

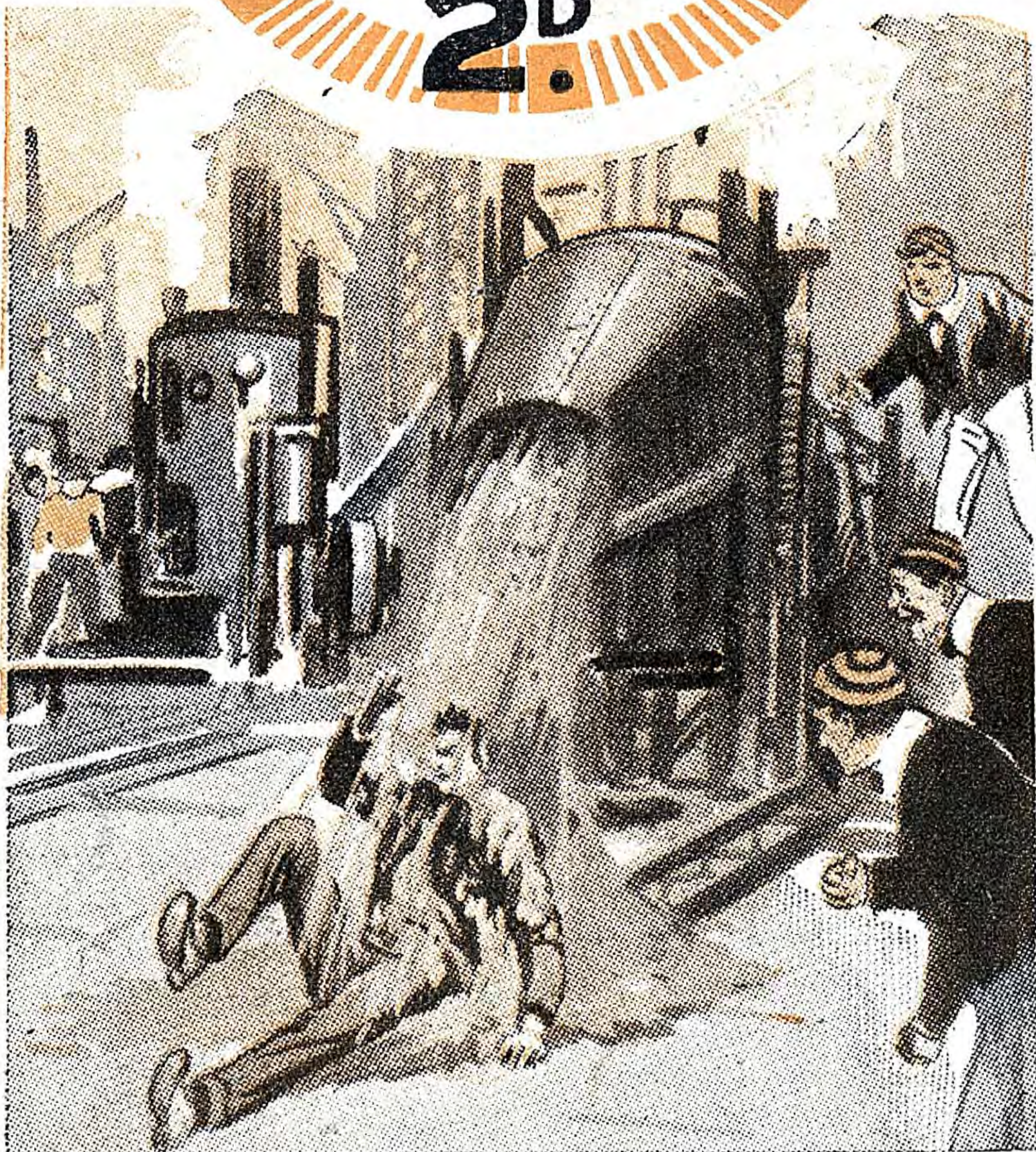
FIGHTING THE FACTORY FIEND AT ST. FRANK'S!

THE

NELSON LEE

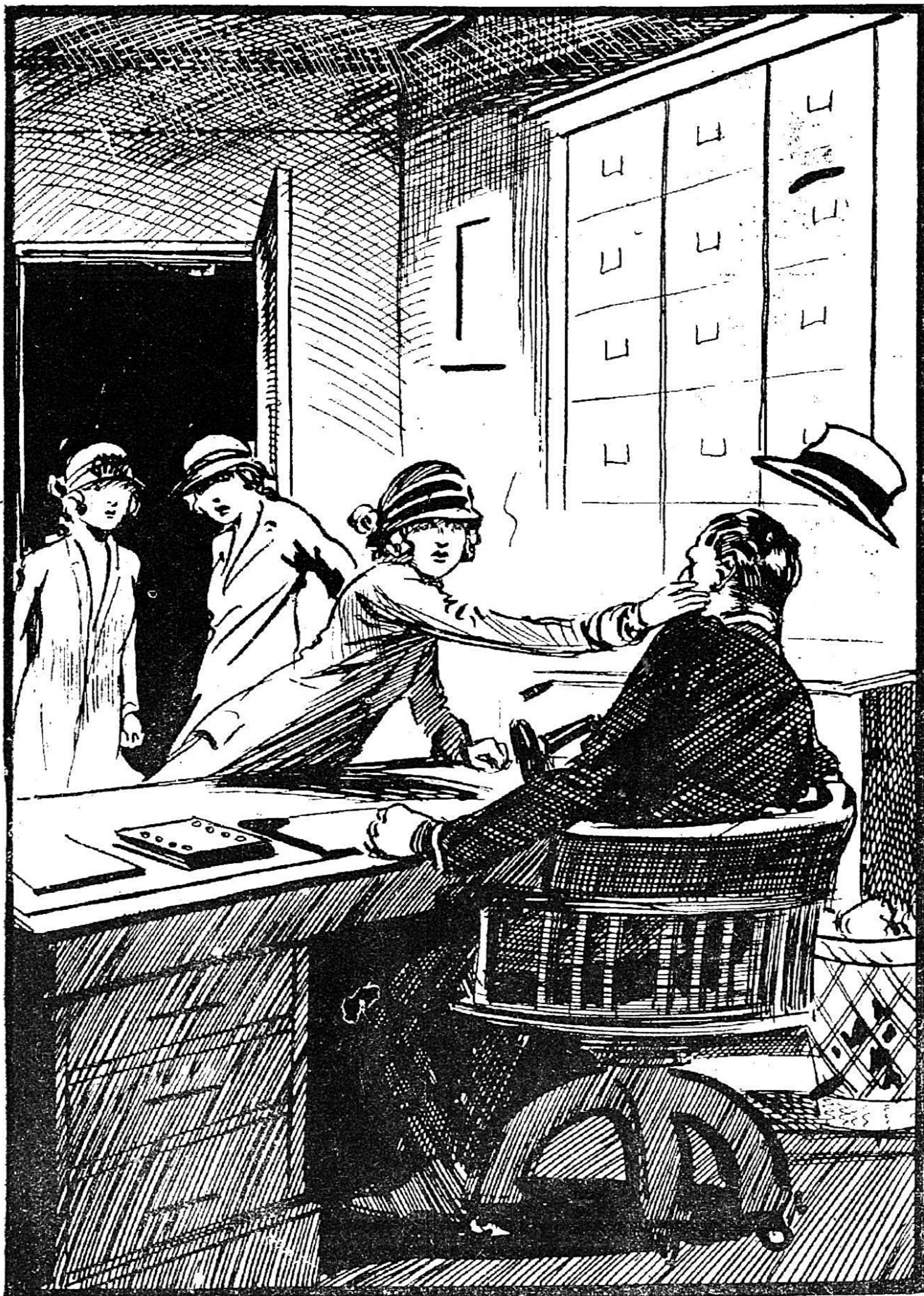
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A Laughable Incident from This Week's Story of St. Frank's:—

DRIVEN TO REVOLT!



Smack ! It was over in a flash. Mr. William K. Smith received the surprise of his life. For Irene leaned over the desk, and with her open palm she delivered a terrific slap on Mr. Smith's left cheek.



DRIVEN to REVOLT!

A real, live story of school life and adventure, featuring the famous Juniors of St. Frank's.

St Frank's and its picturesque surroundings, including the little sleepy old seaport of Caistowe are now in the hands of Mr. W. K. Smith, a German-American multi-millionaire, who has bought up this property in order to set up factories for the manufacture of his own goods, employing cheap, foreign labour, which he has gathered together from various seaports. "Cyclone Smith," as he is familiarly called, has already set into motion the machinery of his daring scheme. As a result, Dr. Stafford has resigned, and Mr. Ponsonby Small has been installed as Head by Cyclone Smith. The boys of the River House School have been turned out of their quarters, and are now being housed in the studies and common rooms of the Remove at St. Frank's. Gangs of foreign labourers, huge cranes, great iron girders and large quantities of building materials have appeared on the scene, and work is proceeding at a feverish pace. The Boys of St. Frank's are seething with indignation, and are preparing to wage war on this powerful magnate and his foreign labourers.

THE EDITOR.

The Narrative Related by Nipper and Set Down by E. Searles Brooks

CHAPTER I. THE BRUTES!

IRENE MANNERS, of the Moor View School for Young Ladies, clapped her hands delightedly.

"Oh, isn't he just a dear?" she exclaimed, with enthusiasm.

"A darling!" agreed Marjorie Temple.

And Edward Oswald Handforth, who had climbed to the top of the Triangle wall, nearly fell over backwards. For one delirious second, he thought the girls were referring to him; but, as a matter of fact, Handforth had not been even seen, and he was rather disgusted when he saw the two girls making a great fuss of a small, insignificant Irish terrier.

"A blessed dog!" he said gruffly. "Well, I'm jiggered!"

For once Handforth was discreet, and he dropped back into the Triangle before being seen. He didn't want the young ladies to suspect that he had been spying on them,

for no such thought had entered his head. And girls, after all, are rather terrible people for misunderstanding a chap.

The leader of Study D had jumped to the top of the wall, just as a kind of exercise, his object being to show Church and McClure that the feat was as easy as winking. His abrupt descent took his chums by surprise, for Handforth, in order to complete his programme, had yet to stand on his hands, and perform one or two other remarkable gymnastic feats.

"Fine!" said Church enthusiastically. "Great!"

"Fathead!" snapped Handforth. "I've done nothing!"

"Oh, sorry!" said Church. "I thought I was supposed to applaud!"

"Irene and Marjorie just outside—going down the lane with a giddy dog!" hissed Handforth. "Irene's new pet, I expect. She mentioned one day last week that her pater was buying her a terrier."

McClure shook his head.

"Hard luck, old man!" he said sympathetically.

"What do you mean—hard luck?"

"Oh, well, you'll be rather cut out now!" explained McClure. "You see, now that Irene's got this dog—Hi! What the—Yaroooh!"

McClure had staggered back, yelling, for Handforth had delivered one of his famous punches. McClure, in fact, sat down violently in the Triangle—unfortunately, in the centre of a puddle.

"You insulting rotter!" said Handforth wrathfully. "Are you trying to make out that I'm no better than a dog?"

"Not so good," pointed out Church. "He said that this dog is going to take your place! Here, steady! What's the idea of going for me? I don't exactly agree with McClure."

"You don't exactly agree?" repeated Handforth suspiciously.

"Of course not," replied Church, edging away more by instinct than anything else. "But, instead of wasting time here, why don't you go out and say 'Good-afternoon' to the girls? There might still be a chance for you if you hurry up."

Handforth was so intrigued by the thought of saying "Good-afternoon" to the girls that he overlooked the doubtful nature of Church's remark. And off he went, rather disgusted to find that Reginald Pitt and Archie Glenthorne were just passing out of the gateway.

"Oh," said Handforth grimly, "where are you going?"

"We would wander forth for fresh air, O Father of Inquisitiveness!" replied Reggie. "But why do you look so fierce? Pray expound on the subject O Padlock of my Impatience!"

"Ass!" said Handforth with contempt. "I'm just going for a walk."

"What ho!" said Archie. "Three minds as it were, with but a single thought. Absolutely! Pray join us, dear old companion, and we will chat about this and that as we wander."

"Oh, all right!" growled Handforth.

There was no help for it. Church and McClure had come up in the rear and joined the little party, McClure decidedly damp in a certain quarter, but by no means discouraged. To tell the truth, he was rather anxious to see some violent fate overtake his leader.

It was a half-holiday, of course, and the early March afternoon was unusually fine, and all the more welcome after a day or two of dull, damp, drizzly weather. The sun was shining promisingly.

And, in the meantime, Irene and Marjorie had progressed farther down the lane. The two girls were on their way to the village, chiefly in order to give the little dog a run. His name was Peter, and he had only arrived that morning, and hardly

knew his new mistress yet. Consequently he was on a lead.

"I think dad's a dear to send me such a nice little dog!" declared Irene. "I mean to teach him all sorts of tricks, and I believe he's ever so clever. Just look at the way he cocks his ears when you talk to him!"

"Don't be silly!" said Marjorie. "All dogs do that!"

"Oh, well, I think Peter's going to be clever!" insisted Irene. "And I—Oh, quick, Marjorie! Catch him, for goodness' sake!"

The little dog—indeed, practically a puppy—had given a sudden jerk, and the lead was pulled out of Irene's hand, and, rejoicing in his newly-found freedom, Peter proceeded to investigate a gap in the hedge.

He dived through without hesitation, and examined the outlook with considerable interest. And he was rather astonished to observe a rabbit sitting up jauntily near a clump of trees.

"This," said Peter, "is where I come in!"

Or, if he didn't actually say it, his actions proved that he meant something of this sort. For Master Peter, with a joyous bark of triumph, made such a decided dash for the rabbit that he nearly tripped over his trailing lead.

And his optimism was much greater than his judgment, for by the time he got to the spot where the rabbit was, the rabbit wasn't. Peter paused, and looked round with as much surprise on his face as any dog can express. He heard frantic sounds from the road, and turned round.

Irene and Marjorie were gazing over the hedge and calling to him. Peter stood there, and he cocked his head and wagged his tail. He had a short period of acute indecision. He fought the battle of duty against instinct, and instinct won.

He gave a contemptuous jerk of his head, and bolted rapidly into the trees, absolutely determined to discover that rabbit or lose himself in the attempt. It need scarcely be said that he lost himself.

He received a further thrill on pushing his way out of the trees on the farther side. For there, in front of him, were two strangers. They were rough-looking men, and they gazed at Peter curiously. But Peter was not at all particular about the friends he made, particularly if they were engaged in the interesting occupation of eating.

And it appeared to Peter that these interesting individuals were sampling some large chunks of bread and cheese. Peter wasn't quite sure, so he raised his head and sniffed the air. At the second whiff his doubts vanished, and he charged forward boldly, little realising that he was advancing straight into the jaws of danger.

To be quite exact, these two men were employees of Mr. William K. Smith, the German-American multi-millionaire, who had recently caused such a sensation in the neighbourhood of St. Frank's.

Mr. Smith's vast encampment, already known as Cyclone City, lay just down the dip, between this rise and the River Stowe. The hum and bustle of great activity could be distinctly heard on the air. For there were well over a thousand men in that encampment, and building operations were going forward at a speed that never failed to startle the peaceful country folk.

The two gentlemen who were partaking of bread and cheese appeared to be half-breeds of some kind—dark, swarthy men, dressed in the typical American overalls, with shoulder-straps. They looked rather Mexican, but talked American, and took a large interest in the dog.

Peter was disappointed, for, instead of getting something to eat, his lead was seized, and the two men picked Peter up, and, as they observed themselves, gave him the "once-over." They came to the conclusion that he was a mongrel, which was a deadly insult to Peter, because he wasn't.

"Aw, he ain't worth two cents!" declared one of the workmen. "Give him a kick, and send him off!"

"Not on your life!" said the other man. "Say, we'll sure have some sport! See here!"

He took Peter a short distance along to a fence, and securely tied the end of Peter's lead to one of the crossbars. And Peter, astonished at this indignity, began to have a few doubts regarding his new friends. His tail, so jaunty a few moments earlier, began to descend in a drooping fashion.

And he was somewhat alarmed when a stone came whizzing past his head, to hit against the fence with a loud crack. The two men laughed, and Peter, gaining courage, wagged his tail a bit. Apparently there was a joke somewhere, but he failed to grasp the point of it.

Then something hit him a stinging, cruel blow on the left front leg. Peter was the most surprised dog in the county of Sussex. He gave one violent yelp and bolted. Unfortunately, he was brought up with such a jerk by his string that he nearly broke his own neck.

And the two half-breeds roared with laughter, considering that the fun was becoming quite entertaining. They were by no means moved when Peter realised his helplessness and looked at them pleadingly.

With his ears down and his leg quivering from the hurt, he gazed at his tormentors, with such an expression in his eyes that any normal human being would have felt compassion. But not these half-breeds. Although they talked American, their actions proved them to be very different from Americans.

Whiz! Whiz!

Two more stones were hurled at Peter, who began to conclude that this game was the worst he had ever played, for the inhuman brutes continued to throw stones at their helpless victim, and they took immense delight when he was hit.

The poor little dog was absolutely terrified. Try as he would, he found it impossible to escape from the lead.

He became frantic, and his yelps of pain grew more pathetic as his tormentors gained skill in throwing the stones.

Peter was already cut and gashed in several places, and he was so stricken with fear that he cowered down, his heart nearly ceasing to beat. And those cruel brutes continued to pelt him with stones.

CHAPTER II.

GETTING THEIR DESERTS!



ARCHIE GLENTHORNE adjusted his monocle, and carefully felt his tie.

"What ho!" he murmured. "Kindly put the old collar straight, Reggie, old darling. I mean to say, you look rather frightful, and we are about to stagger into the presence of the young ladies. Dash it! A chappie must look his best on an occasion like this—what?"

Reggie Pitt grinned.

"If the girls don't like me with my collar rumpled, it'll be a tragedy," he said. "I never worry over such details, old son. Comfort is my watchword, and if I could find the chap who invented Eton suits, I'd stick him on a spit, and rejoice in seeing him frizzle!"

The five juniors were coming down the lane, and they were rather surprised at the actions of Irene and Marjorie. For the two girls, just a little ahead, were standing on the grassy bank, making frantic signs into the adjoining meadow, and calling some mysterious person named Peter.

Handforth was already looking fierce, and his face was gradually assuming a reddish hue. Perhaps this was because Irene was calling more vigorously than Marjorie.

"This is sad!" said Pitt, shaking his head. "Handy, old man, allow me to sympathise. Instead of calling Ted, she's calling Peter. Do you know anything about this unhappy lapse?"

"Go and eat coke!" snorted Handforth gruffly.

Further conversation was interrupted by Irene herself, who, observing the approaching juniors, waved to them.

"Oh, come quickly!" she cried. "Do come and fetch Peter, please! The little darling has run away, and he's vanished!"

"Bah!" breathed Handforth, under his breath. "Little darling! All this giddy fuss over a puppy!"

It must be reluctantly recorded that Handforth was secretly delighted that Peter had vanished. And when he was called upon by Irene to go in search of Peter, he nearly refused. If he had given way to this impulse, it would have been a fatal blow to their friendship. Perhaps he dimly realised

this, for he hesitated only a second and then hurried off.

The other juniors leapt over the hedge, too. "He went into those trees!" called out Irene. "Oh, thanks ever so much for going to fetch him! I wouldn't mind, only he's quite a stranger here, and doesn't even know me yet."

"All right, Miss Irene! We'll fetch him," said Reggie.

The five juniors plunged into the trees, as though they were searching for some long-lost brother. And when they had penetrated into the heart of the little thicket—which was a kind of broken-off portion of Bellon Wood—they paused, listening.

"Peter," said Handforth gruffly, "where the dickens are you? Come out, you little beast, or I'll wring your giddy neck!"

"Such is love," said Pitt—"or, to be more exact, hate. Somewhere amid these trees lurks Handy's deadly rival!"

"Shush!" said Church. "I can hear something!"

They all listened, and the distinct sounds of wailing and yelping came to their ears. The juniors looked at one another, rather astonished. There was no mistaking that yelp. Peter was in trouble.

"Must have caught his foot in a root or something," suggested McClure. "Let's go and see! Oh, wait a minute! Strictly speaking, we're on old Smith's property! I'd forgotten that!"

"Blow Smith!" said Handforth. "Rats to Smith! Smith can go and eat cinders! And if he interferes, I'll biff him!"

