby.

"I think not, sir. To Mr. Railton first, I believe—only to the Head if he chooses to refer the matter."

Cardew was right, and the master knew it.

The Fourth-Former stood aside while Mr. Selby swung out of the room, his gown rustling, the cane still in his right hand.

"Excuse me, sir," said Cardew, "but if Mr. Railton needs a cane he will probably have one handy."

The Third gurgled and sniggered at that. Mr. Selby dropped the cane and stalked on,



with Cardew strolling in his wake. They were not a dozen yards away when Wally D'Arcy pounced upon the weapon.

The master of the School House looked up from a book as Mr. Selby, frowning portentously, strode into his study, followed by Cardew, looking calm and bland.

"What is it, Mr. Selby?" asked Mr. Railton.

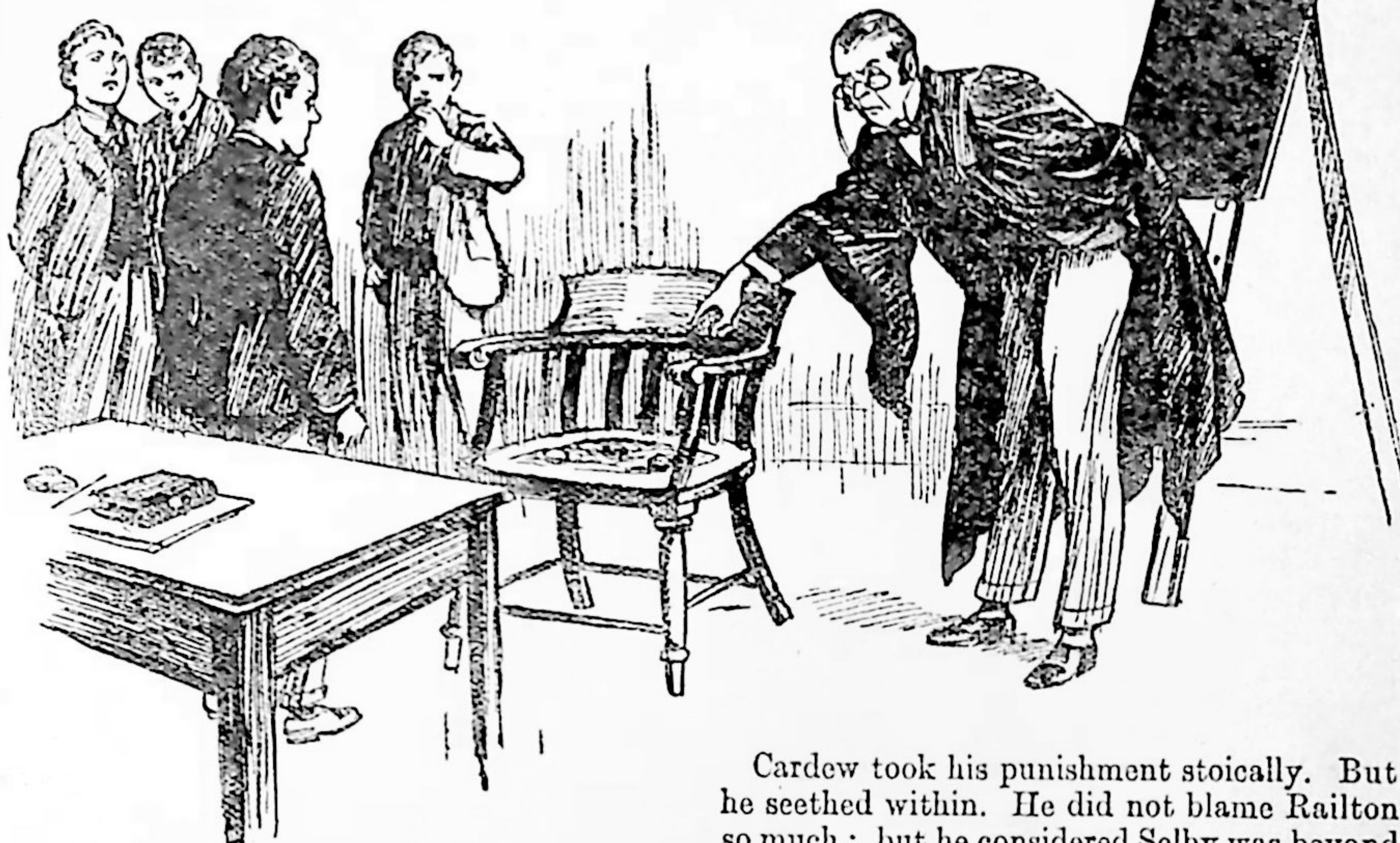
"This impertinent boy has grossly insulted me!" snorted the Third Form master.

"Yes? Perhaps you will tell me just what happened?"

For a second Mr. Railton's right hand went up to his mouth. He could not restrain a faint smile; but he did his best to ensure that neither master nor boy saw it. Then he said sternly:

"Such language from boy to master is certainly intolerable, Cardew! Hold out your hand!"

"Do you deny that you put those eggs there, Levison?" snapped Mr. Selby. "Yes, sir!"



"He had the intolerable impudence to interfere in the discipline of my Form. I ordered him out, and he called me—he called me——"

The objectionable phrase fairly stuck in Mr. Selby's throat.

The Housemaster bent an inquiring glance upon Cardew.

Cardew did not even flush.

"The expression I used, sir," he said, "was 'tyrannical old acidulated drop.' In the circumstances I consider it was quite a mild one."

Cardew took his punishment stoically. But he seethed within. He did not blame Railton so much; but he considered Selby was beyond the limit.

"Is that all, sir?" he asked coolly, when the Housemaster laid down the cane.

"If Mr. Selby is satisfied."

"I am satisfied, Mr. Railton," said the Third Form master.

Mr. Railton nodded. Mr. Selby gave a stiff jerk of the head and marched out. Cardew politely held the door open for him, well knowing that the act of courtesy would gall.

Mr. Selby might be satisfied, but Ralph Reckness Cardew was not!



## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### Wally's Wheeze !

"OH, what's the odds?" said Frank Levison. "I only got four, and I've often had it a lot hotter than that."

"It's a bit rough on Cardew, though," remarked Joe Frayne. "I reckon it was decent of him to speak up for you, Franky."

"Hang Cardew!" exclaimed Wally. "What's he want butting in for?"

"He stood up for me like a brick, whatever he wanted," said Frank. "And I fancy you can guess what he was after here, Wally—for japing him this morning. That makes it all the more sporty of him, because he must have guessed I was in it."

"Oh, that!" sniffed Wally. "Cardew's got nerve to think he could tackle us in our own Form-room about it, I think. But see here, young Levison; why were you such a fat-headed chump as to think of meddling with those eggs? It was none of our bizney!"

