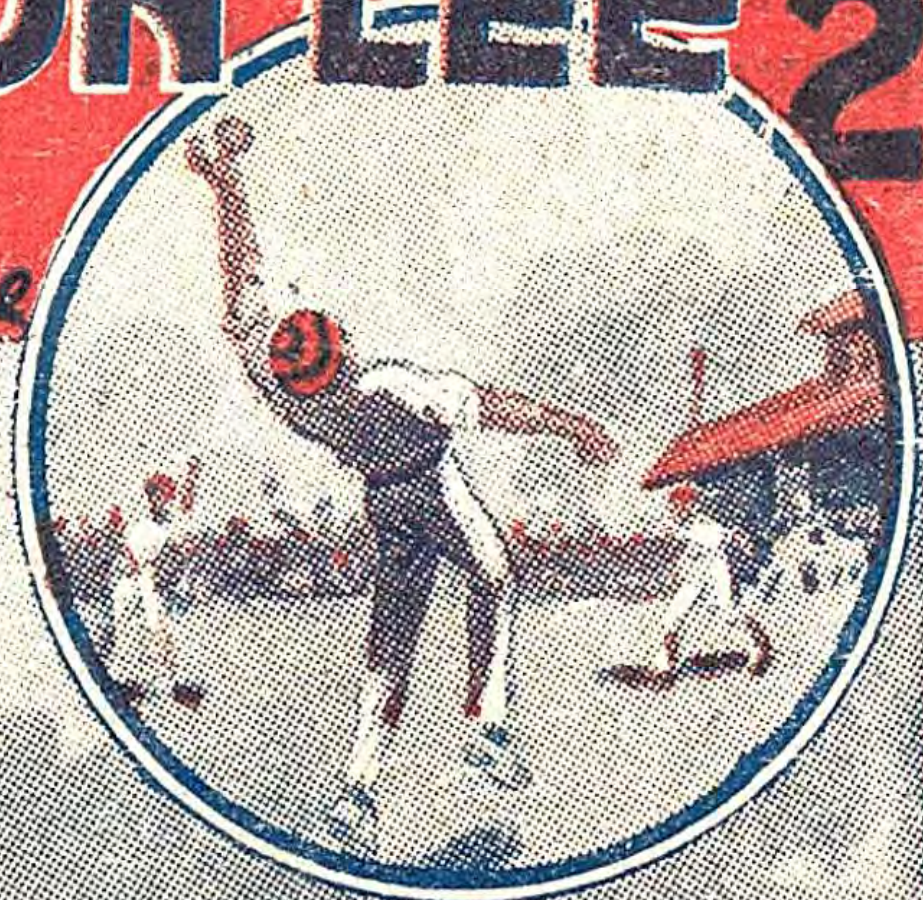


WILLY HANDFORTH PLAYS FOR THE FIRST!

The **NELSON LEE 2^D** **LIBRARY**

And St. Frank's Magazine



*Playing for
the First
or
The Rival Houses*

Another absorbing story of our great cricketing series, in which the Leader of the Fags at St. Frank's wins honour and renown by playing for the School First Eleven.



A turban-clad Indian went to the furnace, and opened a door with a long iron implement. A brilliant, white glare shot out.



PAYING FOR THE FIRST!

Great changes have taken place this season at St. Frank's in the method of selecting the First Eleven. Hitherto, the premier school eleven was composed entirely of Fifth and Sixth Formers. At the suggestion of William Napoleon Browne, the new leader of the Fifth, Fenton, the school captain, gave three Fourth Formers a place in the First Eleven, and for the first time this season St. Frank's won an important match, and this was mainly due

to the brilliant play of the three Fourth Formers. Finding this experiment was a success, Fenton has now decided to recruit his eleven from the whole school, irrespective of age or position in the school. Every boy, from the lowest form upwards, has a chance of getting his colours, and in this week's story you will read how Willy Handforth, the leader of the fags, plays for the First. Meanwhile, more strange facts come to light in the story concerning the mysterious Goolah Kahn, the young Rajah of Kurpana.

THE EDITOR.

By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS

CHAPTER I. ON THE RIVER.

"THIS," said Doyle lazily, "is what I call real luxury!"

Doyle certainly looked comfortable. He was lolling languidly back in a punt, and the punt was gliding noiselessly with the current down the River Stowe.

There were two other juniors in the little craft, and they were no less comfortable than Doyle. Armstrong lounged at one end, reading a book, and Griffith sat in the middle, indulging in the interesting pastime of throwing nutshells at the water-lilies. Incidentally, he was munching the contents of the nutshells as an additional attraction.