Thus defiant, Handforth pushed his way through the trees, and emerged on the other side. The other juniors, not quite so reckless, hesitated for a moment. They, too, had overlooked the fact that they were on William K. Smith's property, and the sudden realisation of it made them pause.

"Dash it, it's for a lady, you know," said Archie. "I mean, even Smith wouldn't be such a foul chunk of fungus as to cut up rusty—what? We've only come after the good old puppy."

"Yes, but Smith is a power in the land," said Pitt, shaking his head. "Ponsonby Small, our beautiful Headmaster, is obliged to do everything Smith tells him. And we've been warned that a public flogging, and possibly expulsion, will be the punishment for any trespassing."

"Better go back," said Church. "It's not worth risking."

But just then Handforth came charging back.

"What's the matter with you, fatheads?" he panted. "Ain't you coming? Two of Smith's men have got that puppy tied to a fence, and they're stoning it; Come on! The little beast's nearly dead!"

"Oddslife and gadzooks!" gasped Archie. "I mean——"

"Tied to a fence, and stoning it!" exclaimed Pitt, his face becoming grim and

set. "By Jove! That makes a difference!"

Without another word, he hurried forward through the trees. All thought of possible punishment fled from his mind. If there was one thing that Pitt hated worse than another, it was to see cruelty to a dumb animal. A kind-hearted fellow himself, he absolutely boiled with sudden fury as he broke through the trees, and looked at the scene. His eyes blazed.

"Oh, the cads!" he ejaculated. "The filthy cads!"

One glance at the little dog was sufficient. The creature was in a pitiable condition now—cowed, scared, and hit by so many stones that it was in continual agony.

"We're going to make these devils pay for this!" shouted Handforth.

"Rather!"

The five juniors rushed forward, and as they swept down the little grassy slope the two men turned. They looked rather startled, for the very appearance of the boys was menacing.

Right into the open the juniors dashed, caring nothing for the fact that this incident would be reported in full to Mr. Ponsonby Small. Something else would be reported, too—something that hadn't happened yet!

"Grab 'em!" shouted Handforth.

The juniors simply hurled themselves at the men—who, valiant enough when torturing a puppy, were now stricken with fear. For these juniors were not mere infants, but strong, determined, muscular boys. In fact, they were just as big as the two men themselves—for these half-breeds were only undersized wretches, at the best.

And they possessed utterly no pluck. Handforth and Church, seizing one of the pair, and expecting a stiff fight, were disgusted beyond words when the man sagged to the ground and started wailing. Handforth could not even punch—for his code of honour forbade him hitting a man when he was down.

"Get up, you beast, and let me swipe you!" he roared fiercely.

"Say, listen!" gasped the man. "You've got me wrong——"

"Get up, confound you!" yelled Handforth. "If you don't, we'll chuck you in the river! You low-down cur! You—you——"

"If you touch us, we'll make you smart—sure!" muttered the fellow, his dark face turning sallow with fear. "I guess Mr. Smith will——"

"Hang Mr. Smith!" rapped out Handy. "We're going to make you pay for this piece of rotten cruelty. Come on, Church—into the river with him! He deserves smashing about until he's a pulp, but the coward won't stand up to a scrap!"

The other man showed a trace of fight at first, but one well-directed upper-cut from Reggie settled him. Pitt and McClure had no difficulty in keeping a tight hold on the brute, and he swore horribly.

In the meantime, Archie, his heart thumping with indignation and compassion, had rescued Irene's little dog. Peter was in a shocking condition, and one of his legs seemed to be broken.

"All right, laddie—all right!" said Archie soothingly. "Dash it all, pull your socks up, you know! Brace up, old companion, and the tissues will soon begin to absolutely buzz. That's the stuff!"

Archie had taken Peter in his arms, quite regardless of the fact that the puppy was muddy, grimy, and blood-smeared. Archie didn't even know that his clothing was being soiled. He forgot all about his elegant appearance in such a tense moment.

would tell the police, and have those half-breeds arrested for deliberate cruelty to a helpless animal.

The punishment, in fact, was just beginning.

A bend of the River Stowe came winding round in this direction, and the bank of the stream was not far off. Cyclone City itself was situated a little further along, more towards the River House School. This spot here was comparatively quiet.

The two men were rushed along to the river bank, helpless in the grasp of their determined attackers. The slight resistance they put up in no way saved them from the punishment that was their due.



Handforth and Church were the first to reach the river bank, and with one terrific heave, they sent their prisoner hurtling head-first into the stream.

The junior would have suffered torture rather than spoil his appearance, on any ordinary occasion.

And Peter, at once recognising a friend, huddled into Archie's arms, shivering furiously—not with cold, but with pain, and the effects of his recent torture. He looked at Archie with two pitiful eyes, and licked Archie's hand.

"Don't worry, old son—we'll make those blighters smart for this," said Archie soothingly. "By gad! The poisonous reptiles! I'm jolly well going to tell the police about it! Absolutely!"

Archie was quite firm in this resolve. It didn't matter to him what punishment the curs received at the juniors' hands, Archie

Handforth and Church were the first to reach the river bank, and, with one terrific heave, they sent their prisoner hurtling head-first into the stream. The man descended with a splash, and came up, gasping and spluttering and cursing.

A second later Pitt and McClure treated their own prisoner in exactly the same way. The man flew outwards and upwards, in a kind of arc, and nearly descended on his companion, who was trying to scramble out. The four juniors stood on the bank, their expressions grim and angry.

And Archie, near by, held Peter in his arms, and looked on with great satisfaction. But he considered that this was only

a tiny portion of the punishment that was due to these men.

"And now try to get out!" said Handforth grimly. "We're going to keep you in that water until you beg for mercy!"

There was no fear of the men drowning, for the river was only three or four feet deep at this point. But, by this time, attention had been attracted towards the spot, and several other men were coming up.

Looking round, Archie started.

"What ho! The Hog himself!" he exclaimed. "Dear old tulips, Mr. Smith has wafted into the good old offing."

"Good!" said Handforth. "I'm going to tell him what I think of him!"

lost none of his customary coolness. A cigar was clamped between his strong teeth. Indeed, Mr. Smith was hardly ever seen without a cigar.

"Say, what's all this?" he asked grimly. "By heck! Am I to be pestered every day by you young hounds? What's the idea of trespassing on this property, in broad daylight, in front of my very eyes?"

"We've saved this little dog from being stoned to death!" replied Pitt quietly. "And, what's more, Mr. Smith, we're going to inform the police about the inhuman brutes who committed the outrage."

"Absolutely!" said Archie stoutly.

"So that's the game, is it?" said Mr.

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"Go easy, old man!" muttered Church. "We don't want you to be sacked!"

All the juniors turned, and walked from the spot, and went to meet the approaching millionaire. The two half-breeds, in the meantime, crawled out of the river, and slunk away.

Hurrying, the juniors penetrated practically to the outskirts of the "city" itself—to a point where a concrete road was being constructed. And they paused near a noisy mortar-mixing machine, which was busy in the hands of a rough-looking gang.

Mr. William K. Smith came to a halt, and faced the grim-looking juniors. The millionaire was cold and calm, and he had

Smith. "Not content with throwing two of my men into the river, you talk about the police! Say, you've got some nerve! As for that dog, I'll show you how this thing's going to be settled!"

Although the millionaire spoke calmly, his eyes were glittering with evil fury, and, before Archie Glenthorne could realise his intentions, Mr. Smith wrenched Peter from the junior's arms, and sent him swinging into the air with one, terrific heave. The unfortunate dog struck the ground, and rolled over and over.

And in a flash Mr. Smith whipped a revolver from his pocket, took aim, and fired. Crack!

Peter, in the act of rising, pitifully hurt, turned a complete somersault, stretched out on the ground, and shuddered. The unhappy little chap was dead—instantly killed by the bullet!

CHAPTER III. THE GATHERING STORM.



WILLIAM K. SMITH laughed lightly. "Get the idea?" he asked, his voice harsh and sneering.

The five St. Frank's juniors stood absolutely still—but only for a bare second or two. They were utterly horrified by this deliberate, callous act of cold-blooded brutality.

"You cowardly hound!" shouted Reggie passionately.

Mr. Smith recoiled, his face flushing deeply.

"You'd best alter that tone—" he began.

"I won't alter any tone!" exclaimed Pitt, his voice vibrating with rage. "I think you're a beast and a brute! You ought to be horsewhipped for acting in that callous, murderous way."

"Grab him!" panted Handforth hoarsely.

"Absolutely!" shouted Archie Glenthorne. "By gad! I don't care if I'm sacked! That poor little blighter, you know! Shot down without a dashed qualm. By gad!" he added again.

The juniors were more angry than they had been for months. Mr. Smith's calm, deadly action had taken them all by surprise. And now they simply hurled themselves at the millionaire before he could call anybody to his assistance.

But this tall, wiry autocrat was made of very different stuff to the two half-breeds. Almost before he was seized he succeeded in wrenching himself away. He took a step backwards in order to avoid the full charge, and his foot caught against a thick tuft of grass.

William K. Smith staggered back, losing his balance. He tried, in vain, to recover his equilibrium, but failed. There was a quick shout of warning, but it was too late.

The German-American fell to the ground, and sat in a deep, sticky pool of mortar and cement, immediately beneath that patent mixer. One of the men employed at the works was even then in the very act of swinging the handle down.

The big container swung over, and its full contents poured down in a sticky, messy stream over the head of William K. Smith. But this would not have happened unless Handforth had been on the alert.

He saw what was coming, and he also saw that the man in charge was about to pull the lever back. But he couldn't do so, for Handforth dashed forward, hurled the fellow out of the way, and finished the work himself.

The mixer was one of those cumbersome machines which are frequently seen on the public highway—with an engine pumping and snorting, and operating a revolving mixing container—this later being spherical, with an opening at the top.

Still whirling round, the container delivered its load over Mr. Smith—who was completely enveloped in the horrible mess. The incident had come so suddenly, and so unexpectedly, that nobody had had time to act—except Handforth, who had certainly covered himself with glory—to say nothing of having covered Mr. Smith with mortar.

"Run!" gasped Church huskily.

Reggie Pitt looked round sharply. He didn't want to run—it was the last thought in his mind. But other men were coming up now, and the attitude of these foreigners was not only unfriendly, but positively dangerous. Given a free hand, there was no telling what excesses they would indulge in.

"Yes, we'd better go!" muttered Pitt. "Anyhow, Smith's got something!"

They didn't wait to see what happened to the half-buried millionaire. With one accord they fled. And if they had any doubts about the wisdom of this action, these doubts were soon dispelled. For Mr. Smith's employees gave chase at once, hurling stones and other missiles at the fleeing boys. They were rather lucky to escape without any serious hurt.

They plunged into the nearest part of Bellton Wood, and after a breathless push through the trees, they found themselves in the lane. Here, at all events, they were safe. For the enemy would not dare to commit an assault on the public road.

Several days earlier the St. Frank's Remove, at a general meeting in the gymnasium, had made a solemn declaration of war against Mr. William K. Smith and his men. So the juniors were by no means sorry at what had just happened, and they felt that they had come out of the affair with flying colours. The only touch of sadness was the unhappy demise of Peter.

But even this was merciful. For the poor little beggar had been so badly hurt by the stoning that sudden death was, perhaps, a happy release. At all events, Peter was in peace now.

The five juniors looked at one another—scratched, untidy, ruffled, and breathless. Even Archie was a bit of a wreck, but he didn't give a thought to his appearance.

"The first thing," said Pitt, "is to tell Nipper."

"Nipper?" repeated Handforth. "What for?"

"Because Nipper's the Captain of the Remove, and it's up to him to say what's going to be done," replied Pitt. "I shall advise him to tell Mr. Lee, and then get the police on the job. But what about Irene and Marjorie? They seem to have gone."

Such, however, was not the case.

For a moment later Irene and Marjorie appeared from a gap in the hedge, a little higher up the lane. And they were now accompanied by Doris Berkeley—another of the Moor View girls. At sight of the juniors, they came running down at full speed.

"Haven't you found him?" asked Irene, disappointed.

"Er—that is—I mean——"

Reggie Pitt paused, unable to express himself. All the juniors were looking so grave that the girls were at a loss. Archie tried to come to the rescue, and he gave a preliminary cough.

"We've got some rather frightful news, dear girls," he began. "It's dashed horrid, but there you are! Kindly brace yourselves somewhat, and prepare for a good old shock! I mean to say——"

"Why, Archie!" broke in Irene. "What have you been doing? You're muddled, and I—and I believe there's some blood——"

"Absolutely not!" interrupted Archie stoutly. "It's nothing, dear old thing! I—I mean—— You see, Peter—— Or, to be exact, we—— Dash it all, it's frightfully hard, don't you know!"

Irene looked at Pitt quietly.

"You tell me," she said. "I know something dreadful has happened!"

"Peter is dead," said Pitt, without beating about the bush.

Irene turned rather pale, and her companions cried out in unison.

"Dead!" they echoed. "Oh, but how?"

Briefly Pitt related what had happened, although he refrained from saying too much about the stoning. But the girls fully understood. By the time he had finished Irene was looking strangely calm. Only the glint in her eyes gave any indication of her inward fury.

"We tried our best, Miss Irene," said Handforth, after a short silence. "But how could we suspect that that brute would take out his revolver and fire? We're going to tell the police——"

"No, please don't," said Irene, her voice rather husky.

"Don't?" repeated Pitt.

"Oh, what's the good?" said the girl. "If there was any possibility of helping poor Peter, I'd agree, but it won't do any good to tell the police. There would only be a lot of publicity, and nothing done."

"Perhaps you're right, Miss Irene," said Pitt slowly. "And, after all, Smith was buried in his own concrete!"

Irene looked at the juniors steadily.

"Yes, and Mr. Smith has got to answer to—me!" she said, in a deliberate voice.

"I say, Miss Irene—don't do anything rash——" began Handforth.

"Thank you, Ted, but I have already made up my mind," said Irene quietly.

And almost at once, she turned and walked down towards Belton with Marjorie and Doris, who were so startled by the news

they had just heard that their usual chatter was stilled.

"I don't like it!" said Handforth gruffly, as they stood watching the young ladies as they walked away. "Irene's going to do something or other. And if she faces Smith, he'll only insult her. I think we ought to go down and see that everything's all right."

Reggie Pitt shook his head.

"If there's one thing worse than another, Handy, that one thing is butting in," he said. "Goodness knows, Irene showed us plain enough that she wants to do this thing off her own bat. We shouldn't be thanked for interfering now. Let's get back to the school, and tell the rest."

"Hear, hear!" said the others.

Handforth saw the commonsense of this suggestion, and soon afterwards the juniors arrived in the Triangle. As it happened, I was just crossing over to the playing fields with Tommy Watson and Sir Montie Tregellis-West. Pitt came and gave us an account of the affair.

"There's going to be trouble," I said, at length. "I shouldn't be surprised if you five fellows are expelled for this!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Church, going rather pale.

"I don't want to scare you, but you know what a beautiful Head we've got," I went on. "If we still had Dr. Stafford, he'd uphold you for what you did. But that crawling worm, Ponsonby Small, is nothing else but Smith's paid tool. And he'll drop down on you like a ton of bricks."

"I know it," said Pitt. "And we'll face the music. But we shan't be expelled. Mr. Smith won't care for the idea of us going home, and telling our people all about it. There'd be a scandal—the papers might even get hold of the story. And Smith hasn't got a leg to stand on in this affair. No, old chap, we shan't be sacked."

"If you are, it'll bring matters to a head sooner than I want," I said slowly. "Because it'll mean rebellion!"

"Rebellion?" said Handforth eagerly.

"Nothing else," I replied. "My dear fellow, you don't suppose for a minute the Remove will stand by and see you five chaps expelled? And expelled for performing an act of humanity? This business is going to make the Remove more eager for revolt than anything else. And, as I say, if you're sacked it'll bring the whole thing to a premature head. And we shall be committed to a rebellion that isn't really ripe."

Handforth's eyes gleamed.

"I hope he expels us!" he said grimly. "Blow the time not being ripe! I'm all in favour of a revolt at once! We'll demand that Dr. Stafford comes back, and this Ponsonby Small——"

"Beg pardon, young gents," interrupted Tubbs, hovering near by.

"What do you want?" asked Pitt.

"It ain't what I want, Master Pitt," said Tubbs. "But the 'Ead sent me out to find you an' Master Handforth an' the other

young gents what was concerned in fightin' Mr. Smith. Five of you, 'e said. Mr. Small wants you in 'is study at once."

"The hour," said Pitt, "has struck! This is where we learn our fate! Let's go and get it over. Mr. Smith didn't lose much time, did he? I expect he 'phoned old Small, and this is the happy result."

The five juniors, looking a bit pale, went indoors at once. And it only took about three minutes for the story to spread like wild-fire about the school. The Remove gathered together and held a meeting in the Triangle, talking excitedly about rebellion, and all sorts of impossible projects. Hal Brewster, and his chums of the River House School—who were with us at St. Frank's—took an active interest in the proceedings. And even the Fifth and Sixth became somewhat excited.

In the meantime, the five culprits were ranged before Mr. Ponsonby Small's desk, and the Head was working himself up into a fine rage. Although the juniors had attempted to tell him the facts, he refused to listen.

Mr. Small, thin, weedy, and insignificant, only succeeded in making himself look ridiculous, for he must have known that the boys had been perfectly justified in the action they had taken.

"Never," said Mr. Small, "have I heard such a tale of impertinence and insufferable audacity! Not content with trespassing upon Mr. Smith's property—in strict disobedience of my commands—you lay hands upon this gentleman, and treat him with gross indignity."

"We didn't, sir!" snorted Handforth. "He fell into the mortar himself! I'll admit we pushed him, but—"

"Silence!" shouted Mr. Small shrilly. "Your own words condemn you! I have a mind to send you all from St. Frank's in disgrace!"

"All right—we don't care!" said Handforth excitedly. "But if you do, there'll be such a commotion that you'll regret it to your dying day! We chucked those men in the river because they were torturing a dog—"

"I will hear no more!" interrupted Mr. Small. "And for once I will be merciful. You will be flogged, but not expelled. And perhaps you will remember that my orders are to be obeyed. Perhaps you will realise that Mr. Smith is our neighbour, and must be treated with respect and courtesy!"

And then a somewhat painful episode took place.

One after the other, the juniors were soundly and viciously flogged. At first they had thought about concentrating, and falling upon Mr. Small. Handforth, in fact, would have been quite ready for this move. But Reggie Pitt was more level-headed.

And largely owing to him, common sense prevailed. For they would have placed themselves utterly in the wrong if they had laid hands upon their Headmaster. Mr.

Smith was different—he had no authority over them. But Mr. Ponsonby Small had to be obeyed—at least, until a general revolt took place.

And fifteen minutes later the five juniors trooped out of the Head's study, racked with pain, and burning with a fierce, deadly indignation. And this indignation was spread over the entire Junior School as soon as the facts became known.

The Remove was not quite ready for an open revolt yet, but the fellows were getting the right kind of education! A few more incidents of this sort, and there would be no holding them in check!

CHAPTER IV.

SOMETHING MORE FOR MR. SMITH!



IRENE MANNERS walked on, silent and strangely grim.

It was most unusual for her to look anything but care-free and happy. For Irene was one of the prettiest girls at the Moor View School, and she was renowned for her silvery laugh, and sparkling blue eyes.

The change in her was all the more remarkable because it had come so suddenly. Her cheeks were pale, her eyes had a hard, cold glitter, and there was a set about her smooth little chin that boded ill for Mr. William K. Smith. Nobody would have realised that Irene could have looked so really stern.

She even made her own chums silent with a kind of awe. Marjorie and Doris, both hot with indignation, quite failed to understand Irene's calmness. They didn't see that it was the calmness of rigidly controlled anger.

"What are you going to do, Renie?" asked Marjorie.

"I don't know," replied Irene.

"You don't know?"

"Not until I'm facing Mr. Smith, I don't know," said Irene. "But I am going to face him, and I'm going to ask him what he means, and I'm going to tell him exactly what I think of him. Oh, the brute! The beast! Shooting poor little Peter like that! And killing him on the spot!"

Doris nodded.

"It's pretty rotten, I know," she said. "But wouldn't it be better to go back and tell old Bondy?"

"Miss Bond would be very indignant, but she wouldn't do anything," said Irene quietly. "And I simply couldn't go back, Doris. I must see Mr. Smith—I must! Oh! I just want to stand in front of him, and tell him what a cur he is! And I'm going to do it, too!"