"Yes. Why didn't you let the old bounder sit on them?" chimed in Reggie Manners.

Wally flourished the cane and did his best to look like his Form-master.

"I didn't think it was quite a decent trick," replied Frank. "I bet they're jolly nifty eggs!"

"Rats! Of course, no fellow would be ass enough to use perfectly good eggs for a job like that. But they were quite good enough for an old sweep like Selby——"

Wally broke off short, and a gasp went up from the assembly.

The summary execution meted out to Cardew had brought Mr. Selby back sooner than he had been expected. He was in the doorway.

How much he had heard they could only guess. But that he saw the cane in Wally's hand was obvious.

The sniggering of Piggott and a few of his kidney exasperated Wally. With dignity worthy of his major, Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, he marched up to Mr. Selby and proffered the cane.

"I picked this up, sir," he said.

"Ah! Thank you, D'Arcy minor! Hold out your hand!"

Six times the cane rose and fell. Thereafter, Wally went to his place with both hands in

his pockets. And Mr. Selby went to his seat. In his wrath the Form-master's memory had suffered a curious lapse!

He sat down. There was the sound of cracking shells, and then there impinged upon the atmosphere of the Form-room a smell truly awful.

Mr. Selby leaped up, cast a glance behind him, and fled, followed by a roar of laughter from his Form.

He was back in a few minutes, his gown changed. The chair was removed by Toby, the page, another replaced it, and prep. proceeded in solemn silence.

When the moment of dismissal came Mr. Selby rose.

"I call upon the guilty boy to come forward and confess!" he said.

But no one came forward. Piggott was not of the stuff of which heroes are made.

"I give you until to-morrow morning. If confession is not then made the whole Form will be punished!"

With that drastic pronouncement Mr. Selby departed.

In the Third dormitory that night there was much talk. Everyone was in agreement on one score. The fellow who had played that trick must own up! It was not to be thought of that the entire Form should suffer for the fault of one.

The fact that there was no dissenting voice might have told the Third-Formers that there was small likelihood of confession. If the culprit had meant to own up he would have said so then and there. No one would have felt annoyed with him for what the Form-master had suffered, and he would have been regarded as a hero for saving the Form.

But Piggott thought that his share of the Form's pains and penalties, whatever they might be, would be less than he would bring upon himself by braving alone Mr. Selby's ire. And the voice of Piggott, though heard with the rest, merely echoed what the rest said.

Mr. Selby came to his Form-room next morning firmly persuaded that half the Form knew who the miscreant was, and believing that he would be forced into confession. If he baulked that, it was the duty of someone else to tell the truth, so Mr. Selby held.



The Form-master rapped with his pointer upon the desk before him.

"With reference to the abominable occurrence of last night," he said sternly, "I call upon the boy or boys responsible to confess!"

Feet shuffled, but no one spoke.

"Levison minor, do you still maintain

been caned; that would have been soon over. This was a sentence the length of which no one could even guess. It would have been bad enough at any time; now, in the glorious summer weather, it was unendurable. No cricket—no river—no anything!

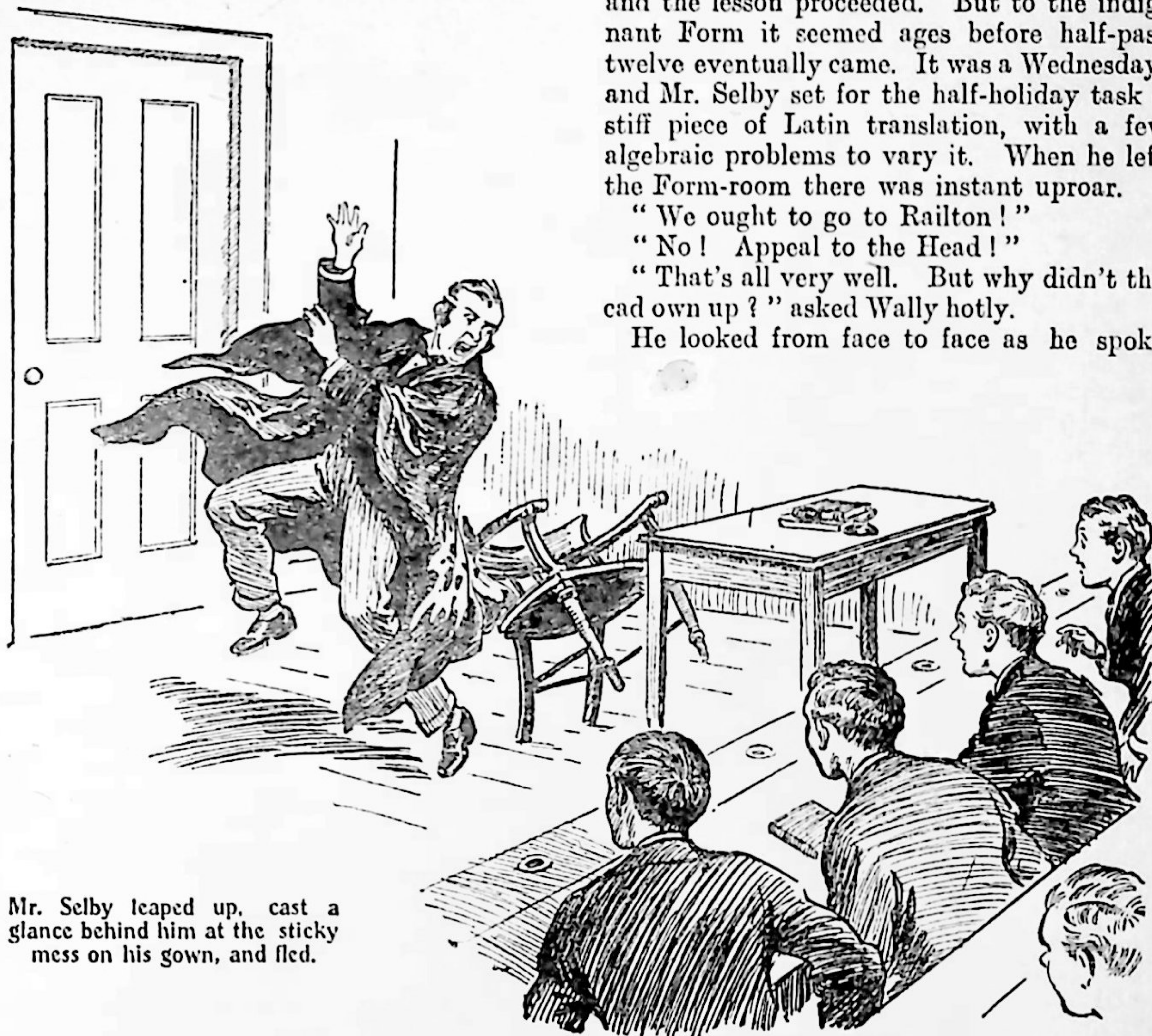
Mr. Selby spoke no more on the matter, and the lesson proceeded. But to the indignant Form it seemed ages before half-past twelve eventually came. It was a Wednesday, and Mr. Selby set for the half-holiday task a stiff piece of Latin translation, with a few algebraic problems to vary it. When he left the Form-room there was instant uproar.