It was a fine, warm May evening, and Armstrong & Co. were not the only St. Frank's juniors who were taking advantage

of the weather. And the river offered all sorts of delightful recreation.

The punt was drifting with the current. Armstrong, strictly speaking, was supposed to be wielding the pole, but he had succumbed to the lures of his story book, and just let the craft go where the river took it.

It didn't matter much, because they were on a quiet reach of the Stowe, some distance above St. Frank's. The river was wide, and the current flowed very lazily.

On both sides there were green meadows, with occasional bunches of willow-trees. And every now and again the punt would pause for a moment or two and swing idly round as it got caught among the rushes and reeds.

"Better than watching the blessed cricket!" remarked Griffith, between two nuts. "Not much of a game, anyway—only the First Eleven in a trial match. What

about your pole, Armstrong? We're not making any particular speed."

"Shut up!" said Armstrong. "They've just got into the pirates' cave."

"Cave? Which cave?"

"Don't bother, blow you!" snorted Armstrong. "This yarn's a bit thick, but I must say it's jolly interesting."

"Oh, that story?" sniffed Griffith. "That's the one I lent you. Not bad. Have you just got to where they get into the cave? In the next chapter there's a big surprise. They find a big hole at the end of the cave—"

"Dry up!" howled Armstrong. "Don't tell me the secret!"

"It's not much of a secret—only about some old bones—"

"You rotter!" roared Armstrong. "You're trying to spoil my interest! What's that you're eating? No need to be so jolly mean with those walnuts! Hand some over here!"

"I've just eaten the last one," said Griffith.

"Greedy bounder!" sniffed Armstrong, going back to his book.

Doyle, apparently, was going to sleep. The lazy motion, and the warmth of the evening sun, were having their effect. And Griffith, having finished his nuts, looked round for something else to occupy his attention.

He soon found something.

There was a bend of the river just ahead, and in the shade of a clump of willows lay a rowing-boat. In it were three still, silent figures. Two of them were still and silent because they were asleep. And the other was holding a fishing-rod. He was still and silent because he was afraid that the fish might be disturbed.

"I say, here's a lark!" grinned Griffith, giving Armstrong a jab with his foot, and knocking the book out of his hand. "Handforth & Co. are just round the bend, and old Handy's fishing—"

"You've lost my place!" roared Armstrong. "Look out, you idiot! It's fallen into the water now!"

"That's my book!" ejaculated Griffith, in alarm.

"Well, you did it yourself—don't blame me," said Armstrong, sitting up and looking ahead. "Oh, you mean that boat! I always thought Handforth was up the pole, and now I know it! Fancy sitting there, hour after hour, watching a giddy float!"

The punt, in the meantime, had drifted nearer and nearer, and Edward Oswald Handforth, who was concentrating all his attention on the float, knew nothing until he heard the loud voices of his fellow Fourth-Formers.

"Oh, my goodness!" he said, exasperated. "Some of the chaps coming now! And I've been waiting all the evening for a bite! There's a whacking great pike knocking about somewhere, and I nearly had him five minutes ago."

Silence.

"What's the good of me talking to you chaps if you don't answer me?" went on Handforth. "You can sulk as much as you like—I don't care! It doesn't matter to me whether you wanted to come on this fishing expedition or not. What's the time, Church?"

Church was in no condition to tell his leader the time.

"Can't you hear me speaking, fathead?" roared Handforth.

It didn't seem to occur to him that his own voice was disturbing the fish far more than any possible passer-by along the river. Still failing to get a reply, he turned his head, and glared at his chums.

"Well, my only hat!" he said blankly.

Church was reclining in the bows, one leg on the first seat, an arm outflung, and his head resting upon an iron bolt. How on earth he managed to sleep at all was a mystery. But he was asleep—with his mouth wide open, with a fly hovering nearby, as though intent upon investigating the cavity.

McClure reclined in the stern, and he had a little more comfort, since he was using a jacket for a cushion. The jacket was rolled up in a bundle, and made an excellent improvised pillow.

"You lazy rotters!" roared Handforth. "What's the good of me bringing you on a fishing expedition if you go to sleep?"

By this time, the punt had glided quite close, and Armstrong & Co. were looking on with interest. It struck them as peculiar that they heard only one voice.

"Talking to yourself, Handy?" shouted Armstrong. "How many whales have you caught?"

"Go and eat coke!" said Handforth sourly. "And clear off! If you shout like that, you'll disturb all the fish!"

Armstrong & Co. howled. Considering that Handforth was shouting about twice as loud as they were, they had every reason to be amused.