"Oh, Renie!" murmured Marjorie. "Well, would it be right?"

"Right or wrong, I'm going to do it!" replied Irene. "I've never been so mad in

all my life. I feel like writing to all the newspapers, and to the Government, and to hundreds of people—just to tell them what a brutal, cowardly fiend this man is!”

They walked on, both Marjorie and Doris feeling just a little scared. And further conversation was hardly possible, for they had arrived at the River House School. It was here that Mr. William K. Smith had his headquarters.

The millionaire had bought Dr. Hogge's academy at the very beginning of his campaign, and the River House boys, in consequence, were planted on St. Frank's—much to the resentment of the Remove.

Irene and Co. walked up to the main door of the River House, and found it open. It was no longer a private dwelling, but a bustling, humming house of business. One of the big class rooms was now a general office, with typewriters tapping, and clerks as busy as bees.

Near by was Mr. Smith's own office. It was quite a sumptuous place now, luxurious furniture having been installed, in keeping with the great man's powerful position. Even the door had been changed, a huge mahogany portal having been substituted, with a class top. The name, "William K. Smith," was neatly painted on the glass.

Irene didn't hesitate a moment after entering the hall.

She walked straight to the glass-top door, and tapped upon it. Then she entered, her two friends following, now thoroughly nervous. They did not possess Irene's coolness.

Inside the door, they found themselves not in Mr. Smith's sanctum, but in a kind of outer office. And progress was impossible, because a kind of counter barred the way. But Irene quickly saw that there was a way through at the side.

A lean young man got up from a chair and came forward.

"Is Mr. Smith in?" asked Irene firmly.

"Why, sure," said the other. "I guess you have an appointment?"

"We have no appointments with Mr. Smith," returned Irene sharply. "I suppose that's his office, over there?" she added, nodding her head of golden hair towards a private door.

"Yes, but Mr. Smith is sure busy——"

"Come on, girls," said Irene. "We'll go through."

She quickly realised that unless she acted in this manner, the whole project would come to nothing. William K. Smith was a big man, and it was a most difficult matter to gain an interview.

"Say, miss, you can't go through!" said the clerk, in alarm. "Mr. Smith won't stand for this kind of thing——"

"Thank you, but I am going," said Irene, with dignity.

The man stood helpless, hardly knowing what to do. He was not prepared for this imperious young lady who had such a cold, grim look in her eye. And before the clerk could take any further action, Irene had

reached the second private door. She knocked, and entered.

"Oh, dear!" murmured Marjorie, her heart beating rapidly.

But Irene's chums did not think of deserting her. They followed close at her heels into the room—which proved to be Dr. Hogge's late drawing-room, but now hardly recognisable as such.

It was lined with bookcases, letter files, and other furniture all in polished mahogany. A rich carpet was on the floor, and Mr. Smith was sitting at his desk, using the telephone. He was quite neat and tidy in another suit, having changed quickly.

He looked up, caught sight of the girls, and for a second he allowed an expression of surprise to enter his eyes.

"I guess I'll have to cut you off," he said into the 'phone.

And he hung the receiver up, and replaced his cigar into his mouth. Then he sat back in his chair and looked at the girls with an amused smile.

"Walk right in!" he said calmly. "Take a seat, girls! I wasn't looking for the pleasure of this——"

"You brute!" said Irene, her tone filled with unutterable scorn.

Mr. Smith's smile froze on his face, and he sat forward with a jerk. He had intended being sarcastic at the expense of these schoolgirls, but all thought of this was swept away by Irene's manner.

"Say, you're fresh!" he said curtly.

Even now he did not rise—as he certainly would have done, if he had had the elementary instincts of a gentleman. But Irene was rather glad of it, for Smith's behaviour confirmed her opinion of him. Until now she had never met him face to face.

"I've come here, because I want to tell you what I think of you!" said the girl, that scorn still throbbing in her voice. "How dare you kill my poor little Peter? How dare you shoot a dear, harmless little dog?"

"Oh, so that's the game, is it?" said Mr. Smith, enlightenment coming to him. "Well, say! You sure surprise me! I thought the dog belonged to the boys. Maybe I wouldn't have shot the mongrel if I'd have known he had such a pretty mistress."

"Don't dare to insult me like that!" cried Irene, her eyes flashing. "What did it matter to whom the dog belonged? Oh, I think you're the most cowardly man I've ever seen! I'd love to see you horse-whipped—horse-whipped until you shouted for mercy!"

Mr. Smith's jaw grew firm. This interview was becoming awkward. The girls had left the door open behind them, and several of Mr. Smith's clerks were overhearing the whole conversation. And the millionaire, who had been accustomed to dealing with men all his life, was almost at a loss.

"You'd best get out of here, my girl," he said quietly. "If you don't, I won't be answerable for what happens. I am not the

man to take impudence from anybody. Do you get me?"

"You needn't be afraid—we're going," said Irene. "But I made up my mind to come here and tell you what I thought of you. Any man who can treat a dog in that way is a fiend—"

"Say, cut out that foolishness!" snapped Mr. Smith. "The dog was on my property, and I guess I had a right to shoot it. And now, if you don't quit, I'll have you taken off these premises."

"There's only one thing more, Mr. Smith," said Irene steadily. "I came here to say what I have said, and to do—this!"

Smack!

a schoolgirl of fifteen to come into his office and to deliberately slap his face, was an experience new to him.

He leapt to his feet, and grasped Irene's arm in a vice-like grip. Swinging her round the desk at the same moment, he pulled the girl towards him. She winced with the pain of that fierce grip. Even Mr. Smith didn't exactly know what he intended doing. And he certainly got no chance of proceeding any further with his plans.

For Doris and Marjorie, electrified into action by Irene's plight, leapt to her assistance. They simply jumped at Mr. Smith from behind, and tore his arms away. And



Handforth moved forward and, bending double, approached the doorway. Church and McClure followed.

It was over in a flash. Mr. William K. Smith, the multi-millionaire, sitting there at his desk, cigar in mouth, received the surprise of his life. For Irene leaned over the desk, and with her open palm she delivered a terrific slap on Mr. Smith's left cheek.

"Oh!" breathed Doris. "Oh, Renie! How perfectly ripping!"

"There!" said Irene, breathing hard. "That's what I think of you, Mr. Smith!"

The millionaire, his cheek showing the mark of that unexpected slap, lost his head for a moment. He knew well enough that some of his employees had witnessed the blow, and the thought of this indignity being public almost made him see red. For

Doris entered into the spirit of the affair in a flash.

"Quick—through the French windows!" she gasped. "There's a ditch out there!"

"Oh, splendid!" said Marjorie excitedly.

And the multi-millionaire, to his own horror and untold rage, was whirled towards the French windows by the three muscular young girls, and he was outside almost before he knew it.

He struggled, certainly; but never in all his life had he battled with three young ladies before. He hardly had a chance to gather his wits together when the climax arrived.

For the girls whirled him across a stretch of intervening ground, and pitched him head

first into the ditch. For the second time in one day, Mr. William K. Smith was covered in oozy mire from head to foot. Irene and Co. didn't even wait to see what happened to their victim.

They walked off round the garden, and reached the road.

Vaguely, they half-expected to find themselves stopped and called to account for the way in which they had treated Mr. Smith. But, having reached the road, they saw nobody but a few workmen in the distance, and at last they reached Bellton Lane, and set off towards the Moor View School.

"I can't believe it—I can't just believe it!" said Marjorie, in rather an awed voice. "We threw him in the ditch, and you smacked his face, Irene! Oh, wasn't it perfectly lovely!"

"We'll catch it hot from Miss Bond, I'll bet," said Doris practically.

But Irene shook her head.

"I don't think so," she replied. "Mr. Smith will do everything he can to hush this affair up. Why, it would be dreadful for him if the newspapers heard the story. I can see the headlines now! 'Multi-Millionaire's Face Slapped by Schoolgirl.' 'Mr. William K. Smith Thrown Into His Own Ditches!' 'Swift Retribution for Cowardly, Brutal Act.' That's what the papers would say—and perhaps worse. So I don't think Mr. Smith will do anything to make the matter more public than it is now."

"Oh, good!" said Doris, with relief. "After all, Peter was a disobedient little beggar, and——"

"Don't say a word about him!" interrupted Irene. "Poor little chap! We've punished Mr. Smith, but I'm still terribly upset."

At the same time, even Irene had to admit that Peter had been well and truly avenged.

CHAPTER V.

THE CHANGING LANDSCAPE!



TEDDY LONG ran into the gymnasium excitedly.

"I say, you chaps, heard the latest?" he gasped.

"No," said Reggie Pitt. "Is Mr. Smith building a department store in Bellton? Or has he planned a skyscraper for Caistowe?"

"Oh, don't rot!" said Teddy. "It's about the girls!"

"The girls?"

"Yes, Irene and Marjorie and Doris, you know."

"Look here, my lad, not so free with those names!" said Pitt curtly. "You little worm! If you don't show some more respect, I'll clip you over the head! I suppose you mean Miss Temple and Miss Manners and Miss Berkeley? What about them? If you trot out any of your scandal——"

"Tain't fair!" shouted Long indignantly.

"I never talk scandal! Not half an hour ago Miss Irene slapped Smith's face——"

"What?" yelled a dozen voices.

"Yes, and then she and her chums threw Smith into the ditch!" went on Teddy. "Pretty good, eh? I didn't think the girls had it in 'em! They gave him a terrible time!"

"Rubbish!" said Jack Grey. "You can't fool us like that——"

"All right—ask Nipper!" snorted Teddy indignantly.

He was famed for being a frightful little liar, and so nobody would believe a word he said—particularly when he was telling some incredible story such as this. But for once Teddy Long was right.

I came into the gymnasium at that very moment, and I was at once surrounded, and a dozen questions were fired off at me. I had met Irene & Co. at the gates, ten minutes earlier, and apparently Long had been eavesdropping—one of his usual forms of pastime.

"It's quite true," I said, looking round. "Miss Irene told me all about it. Those girls are made of the right stuff, by Jove! I never thought they'd have enough spirit."

"Oh, rather!" said Archie firmly. "I mean, Miss Irene is absolutely a person to be dashed afraid of. She can get a look in her eyes that makes a fellow positively wither at the joints."

"And you mean to say that she smacked Smith's face?" yelled Armstrong.

"Yes—and smacked it hard, too."

"Good for Irene!" said Pitt enthusiastically. "By Jove, that's taken some of the smart away! I wouldn't mind having another licking from old Small if the girls piled into Smith again. And they absolutely chucked the millionaire into his own ditch?"

"Yes," I grinned. "Irene told me all about it—and you know she's not the sort of girl to exaggerate. Besides, there were a dozen witnesses, and by this time I expect the whole village is talking about the affair."

My supposition proved to be correct. For soon afterwards Chambers & Co., of the Fifth, came up from the village in a high state of excitement and enthusiasm. But according to their version, Irene had given Smith a punch on the nose, and had knocked the millionaire backwards out of his chair. After this the three girls had dragged their victim outside, thrown him into the ditch, and half-buried him. Personally, I preferred to believe Irene's own account.

The story, in any case, proved very entertaining for the whole of St. Frank's. The fellows, seniors and juniors, delighted in it. And Irene and Co. soared up enormously in the estimation of the Remove.

Hitherto, girls had been regarded with open respect, but a little inward contempt, especially when it came to any kind of action. Irene had proved, once and for all time, that she and her chums were capable of being deadly dangerous to an enemy.

The River House boys were just as pleased

as we were. Hal Brewster and his chums fairly chuckled over the story, and Johnny Onions, the schoolboy acrobat, celebrated the occasion by turning a few double somersaults in the Triangle, and then walking round the fountain on his hands.

His brother, Bertie, was extremely melancholy. Not that this was any indication of his real feelings. For the Onions brothers were a peculiar pair. Johnny was always smiling, and Bertie was always gloomy. In fact, the latter had not been known to smile once since his arrival, and Johnny seriously declared that he had never known his brother to smile in all his life.

They were the sons of a celebrated circus king, who had unexpectedly come into a fortune. So their training had been cut short, and they found themselves at school. Johnny was no longer booked to be a circus acrobat, and Bertie had no intention of growing up a clown.

"What do you think of the affair, Onions minor?" asked Pitt. "Don't you agree that the girls did the right thing?"

Both the Onions brothers were very popular, and it was becoming quite the habit to seek Bertie's advice and opinion—not because these were valued, but because the fellows liked to hear him getting mixed up in his speech. For Onions minor had the unfortunate habit of transposing the beginnings of his words, and sometimes the effect was funny.

"Of course I do," said Onions minor solemnly. "In fact, Mr. Smith wasn't punished enough. In my opinion he ought to have been oiled in boil—pardon! I mean, boiled in oil."

"Quite right," said Pitt firmly. "I agree."

"But the girls did well," continued Bertie. "And it makes it all the better when you consider that Irene and Co. are really gritty pearls, and I'd like to congratulate them."

"Gritty pearls?" repeated Handforth blankly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, pardon!" said Onions minor. "I meant, of course, pretty girls."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Marvellous how he mixes up his giddy words!" grinned Pitt. "Pretty girl—gritty pearl! I suppose it's more or less a habit, and unless we're careful we shall be suing the dame thing."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You mean, doing the same thing!" grinned Handforth. "I was caught like that once, after listening to this fathead; but never again! I'm careful now! I never take any notice of the eely mass!"

"I say!" protested Pitt. "There's no need to call him that. After all, he's not so very slippery."

"Call him what?" demanded Handforth.

"Why, you said, an eely mass!"

"Eely mass!" gasped Handforth. "You idiot! I called him a mealy ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Now I understand!" grinned Pitt. "And

you said you weren't going to make any more bloomers! You can't be too careful after you've been listening to this chilly sap—er—sorry! Don't think I'm American—I meant to say, silly chap. Look here, Bertie Onions, can't you speak without mixing everybody up like this?"

"I fail to see how you should be so much affected," said Onions minor. "And if you think it so funny, why don't you write an article about it for the muddy stag?"

"For the which?" repeated Pitt blankly.

"For the muddy stag—pardon! I meant to say the Study Mag."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'll get muddy stag in a minute!" growled Handforth. "Besides, you're wrong—it's a school mag! Thank goodness you're a River House chap. I'd go dotty in a day if I had you for a muddy state."

"But, really, I'm not muddy at all!" said Bertie mildly.

"Who said you were?"

"You did!" said a dozen voices. "You said he was in a muddy state!"

"You jilly sossers!" roared Handforth. "I said I wouldn't have him for a study mate."

"You should say what you mean!" exclaimed Pitt severely. "Before we get entangled any further, I think we'd better finish with Onions minor at once. The best thing is to get him low!"

"Punch him on the nose, I suppose?" asked Handforth eagerly.

"My hat! I meant to say, let him go!" said Pitt, with a start. "It's awful when you get mixed up like that—you say things you don't mean at all! Hallo! There goes the tell for be! Oh, rats! The bell for tea!"

The juniors crowded out of the gymnasium, chuckling, and Bertie Onions confided to his brother that, after all, Handforth was only an ear mass. And when Johnny pointed out that Handforth's ears weren't at all massive, Bertie explained that he had meant to call him a mere ass.

Tea, of course, was not the same merry meal as of old.

The fellows were compelled to feed in the dining-hall, for junior studies were no longer available—being, in fact, turned into bedrooms for the convenience of the River House contingent.

But the Fifth was coming to the rescue in a manner that did them credit. Until this situation had arisen, the Fifth had held aloof, considering themselves too dignified to mix with mere juniors.

But of late they had changed their tone, and it was now becoming quite a habit to invite Remove fellows to tea. And a much better understanding was springing up between the Remove and the Fifth—which would probably be of some significance later on, I privately told myself.

Chambers & Co. had been the first to start the new vogue, and a good many other Fifth-

Formers had not been slow to follow. So, although half the Remove had to have tea in Hall, the other half were guests in senior studies. So the position was not quite so bad.

After tea, Tommy Watson and Tregellis-West and I went out for a walk, to inspect the neighbourhood. We hadn't been since the previous day, and it might be supposed that everything would be just the same.

But miraculous changes were taking place within the space of twenty-four hours just now. Cyclone City itself—that straggling settlement of wooden shacks—had sprung into being between sunrise and sunset, and there was no telling what other marvels Mr. Smith's organisation could produce.

His plans were no longer a dead secret.

This enormously rich Chicago manufacturer—backed by tens of millions of dollars—had bought up an enormous lot of ground in Bellton and Caistowe. And it was his intention to construct a great factory at Bellton, and thus turn the peaceful rural village into a dirty, noisy, industrial centre.

And Mr. Smith intended to manufacture motor-cars like sausages—not on the style of the celebrated Mr. Ford, but in quite a different way. The Smith car was a cheaper product, and it was to be put on the market at such a low figure that the whole trade would be revolutionised. This, at all events, was William K. Smith's scheme.

And Cyclone City was the beginning. It was the camp where his workmen lived. And already the first sign of the building operations had commenced. For great lorries had been coming and going all day, bearing iron girders and building materials of every description.

A great crane had been fixed up, and it towered on its three spidery supports, high in the sky. Willard's Island, that peaceful haven in the centre of the River Stowe, was now changing its appearance. No trees had had been cut down yet, but we felt sure that they would soon fall under the ruthless hand of this devastating monster.

A concrete road was now being made from Bellton Lane to the scene of activities. The factory itself was not yet commenced, for Smith was concentrating all his attention on building a power-station.

Once this was up, and electric power being generated in vast quantity, the real work would begin. And such were Mr. Smith's rush methods that he had actually planned to have this power-station built and completely equipped in a matter of days.

The skeleton work was being prepared now, and as we stood on a rising piece of ground

near the playing-fields, we could look down at the bustling scene of activity.

At first I had thought that the power-station was to be built on the old River House playing-fields, but this supposition was wrong. This spot was the site for the factory itself. The power station was being put up nearer the river, in the centre of a big, flat meadow which, previously, had been the grazing-ground of a few harmless cows.

This meadow was locally known as Curdle's Paddock—having belonged, I believe, to a Bannington dairyman—whose name, according to public opinion, was very appropriate to his wares.

It was really a paddock no longer, because practically all the grass had been trampled out of existence by countless feet, by the wheel marks of hundreds of vehicles, and so forth. And the centre of it was occupied by the foundations for the power-station.

Cyclone City was further towards the River House—Curdle's Paddock being outside the limits of the "town." And this latter was now quite a feature of the district.

It not only boasted a saloon, but a vast general store, and even a dance-hall. A cinema was talked about, too. Mr. Smith knew how to deal with men, and he had provided his horde with every kind of amusement for their leisure hours.

The men were prohibited from dealing with any local tradesmen—and this was one of the reasons why the whole district was up in arms against this impudent German-American. Even Bannington, which was not greatly affected, had organised its own indignation meetings.

And the London newspapers, while giving great prominence to the whole subject, did not seem to grasp the importance of it. Most of the articles were in a light vein, treating the affair as a kind of joke. But the local inhabitants didn't regard it as a joke at all.

"They're progressing at marvellous speed," I said grimly. "They've already got the foundations laid for the power-station, and it looks to me as if they're going to build a dam across the Stowe."

"But that'll cause flooding, won't it?" asked Watson.

"Not if it's done properly," I replied. "And you can bet that Mr. Smith has got a staff of efficient engineers. He means to use the river as motive-power for his dynamos. Of course, I don't know anything about the system he means to adopt, but it's bound to be up-to-date."

"I've heard it's a marvellous new invention, dear old boys," said Sir Montie. "It's a pity the beast couldn't have chosen some other part of the country, though. Things are frightful round here."

"Including the roads," said Watson. "It's practically impossible to do any cycling nowadays, between here and Caistowe. This continuous lorry service has torn the surface up to shreds."

We had our walk all round the affected

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area, and were certainly impressed by the things we saw. The district, instead of being peaceful, was now humming with industry. But it made our blood boil when we realised that none of the British unemployed were reaping the slightest benefit.

Something would have to be done—and my mind was already at work.

CHAPTER VI.

HANDFORTH DEMANDS ACTION.



THE Ancient House lobby hummed like a beehive.

Tommy Watson and Tregellis-West and I, returning after our walk, could hardly fight our way through the crush of excited, clamouring fellows. Something, evidently, had happened.