"We ought to go to Railton!"

"No! Appeal to the Head!"

"That's all very well. But why didn't the cad own up?" asked Wally hotly.

He looked from face to face as he spoke



Mr. Selby leaped up, cast a glance behind him at the sticky mess on his gown, and fled.

your ignorance of the identity of the offender?" demanded the master harshly.

"Yes, sir."

"Very well! The whole Form will be gated till further notice. We shall work an extra half-hour both morning and afternoon, and I shall set special tasks for half-holidays."

The Third felt stunned. They would have regarded it as unjust had the whole Form

and it seemed to Piggott that he looked hardest at him.

"Selby seemed to think the cad was one of your crowd, D'Arcy," said Piggott mildly.

"Do you mean you think so?" flashed back Wally.

"Me? I don't know who it was—how should I? And, of course, it couldn't have been Levison. Unless——"



Piggott paused. Frank thrust forward.

"Unless what?" he asked. "Speak up, Piggy!"

"Unless you did it, and then funk'd at the last moment."

A small hard fist approached within an inch of Piggott's nose.

"Do you say that, you rotter?" snapped the owner of the fist.

"No, of course not."

"Well, you'd better not even think it, or you'll get it in the neck!"

Piggott backed away.

"Oh, come along, Franky!" said Wally.

"We've got to decide what we're to do. These chaps may be willing to take it sitting down, but we won't."

"Fat lot you can do!" sneered someone.

Wally paid no heed to the taunt. He marched out, followed by Levison minor, Manners minor, Frayne, Gibson, and Jameson.

In a corner of the quad he addressed the Third-Formers.

"There's only one thing to do—bunk!" he said resolutely.

The other five stared at him.

"Where to?" asked Frank.

"That's it. I know I'm jolly well not going home. They'd only send me back," said Reggie Manners.

"Same here," Wally admitted. "A chap's people can't see things the same way as he does. I never meant bolt home. I've a better notion than that."

"I'm on, if it's anything poss.," Jameson said.

"Oh, it's poss. enough," said Wally. "If we bunk we can't go home—that's settled. We can't wander about the country—the police would be on our giddy tracks. But if we took grub and things and hid on Mayfly Island——"

"My hat! That's a ripping notion!" Jameson cried.

"It's not so dusty," said Curly Gibson.

"But, of course——"

"They'd find us in about five minutes," Reggie broke in.

"Rats!" snorted Wally. "Why should they?"

"For one thing, we can't get there without

a boat, and the boat's sure to be missed."

"I've thought all that out. I was thinking about this scheme all the morning," Wally replied.

"But there's another thing in the way," said Frank. "If we're to stay there more than a few hours we shall need plenty of grub, and where's the money coming from to get it?"

All dug into their pockets, though of them all only one did so with any real hope of helping to supply an answer to that question.

Jameson produced a postal order for ten shillings.

"Came this morning," he said.

The combined wealth of the other five totalled three and fivepence. Levison minor had half a crown, the rest elevenpence among them. No one had hoped for anything better; Jameson's windfall made their funds larger than they could have expected.

"Thirteen and eleven," said Wally, rubbing his head thoughtfully. "It would do for a bit of a tuck-out now, but it wouldn't go a giddy long way towards provisions for days and days."

"Let's go and have the tuck-out," suggested Reggie. "We can't play Crusoes on thirteen and eleven."

"Wally! Hi, deah boy! Heah's some-  
thin' for you!"

It was the voice of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, the swell of the Fourth and Wally's major, that hailed thus.

"Oh, bother old Gussy!" said Wally impatiently. "I don't suppose it's anything that matters. If I could touch him for a quid now—but I know he's stony."

He advanced, however, though without hurry, to meet his major.

Arthur Augustus beamed as he came towards his minor.

"Congwats., deah boy!" he said warmly.

"What about?" growled Wally. "I suppose you know we're gated—the whole giddy Form! P'r'aps you're being sarcastic?"

"No, Wally, I assuah you! I am sowwy to hear of your twouble, but I wathah think this will welieve it somewhat. That bay colt of Conway's has won its first wace, and I have had the wemittance he pwomised."



and I have no doubt whatevah that heah is —"

"Oh, hold your jaw and give me the letter!" Wally interrupted him.

Looking rather injured, Arthur Augustus handed it over. It had been registered, but the envelope was an ordinary one, and Wally slit it open with a hasty forefinger.

Lord Conway, the heir of the Earl of Eastwood, was the elder brother of the two D'Arcys, and an elder brother of the right sort!

Inside the envelope were pound Treasury notes—five of them!

The commissariat problem was solved!

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Cardew's Curious Game

CARDEW lay in the long grass not far from the river bank, with the latest HOLIDAY ANNUAL to beguile the tedium of a hot afternoon.

Much too hot for cricket, he had told his chums, Levison major and Clive; and they had called him a slacker, which had not worried Cardew in the least, since they had so often applied to him that epithet.

It was so very hot that he grew quite sleepy and the book dropped from his hands. But a sound struck upon his ears, and he sat up.

The sound was a familiar one—the shrill yelp of Pongo, Wally D'Arcy's dog of indeterminate breed.

Then Cardew saw something that struck him as curious.

A heavy old tub of a boat, which certainly did not belong to the school flotilla, was approaching the well-wooded Mayfly Island in the Rhyl.

Pongo was in the bows, his forepaws on the gunwale. Gibson sat by him, with a restraining hand on his collar. Reggie Manners steered; the rowers were D'Arcy minor, Levison minor, Frayne and Jameson.

It struck Cardew that the boat was very heavily laden.

"There's somethin' more here than meets the eye," said Cardew to himself. "It may be only a picnic, of course. But I fancy it's hardly that."

Taking care not to show himself, he watched.

He knew from Ernest Levison that the Third were booked for gating. It was unlikely that these six, young bounders though they were, would incur the risk of their Form-master's vengeance just to go picnicking while that punishment hung over their heads.

Gibson jumped out as soon as the boat was conveniently laid alongside the island bank. Pongo, still yapping, followed him; and Wally and Jameson followed Pongo.

The other three proceeded to hand out various packages—hampers, bundles of rags, parcels of curious shapes. The spout of a kettle stuck through the brown paper wrapping of one parcel. The ripped covering of another disclosed the enamelled surface of a cooking pot.

Perhaps there was not another fellow at St. Jim's whose mind would have jumped at the right conclusion as quickly as did Cardew's. He guessed the whole plan.