I had noticed that a similar kind of commotion was vaguely sounding from the lobby of the College House. So the excitement, whatever it was, affected the Monks equally as well as the Fossils.

"What's all the row here?" I asked, trying to push my way through.

"I know not, O Owl of Wisdom!" said Reggie Pitt, who was near me. "Even as thou, I am attempting to discover the Candle of Enlightenment! In other words, there's something doing."

"The fellows seem to be pretty indignant, anyhow," I remarked.

"Rather!" said Pitt. "Let's make one big shove, and pretend we're trying to get into an Underground train."

By a process of much pushing, we found ourselves in the middle of the throng. Here further progress was stopped, and we were facing Handforth, who talked away so rapidly that his words sounded like double Dutch.

"Cease, O babbling brook!" gasped Pitt. "Allow the flow to come more evenly. If you go on at this rate, you'll burst a giddy blood-vessel!"

"Haven't you seen it?" hooted Handforth.

"Seen what?"

"The notice."

"Oh, the notice?" I repeated. "So that's the cause of all the commotion. I suspected as much. So the delightful Ponsonby has been at it again, eh? What's the latest?"

By a piece of luck, the crowd swayed so much at this moment that Pitt and I were carried through the press until we found ourselves in front of the baize-covered board, and we were enabled to read the fresh notice which had been pinned there since tea-time. And this is what we saw:

"NOTICE TO THE JUNIOR SCHOOL.

In consequence of the recent unseemly disturbances, and the repeated complaints which have reached my ears concerning

insolence by junior boys towards Mr. William K. Smith, I hereby give notice that the following regulations come into force without delay.

"1. All boys belonging to the junior school are strictly forbidden to leave the school premises unless provided with a pass, signed by my own hand. Or,

"2. Unless accompanied by a member of the Sixth Form. It must not be understood that one senior can escort a dozen juniors. Only one junior can pass out of the school bounds at a time, and he must remain with his escort throughout the entire period of his liberty.

Any breach of these new regulations will be visited by swift and drastic punishment. And it must be understood that seniors escort juniors at their own responsibility, and will be held answerable for any misconduct that may take place.

"PONSONBY SMALL.

"(Headmaster.)"

Pitt looked at me, and I looked at Pitt.

"My only aunt!" said Reggie. "This, without question, is the most staggering blow that ever made the old walls shake! Gated! The whole junior school! These concessions aren't worth a cent!"

I took a deep breath.

"Of course they're not," I replied. "They're just put in as a bluff. And Mr. Small is a fool to think that we shall be deceived. We know in advance that he'll never sign a pass for anybody."

"And you won't catch any of the Sixth-Formers agreeing to act as escort," replied Pitt. "Unless it's a fellow like Conroy major, who might take his young brother out. And, in any case, what's the good of a junior going out alone, with a giddy senior to watch over him like a warder? No wonder the fellows are excited."

Mr. Small's latest bombshell had struck both Houses at St. Frank's with devastating force. The seniors, although not affected, were inclined to be highly indignant. Fenton, the school captain, condemned the headmaster's action, and regarded it as a direct incitement to rebellion. But Fenton could do nothing, although he went straight to the headmaster and pleaded with Mr. Small, who greatly modified the new rules.

"He won't shift an inch," said Fenton, when he reported the result to Morrow and two or three other prefects. "Personally, I wash my hands of the whole affair. I believe in discipline, but if the kids break out into revolt, I shan't lift a finger to stop them."

"Rather not!" agreed Morrow. "If ever they were justified in rebelling against tyranny, they're justified now. Why, it's unheard of! Small's simply converting the junior school into a crowd of prisoners, with practically every liberty gone."

"He thinks he's all-powerful, and can do just as he likes," growled Fenton. "But it only proves his inefficiency and utter failure to understand boys. They're not quite such a crowd of worms as Mr. Small imagines. There's going to be trouble, Morrow—mark my words!"

"The sooner the better," said the other prefect glumly. "I'll welcome it."

If Mr. Small had heard his prefects speaking in this way, he would not have been exceedingly delighted. But they were, after all, human. And the Remove knew almost at once that the seniors were in sympathy with them. And that meant a great deal.

Handforth, as usual, was wild with excitement, and advocated instant action. He called a meeting together in the gymnasium, and it was attended by the entire Remove, including Boots and Co., of the College House. And the enthusiasm was at fever pitch.

But I shook my head as I looked at these demonstrations of coming rebellion. As I told Reggie Pitt, the whole policy was wrong. There was utterly no sense in revolting against Mr. Ponsonby Small.

I felt convinced that Small had received his orders from Smith that afternoon. It wasn't Mr. Small's notice on the board, but William K. Smith's. And what on earth was the good of butting against the tool, and allowing the master-mind to go on his own way?

But the juniors didn't think. The rank and file of the Remove was not celebrated for its deep insight, and Handforth was one of the worst offenders in this way. As straight as a die, and one of the best fellows breathing, he was altogether too prone to glimpse the surface, and ignore everything that lay beneath. And the Remove followed him almost to a man.

"I call upon the Remove to support me at once!" shouted Handforth, after working himself up to a fine pitch. "Are we going to stand these new restrictions?"

"Never!"

"Are we going to be bottled up in the school like convicts in Dartmoor?" roared Handforth.

"No, no!" came the thunder of voices.

"I've never heard of such a thing in all my life!" continued Edward Oswald, thumping one fist into his other palm. "It's an insult and a disgrace! Just because we express our free opinion about this German-American beast, the Head treats us like slaves. I call upon you to support me in an instantaneous revolt!"

"Hear, hear!"

"The time is ripe for us to rise and to demand Small's dismissal!" shouted Handforth boldly. "It's impossible to live under these new restrictions. How many of you will back me up and strike against this tyranny?"

"We're all ready, old man!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll revolt now, and grab old Small and chuck him out!" shouted Armstrong. "We'll make him run the gauntlet to the village, and then boot him into the first goods train that comes by!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Good old Handy! We're with you!"

Handforth looked over the crowd with gleaming eyes.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "We'll start this revolt at once—this very evening! It's no good waiting. The sooner we start, the better. And we'll show Mr. Viper Small that we don't care a fig for him or his orders!"

"Hear, hear!"

"That's right—he's a viper all right!"

"Wait a minute!" came a loud, sharp voice from the rear. "Before you fellows go any further, wouldn't it be a good idea to consider the wisdom of this drastic action?"

The crowd turned and glared at me—for mine was the voice that had interrupted.

CHAPTER VII.

THE VIPER OF ST. FRANK'S.



HANDFORTH looked at me aggressively.

"Who told you to come butting in?" he asked. "We know you of old! Always trying to delay matters, instead of going straight at it when the time's ripe. But this time we're determined!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll stick to you, Handy!"

I walked up to the platform—which, in reality, was a table—and climbed aloft. Handforth didn't welcome my arrival.

"You clear off!" he said. "I'm addressing this meeting, and you're not going to push me out of it! What's the idea?"

"Well, I happen to be skipper of the Remove, and I think I've got a certain amount of say in the affairs of the Form," I replied grimly. "And when I see a fellow deliberately inciting the chaps to a revolt that's bound to fail, it's time to butt in."

"Bound to fail?" snorted Handforth. "You're mad!"

"That's just where you're wrong—I'm sane," I replied. "You fellows have made the mistake of allowing yourselves to be carried away by indignation and enthusiasm. That's a fatal blunder that's caused many a dismal failure. When it comes to a revolt, the leader ought to think of everything well in advance, and have his plan of campaign mapped out in every detail."

"Piffle!" said Handforth. "This affair's different."

"You clear off, Nipper!" shouted Armstrong.

"We're going to revolt!"

"Rather!"

"Good old Handy!"

The crowd roared with approval, even the College House fellows supporting Handforth with enthusiasm. This was because Handy's policy appealed to the popular imagination.

"There you are!" said Handforth triumphantly. "Can't you see you're absolutely unsupported? The best thing you can do, my son, is to climb down before you make yourself ridiculous!"

"Whether I look ridiculous or not, I'm going to do my best to make you fellows realise the deadly gravity of this proposed revolt," I said, turning to the eager crowd. "Don't imagine for a minute that I'm against it. A revolt is bound to come, unless Mr. Small alters his tactics. But before breaking out into rebellion, and showing our hand, there's an enormous lot of preparation work to be done. It's a fatal mistake to act unprepared."

"But we are prepared!" yelled Griffith.

"We're ready to rise now!" shouted Armstrong.

"Hear, hear!"

"Get down, you ass—we don't want to hear you!"

I glared at the hostile Removites.

"Well, you're going to hear me, whether you want to or not!" I retorted. "I'm the captain, and you'd better——"

"Resign—resign!"

"Hurrah!"

"We'll elect Handforth instead."

"Good old Handy—he's the chap!"

"Clear off, Nipper—you're too weak! Resign—resign!"

For an instant I blazed up with sudden anger at this absolute treachery, for it was nothing less. Just because the fellows disliked my argument, they turned on me, and ignored all the periods of stress I had pulled them through in the past. I was on the point of resigning on the instant, in deference to their shouts. But I allowed this moment of fury to subside, and common sense prevailed. I felt that my responsibility was too great.

"Listen to me, you blockheads!" I shouted sternly. "And if you still persist in your attitude after I've done, I'll surrender. But you've got to know the facts of the case before I let go of the reins."

"We know the facts!"

"Yes, you know that Mr. Small is headmaster, and you know that he's just inflicted some more restrictions on us," I exclaimed. "But what about this revolt you talk so glibly about? Who's going to lead it?"

"I am!" said Handforth promptly.

"All right, we'll take it for granted that Handforth is going to lead you into a position from which there is no backing



"By gee! Dere's sure one of dem schoolboys around!" exclaimed a thick voice, accompanied by a leering laugh. "I guess dis is where I does somethin', fo' sure!"

out," I continued. "Because, don't forget, once you've rebelled against authority, there's going to be a bill to pay. It can't be divided evenly. Either you win, or the Head wins—and the loser's got to pay the piper."

"The Head's the one who'll lose!" shouted Armstrong.

"Hear, hear!"

"You're talking out of your hat, Nipper!"

"I'm talking calmly, and without allowing my imagination to be warped," I replied. "And I'm just trying to make you fellows see a little sense. And if anything happens after this, don't turn on me, as skipper, and say that I didn't give you a full and complete warning. If you break into rebellion now, you'll absolutely fail!"

"Rats!"

"The whole Remove is combined and determined."

"Yes, and the seniors will back us up."

"Exactly," I agreed. "I'm not denying that. But what about preparations? What about plans for holding out against any possible siege? How can you expect to beat Mr. Small when you're nothing but a disorganised rabble? You'll probably cause a riot, and there'll be plenty of excitement for a few hours, but after that failure is certain to come. Listen to me, and be warned. Failure is the certain result of hasty, ill-considered action."

The Remove was not quite so boisterous now.

"Absolutely!" agreed Archie Glenthorne from somewhere. "The dear old scout is correct. I mean to say, I can't think of anything more utterly shredded than a revolt just now. Listen to Nipper, and he'll do the rest."

"Good!" said Pitt. "I'm with you, Nipper."

"Same here!" said Watson and a few others.

But Handforth stepped forward, waving his arms excitedly.

"Are you going to listen to this slow-coach?" he demanded hotly. "What does it matter about being prepared? This isn't like an ordinary rebellion—plans and preparations ain't necessary. All we'll do is to chuck Small out, and take possession of the school!"

"Hurrah!"

Handforth's words were like a match to gunpowder. The juniors became excited again in a moment, forgetting all that I had said to them.

"Besides, you don't suppose for a minute that we shall be unsupported, do you?" went on Handforth, seizing his advantage. "Small's a viper—a snake in the grass! The Fifth and Sixth hate him, and as soon as the Remove rebels the seniors will join in with us."

"If I could be certain of that, I'd say, 'Go ahead!'" I put in grimly. "But if I know anything of the seniors, they won't forsake their dignity on behalf of the Remove. When it comes to the point, they'll remain neutral. And that'll mean the sack for all the ringleaders of this ridiculous rebellion."

"Oh, come off it, old man!"

"I'll come off when I've finished, and not before!" I replied angrily. "I wish to goodness I could drive some sense into your thick skulls! Don't think that I'm wishy-washy, and lacking in loyalty to the Remove. It's just the opposite. It's because I want the Remove to win that I advocate delay. Just give me a week, and then this rebellion will happen in earnest."

"A week!"

"Don't be mad!"

"A week, at the very least," I insisted. "My proposal is to appoint a secret committee at once—now, at this meeting. It will consist of eight fellows—four belonging to each House. They can be elected straight away. And the secret committee will get to work at once, and make full and elaborate plans for a settled and determined revolt. And then, when the zero hour comes, the Remove will be prepared!"

"And what about in the meantime?" asked Handforth. "We've got to remain like prisoners, I suppose?"

"Yes; but it won't hurt us much—for a week," I replied. "And there'll always be the anticipation of what's coming to cheer us up. Let me tell you seriously that all this talk about direct action is wrong. It'll lead to nothing but dismal failure."

The Remove growled and grumbled.

"Don't take any notice of him," exclaimed Armstrong. "He's always talking about delays. If we wait a week Mr. Small might adopt some new measures that will put a stop to everything."

"Just what I say," said Handforth quickly. "We can't afford to wait. And preparations aren't half so necessary as Nipper makes out. Blow him! Who's ready to follow me to Small's study and kick him out?"

"I am!"

"Same here!"

"We're all with you, Handy!"

The Remove, fired by the sudden picture of Mr. Small being hurled out, blazed up into fresh excitement. I turned to them, and I knew that I had failed. I was simply quivering with rage.

"All right—have your own way!" I shouted savagely. "But don't blame me for what happens. I'm sick of the whole crowd of you! You're putting the noose round your own necks, and you're too blind to see it."

I jumped off the table, thoroughly disgusted, and a groan went up as I did so. Yet I knew well enough that most of the fellows were decent enough, and ready to support me to the limit. It was only their present excited indignation which caused them to support Handforth's "direct action" policy.

However, the ambitious plan of the Remove received a somewhat nasty jar within the next minute. For nobody in the gymnasium had observed a face at one of the windows. But that face, as it happened, belonged to Mr. Ponsonby Small.

The Head, noticing an almost entire lack of juniors in the Triangle, and hearing an excited buzz from the gym., had come along to investigate. He was, indeed, rather curious to find out the effect of his latest edict.

And, unfortunately for the Remove, or perhaps, fortunately, Mr. Small stood by the gymnasium window and listened for several minutes before going round to the door.

He went into the building, and stood just inside the entrance, gazing at the excited crowd.

"Indeed!" he said sneeringly. "And what is this? May I inquire the reason for this disgraceful commotion? Perhaps some boy will be generous enough to enlighten me on the subject."

The fellows turned, startled by the sudden appearance of their enemy. A few minutes earlier they had been advocating pitching Mr. Small out of St. Frank's. But now the Head stood before them, the greater part of their determination seemed to ooze away. They could only stand and stare.

But Handforth was made of different stuff.

"Now's our chance!" he shouted. "Go it, you chaps!"

The chaps didn't move.

"Well?" said Mr. Small sourly. "I am waiting for you to pick me up and throw me into the road. A very fine programme! An exceedingly entertaining diversion, no doubt! Upon my soul! Your impudence is

even greater than your unbounded effrontery! Handforth, am I to understand that you are the leader in this perfectly disgraceful scene?"

"We—we've determined to revolt against your orders, sir," said Handforth, foolishly believing that he would receive support. "We're not going to be trampled on like doormats. We want our liberty!"

"You impudent young puppy!" shouted Mr. Small. "How dare you!"

Handforth waved his arms.

"Now, you chaps, the time's arrived!" he roared.

Some of the juniors made a movement towards Mr. Small, and I must confess that the despicable Ponsonby behaved better than I had given him credit for. When it came to the pinch, he maintained a trace of dignity, when dealing with juniors, at all events.

"Back!" he thundered. "Stand still, every one of you! The first boy who moves will be expelled from the school within the hour! By heavens! I'll show you that I mean to have obedience, and that discipline is discipline!"

The Remove stopped, startled by the firmness in the Head's voice. It was a crucial moment. If the Head had shown cowardly weakness at that second he would have been swept off his feet and the Remove would have been lost, for they could never have finished this revolt victoriously.

"Oh, so you have not quite taken leave of your senses yet?" said Mr. Small contemptuously. "As for you, Handforth, I will take into consideration the fact that you have been egged on by these foolish boys, and I will not punish you more severely than the rest. The whole Remove will go indoors at once and march straight to bed."

"Oh!"

"For the period of one week there will be no supper, and breakfast will consist of bread and water," said the Head grimly. "I will show you that I am here to be obeyed, and not to be flouted. And if there is any more talk of revolt, the ring-leaders will be instantly expelled!"

"But look here, sir——" began Handforth.

"One more word, boy, and I will show no mercy!" shouted the Head harshly.

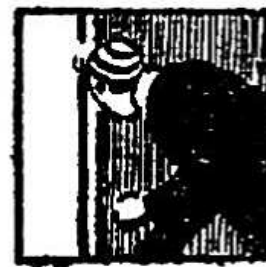
He turned before Handforth could reply and stood aside.

"Form into a double line!" he commanded. "Go straight indoors, and up to your dormitories! March!"

And the Remove, rather cowed by Mr. Small's unexpected firmness, tamely marched indoors. The revolt was nipped in the bud, although I had an idea that the postponement was only temporary. With Mr. Small out of the way there would be a different feeling in the Remove ranks.

CHAPTER VIII.

INVESTIGATIONS!



"AND that," said Glenthorne, "is that!"

The Remove was in the dormitory in the Ancient House. And Archie had just popped in to say good-night. He occupied a little room of his own, further along the passage.

"Of course you'll allow me to point out, dear old lads of the village, that it comes a bit dashed hard on a chappie like me," he went on. "I wasn't in favour of a rebellion at all—what? And here I'm doomed to bread and water for a week, by gad! A seamy prospect; but I dare say we shall live through it."

"Yes, you can easily live through it!" growled Armstrong. "You've got a valet to look after you, and you've only got to order eggs and bacon in your bed-room and you'll get it! Lucky beast!"

"Impolite; but I freely forgive you, old lad!" said Archie gracefully.

It was an hour or so before the Remove's correct bedtime, and the fellows were indignant and angry; but their excitement had died down considerably. Mr. Small's prompt and drastic punishment had had effect.

"And you call yourselves supporters!" said Handforth bitterly. "A crowd of rotten weaklings, that's all you are! We had the chance to go for Small baldheaded, and you let him wipe his boots on you!"

"Oh, don't be a fool!" snapped Armstrong. "What else could we do? I wasn't looking for the sack, even if you were. Mr. Small's the Head, don't forget, and his word is law. In my opinion, you were jolly lucky to get off so lightly. I thought he was going to expel you!"

"Huh! He'd better try!" snorted Handforth. "I'm disgusted with all of you! But it's Nipper's fault. If he hadn't jawed at you before Small came in, you'd have followed me. What d'you mean by it, you rotter?" he added, turning on me.

I grinned.

"Steady, old man," I said. "We're not going to quarrel. We've always been good pals, and always will be, I hope. Everything has happened for the best, and now I believe you fellows will listen to me, and drop all this talk until next week. In the meantime we'll get busy and appoint a committee."

This seemed to please the Remove immensely. And although a prefect came along and saw lights out soon afterwards, the fellows kept talking for a full hour or more. And it was finally decided that we should leave matters to be completely settled on the morrow, when the College House fellows could attend. All talk of an instantaneous revolt was abandoned. And

I felt that my efforts had not been in vain, after all.

"You can't beat calm, well-considered action," I said quietly. "I'm not blaming Handforth for wanting instantaneous rebellion, because I feel that way myself. If you consider for a moment, though, you'll see that it's a bad blunder. Success can only come when everything is properly mapped out. When the time is ripe I'll strike, and you can rely on me to do my very utmost to bring victory. Common sense is the watchword for this week."

And the Remove went to sleep, feeling a little more satisfied.

The immediate prospect was certainly pretty ghastly, but the knowledge that revolt was coming bucked the fellows up.

Bread and water; restricted to school grounds; no studies, and all sorts of other things. Life for the junior school was hardly worth living, especially for the Remove.

But, as I pointed out, it could only be temporary. And the Remove could see the mistake of impulsiveness. Already they were consigned to bread and water for a week in consequence of ill-considered action.

Handforth, however, was unconvinced.

He refused to go to sleep, and even after most of the other fellows had dozed off, he sat on the edge of his bed, addressing the Remove, and urging them to have some sense. He declared that he was quite willing to go at once and yank Mr. Small out of his study, and kick him over the Triangle wall.

And the Remove took no notice. The reason was simple, because the Remove was asleep. That is, with the exception of Church and McClure, who lay miserably in bed, listening to this seditious talk, wondering when they would be allowed to slumber. At last, towards ten o'clock, Church became positively restive.

"I say, old man, chuck it!" he said peevishly. "It's no good chewing the rag like this! Why not go to sleep, and leave everything till to-morrow!"

"Good idea!" mumbled McClure drowsily.

"Oh, I suppose you chaps are going to turn against me now?" said Handforth bitterly. "My own study-mates reject me. You rotters! You traitors!"

"But look here, Handy——"

"I don't want to hear another word—I'm fed-up!" said Handforth.

He rose from the bed, and Church and McClure thought that he was about to climb between the sheets. But no such luck. Handforth went to one of the windows, raised it, and gazed moodily out into the night.

It was only just after ten, and comparatively early, although late for the Remove. And the leader of Study D looked over towards the gleaming, blazing lights of Cyclone City. They could plainly be seen from the dormitory windows, for Mr. Smith's American-like township was blazing with light at night. Indeed, work progressed,

one way and another, for the full twenty-four hours of every day. There was never any complete stillness in that camp.

"Of course, Smith's at the bottom of the whole giddy business!" muttered Handforth, looking at the matter in its true light at last. "He's the giddy ringleader! All the same, Ponsonby Small is the Head, and he's the man we've got to fight against!"

This line of reasoning was quite wrong, but Handforth didn't see it. His attention became attracted by two moving figures in the Triangle below. He strained his eyesight to see them more clearly. And then he gave a start of recognition as the two figures paused, and a match was struck.

"Small and Smith!" muttered Handforth tensely.

There was no question of it. Mr. William K. Smith, the millionaire, was lighting a cigar, and the flare of the match revealed his own face, and the smaller, weaker face of Ponsonby Small.

"By George!" murmured Handforth. "They're going out together! Conspiring over something, I'll bet! This proves without question that they're hand-in-glove!"

Apparently Handforth had founded his celebrated character of Trackett Grim on himself. Here he was, making a deduction that was obvious to a simpleton. Everybody knew that Ponsonby Small was nothing more nor less than the millionaire's factotum. But Handforth seemed to imagine that he had made a discovery.

And his imagination was fired.

He watched the two figures as they left the Triangle and went away across the playing-fields, obviously towards Cyclone City.

As soon as they had disappeared into the gloom Handforth turned away from the window and went to Church and McClure. He stood between their two beds, and gazed at them in disgust. Here, in this critical position, his own chums were so indifferent that they had fallen asleep.

"Wake up, you lazy bounder!" he whispered fiercely. "We're going out!"

"Eh?" said Church, aroused out of a doze.

"Get your things on, and make haste about it," said Handforth. "I've decided to make some investigations."

"Oh, my goodness!" groaned Church blankly.

McClure sat up in bed, defiant.

"You rotter!" he muttered. "If you think we're going to risk the sack on your behalf, you've made a bloomer! You know what Ponsonby Small said about breaking bounds——"

"Can't help that," interrupted Handforth grimly. "I've just seen Small go out with the Hog. They've gone to Cyclone City—and that's where we're going too. We're going to creep in, under cover of darkness, and find out what the game is. Get a hustle on!"

"How can we creep in under cover of darkness when Cyclone City is full of

lights?" demanded Church, with the air of one who asks an answerable riddle. "Don't be silly."

"Are you going to get dressed willingly, or shall I biff you?" asked Handforth.

He slowly rolled up his sleeves, and prepared for battle. For one instant it seemed that Church and McClure were about to revolt. It wouldn't have been the first time either. But they decided that it was rather an inopportune time just now. There was no necessity to awaken the entire Remove, and possibly the Third and Fifth as well.

And so, reluctantly, they climbed out of bed and got dressed.

Handforth did the same, and by the time they were all ready, he was as keen as mustard on the projected trip. There was something exciting about it, for this was the first time that any Remove fellows had planned to penetrate into the heart of Cyclone City at night.

Whether they would succeed remained to be seen.

CHAPTER IX. IN CYCLONE CITY.



CYCLONE CITY was fairly quiet.

The outskirts of the encampment near the St. Frank's playing-fields were divided off by means of a high fence. Not that this proved any barrier to Handforth and Co. They succeeded in climbing over without any difficulty.

"I'd better go first, and you chaps can follow," breathed Handforth. "Just leave everything to me, and we'll get some valuable data."

"We're more likely to get the sack!" murmured Church.

"Eh?"

"Oh, nothing!" said Church.

"Look here, my lad, none of this muttering to yourself!" said Handforth darkly. "I suppose you're afraid to speak out loud? The fact is, you're both funky! You're scared stiff! I never thought my study-mates were a couple of cowards!"

Church and McClure glared ferociously.

"You—you rotter!" snapped McClure. "What the dickens have we got to be funky about? Even if we're collared, we shan't be shoved against a fence and shot! But the whole thing is dotty—that's all. We're only sticking to you to bug you out of trouble."

Handforth was rather nonplussed by this frank admission, and it is possible that the argument would have developed into a scrap. But just at that moment some figures walking near by caused the juniors to drop in the grass. And by the time the incident was over Handforth had forgotten the argument.

The three juniors crept on, keeping to the

shadows as much as possible. And this undertaking was not so very simple, after all. Discovery would mean capture, and possibly Mr. Smith himself would come on the scene.

And when Mr. Small got to know of the affair the punishment would not merely consist of a flogging, but something far more drastic.

But Handforth and Co. were cautious. They had no desire whatever to put Mr. Ponsonby Small's temper to the test. Fortunately, this part of the camp was silent and still. Even the "streets" were deserted. For the greater number of William K. Smith's workmen were asleep.

What little activity there was, indeed, was taking place on the other side of Cyclone City—towards Curdle's Paddock, where the foundations for the power-station were already being laid.

Handforth and Co. progressed slowly and cautiously.

Church and McClure had no idea as to their leader's plans. And if the truth must be told, Handforth's own ideas were very vague. He was simply prowling round, and doing a bit of scouting work. If he had been asking for trouble, he couldn't have come to a better place.

The wooden shacks, at close quarters, proved to be neat, well-built, and thoroughly weather-proof. The grass of the meadows had been churned up by constant traffic, and then beaten down again. The result was hardly pleasant. The juniors found themselves progressing through patches of thick mud, dropping every now and again into pot-holes, and tripping over unseen obstacles.

One of the larger buildings loomed up near by, and the windows of this were brilliantly lighted. The three juniors came to a pause at the angle of an adjacent building, and considered.

"Better go in the other direction!" murmured Church. "We don't want to risk anything by getting near those lights."

This was a most unhappy remark. Handforth himself had been about to suggest a detour, but now that Church had put forth the proposition, it was naturally up to Handforth to decide the opposite.

"Rats!" he whispered. "We'll go and squint in one of these windows."

"Yes, but look here, Handy——"

"My mind," said Handforth, "is made up!"

He spoke very much like a general giving orders for battle, and Church and McClure knew that argument was worse than useless. Once Handforth made up his mind, a whole team of wild horses wouldn't shift him.

Church silently patted McClure on the back.

"This is going to be the finish, old man!" he breathed sadly. "It'll mean the sack for all of us to-morrow!"

"Looks like it!" said McClure sorrowfully. Handforth glared.

"Fathead!" interrupted Handforth. "Didn't George! If I hear you chaps conspiring against me any more, I'll knock you sideways! I've just remembered that this big building is the saloon! That's a very important discovery."

"Marvellous!" said McClure. "But where's the importance come in?"

"Perhaps some of these rotters are conspiring in there, and we may be able to overhear some of the plot!" said Handforth tensely. "In that case, there's no telling what great results may follow."

Church and McClure sighed. Words were useless. Handforth seemed to imagine that he and his chums were in the midst of a gang of desperate criminals, where plots were being hatched all through the night. He couldn't bring himself to realise that the camp was a perfectly harmless organisation of honest workmen, who were simply there because they were being paid a high wage by their millionaire employer.

Handforth moved forward, and, bending double, approached the doorway. Church and McClure followed. And even Church and McClure felt a thrill of anticipation as they gazed into the saloon. The scenes here were so novel that they could not fail to be interested.

The juniors were looking into the saloon, as Handforth had declared. It was a rough-and-ready place, with a big bar, containing countless bottles at the far side. A typically American bar-tender was in charge, and a few rough men were lounging there, drinking.

Others were seated at various tables, playing cards—gambling. Piles of money lay on the tables, to say nothing of glasses and bottles. For a moment it seemed to the juniors that they had been miraculously transported to Western America.

Handforth, to tell the truth, felt a slight pang of disappointment. Everything here was orderly. The card-players were quiet and well-behaved, even laughing good-naturedly at their games. A murmur of conversation came out through the window, but there was no real excitement. And Handforth couldn't see a single sign of a revolver. This was certainly disappointing.

"Disgraceful!" breathed Handforth, feeling that he had to say something.

"You mean this drinking and gambling?" asked Church.

"You'd better go round to all our own public-houses, and say the same thing," grinned McClure. "You'll find plenty of drinking there—and gambling as well, I expect. And these men are not rowdy. Nothing much to grumble at here."

"Oh, well, let's push on!" said Handforth. "We've got to locate William K. Smith yet, and find out what he's plotting with old Ponsonby."

"My goodness! You're not going to be such an idiot as that, are you?" asked Church. "We'd better steer clear of Smith

"Fathead!" interrupted Handforth. Didn't we come here for the one purpose of finding out the lie of the land? The best thing we can do is to make for the other end of the camp, and if we can't see anything of our quarry, we'll go along to the River House School, and investigate there."

And, without waiting for his chums to comment upon this plan, Handforth left and walked round the corner of the saloon, as though he were in a public highway. He came face to face with a burly, swaying figure. Handforth paused, suddenly realising his indiscretion.

It was too late to back out, for he had been seen. There were, indeed, several flares near by, and Handforth's figure was clearly outlined.

"By gee! Dere's sure one of dem school-boys around!" exclaimed a thick voice, accompanied by a leering laugh. "I guess dis is where I does somethin', fo' sure."

The man was half drunk, and he didn't wait to ask any questions, or to make any further comment. He just lurched forward, and struck out at Handforth with a mighty fist. The leader of Study D only just ducked in time. But he was quite ready.

"You'd fight, would you?" he roared. "All right! Come on!"

Church and McClure, turning the corner, stood stock still, somewhat dazed. They were just in time to see Handforth and his opponent getting to blows. And men were coming from all directions.

"That's done it!" gasped Church. "Oh, the hopeless ass!"

"We'd better bunk!" breathed McClure. "No, we can't do that—we can't leave him in the lurch," he added. "I knew something like this would happen—the careless, reckless idiot!"

They could see little of the fighting, because a crowd had gathered in a somewhat extraordinary manner. A number of men had come out of the saloon, and others had gathered from apparently nowhere. Somebody had brought one of the acetylene flares nearer, too, and the scene was now quite brilliant.

Handforth and his half-drunken assailant were going at it, hammer and tongs. And the crowd, instead of interfering, laughed and shouted, and urged the fight on.

In the glare of the light it could be seen that Handforth's opponent was an evil-looking negro. He was all brawn and muscle, and even if he had been quite sober, it is doubtful if his brain was sufficiently quick to have grasped the advantage which his extra strength gave him.

One blow from his tremendous fist would have felled Handforth on the spot, but Handy was one of the best fighters in the Remove, and he always revelled in a scrap. Some of the fellows insisted that Handforth had some Irish in him, which he hotly denied.

In this present battle all the advantage was with the junior. He was quick, active,

and dodged the drunken negro's swings without the least difficulty. And with relentless persistence, he kept jabbing in blow after blow.

And Handforth was no light hitter, either.

Every one of his punches jarred the black man, and the latter became more and more infuriated as the fight progressed. His lurches became more drunken, and his swings were aimed at random.

"Gee! The kid's sure got pep!"

"Attaboy!"

"He sure knows a bit, this guy, although he's a young 'un!"

The crowd, making comments of this kind, watched with increasing interest. Handforth didn't hear anything. He was so engrossed with the scrap that he hardly knew that a crowd had gathered. His one aim was to get in an uppercut which would finish the negro for good. Handforth was certainly game enough, and the very thought of flight had never entered his head.

Church and McClure, on the outskirts of the crowd, were full of acute anxiety. It seemed sheer madness to them that Handforth had dared to stand up to the nigger.

And they were fairly staggered when Handforth saw the opportunity he wanted a moment later. The negro, missing the junior, lurched forward, and Handforth was able to get in an upper-cut.

It came straight from the shoulder, with all the weight of his body behind it—a driving, terrific punch.

Crash!

The negro sagged backwards, his knees bent under him, and he rolled to the ground. And Handforth stood back, rubbing his knuckles, and breathing hard. He looked round, his face flushed, and his eyes gleaming.

"Anybody else?" he asked grimly. "I'll show you!"

This was certainly asking for it, but Handforth was a fellow who never counted the odds. In the excitement of battle he was ready enough to pit himself against overwhelming numbers.

"Gosh! He's downed the nigger!"

The crowd became different in tone. And now that the negro was down and out, the men began to regard Handforth with hostility. Perhaps they looked upon it as an insult that one of their number should have been beaten by a mere schoolboy.

"Come on, Handy—scoot!" shouted McClure urgently.

But Handforth had no idea of scooting. And even his chums had no opportunity to do so. For attention had been attracted to them by that shout of McClure's, and they were roughly pulled forward.

The crowd, in fact, fell upon the three juniors, and held them firmly, after some futile struggling. Handforth wouldn't have minded a fight, but this rough handling was an indignity.

"You rotters!" he gasped. "I fought the chap fairly—I knocked him out with



And the cupboard was absolutely barren. There wasn't even a piece of oilcloth on the floor. The juniors felt cold and stiff after half an hour of this imprisonment.

a clean blow! Ain't you got any sporting instinct? Leggo, confound you! I'll jolly well biff—"

"Say, what's all this durned rumpus?" demanded a sharp voice. "Gee! Can you imagine that? Those young guys from the school again. Say, I've gotta get a line on this!"

Dinty Todd pushed his way through the crowd. He looked at Handforth and Co. very grimly. The juniors returned his gaze, and their expressions were hostile. They were disappointed in Dinty. Mr. Todd had seemed quite a decent sort in New York, but he was falling from grace now.

"Don't make a fuss!" growled Handforth. "We're only just having a look round. Nothing criminal in that, I suppose? This nigger chap attacked me—without any reason—and I had to defend myself."

Mr. Todd gazed at the fallen nigger, and then at Handforth.

"For de love of Mike!" he exclaimed. "Say, ain't youse some little baby? Defendin' yourself, hey? Guess it looks mighty like you was givin' dis guy a beatin' up!"

"Well, don't waste time—let us go!" said Handforth. "There'll only be trouble if your boss gets to know. Be a sport, Dinty. We'll clear off, and buzz back to St. Frank's."

"Aw, let 'em go, Dinty!" said one of the other men.

Mr. Todd grinned.

"Surest thing you know!" he replied. "See here, kids! Quit—an' show some speed! If de boss knows—"

He paused, as he noticed several of the crowd looking in one direction. Dinty had proved himself to be a bit of a sportsman

by offering the juniors their liberty, but it happened to be too late.

For Mr. William K. Smith had just arrived.

CHAPTER X.

THE PUNISHMENT!



SILENCE fell upon the crowd.

And the millionaire came striding forward, his face expressing none of the emotions within him. Only a gleam of anger

in his eyes gave an indication of what he felt.

In his rear was Mr. Ponsonby Small, looking absurdly undignified and insignificant in comparison to the well-built, lithe Mr. Smith. Indeed, Mr. Small's legs appeared to be even more knock-kneed than usual.

"This—this is astounding!" exclaimed the Head, before Mr. Smith could speak. "You wretched boys! How dare you come here? What is the meaning of this scandalous escapade?"

Handforth and Co made no reply.

"Say, just leave this to me," put in Mr. Smith. "What's been doing around here, Todd?" he added, appealing to Dinty.

Mr. Todd briefly explained.

"Well, these kids are sure full of pep!" said Mr. Smith grimly. "But this time they'll be a bit sorry, I imagine. Boys, you'll come right along with us to the school. Step lively!"

"But look here, Mr. Smith——" began Handforth hotly.

"You're speaking out of your turn!" cut in Mr. Smith. You will march, and that's all there is to it.

There was a tone of finality about his voice that his employees were well accustomed to. And even Handforth felt that it was useless to speak again. And now that the Headmaster himself knew of this affair, there was nothing to be gained by arguing.

Disaster had overtaken the expedition—as Church and McClure had feared from the very first. The only consolation was that Handforth had managed to knock out the nigger. And this incident, alone, did a great deal to uphold the prestige of the Remove.

But the consequences were likely to be grave, indeed, for Handforth and Co. They expected nothing less than instant expulsion. But even this had its consolations. For if they were expelled it might arouse the Remove to revolt, and then matters would be brought to a head.

Perhaps Mr. Ponsonby Small realised this, too—for earlier in the evening he had had an opportunity of gauging the temper of the juniors. Perhaps it would be just as well to act with caution.

Rather to the surprise of Handforth and Co., they were not taken straight to the

Head's study, and flogged. Instead, they were marched to an empty room in the Head's house, and locked in—in the dark.

"What's the idea of this?" growled Handforth.

"How should we know?" asked Church miserably. "I suppose we're going to be locked in here until early morning, and then shoved on the first train. This is what comes of investigating. We're all going to be sacked, and disgraced for life! You know what it means to be kicked out of a school like St. Frank's. No other decent school will accept us, and we shan't be allowed to go to Oxford. All because of your dotty schemes!"

"It's awful!" groaned McClure. "My people will be horribly cut up."

"Don't rub it in!" said Handforth gruffly. "Goodness knows, I didn't mean to drag you chaps into this trouble. But you needn't worry—I'll take all the blame. You won't be sacked. I'll see to that. If anybody's going to be kicked out, it'll be me."

"That's nearly as bad!" said Church sorrowfully.

"Besides, you're all wrong," went on Handforth, his voice hardening. "Old Small daren't sack us. He's too much afraid of a rising. I expect we shall be flogged, and that won't matter a bit."

"Oh, not at all!" said Church.

"It'll be lovely!" remarked McClure. "Personally, I go mad over a flogging before breakfast. It's as good as a tonic!"

Handforth glared at the sarcasm, but Church and McClure knew nothing. For, although Handforth's glare was powerful, it was quite incapable of penetrating the darkness.

"Don't try to be funny!" he growled. "A flogging is pretty rotten, I'll admit, but you soon get over it. Sitting down is rotten for a few hours, but even that wears off. But where the dickens are we? They might have given us a light, anyhow!"

"I've got some matches," said McClure.

"Then strike one, you fathead!"

McClure, thus admonished, produced his box of matches, and struck a light. He and his chums were rather astonished to find that they weren't in a room at all, but a kind of big old cupboard, without any window. Being situated in the private recesses of the Head's own house, the juniors had known nothing about it.

The door was a strong one, and was, of course, locked. Indeed, it was bolted, too. For they had heard the key turn, and the bolt shot. Escape was quite out of the question.

And the cupboard was absolutely barren. There wasn't even a piece of oilcloth on the floor. The juniors felt cold and stiff after half an hour of this imprisonment. They knew that the time was now in the neighbourhood of midnight, and it seemed queer that they should have been left alone for so long.

"Having a jaw, I suppose," said Hand-

forth at length. "As soon as Smith's gone the Head will come along here and send us to bed, I expect. Just like those beasts to let us freeze!"

In the meantime, Mr. William K. Smith and the Head had come to a decision. The millionaire went, and Mr. Ponsonby Small calmly proceeded to go to his own bed-room. This did not seem very promising for Handforth and Co.

Indeed, the three juniors were now huddled up in a corner of the big cupboard, squatting on the floor, and pushing against one another for warmth. They were sleepy and tired, and cold through. They could not understand why they had been left alone for so long.

And the hours went by.

Faintly, at intervals, they could hear the chiming of the school clock. They obtained fitful sleep, but every now and again they were obliged to get up and move about, to relieve their coldness and exercise their stiff joints. And it was now apparent to them that they had been deliberately left in this cupboard for the whole night.