And now he recognised the boat. It belonged to one of Rylcombe's oldest inhabitants, who was long past using it, and it had lain moored in a little creek for years past. The six had thought it would not be missed, as any of the school boats must have been, Cardew supposed. But to leave it where it was must surely give them away.

For a few minutes the Third-Formers went back and forth, bearing burdens into the interior of the island. Cardew watched the rickety old craft rise higher in the water as its cargo was removed. Then for a few minutes nothing was to be seen of the adventurers. But Pongo's yapping was still to be heard.

The six reappeared. Wally and Frank Levison were in bathing costumes. The two got into the boat, pushed off and rowed away.

"A dashed good move!" said Cardew to himself. "When that old tub's back in its moorings they'll have covered their tracks a bit. But they can't hold out long. More's the pity, for it would put the wind up old Selby if they were missin' for a few days!"

Then into his mind, always active for mischief, there came an idea.

He wanted badly to get his own back on their Form-master. Here was his chance!

In the ordinary course of events the island might be searched as soon as it was known that



the juniors were missing. But if a false trail were laid they might remain undiscovered for some time. They would take no harm in this weather; they would have the time of their lives. The only person who would suffer much, as Cardew saw it, was Mr. Selby, and the more Mr. Selby suffered the better Ralph Reckness Cardew would be pleased.

Wally and Frank obviously meant to swim back to the island. But they were hardly likely to swim all the way from the creek. They would run along the bank to somewhere near the place of his hiding and take the shortest distance across.

Cardew wanted a word or two with them. He shifted nearer the bank. Two small figures in blue bathing suits came into view, racing to be first at the pollard willow against which Cardew lounged.

They did not see him until he hailed them.

"How goes the Crusoe enterprise, my hearties?" he asked.

They stared at him, wondering how much or how little he knew.

"Of course, you would never think of tellin' me any real crammers," Cardew said blandly.

"But in case you might be thinkin' of a few, let me tell you that I am on your giddy little game!"

"I say, you won't be a rotter and give us away Cardew:" said Wally with some heat.

"No—if you let me help you!"

"I don't see how you can help us," said Wally.

"As far as they go your plans are quite well laid," returned Cardew, "though it was an error of judgment to bring along the dog. But unless attention is diverted elsewhere the island is bound to come under suspicion. If the pursuers are led to believe, however, that you have fled to remoter parts they will hardly think of lookin' for you here."

"What do you mean by remoter parts, Cardew?" Wally inquired.

"That is rather my affair, I think."

"But why are you helping us?" asked Wally.

"That again is my bizney."

"Oh, well, I know you won't let on, and I only hope you won't come a mucker trying to help us, Cardew," said Wally.

The Third-Formers entered the water, and as they swam across to the island, Levison spoke to Wally.

"Cardew's got something pretty big up his sleeve, I'll bet."

"Oh, well, you never know. I don't much believe in his schemes myself."

But Cardew really had something rather ingenious in his mind. Even Wally would have admitted that had he known what it was.

It was a curious game the Fourth-Former was playing. But Cardew had played so many curious games that St. Jim's was not easily surprised by anything he did. Sometimes these games seemed without motive. In this case he had a very definite motive—to get his own back on Mr. Selby.

To that end he was willing to take trouble and spend money. The money was of small account, for Cardew usually had plenty of cash; but he hated taking trouble.

Nevertheless, he walked back to St. Jim's at quite a good pace, went to the bicycle shed, wheeled out his machine, and took the road to Wayland.

The sun poured down upon Wayland Moor. Lightly clad though he was, Cardew perspired and gasped at times as he wiped his heated brow. But he held on.

At Wayland Junction he approached the window of the booking office with his cap pulled down well over his eyes, so that his face was partly disguised. He bent his knees, to take off from his height. He asked and paid for six third singles and a dog ticket to London.

The train for town was due in a few minutes. But Cardew did not wait for it. It was easy enough, he knew, to get on to the platform at Wayland without showing tickets. Therefore, those he had did not need to be shown in order to prove that they had been used. Once the fact was established that they had been bought, it would be some time before full inquiries as to whether they had been given up could be put through; and, meanwhile, no one at the St. Jim's end would suspect that their being taken was only a ruse.

Nearing the outskirts of the town on his way back, he chanced to see a police constable





Cardew saw a heavy old boat, containing six Third-Formers, approaching Mayfly Island. "There's something more here than meets the eye," he said to himself.

whose face was unfamiliar to him. As he did not know the man by sight, it was likely the man did not know him. So he jumped from his bike, and said politely :

"I say, constable, do you happen to have seen half a dozen of our kids, with a mongrel dog, in the town this afternoon?"

"No, sir. Were you looking for them?"

"Well, I might say I was. But I don't know that it matters much. Thanks!"

"You're welcome, sir."

"That's a pointer to the false trail," Cardew said to himself as he remounted. "When Wayland Police Station is rung up to ask if the kids have been seen my man will remember the inquiry, an' it will be supposed that they were in the town. Then there are sure to be questions asked at the station. After which——"

A chuckle finished the speech.

Cardew was very pleased with himself. The false trail would cause enough delay to give Mr. Henry Selby acute discomfort!

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER

### Captive to the Crusoes!

"I SAY, you fellows, isn't this spiffing?" asked Wally as he lay on his back and

gazed up at the spreading branches of a big elm.

"Ra-ther!" agreed Curly Gibson.

The six Third-Formers were enjoying a comfortable sense of repletion. The scent of frying still hung upon the still air. Sausages and bacon, followed by raspberry turnovers, had made a meal that had seemed nothing short of ideal. They had drunk cocoa with it. Ginger-pop had been vetoed as making too big a weight when there was so much else to bring along; but they had plenty of tea and cocoa, and also some packets of lemonade powder, which were to be used next day.

They had chosen a place right in the middle of the island for their camp. Trees screened them on every side, and they had lighted a fire without fear that it would be seen. The river banks were lonely here, in any case, and few boats except those from the school and from Rylcombe Grammar School were ever seen on the Rhyl.

For half an hour or so there was no sound but the regular snoring of Jameson, who lay asleep on his back with his head pillowed upon his hands.

Then Wally jumped to his feet.

"Time to get everything right for the



night," he said. "Wake up, Jimmy, you old foghorn!"

The Crusoes stirred themselves and started to rig up a big strip of canvas, fastening it to the branches of the trees so as to form a rough roof. Then Wally commenced to scoop out a hole in the ground.

"What are you playing at?" asked Manners.

"That's to take my hip-bone. A chap's hip-bone begins to ache like billy-ho after he's been lying a few hours on it; and very few people can sleep on their backs all night."

The others dug holes in imitation of Wally. It was, indeed, no more than an elementary bit of scoutcraft.

This done, such of the stores as were counted perishable were brought in under the shelter, leaving the tinned stuff and the cooking utensils outside. Then each of the Third Form Crusoes rolled himself up in his rug, and silence fell upon the camp.

The first to awaken was Reggie Manners, as the slanting beams of the sun penetrated the foliage.

He rose and stretched.

"Lazy bounders!" he said scornfully, looking down at his chums.

After a wash, he started to prepare for breakfast. Tinned salmon had been agreed upon as the staple of that meal.

Three tins were opened, and the bread was set beside them, with a bottle of vinegar and a packet of salt. Then Reggie took the kettle, and went to the bank to fill it.

Looking across to the opposite bank, he saw what made him let the kettle fall and lower himself instantly to the ground that he might not be seen.

For there was Piggott, slouching along furtively, as though he had something upon his mind.

What on earth could Piggott be doing up the Rhyl at this hour?

Spying upon them! That was naturally the first thought of Manners minor. But second thoughts told him that the chances of Piggott's having penetrated their secret were too small to be worth considering. Besides, the black sheep did not even glance towards the island.

It seemed to Reggie that he was concealing something under his jacket.

Reggie let him get well past, then rose to his feet, and bolted to tell Wally.

The leader of the Crusoes awoke at once, and flung away his rug. He and Reggie ran together to the northernmost point of the island.

They were in time to see what Piggott did.

He had halted, and had produced something from under his jacket. They could not see what it was while in his hand. But he flung it into the river, and Wally's keen eyes made it out to be a small tin of some sort.

In the very instant in which he made his throw Piggott saw them. He bolted at once.

"Great Scott! We're done if he gets away!" exclaimed Wally.

And, regardless of the fact that he was more than half clothed, he plunged into the water. Reggie took off his boots and most of his clothes before following.

The chances seemed with Piggott. Even the best swimmer cannot keep pace with a very ordinary runner.

But Piggott had gone upstream beyond the island, and his deadly funk handicapped him. He was not thirty yards nearer St. Jim's than Wally when the leader of the Crusoes clambered up the bank in pursuit. The cad of the Third Form put on a desperate spurt, and gained a yard or two. Then one of his feet struck something, and he fell headlong.

Wally was sitting on his back when Manners minor emerged from the river.

"Good man, Reggie!" cried Wally. "We have got the sweep!"

Manners minor added his weight to that of D'Arcy minor. Piggott groaned and writhed, but was helpless.

"You're a pretty beauty, aren't you?" said Wally. "Spying after us, eh?"

"I didn't!" howled Piggott. "I hadn't a notion you were on the island."

"Coo-ee-ee!"

Wally's call brought to the bank Jameson, Levison minor, Gibson and Frayne, in various stages of undress. They were rubbing their eyes, partly from the sudden waking, partly because they could not begin to guess what had happened.



Pongo, left alone in the camp, proceeded to investigate one of the tins of salmon. He cut his nose slightly, but paid no heed to that. He cleared up the first tin, and at once began on the second. This was an entertainment to Pongo's taste.

"It's Piggy!" shouted Wally.

Jameson and Frank Levison swam across. There was no more room on Piggott's back, so Frank sat on his legs and the New House sag on his head.

"What was he after?" yelled Curly.

"Dunno. But it's a dead cert we can't let him go back," answered Wally. "He'd be sure to split on us."

"I won't!" gasped Piggott. "I'll swear any oath you like that I'll keep it dark about you fellows being here!"

"I say, Wally, what was it the boulder chucked into the river?" asked Reggie.

At that Piggott writhed convulsively.

"How should I know?" said Wally. "He's our prisoner; that's all I care about. We shall have to swim him across to the island, and keep him there as long as we stay. We don't want his company, of course; but it's the only way to make us safe."

"I fancy I can guess what he chucked in!" exclaimed Frank.

"You can?" said Wally. "It looked like a tin of some sort, but—oh, I see!"

Wally's mind had jumped to the same conclusion as Frank's. A tin—the stain which had harmonised the colouring of those very bad eggs to that of the padding on Mr. Selby's chair—Piggott, afraid of hiding that tin any longer, thinking the waters of the Rhyl a safe depository for it!

Not a spy, then, but worse—the miscreant through whose failure to play the game the whole Form had been punished!

But if not a spy, still a certain traitor if allowed to return to St. Jim's. He would tell where they were, and would deny that what he had hurled into the river was anything of importance. They would not be able to prove that their theory about it was correct. Within two or three hours after he was let go they would be rounded up, and the Crusoe game would be over!

If they let him go, that was. But they would

not let him go! The four had but one mind on that question. Reuben Piggott must stay—a captive to the Crusoes!

"I reckon you'll have to take most of your clobber off, Piggy," said Wally. "Of course, if you like to swim to the island in it that's all right. But if you'd rather have it dry when you get there you can make it into a bundle and take it across on your coconut."

"I'm not going! I can't swim all that way!" bumbled Piggott.

"Your mistake. I've seen you swim farther than that," replied Wally. "What will you do? You're going across with us, anyway."

Eventually Piggott, after many whining protests, stripped himself to his under-clothing, while Jameson fetched the Crusoes' swimming costumes. When they were changed, Wally gave Piggott a lusty shove, and he flopped into the water.

"Ooooh! Yarooogh! I'm drowning!" he gasped.

"Drown, then!" was the callous reply of the Crusoes' leader.

But he knew well that there was no danger for Piggott.

The four entered the water, carrying garments on their heads, and escorted Piggott to the island.

Pongo came up, wagging his stump of a tail. About the jaws of Pongo were certain pink smears. He did not even trouble to lick them away; he had had enough tinned salmon. But he was not so subdued in spirit that he could not growl at Piggott, whom he hated.

The three tins—two empty, the third nearly so—were discovered. But Pongo got off with a word or two of reprimand, which did not in the least daunt him. There was still one unopened tin of salmon left, and there were several boxes of sardines.

Piggott sulkily refused to have any breakfast. He wished he had been less emphatic in refusing when he found that no one bothered in the least about his going without.

It was Frank who thought of diving for the tin Piggott had thrown into the river. The black sheep of the Third had weighted it with stones to ensure its sinking, but he was on tenterhooks for the next two or three hours. One of the Crusoes, each in turn,



with Pongo as aider, kept watch on Piggott, while the other five dived.

Wally was the successful diver in the long run. He brought up the tin in triumph. A very few minutes more would have spoiled it as evidence against Piggott, for the soaking had all but washed away the paper label. But it was retrieved just in time, and among the six there was no doubt as to Piggott's guilt.