It was a cruel, heartless piece of work.

Church and McClure suggested hammering on the doors, to awaken the whole building, and thus draw attention to this scandal. But Handforth wouldn't have anything to do with the idea.

"We're not going to knuckle under!" he growled. "My hat! You won't catch me giving the chaps a chance to call us cry-babies! We'll stick it, my lads! And to-morrow we'll devise some plan of revenge."

"It ought to have boiling oil in it!" growled Church fiercely.

They tried to get to sleep again, but only dozed at intervals. And although they kept their anger in check, they were inwardly fuming at the cold-blooded inhumanity of this form of punishment.

They were convinced now that it had been deliberately decided upon by Ponsonby Small, who had, no doubt, acted upon the suggestion of Mr. Smith. Without a doubt, this punishment was contrived by the millionaire.

When the rising-bell went at the usual hour, the Remove awoke promptly, having had a longer spell of sleep than usual. And the absence of Handforth and Co. was at once noted and remarked upon.

There were all sorts of conjectures put forward, but nobody knew the truth. Later on, at breakfast, Handforth and Co. were still absent. I thought it just as well to put an end to the doubts.

"What's happened to Handforth and Church and McClure, sir?" I asked, addressing Mr. Crowell, at the head of the table.

The Form-master coughed.

"Ahem! I believe, Nipper, that the unfortunate boys are receiving punishment of some kind," he replied reluctantly.

"But they weren't in the dormitory this morning, sir," put in Armstrong.

"Er—no!" said Mr. Crowell. "The fact is, the foolish lads broke bounds last night, I believe, and Mr. Small has placed them in solitary confinement. A pity—a pity! Perhaps we shall see them before long."

The secret, at all events, was out. Nobody was much surprised. Handforth and Co. had really asked for trouble by breaking bounds after lights-out, especially after the very strict orders that Mr. Small had given.

But nobody knew the facts of the case. It was assumed, of course, that the three juniors were confined in some private bedroom. They were certainly not in the ordinary punishment-room—as a number of fellows quickly ascertained. The exact whereabouts of Handforth and Co., in fact, remained a mystery.

They did not appear at dinner-time, nor at tea-time, nor at supper-time. And the Remove was in a state of great perplexity when, just before bed-time, the order went forth that the school was to gather in Big Hall.

"Something to do with Handforth and Co.," went round the whisper.

And this proved to be true.

As soon as the school had gathered together, Mr. Ponsonby Small appeared upon the platform, and made a short speech.

"It is not my intention to keep you here long," he said. "I have a painful duty to perform, and it cannot be further delayed. Three boys of the Remove Form—Handforth, Church, and McClure—defied my authority by breaking bounds last night after lights-out. They have been punished by solitary confinement, but that is not sufficient. They are now about to be flogged!"

Mr. Small whisked his birch suggestively.

"It grieves me that this step should be necessary, but it is absolutely essential that I should make an example of these insubordinate juniors," he went on. "I will maintain discipline in this school! I may add that after the flogging the Remove will march straight up to bed, and if there is any disturbance, drastic punishment will follow. In addition to being flogged, these unhappy boys will have no liberties whatever for seven days. They will be required to attend in the Form-room without any break, except for meals. I trust you will all take this lesson to heart, and realise that I am in earnest."

A moment later Handforth and Co. appeared. And a sorry-looking trio they were, too. Pale, dishevelled, and haggard, they seemed in no fit condition to undergo a flogging. For once Handforth was subdued. There was not an atom of defiance in his attitude.

And the flogging took place amid general silence.

There was nothing particularly brutal about it. A severe flogging, of course, but,

happily, Mr. Small was not physically capable of putting the force into his blows such as he would have desired.

Handforth and Co., at all events, felt that they had had enough.

And the instant the flogging was over, the three agonised juniors were ordered into the Remove ranks, and the Form was at once marched off to bed. A certain quietness reigned which was not altogether without its significance.

CHAPTER XI.

THE VOICE OF THE MAJORITY.



"POOR old Handy!"
"Hard lines, old man!"
"You all three look a bit washed out!"

Expressions of sympathy were showered upon the chums of Study D when the Remove was alone in the dormitory. The prefect who had escorted the boys upstairs had discreetly vanished, observing that he wouldn't take much notice if there was a little noise.

Handforth looked round at the crowd, and his deadly calmness was in striking contrast to his usual noisy excitement. There was something about him that impressed the other members of the Remove. For once, Church and McClure were far more excited than their leader.

"There's no need to make a noise, you chaps," said Handforth huskily. "And don't sympathise with us about the flogging. It was nothing. We're not made of glass! We can stand a swishing without any fuss. There's something else—something you don't know about."

"The beast—the horrible, rotten beast!" exclaimed Church passionately. "He's kept us ever since last night—"

"Half a minute, old man!" interrupted Handforth quietly. "Let me do the talking. But, first of all, I'd like a drink."

"Oh, same here!" said Church and McClure, licking their lips.

We all looked on, rather astonished, as Handforth and Co. drank copious draughts of cold water. And there was some mystery here that vastly interested the Remove. Handforth's very calmness was sufficiently impressive.

"Have a go at these," said Pitt, coming forward. "It struck me that you might have been fed on bread and water, or something, and so I smuggled this stuff upstairs. You can talk afterwards, when we're in bed. We shall only be interrupted, anyhow."

Handforth and Co. positively yelped with joy as they saw what Pitt had produced—a big bag, containing sandwiches, beef pies, and all sorts of other foodstuffs. The Remove stared blankly as Handforth and Co. fell upon the food like hungry wolves.

The effect upon Handforth was rather curious.

By the time he had finished his share of the grub, his face was flushed, his eyes were gleaming, and his old arrogance was quickly returning. His calmness, it seemed, had been partially due to excessive hunger. Perhaps he had been feeling a bit faint, too.

Before he could say anything, however, the prefect came to see that everything was in order before turning the lights out. Everything wasn't in order, but the prefect was singularly blind, and he went away in a bit of a hurry. And the lights now being extinguished, the Remove was left alone for the night.

Only the moonlight came through the windows, but this was quite sufficient for the juniors. They sat up in bed, plying Handforth with questions. Church and McClure were pressed, too, but they loyally kept silent, knowing that Handforth wanted to do the talking.

"I'm going to tell you chaps just what happened," exclaimed Handforth at length. "We broke bounds last night, and went into Cyclone City. And we were collared by that brute of a Smith and Ponsonby Small."

"Serves you right!" said Fullwood. "You asked for trouble, and you got it!"

"And you'll get trouble without asking for it, if you don't dry up!" said Handforth curtly. "Perhaps it was a bit unwise to go into Cyclone City. I'm not the chap to argue. If I'm wrong, I'll say I'm wrong. And I'm jolly sorry I took Church and McClure out last night. They've got me to thank for all this rotten business."

"Oh, don't make a song!" said Church uncomfortably.

"Anyhow, we were brought back by the Head, and shoved into a cupboard," said Handforth. "Now listen carefully to this, you chaps—I want you to thoroughly understand what happened. We were pushed into a cupboard, and the door was locked and bolted on us."

"A cupboard?" I repeated curiously.

"A cupboard!" insisted Handforth. "A big one, I'll admit, but that makes it all the worse. We wouldn't have minded a small cupboard half so much. There was no window, no furniture, and not even a piece of sacking on the floor. Nothing—bare boards and bare walls."

"The awful beast!" said Pitt. "And how long were you kept in there?"

"Until nine o'clock this evening," said Handforth quietly.

"What!"

The Remove was staggered, and many of the fellows jumped out of bed and collected round Handforth, excited and indignant.

"Nearly twenty-four hours of it!" said Handforth, his voice vibrating with fierceness. "Twenty-four hours of utter darkness and discomfort and starvation! That's what Ponsonby Small gave us!"

"Oh, come off it!" said Armstrong. "You can't mean to say the Head kept you in that cupboard all day without any grub!"

"It's true!" put in Church, unable to contain himself any longer. "What are you going to do about it, you chaps? All night we were left in that rotten place—cold, shivering, and hardly able to sleep. We're aching in every joint now—and sore, too. And to-day we haven't touched an atom of food or a drop of water until we came in this dormitory."

"Great Scott!"

"The inhuman monster!"

"He kept us locked up in that place the whole time, and starved us!" said Handforth, excitement now beginning to reveal itself in his manner. "On the top of that, he flogged us, and for a whole week we've got to stick in the Form-room without a minute of liberty! And all this for breaking bounds!"

"Shame!"

"It's absolute tyranny!"

"And I want to know," went on Handforth deliberately—"I want to know what you're going to do about it, Nipper?"

"Well, I'll tell you what I'm not going to do," I replied. "I'm not going to advise a rebellion. It'll come all right in the end—but not yet. I'm sorry, old man—you and your chums have been treated scandalously. But the best thing you can do is to grin and bear it for the time being."

Handforth burst out with all his old vigour.

"Do you hear that?" he demanded, turning to the others. "Do you agree with him? Isn't it time to revolt now—this very minute? I'm sick and tired of all these delays!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Nipper's wrong. After this we ought to rebel at once!"

"That's what I say!" replied Handforth fiercely. "I've told you what this brute's done—I've told you how he starved us! And you saw the flogging with your own eyes. Who's going to back me up? Who's going to help me to smash this tyrant, and get him kicked out?"

"We will—we will!"

"Count on us, old man!"

The Remove, excited and eager, and full of indignation at the treatment Handforth and Co. had received, vigorously declared itself to be in favour of an instant revolution. The excitement reached fever pitch.

"Steady—steady!" I insisted. "You're all going off your heads! You won't do any good by this idiocy! Be patient for a few days longer—"

"No, no! We want action now!"

"Dry up, Nipper!"

"You're too jolly slow!"

In vain I argued—in vain I pointed out the foolishness of this sudden spasm of madness. But the fellows would not listen

to me. The ill-treatment of Handforth and Co. had played upon their imaginations to such an extent that they felt that any delay was wrong.

"Nipper's out of date—he's a back number!" declared Handforth grimly. "I've got nothing against him—personally, I think he's one of the best. But in an affair of this sort we can't allow any personal feelings to butt in. I call for action, and not delay. And I want every fellow here to back me up. Hands up those who support an immediate revolt!"

I looked on grimly while three parts of the Remove raised their hands. And in a second I made up my mind. As captain of the Remove, I could do nothing else but act in one way.

"Very well, I resign," I said quietly. "You've chosen Handforth as your leader instead of me, and I've got nothing more to say—except that I hope he makes a success of something that seems to promise certain failure."

There was another wave of great excitement.

A vote was taken on the spot, and such was the feeling for Handforth at the moment that he was elected captain by a huge majority. I had done my best to control the fellows, and I had failed. Perhaps it would be just as well to let them go into this affair and prove their own short-sightedness.

Handforth calmed down at once.

"Well, thank goodness you fellows have shown some sense at last," he said grimly. "Now that I'm skipper I'll show you how things ought to be done! This revolt will start almost at once—within an hour. There's nothing to fear—and nothing to lose. We're all a lot of prisoners under this knock-kneed tadpole, and we're going to have him booted out!"

"Hurrah!"

"Down with Ponsonby Small!"

"On with the revolution!"

But as I stood aside, talking with Reggie Pitt, I was not so optimistic. I knew the difficulties that lay ahead—the hundred and one troubles that these reckless fellows did not even dream of.

And, much as I wanted the rebellion to succeed, I was very dubious. But the die was cast, and my voice was no longer predominant.

The great barring-out was at hand!

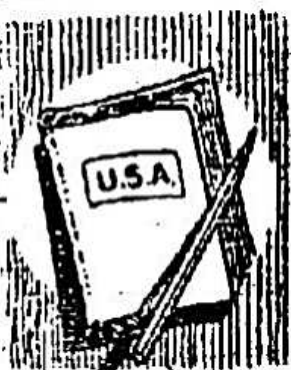
THE END.

The story of HANDFORTH'S
Barring-Out will appear next
week under the title of :—
**HANDFORTH'S
REBELLION!**



MY AMERICAN NOTE-BOOK

By the Author of our St. Frank's Stories.



No. 13. NEW YORK THEATRES (continued)

IN last week's extract from my Note-book, I dealt with the New York theatres, and I am now continuing on the same subject.

It is a universal rule in America that theatres shall provide their patrons with an unlimited supply of iced water. It doesn't matter whether the weather is baking or freezing, one can always obtain a long, cooling drink of crystal water.

It frequently happens that in our own theatres thirsty people are practically compelled to drink lime-juice or lemon-squash—at perhaps a shilling a glass, and worth a penny—whereas they would much prefer water if they could obtain it. But one cannot buy water, and in London theatres it is not given away. It would be a boon to have the American system over here.

They have these big containers of iced water in various parts of the foyer or lounge or smoking-room. You put a cent—one half-penny—in the slot of a machine, and obtain a clean, neat drinking-cup, made of paper. Having had as much water as you desire, you throw the cup away. In many theatres these cups are placed in a pile, free for anyone to take.

Smoking, of course, is strictly prohibited in New York theatres—and not only in the theatres, but the vaudeville houses and cinemas as well. But I will deal with these latter places of entertainment in other articles.

The lighting effects in New York are very different from those of London. The theatre seems quite subdued, and, indeed, dingy. It isn't really so, but this dim lighting makes it appear drab. Perhaps it is done in order to enhance the brilliance of the stage when the curtain goes up.

Upon the whole, the legitimate shows in New York are excellently produced and well acted. The shows themselves, at the various theatres, are of an amazingly contrasting character. Some of the quiet comedies are really exquisite, and the last word in refinement.

But next door, at the adjoining theatre, there will be a wild, unconvincing drama of the "Last Warning" type, and opposite you will find a ridiculous farce that is nothing more nor less than an insult to the intelli-

gence. And in all probability these three shows will be playing to big business, all at the same times. The New York public is so cosmopolitan that almost anything finds an audience. But if a show fails to succeed in New York, it is a very bad day for the star actor or actress. For failure on the New York stage means little short of permanent disaster. Once rejected by the New York public, a former stage favourite is wanted no more.

Musical comedy in New York is quite good, but can in no way compare to the London productions of a similar type. These shows are neither so well staged, nor so well acted. And the chorus is generally indifferent. I venture to say that half the big New York musical comedy successes, if produced in London in the same way, would be dismal failures. There are, of course, exceptions to this rule—as, for example, "Little Nellie Kelly." This was playing to huge business while I was in New York, and I believe it is still running.

If the New York theatres are subdued inside, they easily make up for this by having the outside a perfect blaze. Practically every theatre has the name of the play and the leading actor or actress displayed in great, scintillating letters of fire. Walking down Broadway, and glancing down the various side-streets, you require no guide to tell you where the hundred-and-one shows are situated.

Perhaps the most prominent theatre sign of all is the enormous advertisement for the New Amsterdam, in Times Square. Unless you are absolutely blind, you cannot fail to see the brilliant, dazzling words, "Ziegfeld Follies—Glorifying the American Girl." This sign absolutely hits you, and it was a constant wonder to me how the management could afford to pay the upkeep.

The Ziegfeld Follies is really a revue, and when I saw it such famous comedians as Gallagher and Shean and Will Rogers were included in the cast. And I must admit that this revue, thoroughly clean and wholesome, was better than any I have seen in London. But it rather pleased me that the very best dancers in the whole company were a troupe of English girls!

The Editor's Resignation—See This Week's Chat !

No. 15. Vol. 1.

Edited by Nipper.

March 8, 1924.

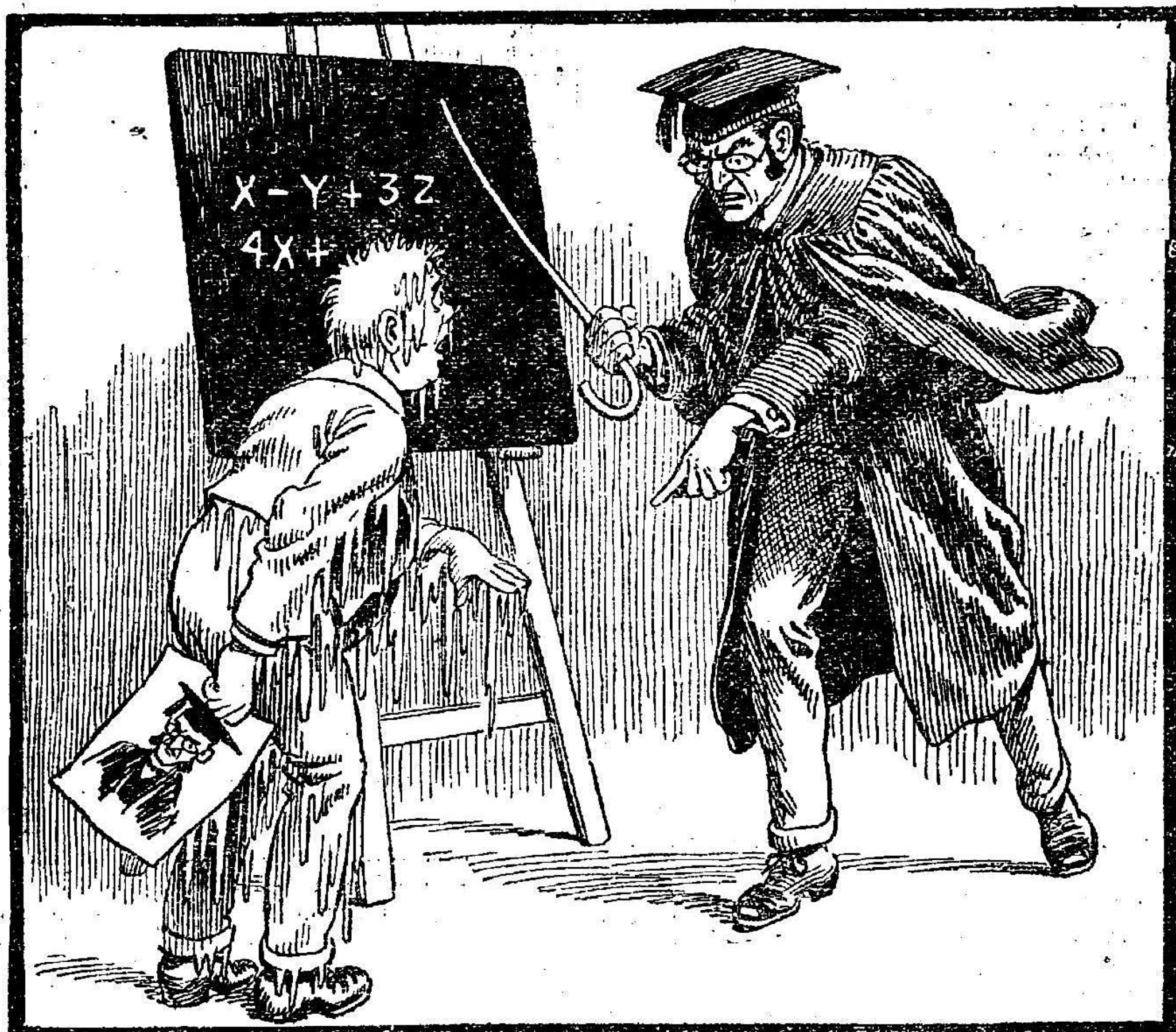


St. Frank's Magazine



FAMILIAR PHRASES FROM FICTION

As Seen By Our Artist.