He was set to peel potatoes and onions for the stew they designed for dinner. And after a time he got on with his job energetically, having had no breakfast. But he did not mean to stay on the island if he could get away. The Crusoe life had no charm for Piggott, and he saw the benefit to himself that would come from his reaching St. Jim's with tidings of the runaways' whereabouts.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

### Cardew's Plan.

"WHAT'S it matter to anyone but old Selby?" asked Cardew lightly.

Ernest Levison glared at him.

"It matters a bit to me," he said. "Frank's my minor, and the people at home will be half off their heads when they hear about this."

"That's true enough," chimed in Sidney Clive. "It does matter to Ernie, and to Manners major, too, and to Gussy. It's a bit rough on them all, and my notion is, Ralph, that if you really know anything you ought to speak up."

Cardew yawned as if but mildly interested. He was sorry now that he had let drop a hint or two from which Levison major, who was uncommonly acute, had drawn deductions.

The harmony of No. 9 was disturbed. Inquiries made on the previous evening, when the absence of the six had been discovered, had led to the general acceptance of the theory that they had made for London. The Head had conferred with the two Housemasters and Mr. Selby, and the Third Form-master had left the conference considerably chastened. Neither Dr. Holmes nor Mr. Railton exactly approved of the punishment of a whole Form for the fault of one of its members; and Mr. Ratcliff, though he might have done the same thing himself, saw no reason for lifting his voice on Mr. Selby's behalf.

"My dear, good asses," said Cardew lazily, "what is there in the wide, wide world to worry about? Of course, the young absconders will get it in the neck more or less when retrieved. But none of them will be sacked, you may be sure—sackin's much more likely for Selby. An' now I propose to dry up an' say no more about it."

"You're not going to dry up!" returned Levison major fiercely. "You were in the bizney with them—I'm dashed certain of that. And all out of spite against Selby because he got you caned by Railton! That's pretty small-minded, I think. I'm going to have out of you what you know!"

"An' how do you propose to get it out of me—assumin' that I know anythin', which I don't admit?"

Cardew was white to the lips with rage. The epithet "small-minded" had hit him hard, coming from a chum. He would not see it as justified; but it wounded, nevertheless. He spoke quietly; but both Levison and Clive could see that he was furious.

"With my fists if necessary!"

"Tha-a-anks, but it's really too dashed hot for fightin' to-day," drawled Cardew.

He dropped upon the couch, took out his handkerchief, and began to fan himself.

Levison darted at him one baleful look, then departed. Clive lingered for a few seconds, as though trying to make up his mind to say something, then followed Levison.

Not two minutes had passed when Arthur Augustus D'Arcy invaded the study with his chums Blake, Digby, and Herries in his wake.

"I heah, Cardew, that you know wheah my minah is!" said the swell of the Fourth, with none of his usual urbanity of manner.

"Isn't it regarded as common knowledge that he's gone to town, with the rest of the elopin' kids?" returned Cardew.

Arthur Augustus surveyed the dandy of the Fourth through his famous monocle with great scorn.

"That is a paltry subtahfuge, Cardew!" he said severely. "If you——"

"Clear out, Gussy! You gas too much. Now, Cardew, if you know anything about what that young ass of a minor of mine is up to you'd better tell it at once, or——"



The speaker was Manners major of the Shell. Tom Merry, junior captain of St. Jim's, and Monty Lowther, the other member of the Co. known as the Terrible Three, were with him. Behind these and the Fourth Form quartet showed up Levison and Clive, who had thought the occasion grave enough to call in aid.

"Or?" spoke Cardew mildly, as Manners paused.

"Or I'll make you!" flashed Manners.

"I say, have you fellows heard?" inquired the boy from the Isle of Man. "That young sweep Piggott's missing, too! He went to bed last night as usual, but no one's seen him since."

"Well, Piggott's no loss," remarked Cardew.

But he did not feel easy. He alone could guess that there might be some connection between the absence of Piggott and that of the Crusoes. To the other juniors, all well aware how completely Wally & Co. barred



Piggott's behaviour was mysterious. He flung something into the river, and Wally's keen eyes made it out to be a tin of some sort.

"Excuse me, but Levison has first claim. D'Arcy has not yet registered a defiance, but——"

"I shall proceed to administah to you a fwightful thwashin', Cardew!" howled Arthur Augustus indignantly.

"There you are, Manners! He was here before you, so I think we must fairly reckon him as No. 2. You are No. 3. In the course of a day or two we can fix up details. I hope this torrid heat will abate meanwhile."

Kerruish, of the Fourth, came up behind the small crowd at the door of No. 9.

Piggott, all believing that the six had travelled to town, there seemed no possible link. Yet they were made still more uncomfortable by the news.

"I think you should help if you can, Cardew," said Tom Merry.

"Oh, he can all right!" Levison exclaimed.

"I know he's got something up his sleeve."

"A tolerably hefty arm, Levison, as I propose to prove to you—not to mention D'Arcy an' Manners—when the weather conditions allow of my meetin' you on even terms," drawled Cardew. "Knowin' as you



do that I simply cannot endure extreme heat, you will hardly press me to combat before that, I should imagine."

"I don't see why we should wait to suit him," said Manners.

"No fear!" exclaimed Levison.

"Weally, Cardew——"

"It's no use, Gussy," broke in Blake. "You'll get nothing out of him unless he chooses, and I don't see that you'll be any forwarder by taking a licking. Come along. Let's leave him to it. If he really is playing some deep game of his own, he knows what we shall think of him when it comes out."

They all departed, Levison and Clive included. Cardew glanced at his watch. There was time to get along to the island and back before dinner.

He went down to the boat-house, and paddled a Canadian canoe up the Rhyl.

Pongo's yapping came to his ears long before he reached Mayfly Island.

He landed without seeing anyone. But to the yapping was now added the sound of voices, and he made his way straight to the camp.

Wally greeted him in a friendly way.

"Hallo, Cardew! Just in time for grub! It's stew—plenty of it, and jolly good, I can tell you. Just niff it!"

The stew certainly smelt savoury enough. But Cardew had not come to the island to eat stew.

"I see you've Piggott here," he remarked.

Piggott sat a yard or so in rear of the rest, very sulky and very hungry.

"He would come," replied Wally, grinning.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Wally's chums.

The notion of Piggott's throwing in his lot with the Crusoes by choice struck them all as very funny.

"I didn't—I wouldn't—I never wanted to come on the beastly island!" burred the black sheep. "They got me, and made me swim across—I was jolly near drowned, I can tell you, Cardew! But they can't keep me now you know about it."

"Cardew wouldn't sneak," said Frank Levison.

"No, I wouldn't sneak," said Cardew, very gravely. "But this has gone far enough.

Unless you get back to St. Jim's this afternoon some of you—perhaps all—will be booked for the sack!"

"Oh, rats!" cried Wally. "They'd never sack us, and we're having the time of our lives here! Plenty of grub, and a prisoner to do the dirty work for us. It's ripping, Cardew!"

But Manners minor and Gibson betrayed by their faces that some little doubt had assailed their minds; and even Frank and Joe Frayne and Jameson did not feel quite as free from anxiety as Wally.

"See here, you'd better let me take Piggott back with me," said Cardew. "After all, he's only been absent for a few hours, an' he can easily cook up some crammer to explain that."

But the six were dissentient.

"Piggy would tell crammers for himself, but not for us," said Frank.

Piggott protested that he was willing to tell them to any extent and on any account if he was only suffered to go.

But the Crusoes were adamant on that score.

"You're not going till we go, Piggy!" said Wally decisively.

"I should still recommend this afternoon for the exodus," Cardew said. "If you like I'll get a couple of boats up directly after dinner."

"Nothing doing!" spoke Wally.

And with that Cardew departed. As he paddled downstream, he thought hard.

The sum of his thinking led him to a conclusion that he did not like a bit, though it seemed inevitable. He would have to force the Crusoes off the island, and he could not do that alone. Moreover, he could not ask anyone to help him till he had owned up to those concerned his share in the matter.

He was not going to ask Levison major, or Harry Manners, or Arthur Augustus. They would know later on what an ass he had been; but they should not know yet.

Clive he could depend upon, though Clive would not relish keeping Levison in the dark. Of the three besides D'Arcy in No. 6 study on the Fourth Form passage he decided upon Blake. He thought Tom Merry and Lowther would both come in.





Wally gave Piggott a lusty shove and he flopped into the water. "Ooooooh! Yaroooooh! I'm drowning!" he gasped.

But the clearing of the island must be done by a stratagem. Four would not be enough to do it by force; and, anyway, Cardew disliked the idea of using force. He would have to think it out during classes.

Meanwhile, on the island the Crusoes and their captive found the stew no end good, and the Swiss rolls that formed the second course also to their taste.

"The grub won't last more than another day, though, Wally," said Frank.

"What? Why, we reckoned on having enough for a giddy week!"

"Well, we must have reckoned wrong. For one thing, we've wolfed all the bread but a couple of loaves."

"Half rations, then!" returned Wally, quite cheerfully.

But not all who heard that edict shared his cheeriness.

"Anybody got a pencil?" Wally asked.

Jameson found a stump. Frank produced on request a blank half sheet of a letter. Then a command was issued to Piggott.

He said that he would not obey, whatever they did to him. They did nothing, and yet he obeyed, in fear of what might be done.

He wrote a confession of his guilt, and his signature was witnessed by all the six. Then Wally carefully put the paper away.

It was then that Piggott made up his mind to the most desperate deed of his life!

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER

### Painful for Piggott!

IF it had been quite dark that night Piggott's resolution would probably have failed him. He could swim well enough to make six times the distance between island and bank without difficulty; but he had little courage, and would not have dared to enter the water alone in the dark.



If he had not been able to retrieve the confession he might not have gone. It was an important part of his plan to destroy that evidence. In its absence nothing that mattered could be proved against him, he thought; and Mr. Selby would not be ready to lend ear to a charge against the boy who had done him the good service of finding the runaways.

But, with the moon shining its brightest in a clear sky, Piggott felt safe. And the incriminating document was found with very little difficulty.

Piggott looked down contemptuously at the seven sleeping forms; for Pongo slept as soundly as any of the fags.

"Think you're giddy clever!" muttered Piggott. "But I'm a match for you all!"

Then Piggott left the camp, thrusting the confession into his handkerchief pocket. Easy to tear it up later.

He entered the river fully dressed, except for his boots, which were slung round his neck. He gave one gasp—not of cold, but of fright at the thought of his risk. But the warmth of the water and the fact that the bank opposite was visible in the dim light reassured him, and he was soon across.

His boots put on, he set off at a steady trot towards St. Jim's. Then he remembered the paper, and stopped, fumbling for it.

There came to his ears the sound of oars, and dimly he made out the shape of a boat in the middle of the stream!

Panic seized him. He started to run. What was a boat doing upon the Rhyl at this hour?

Cardew must be at the bottom of this development. But Cardew would not have told Mr. Selby. It was far more likely that he and some of his pals had gone to fetch the Crusoes off.

That would not suit Piggott's book at all. He wanted the credit of giving them away, and he wanted them to be punished for the way they had treated him. If he could only get to Mr. Selby in time he might achieve both ends, and at the same time make it hot for Cardew, who had refused to extend any sympathy to the captive.

So Piggott rushed on. It was easy enough for him to get into the quad and thence into

the School House; he knew the ropes if anyone did. It was not so easy to nerve himself to the trespassing upon Mr. Selby in his bedroom; but even to do that Piggott found courage.

The Form-master was rudely awakened from sleep by a clammy hand set upon his shoulder. He sat up with a start.

"It's me—Piggott!" sounded the shaking voice of the intruder. "I came to tell you that D'Arcy and the rest of that lot are on Mayfly Island! They captured me, and wouldn't let me come away; but I escaped in the night, and—atishooo-oo-ooo!"

A prolonged fit of sneezing caused Piggott to reach for his handkerchief. It came out, soaked. A match flared. Mr. Selby had dragged on his dressing-gown and was lighting the gas.

"What is this wild story?" he demanded sternly.

But a glance at the black sheep of the Third showed him that the story was not necessarily a wild one. For Piggott had been absent without explanation; and his condition showed that he had been in the water.

"Get to your bed at once!" snapped the master. "You were right not to delay in coming to me. I will take instant measures. But get to your bed! Rub yourself into a glow with a rough towel first, or you will be ill."

Piggott bolted. In another minute Mr. Selby was arousing Mr. Railton.

The Housemaster thought, but would not say, that no great harm could have come out of leaving the runaways on the island till the morning. It was natural enough that Mr. Selby should be flustered and hurried.

Some of the prefects were aroused, and a party a dozen strong went down to the boat-house. Kildare, the captain, was not among these. He had strained an ankle slightly in a cricket match the day before. But he got up and limped about, while the House woke as though tidings had come to the fellows in their sleep; and there was a stir in every dormitory and lights began to show in most of the upper windows.

Meanwhile, on the island the escape of Piggott had been discovered.



Piggott's sleeping place had been close to Wally's—so close that Wally could have touched him by extending a hand.

Half asleep, half awake, Wally flung out an arm. Had Piggott been there Wally's fist must have struck him.

"Sorry, Piggy!" murmured Wally sleepily.

Then he awoke, for it was suddenly borne in upon him that he had not struck a body, but the earth. And in another minute the whole six were awake, and Pongo was yapping his hardest; but it was plain to all that the captive had escaped!

"Well, if this doesn't beat the band!" said Wally. "Who'd have thought he had the pluck?"

"Perhaps he's on the island still," suggested Reggie.

But it did not take a long search to make it clear he was not.