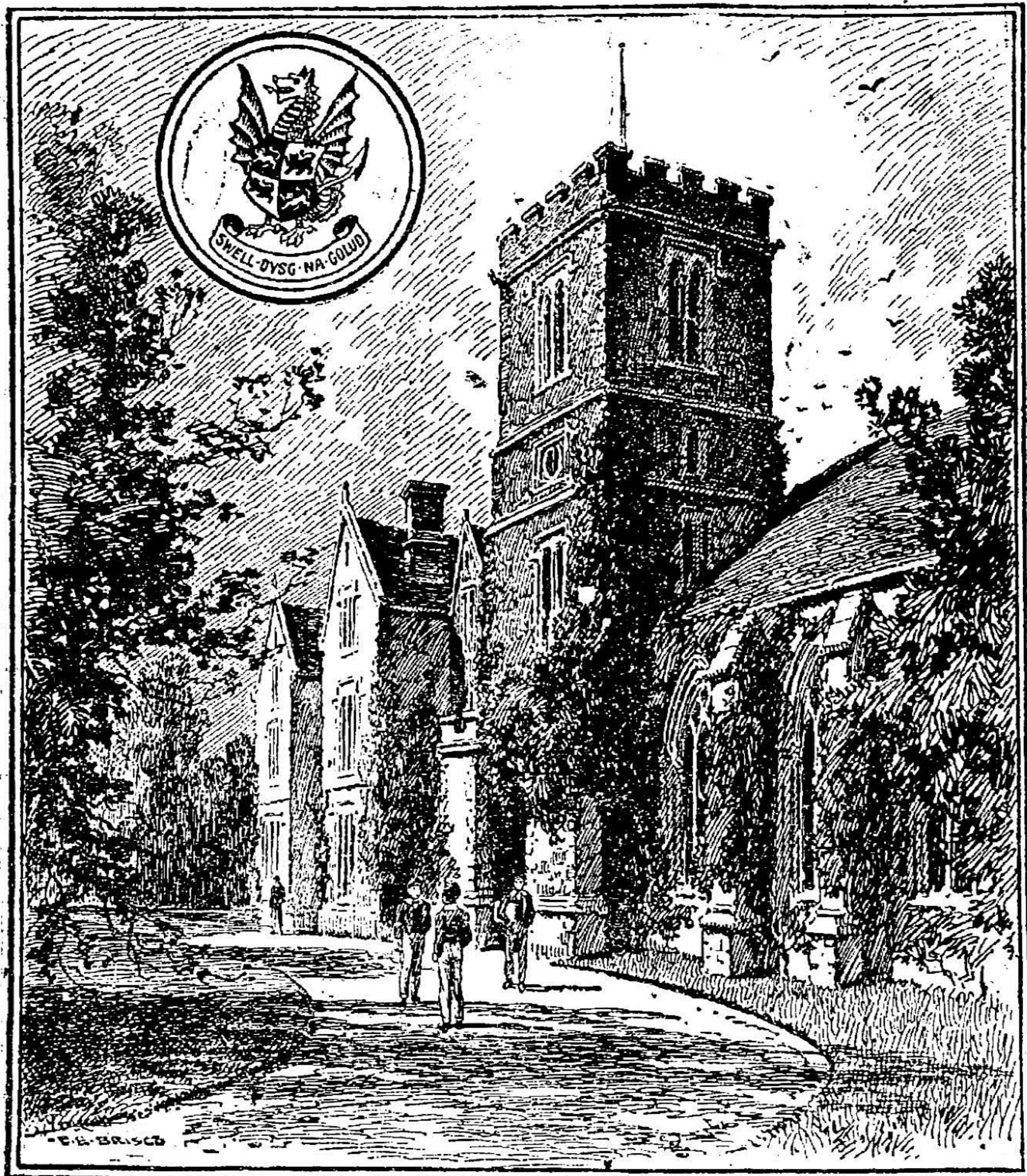


HE STOOD FROZEN WITH HORROR !

OUR PUBLIC SCHOOLS.

SPECIAL SERIES OF ART SKETCHES BY MR. E. E. BRISCOE.

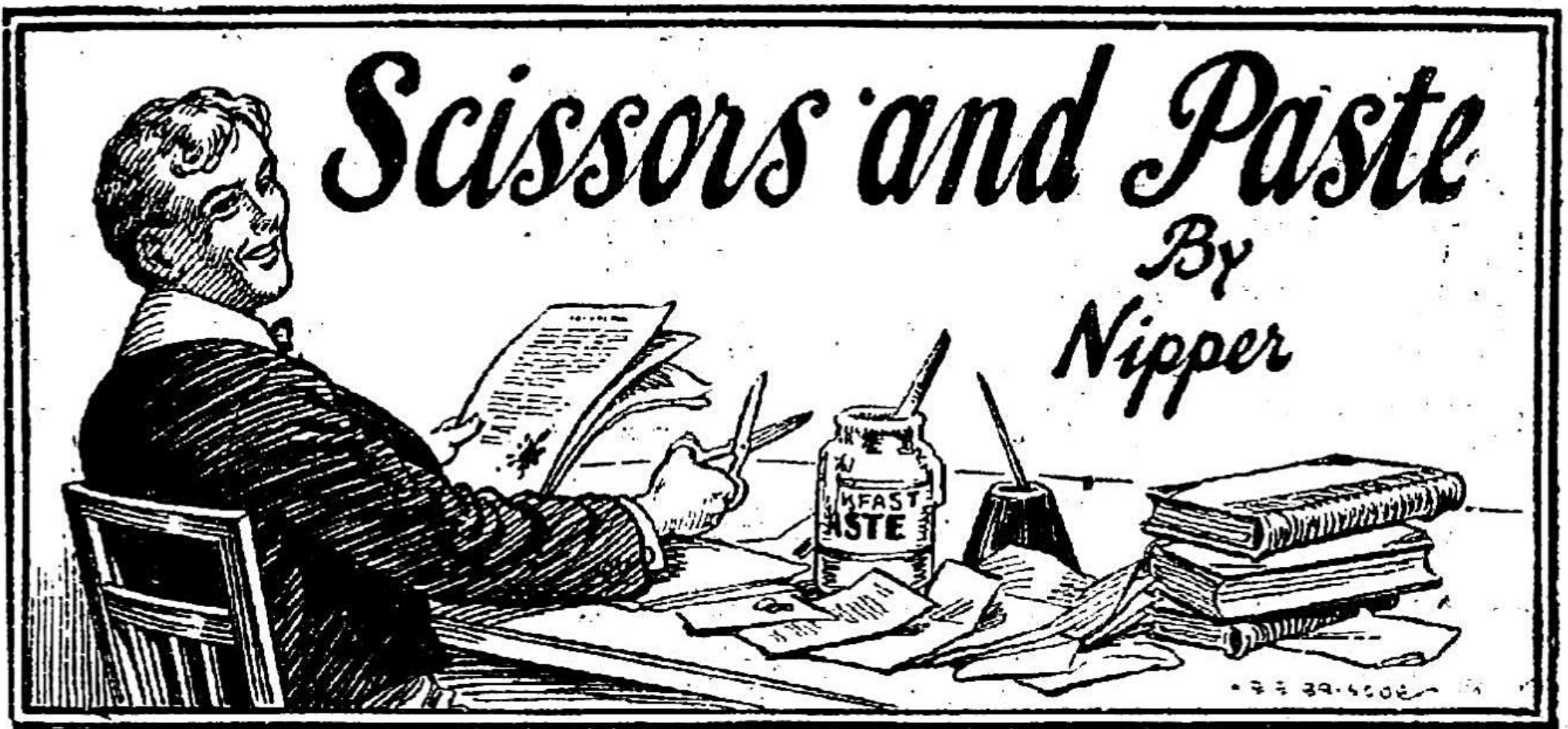
No. 17. LLANDOVERY COLLEGE.



One of the leading public schools in Wales, Llandovery College, is a handsome edifice, built in the Tudor style, situated in picturesque surroundings, not far from the town of Llandovery, and in the Valley of the Towy. It was founded and endowed by Thos. Phillips, in 1848, as a school on Anglican lines. It numbers 150 boys, divided into upper, middle and lower schools. Besides the main structure, there are addi-

tional buildings, which include science laboratories and a gymnasium.

(Has your school appeared in the above series? If not, send along a photo, with badge and particulars about the school's history, to the Editor, THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4. In the event of a sketch being made by Mr. Briscoe from your photo, the original sketch will be presented to you.)



Editorial Office,
Study C,
St. Frank's.

My dear Chums,

The long awaited MSS. from Miss Irene Manners arrived just in time for this week's issue of the Mag. I do not suppose that any of you, my chums, who are at all acquainted with the juniors referred to by Miss Manners, will agree with some of her opinions. Handy may be quite a likeable sort of chap, but to speak of him as being gentle and polite! I would like to know what Church and McClure will say when they read it. The gallant Fullwood should be highly pleased at the impression he must have created upon Miss Manners. When it is remembered that these juniors are always careful to be on their best behaviour whenever they see our fair contributor in the offing, it is not surprising that she is so favourably impressed.

RIDDLEMEREE!

I wonder how many of you, my chums, succeeded in solving the little problem that appeared under this title last week? It may have looked rather difficult at first sight, but it is really quite simple. The first verse is intended to refer to me, though when I started reading it, it did look as if the author had Fatty Little in mind when writing of turkeys, pineapples, muffins, and crumpets. The answer to the next verse is "Archie," and the last verse, of course, can only be "Long."

E. SOPP OF THE FIFTH.

Writes to say that his attention has been drawn to a rank plagiarism by Buster Boots in his "Getting on Top" articles. Our correspondent complains of the frequent use of the capital letter in Buster's articles, which Sopp declares to be a deliberate copy

from his Fables. I am sorry that our honoured contributor of the Fifth should cut up rough over what I am sure is only a coincidence. As a matter of fact, in both cases the capital letter is used for different forms of effect. E. Sopp uses it to give his Fables an old-time appearance, while Buster does it purely for emphasis. This being so, I would not call it plagiarism, which is a very strong word, having a somewhat similar meaning to what is implied by cribbing. Just because Sopp puts capitals in the wrong places, he cannot claim a monopoly for it, any more than I can prevent anyone else from using a full-stop because I am ending this little argument with one.

COMING CHANGES.

I hope to be able to announce definitely next week a coming big event in the history of the Mag. I have alluded to it before, I think, but it has cropped up again as the result of certain criticism levelled at me during the week by a well-known contributor, who imagines that the only thing worth reading in our rag is his own detective story. In consequence, I am resigning my job as editor after next week, and will hand over the control of the paper to my worthy critic. Regular contributors will accordingly refrain from sending any further stories or articles, as the new editor has declared that he will turn down everything written by my contributors. He means to find new talent, and if he can't find it, he will write up the whole Mag. himself.

I shall have more to say on this subject next week, for I have still another chat to make before I bid you all farewell and hand over the fortunes of the Mag. to my successor, your future editor.

I shall continue to be,

Your sincere friend,

NIPPER.



GOSSIP OF THE WEEK

By HUBERT JARROW

WHAT with one thing and another, and, I mean, all this excitement, there's plenty of things to talk about this week. These River House chaps pushing in on us, and shoving us out of our studies. I mean, it's a bit thick when this sort of thing happens.

It's not their fault, of course. They can't help it. Because, after all, schoolboys are just like sheep, when you come to get right down to the real facts. A farmer takes a herd of sheep out of one field, and puts them into another. It's not a bit of good the poor sheep protesting, because they have whacking great dogs running round, and ordering them about.

And it's just the same with schoolboys. The Head suddenly takes them all away, and puts them in another place, and the boys can't do anything, because they have the under-masters ordering them about just like the dogs look after the sheep. I hope the masters won't think that I am comparing them to dogs, but that, in a way, is what I mean. Or, to be exact, what I don't mean. It's rather difficult to make this quite clear.

And here we are, fighting along with fellows packing the passages like people in one of the underground subways. We're all jostling one another, and it's really impossible to dash indoors hurriedly. I mean, if you do, you simply knock half a dozen fellows over before they can get out of the way. And it's most frightfully awkward, because the fellows don't like that sort of thing. When you've been knocked over, you feel rather insulted. I mean, that's the way you feel.

And, talking about the way we feel, there's a certain sort of indignation going about with regard to this Mr. Smith fellow. There he is, I mean, dashing about all over the place in his motor-car, and he's got lorries churning up the roads and men swarming about in thousands. It's a bit rotten when a perfect stranger comes dashing in like this and upsetting everything.

Only on Wednesday he upset one of Farmer Holt's carts, just at the corner of

the bridge. Of course, that's rather a good thing, really, because anything that happens to Farmer Holt is something to rejoice over. It's rather a pity Mr. Holt wasn't in the cart himself. But, all the same, I think he was upset. And Mr. Smith didn't seem to care at all.

It's all very well for these millionaires to shoot all over the place, without caring what they do. Money isn't everything. In fact, money is practically nothing, when you analyse it. What I mean is, most of the fellows in the Remove have such a little that they regard it as nothing. And now that I'm on this subject, I think I ought to mention something that has been on my mind for some time. It's about the Magazine.

I was reading in a paper the other day how authors get paid an awful price for writing things. And yet we spend hours and hours every week on these articles for the Mag., and we don't get paid a penny. Why not charge for the Magazine and pay the contributors?

Of course, some authors get very little money. If it comes to that, they don't deserve to get any at all. I've read lots of stories that ought to pay the reader a pound a thousand words for having the decency to wade through them.

I think Mr. Smith ought to know quite a lot about wading. I mean, after the way he's been pushed in the river, and all that sort of thing, he's thoroughly expert by this time.

And, after all, what is an expert? As far as I can see, he's a fellow who says he can do this, and who boasts he can do that, and yet, really, he can't do very much of anything. The chap who is really capable doesn't call himself an expert—he is one, but he doesn't know it. Just look at Chambers. He's always telling everybody he's an expert on motor-cycling. But when it comes down to rock-bottom fact, he doesn't actually know anything about a motor-cycle except how to pick it up after it's fallen over.

THE PROBLEMS OF TRACKETT GRIM



THE PINK EYE OF PUT!

The Most Amazing Case Ever Undertaken by Trackett Grim.

BY
ED. O. HANDFORTH.

CHAPTER I.

THE MYSTERIOUS VISITOR.

"**M**ARCH!" cried Trackett Grim, the world-famous incriminator, striding into his consulting-room.

Splinter, his clever young assistant, sprang to his feet and began to mark time.

"Right-ho, guv'nor!" he cried, and set off at a quick step round the room.

The great detective gazed at Splinter in wonderment. Though he was never at a loss when it came to tracking criminals, he could not understand what had come over Splinter.

"Poor lad!" he muttered, filling his pipe from a wad of notes which he absent-mindedly took from his note-case. "Poor lad! So it has come to this!"

Splinter was still striding round the room as though he were trying to catch a train. At the great incriminator's words he came to a stand and marked time.

"I can't march any more," he said, still picking up his feet gamely.

At the simple words Trackett Grim flung back his head and burst into a sudden roar of laughter.

"I see it all now!" he chortled. "Splinter, my dear lad, forgive me. I see it all. You thought I said, 'March!'"

Splinter looked at his master in awed wonder. There seemed no limit to the man's cleverness. He seemed to take the very words out of people's mouths.

"You are quite right, guv'nor," he said, still marking time.

"As I surmised," replied Grim, emptying the Treasury notes out of his pipe. When I said March, I was referring to the month we are now in. In the same way, if I say April, it will refer to next month."

Splinter stopped marking time and sat heavily down in the waste-paper basket.

"I see it all now, guv'nor," he answered. "You have made it clear to me. But why do you— Hark! Listen! Can't you hear it?"

The rich colouring had left the lad's face, and he had turned a ghastly green. Then the green turned to a pale yellow, only for a chalky whiteness to take its place.

And even Grim turned a little blue about the chin, and took an automatic from its secret hiding-place behind his right ear.

What had happened to daunt these two brave men?

Only a sinister sound! At least, only three sinister sounds, each more sinister than the other sinister sound. And even as they stood there in Grim's consulting-room, changing colours, there came yet a fourth sinister sound!

And it came from within the very room!

It is impossible to describe the sound. But it sent the blood shivering through the veins. Splinter's wig stood on end. And Grim's back-stud suddenly broke away from his collar and leapt across the room.

And as the two stood, the sinister sound came again, and Grim's automatic barked.

"Bow-wow, bow-wow, wow!" it barked.

There was no time for further speech. For from under the desk in Grim's room suddenly dashed a figure which made six sinister sounds as it faced the great incriminator.

It was dressed in robes such as are worn in the East, and on its head was a turban. In colouring it was a deep chocolate, and when it spoke, it was in a thick voice, like a caramel.

"Peace be upon thee," said the stranger.

"Just what I thought," snapped Grim, who was now as calm as though nothing unbelievable had happened. "You have been hiding under my table, making sinister noises!"

"My lord speakee the truth," agreed the man from the East, dropping suddenly into the Chinese language, which, of course, Grim had spoken from birth.

"Me clum flom undel the tlabel, savee?"

"You are no Arab," said Grim shrewdly. "You are a lookee, one-time Chink. Don't tell me any of your lies!"

"Yes, mastel," said the stranger, groping

under his robe with his right hand. He produced a scroll of paper and handed it with a polite bow to Grim, adding as he did so: "I am one-time big chief of the Tong, savee? And bad man he no care. He rob us of the Pink Eye of Put, and take it to temple in Eglypt."

"I see," said Grim slowly, reading the parchment he had been given. The message was brief; it simply stated that Fling-Me-Hi was a messenger from the Four Winds Tong. The chief of this great body was Wang-Gul. He had been playing Mah-Jongg with an Egyptian stranger, who accused him of trumping his ace of hearts. Without waiting for answer, he had hit Wang-Gul over the head and made off with the great jewel that blazed in the Chinaman's pigtail. This jewel was the famous Pink Eye of Put-ank-tak-em, the ancient Egyptian king.

"You no savee?" asked the disguised Chinaman as Grim came to an end.

"Of course I do!" Grim said quickly. "The man who stole this jewel from Wang-Gul was a thief. He was also from Egypt, and he evidently considered that the jewel should be returned to the grave of Put-ank-tak-em, from whence it had originally been taken. These Egyptians often have strange ideas like that. It is quite common. Now, I should imagine from the fact that you have called on me that you think I might be able to get it back for you."

"You speakee good medicine, bo," said Fling-Me-Hi.

"Thanks!" Grim said shortly. "Then I will travel to Egypt to-night by my private aeroplane. I can promise you that I will place the Pink Eye in your hands the day after to-morrow."

Fling-Me-Hi was so overcome with gratitude that he made eleven sinister sounds all at once, thereby unfortunately dislocating his jaw.

"Remove that man," ordered Grim curtly, and Splinter immediately pressed a secret emergency knob. A cavity appeared in one of the walls, and Fling-Me-Hi was bundled in. The cavity was connected by a long tube with the nearest hospital, where the unfortunate fellow would be attended to.

CHAPTER II.

SURROUNDED BY PERILS.

IT was twelve hours later. Two Englishmen strolled down the High Street in Cairo. They were Trackett Grim, the famous incriminator, and his marvellous young assistant, Splinter. They were attired in the picturesque costume of the East. Grim wore a fez and a black beard, while Splinter carried a scimitar and a small praying-mat such as are usual in Egypt.

Both had dyed their faces a deep coffee colour, and were in the pink of condition. They had flown over from England in record time and were now hot on the scent of the High Priest of Put-ank-tak-em, whom Grim, with his marvellous powers of deduction, rightly guessed had taken the Pink eye.

"We must get hold of some camels," remarked Grim, as they crossed the tramlines and stood for a moment outside the Hotel Astoria. "Everybody here rides camels. Then we will ride out to Put-ank-tak-em's tomb. We shall have to face grave perils, but we shall get the jewel."

"You know everything, guv'nor," murmured Splinter. "As you say, we shall not fail. Let's buy some camels."

"Pouf!" replied the incriminator, lighting his oldest pipe, which he had bought that morning in London. "We don't need to buy camels. Hi! Camel!" he added in a shout.

Camels are as common in the East as taxis in London. At once a man in livery dashed up, leading two fine camels fully equipped with steering appara-



It was dressed in Eastern robes, and spoke with a voice like a caramel.

tus, hooters, chain-drives, and side-brakes, not to mention rear-lights and a free insurance policy.

"Up you get!" cried Grim, leaping into the saddle and throwing a handful of piastres, as money is called in Egypt, to the owner.

Without waiting for thanks, Grim set off at a terrific pace for the desert, followed closely by Splinter. At first it was a bit difficult to balance on the camels, but Splinter soon found out that by leaning well over the animal's neck and holding on to his ears it was quite a simple matter to stick on. As for Grim, he had been used to camels all his life, for he used to play in the Zoo as a child.

On and on raced the two Englishmen. The desert was covered with sand, and every now and then they came upon an oasis and dismounted to have a drink.

At last, in front of them, they saw the Pyramids. The great works of old loomed up ahead in the twilight. It was nearly night now, and a huge moon shone down upon them. The Southern Cross twinkled in the heavens like a great big lamp.

"At last we are there!" hissed Grim, dismounting from his camel. "Come on, Splinter. Our destination is the middle one of these pyramids, for in it is the tomb of Put-ank-tak-em."