"There's only one thing to be done—go after him!"

"What's the good of that, Wally?" objected Gibson. "We don't know how long ago he slid off, and we haven't a chance of catching him."

"What's the good of staying here if we can't catch him and drag him back?" returned Wally hotly. "I say there is a chance, and I'm going, anyway!"

All agreed to go. Stripped to their under-clothing, leaving their boots behind, they plunged in and swam for the mainland bank.

But Pongo would not make the plunge, though Wally called to him. He stood yapping on the bank.

Two terrible-looking ruffians heard that yapping. One of them struck a match, to find that they had reached the camp and that the camp was deserted.

They might have been burglars or even cut-throats, so very ruffianly they looked. But in fact, they were only Cardew and Monty Lowther, made up and wearing costumes from the wardrobe of the Junior Amateur Dramatic Society. Cardew's plan had been to frighten the Crusoes away by making them believe the island the resort of the worst kind of villains. Lowther had been strongly for it, sure that with his aid it could not fail to be a success. He had several blood-curdling

speeches prepared, to be delivered in a terrifying voice, and was a trifle huffed because Cardew would not consent to have replies made for him, saying that he could think out his own.

Tom Merry, Blake, and Clive were not so sanguine, but thought the scheme worth trying. If it failed there could be made the resort to force that seemed its only alternative. But they were not keen on that.

They stayed in the boat—the same boat Piggott had dimly seen.

"My only Aunt Jemima! They've cleared already!" exclaimed Lowther, in deep disgust at being deprived of the pleasure of playing villain.

"I don't know about that. They've left their clothes behind if they have," replied Cardew. "They may have heard us, an' hidden somewhere else. Where's that giddy cur? He hasn't gone, anyway."

Pongo was easy enough to find, but though the five searched every scrap of the island they found neither Wally & Co. nor Piggott.

They had come up on one side almost at the moment when the six had plunged in from the other.

Day began to glimmer in the sky. Cardew's aids recognised the fact that their mission had failed.

"We'd better go back," Tom Merry said. "After all, if they have cleared out for good, there's nothing left for us to do."

But Cardew held that the presence of the fags' outer clothing proved that they had not returned to the school. He suggested that they had gone for a swim up river.

It was possible; the rest admitted that. Some time was spent in discussion. Then Cardew broke out impatiently:

"What an absolute idiot I am! I see it now. Piggott's clobber's all gone. He escaped, and they went after him."

"What's that?" inquired Tom Merry, with hand to ear.

The sound of oars and voices in the distance had just reached him.

A few minutes enlightened them. Mr. Selby's grating tones were heard.

"You were right, Cardew," said Tom



Merry. "Piggott did a bolt and got to St. Jim's. We're in the soup if we're spotted."

"My hat! To be nabbed in this ghastly clobber!" moaned Lowther.

"We needn't be nabbed—any of us," spoke Cardew quickly. "Make for the boat, push upstream a bit, then land Lowther an' me. We must dodge back along the bank. You stand on and off till you see which side of the island the boats put in, and then dodge down the other. It's a fair chance they won't twig you. But you'll have to leave that dog. He'll give you away if you take him."

Light was broadening, but it was still grey over the river, and the five had the advantage that their presence was not suspected. Cardew and Lowther were landed, and scuttled off. They had left the school in their disguises, and could not change till their return, so that there must have been many awkward questions asked had the boat been stopped with them in it.

Once they had gone Tom Merry hit on a bold stroke.

"Let's row down quietly a bit, and then make upstream again, as though we'd followed the other boats," he said. "We shall get jumped on for coming along without leave, but if we hold on we may run right into the jaws of another boatload or two of masters and prefects."

"Good notion!" agreed Blake. "We shall see the fun that way, too!"

But there was very little fun to see. The island was deserted; the expedition found that they had had their trouble for nothing.

The six fags reached the boat-house without catching Piggott. They knew by this time that the game was up, for they also had heard and seen boats on the river, and were not surprised to see lights in the boat-house. It was something like a relief when Kildare, limping, appeared in their midst as they huddled together.

"You young asses!" snapped the captain. "Get along inside, rub yourselves down and scramble between the sheets. You'll answer for your actions in the morning."

"Weally, Wally——"

"I always knew you were a bit potty, Reggie, but——"

"Frank! My word, aren't you ashamed of yourself?"

D'Arcy major, Manners major, and Levison major were all there. At least fifty fellows were in and about the boat-house. The six, as they made their way to the School House under escort, heard Kildare ordering that another boat should start at once to carry the news of their arrival to Mr. Railton and Mr. Selby.

It was no time to even up matters with the traitorous Piggott. So tired out with all the excitement were the Crusoes that they slept like tops.

Cardew and Lowther made their way in safely, though not without a narrow squeak or two. Tom Merry and his companions were reprimanded for coming along without permission; that was all. And Cardew's secret was kept by those who were told it, including Levison major, Harry Manners, and Arthur Augustus. All were indignant at first, but cooled down later when it became known that the Crusoes were to get off comparatively lightly.

The sack would have been certain for Cardew had his share in the matter reached the ears of authority. Tom Merry said that he hoped it would be a lesson to him, but had no strong belief that it would.

The hatchet prepared for the necks of the Crusoes came down first and hardest upon the neck of Reuben Piggott!

A sneeze had ruined what chance Piggott had possessed of keeping his guilty secret from his Form-master. From the Form it could not have been kept, of course. But all the Form, except the Crusoes and Piggott himself, first learned it from Mr. Selby's lips.

The Third was gathered, and Mr. Selby rapped on his desk. The six nerved themselves for the ordeal.

"Piggott, stand out!"

Piggott obeyed. For a second or two he had a wild notion that he was to be thanked publicly. He did not want that, but what came he wanted even less.

"You were in my bedroom last night, Piggott. This morning I found on the floor a paper, still wet but decipherable, which I shall now read to the Form."



There came to Piggott's ears the sound of oars, and dimly he made out the shape of a boat in the middle of the stream.



Sternly the master read that wretched confession, while Piggott squirmed.

"You have nothing to say?"

Piggott had nothing to say. What was there to be said?

"The Head will deal with you later, and also with D'Arcy minor, Levison minor, Frayne, Jameson, Gibson and Manners minor. And as the culprit of the wretched trick played upon me is now known, the punishment I imposed on the Form will be rescinded. Now we will proceed with our work."

The Form hissed Piggott as he shuffled back to his seat, but no rebuke came from Mr. Selby.

During the lesson the Head summoned the seven Third-Formers to his study. He had already been enlightened on the matter. The Crusoes were severely reprimanded and caned for their actions. But worse was in store for Piggott. We will draw a veil over what took place, and make our conclusion from the facts that the school porter was sent for, and that Piggott found it painful to sit down for quite a long time afterwards.