Splinter got off his camel and tethered the beast to the railings that surrounded the pyramid. Then he followed Grim, who was walking stealthily towards the door that could faintly be seen in the darkness. Grim had put out his pipe and held a revolver in his right hand. He paused a moment to fix on a gas mask, and held out one to Splinter. Then, holding their breath, the two entered the grim, grisly blackness of the tomb!

A hideous sensation of appalling gloom surrounded them on all sides. Even Grim's usual high spirits deserted him, and his cheeks began to sink in as though he were ill. As for Splinter, he shook like a leaf and his teeth chattered like apes. It was terrible there in the darkness!

And while the two stole forward, there suddenly came a noise!

"Someone is there," muttered Grim, at the same time flashing his electric torch, which he was carrying in his mouth. The bright gleam shone and and fell upon the darkness, cutting it like a knife. Then, and not till then, Splinter's hoarse voice broke upon the scene.

"Guy'nor," he cried, "it's—it's haunted!"

It certainly seemed like it, for they found themselves in a big vault. And all round stood—mummies! And each mummy was armed with a sword! Even as the two stood, the mummies advanced upon them, making a terrible humming noise!

But Grim was as calm as though he were in his consulting-room. Without a second's hesitation he fired his automatic, first at one



Splinter followed Grim along by the pyramid, walking stealthily towards the entrance.

mummy, then at another. Its bark rang out with a thousand echoes.

"Bow-wow-wow-wow! Wow! Wow-ow!"

And the mummies who had guarded the tomb for over a million years fell down in terror. They would never guard the tomb again!

There is little more to add. Once its guardians gave in, Grim was able in a minute to find the Pink Eye. He gave the mummies in charge to the native police, and it was then found that they were not real mummies at all, but members of a terrible secret society.

"Just as I thought," Grim commented shortly. "I was convinced that real mummies would never be alive after all these years. I was also sure that they had been paid to guard the Pink Eye. The rest was simple—a mere matter of deduction, which I won't go into now."

Grim was right again. He never went into the matter. But he left the same night for England, taking with him the Pink Eye, which he duly handed over to Fling-Me-Hi, who had meanwhile quite recovered. Needless to say, Grim got handsomely paid, and he presented Splinter with an ounce of peppermints. But Grim always said afterwards that it was one of the trickiest and most hazardous cases on which he had ever been engaged.



E. Sopp's Fables

By
Edgar Sopp of the Fifth

No. 15.—The Fable of The Untidy Fag and The Orderly Senior.

THERE was once a Fag who, though Small in Size, lacked nothing when it came to Cheekiness. And it came to pass that this Saucy Fag, known throughout the length and breadth of the Domain as Willy Handforth, was pressed into the Service of a High and Mighty member of the Lordly Sixth, named Frinton. Now it chanced that Frinton was

A MOST ORDERLY PERSON.

And it also chanced that the Saucy Fag was precisely the opposite. He performed his duties because he had No Alternative. And the sooner he could get them done the better. It must be admitted that Willy was troubled by No Conscience, and when it came to neglecting work and getting out of his Rightful and Proper Tasks, he was

AN EXPERT.

And this Saucy Fag was, forsooth, as unscrupulous as any member of the Third. It was Part and Parcel of his Daily Duty to tidy up Frinton's study, wash dishes, put books away, collect papers, and So Forth. And, lo and behold, Frinton was Muchly Pleased by his new Fag, and Frinton did even go to the length of presenting the Fag with

A BRAND NEW SHILLING.

And Willy, scorning such a coin, rid himself of it as rapidly as possible in the Tuck Shop, securing in exchange a Wondrous Assortment of cakes and pastries, which he proceeded to consume with Much Avidity. And he informed himself that he had Done Well, but was afraid that the pastries had been not Done Well, for he was already experiencing sundry spasms in that region which is Technically Known as Beneath the Third Button. However, these Distressing Symptoms passed off, Willy possessing

A CAST-IRON DIGESTION.

And on the Second Day Willy did bustle over his duties at such Lightning Speed that much was left Undone. Although the Fag cunningly contrived to conceal his slackness by such Artful Dodges as pushing the sweepings Under the Carpet, and shoving

odd papers away Behind the Bookshelf. These, however, were arts which he had long since perfected and Knew by Heart. And, lo, when Frinton came to his study, he Found things Not. And so he called for his fag, and upon Willy appearing he was

LOOKING ABSOLUTELY INNOCENT.

And when Frinton required the things he needed, he was startled to find that they appeared before him as Though by Magic. For it is a truthful saying that Those that Hide can Find. And Willy acted so swiftly that Frinton was Amazed. And he solemnly warned his fag that this sort of thing Wouldn't Do. He furthermore hinted that if Willy fell into slack habits he would not only get a Clip over the Ear, but he would also be Scalped. At which Willy was quite unmoved, for talking to him was like unto talking to

A GATEPOST.

And it came to pass that on the Third Day Frinton Waxed Wrath. For when he entered his study he found everything in a very Slovenly Condition. He judged, by a Glance Round, that Willy had completed his work in a period of time not exceeding Thirty Seconds, whereas he should have spent Thirty Minutes. And when Willy came, in answer to the Dread Summons, he was

FORTHWITH CHASTISED.

And he promised to Buck Up, and to pay more attention to his work in future. And Frinton solemnly and gravely extracted a promise from his Fag that he would keep everything tidy in future, and that all things would be in their Correct Places. It was unfortunate, perhaps, that Frinton failed to observe the Wicked Gleam which lurked in the Fag's Eye. Indeed, it lurked in Both Eyes. And Willy went off, Much Exercised in mind. And it must be recorded that when Willy exercised his mind, somebody or other was going to Cop Out. And the next day came, and Frinton was Vastly Pleased when he entered his study and found

EVERYTHING IN APPLE-PIE ORDER.

And he smiled, and spake unto himself, saying that he would present Willy with a Tip for being Obedient. And Frinton noticed that his study was so tidy that it seemed full of Empty Spaces. And when he came to examine these Empty Spaces his good temper left him, and he Went off the Deep End; and then Willy arrived, and listened, unmoved as the Storm of Wrath

HIT HIM IN FULL BLAST.

And he stood there, calm, smiling, and it must be said that he did not Get the Wind Up. And, behold, he asked Frinton the reason for all this Rumpus. For he had carried out orders, strictly to the letter. And Frinton frowned, and demanded to know what had become of his

LATIN DICTIONARY.

And Willy did smile sweetly, and with Much Blandness he replied that the Latin Dictionary was in its Right Place, according to instructions. And lo, the Right Place proved to be the bookshelf in Morrow's study, since that particular volume had been Borrowed. And Frinton could say nothing, although he wanted to know what Willy had done with his

SILVER-MOUNTED INKSTAND.

And it turned out that this Useful Article was now reposing on Conroy Major's desk, for this, too, had been Loaned. And again Frinton swallowed hard, and again he Swept his Eagle Eye around. And this time he demanded the truth concerning a matter of Three Doughnuts, which had mysteriously passed out of existence. Whereupon Willy indicated.

HIS OWN WAISTCOAT.

And he reminded Frinton that the Doughnuts were in their Right Place. For were not Doughnuts made to be consumed? And had not Frinton told him to Put the Doughnuts Away? And, behold, Frinton was compelled to admit that his fag was now so Scrupulously Tidy that he was a Dashed Nuisance. For too much of a good thing is worse than Not Enough. And thereafter Frinton allowed the Young Bounder to do his work in his Own Way—for, verily, it proved to be the simplest in the Long Run. And Willy went forth smiling, saying unto himself that the only way to keep these prefects in order was to Touch 'Em Up without the slightest Mercy.

MORAL: IF YOU WANT A THING DONE PROPERLY—DO IT YOURSELF!



PAINFUL PARODIES

PERPETRATED

By

Clarence Fellowe

SHUFFLING ALONG!

Here's a tale of those young bounders
Who are in the lowly Third.

When they go on Sunday walking
For about a mile they're heard.
They don't lift their feet an atom,
So they wear their boots away,
As they go they keep on laughing,
Blithe and free and careless, they!

Shufflin', shufflin', shufflin' along,
Shufflin', shufflin' along with a song.
And the birds up in the trees all feel they
wanna go away and die,
And the Third gets home all over dust
and dirt
But with spirits just as high.
By shufflin', shufflin', shufflin' along
The leather from their boots has almost
gone.
But there's not a care among the lot,
They don't count the cost a little jot
Through shufflin', shufflin', shufflin' along.

When the Third goes in its class-room
Feet are dragging slow and sad.
One might think the fags were dying—
Dull and listless to a lad.
Hear 'em coming down the passage,
Work just gives them all a pain,
And you'll always hear 'em grumbling,
This is how they sound again:

Shufflin', shufflin', shufflin' in line,
Shufflin', shufflin' in line, thirty-nine.
And then they get into the places slower
than a flock of sheep.
It's a long, long time before the morning's
done,
And they'll doze and go to sleep.
But shufflin', shufflin', shufflin' along
Means nothing when they hear the dinner
gong;
For they dash along at topmost speed
And there's not the slightest bit of need
For shufflin', shufflin', shufflin' along.



No. 5. How to Get Goals.

YOU'LL be glad to learn that my cold has gone and that the remedy I told you about last week didn't kill me, but cured me; and now I'm as full of beans as ever I was, and have very decidedly vowed never to stand about in thin footer garments again on a cold day—no, not even for the pleasure of entertaining the editor of the "St. Frank's Mag." Mind you don't do the same, for in that way colds are caught, and once a cold gets its delicate tentacles round your throat or your heart, or wherever it is, he gets em, you don't know what troubles are in store for you. No, sir. If you want to stand about gassing on a cold day wait till you're dressed in warm and woolly garments, and then get somebody to light a big fire both back and front of you. Even then, I doubt if you'd succeed in eluding that gripping menace. The best way to dodge it at all is to take your talks—if you must talk—during a walk.

I said this—or something very like it, last week, I know—but it's a fact that I cannot too importantly imprint upon your minds, and I repeat it here out of consideration for you, having in mind at the moment my own very poignant emotions when the cold fiend's tentacles gripped me.

But this is not a pow-wow on colds and how to cure them; neither is it a discussion on general health, and I perceive that some of you are already becoming impatient. Right, then, we'll get down to the serious business of the meeting.

IT'S GOALS THAT COUNT.

I want to talk to forwards this week—not to any particular individual forward—but to forwards as a whole. I expect most of you young footballers figure in the forward line, so in dealing with this question I hope I shall be satisfying the majority.

The three chief assets of a good forward are speed, ball control, and shooting, and of them all the last is most important, for, after all, it is goals that count, and how-

ever good a player you may be in other respects, you are no earthly use to your side if you cannot get one past the goalie occasionally. That being so, we will consider the all-important question of shooting first.

Not that I can say much about it, anyway. Shooting is an art that cannot be taught on paper; it comes with practice, and is largely dependent upon opportunity. I would say this to you, however—always aim for that portion of the net which presents the biggest target to your view, and aim as far as possible away from the goalie.

HOW TO KICK.

To shoot properly you must be able to kick properly, and kicking is another art that should be well studied. You do not start and finish the art of kicking with booting the ball in whatever direction you may think best—no, there are many more considerations than that. Until you have practised a great deal you cannot gauge the strength of your kick, and this is a most important matter, not only in shooting, but in every other phase of footer. I have often seen an excellent opportunity in front of a goal completely wasted because the kicker shot too hard when, in reality, the ball only required the slightest tap. A slight tap would have lodged the leather in the net; the full volley I have referred to has sent the ball high in the air and over the crossbar, or has missed the goal altogether.

In kicking too strongly it is really astonishing how you may miss an absolute open goal from a distance of a few yards!

Don't make any mistake about this kicking business. In the first place, get rid of the delusion that most young footballers are labouring under—that of using the point of the toe. This method seems most natural and comes most easily, I know, but it is not kicking as kicking should be done.

The whole toe should be used in kicking, and part of the ankle as well. If you

stretch your toe downwards until it is almost in a line with the rest of your leg you will get an idea of the position the foot should be in at the moment of kicking. It is with that portion of the foot you should kick, for by using that method you will find that the ball travels straight and low to the ground—which is one of the greatest things in football to aim at.

WHEN TO SHOOT.

Wait till the ball is fairly at your toe before making the shot, and then pause a fraction of a second to collect yourself. Shooting on the run is sometimes unavoidable, I know, but it is not the sort of shooting which usually gets goals, for a shot thus taken hastily easily misses its objective altogether, or travels safely into

the waiting arms of the collected goalkeeper. By pausing you are given time to collect yourself, review your target, and so perfect your aim.

The strength of the shot, as I have said, depends upon circumstances. Outside the penalty area it should be a straight, strong drive for goal; near to, when the goalie is watching you and is prepared for any movement, you must use that strategy which your mind will dictate, and manœuvre your own opening, after which it is best to tap the ball into the net, sacrificing force for direction. There is a lot I could write about shooting, but I prefer that you profit by your own experiences, bearing in mind what I have already told you, and what I could tell you will come to you quite naturally. Next week, if you like, we'll talk about passing.

GETTING ON TOP

Another Stimulating Dose of Pep
From Our Expert
BUSTER BOOTS

Saving Time.

Last week I dealt with the subject of success at school. This week I propose to say a few words with regard to saving time. If you save time, you save money. That is a generally accepted fact. And if you save money, you will be able to retire and live on its proceeds. If you can do this, you will not have to earn your living later on.

Now, that is a great thing, for earning your living wastes such a lot of your life.

Therefore everyone who wishes to follow my course of live wire methods should start saving time at once.

The Road to Riches.

It is very difficult to save time at first, but it becomes easier and easier. One fellow I knew started collecting clocks. He collected a whole lot. Some of them had an alarm attachment, and he kept them all by his bed in the dormitory.

Then one day he wound them up, and they went off during the whole of the night!

It was a bad way of saving time, but it set him on the road to success. That was because he got so many pairs of boots and shoes thrown at him.

He collected all the pairs very carefully, and later on sold them for quite a large sum of money. It was that money that started his fortune.

So you see that, although he saved time in a poor way to start with, it really led him to riches.

Two Things At Once.

There are a lot of very good methods of saving time. One of them is to do two things or more at once. With practice, this becomes quite simple. For instance, at breakfast I am able to eat and talk at the same time. By the side of my plate I have a pad of paper. On this pad, I write out any lines I have been given the day before.

This means I do three things at once. I do the same in Form. When I am sitting in the class-room, listening to the others spouting their Latin, I am usually looking up words in a French dictionary, in order to be ready for the next lesson.

In this way I can cut down the time given for prep. to a very short amount.

Start Saving Now.

And saving time pays. Let that sink into you. If no time was saved at all, we should get nowhere. A man who spends all his money as soon as he gets it is called a gambler.

And, in the same way, anyone who spends all his time is a gambler.

Time is not made to be spent. It is made to be saved. If we could all save only a couple of hours a day, we should have over seven hundred spare hours at the end of the year.

Think of it! We should have an extra thirty days a year. Practically a whole month. And if we lived to the age of sixty, we should actually have five years longer to live.

This example alone should be enough to show you that saving time pays.

SCHOOLBOYS I LIKE !

By IRENE MANNERS
(of the Moor View School)

NOTE.—Some time ago we invited Miss Irene Manners to contribute her impressions of schoolboys in general to the Magazine. Just before going to press this week, a short manuscript arrived from Miss Irene, and we hasten to include it in our present number. We make no apology for publishing an article by one of the fair sex, although this is purely a schoolboys' magazine, because we feel sure that our readers will find it of general personal interest.—
ED., St. Frank's Mag.

NOW that I have got pen and paper ready, I really feel dreadfully helpless, because I simply don't know how to begin. I've never written about schoolboys before, and it seems so awfully difficult.

There are many kinds of schoolboys I like—not personally, of course, but in a general kind of way. I think it's fine for a boy to be able to play games splendidly. There's nothing more exhilarating than to see a boy playing in a football match, although I'm afraid this game must be shockingly dirty on a wet day.

Now Nipper and Reggie Pitt are two of the boys I like to see playing football. They go at it with such energy and with such fine, manly determination. And Handforth is a splendid goalkeeper. I like Ted in other ways, too. I hope he won't mind me referring to him in this article as Ted. I think he is one of the type of boys I like best of all, because he's always so polite and gallant. And he speaks with such a gentle, refined voice, too. I think it's nice for a boy to have such a sweet voice. And then Ted is always so modest, too. And modesty in a boy is delightful.

And this reminds me that Willy Handforth is another typical example of the kind of boy I like. Of course, he's younger, and really quite a child. I've only seen him once or twice, but I think his ways are quite sweet. A dear little boy like Willy simply couldn't be naughty. There's such a look of innocence in his eyes that anybody can see he's good. And I expect his Form-master looks upon him as a model pupil. Ted is very lucky to have such a dear little brother.

I'm not quite sure that I approve of the

kind of boy who is always so particular about his appearance. I like to see a boy well dressed, but, after all, a boy doesn't need to look after his appearance as much as a girl does. Somehow it seems so unmanly to be foppish.

I have seen Fullwood once or twice, and I think his appearance is quite absurd. It wouldn't matter so much if he had a little taste, but he doesn't seem to know when to stop. I do hope he isn't offended at my candid criticism of the way he dresses, but I am sure he will understand.

And Fullwood, too, apart from his flashy way of dressing, is just the kind of boy I like. Once he didn't behave quite gentlemanly, but I am sure that was only in a fit of temper. Since then he has always been ever so polite and gentlemanly, and I am sure he is a dear fellow at heart. And there is something to be proud of in the way he studies. I know he doesn't play games much, but he has told me how deeply interested he is in his lessons. And I believe he loves animals, too, and that's a beautiful characteristic in a boy. More than once I have heard Fullwood say that he is particularly fond of horses.

Archie Glenthorne, of course, is quite a type of his own, and one really cannot help liking him. I don't approve of his terrible laziness, and I hope he will see these words and remember that it isn't at all manly to wear an eyeglass. And a boy who has a man to look after him is most extraordinary. And I think Archie ought to learn to fight, too. I don't believe in fighting, but every boy ought to be able to defend himself. And Archie's so helpless and so rich. If he were set upon by tramps he would have no chance whatever.

Another type of boy I like is the big, open, frank boy, who never boasts, and who is always doing everything he can to help his younger companions. I think Chambers is a boy like this, because I have spoken to him once or twice, and he seemed so modest and retiring. Of course, I may be wrong in my impressions, but I am only judging by what I have seen and heard.

And now I seem to have written such a lot that I am sure it can't all be printed. And I don't think it is really worth printing. Still, if the Editor thinks it is good enough to be published in the Magazine I shall be awfully pleased.

STOP!



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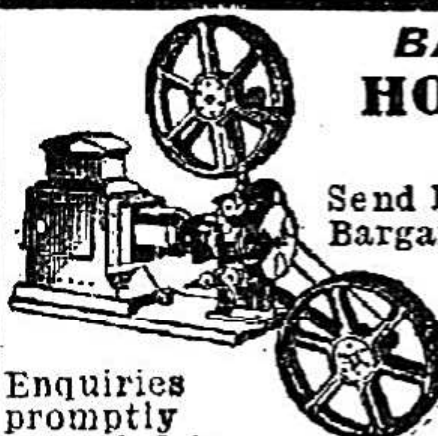


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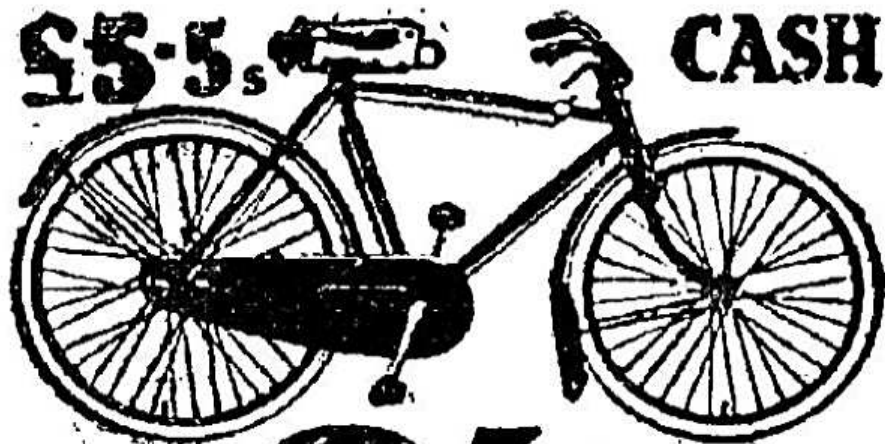
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