CHAPTER II.

THE BITE.



HANDFORTH frowned. "There's nothing to laugh at!" he said tartly. "As for my catch—just you wait till I get home! I'm going to make a special supper, and you can come to it if you

like."

"Thank's all the same, but we'd rather have something to eat!" said Armstrong sarcastically. "Poor old Handy! Don't you know that you're in the wrong place for fishing? You'll never catch anything here!"

Handforth, feeling that argument was quite useless, picked up one of the oars, and proceeded to splash the punters with con-

siderable vigour. They were at a disadvantage, for the punt-pole had no blade, and could pick up scarcely any water.

Handforth sat down in triumph as the punt party glided on, deciding that the game wasn't worth the candle.

"Well, that's got rid of 'em!" said Edward Oswald, with satisfaction. "Hallo, where's the float? Gone, by George! A bite!"

But he was rather too previous. His line, as a matter of fact, was wound round the oar, for in his efforts to get rid of Armstrong & Co., he had quite overlooked a detail of that sort. Also, he gave no attention to the fact that the water was now stirred up and like a lot of mud.

"What's all that noise?" asked McClure, stirring himself and looking up. "How can I sleep with you making all that din, Handy?"

"You're not supposed to sleep—we're fishing!" said Handforth.

"Rats! What's the good of three of us looking at that silly float?" asked McClure. "I'll bet you haven't caught that pike yet! And what about the dozen roach you were going to have by tea-time?"

"You needn't worry—I'll have 'em soon!" said Handforth.

"Optimist!" yawned McClure.

Handforth suddenly started, and looked at McClure harder.

"What's that you're lying on?" he asked sharply.

"This?" asked McClure. "Only your jacket!"

"My jacket!" yelled Handforth. "Great Scott! I wondered why I was feeling so chilly! Come off it, blow you!"

"No fear! Where am I going to put my head?"

"That's not my business," said Handforth tartly. "You can go and boil it if you like! It's a pity we can't come out fishing without you chaps littering the boat up with your sprawling carcasses. No wonder the fish won't come! They're frightened of your snores!"

McClure sat up, realising that further sleep was out of the question. It was just as well to accept the fact with a good grace. He slung the jacket across to Handforth, who looked at it, and folded it on one of the seats.

"I thought you said you were chilly?" asked McClure.

"So I was—but I'm feeling better now," retorted Handforth. "Come here, and help me with this fly! What's the good of paying thirty bob for an angler's outfit if I don't catch anything?"

By this time, Church had awakened, and he sat up, rubbing the back of his head.

"Time to go home, isn't it?" he asked. "I'm feeling a bit peckish—I can do with some of those roach——"

"Shut up about the roach!" interrupted Handforth fiercely.

There was an awkward silence for a few

minutes. Church and McClure felt like telling their leader that they had warned him about this all along. But, upon receiving a liberal tip from his pater, he had insisted on spending good money on a fishing-rod, line, and all the rest of the impedimenta.

This was the first occasion on which Handforth had used his tackle, and so far it had not been a raging success. His catch amounted to precisely nil. And even the optimistic Handy was getting dubious.

He put fresh bait on his hook, cast it into the water, and the float bobbed up and down tantalisingly.

"Now we'll have another try," he said calmly. "It says in the book that all anglers have got to have a lot of patience. If you fellows would only keep quiet, instead of making such a din, there might be more chance."

Church and McClure looked at one another, and refrained from speech. They were well accustomed to Handforth's contrary ways, but he seemed to be particularly perverse this evening.

The extraordinary thing was, he never seemed to realise that patience was about the one quality he lacked. To be an angler one needs a calm mind, a total disregard of comfort, and a Job-like attitude.

"It wouldn't be a bad idea if one of you chaps fished out some sandwiches," remarked Handforth, after a short pause.

"They've all gone," said McClure gruffly.

"My hat! Have you wolfed the lot?"

"Don't be silly!" said Church. "You polished off the last six yourself! Now you ask us if we've wolfed 'em! I told you there wouldn't be enough——"

"Quick!" gasped Handforth suddenly. "Get ready, you chaps—I've got a bite! Stand by to land him if he struggles!"

Church and McClure gazed at the float with startled eyes. Incredible as it seemed, the float was agitated, and finally disappeared below the surface with a little plunge.

Without the slightest doubt it, was a bite!

CHAPTER III.

THE COMPLEAT ANGLER.



"HUSH!" whispered Handforth tensely. "It's that pike! I knew he was dodging about here! Now tell me whether I can fish or not!"

"I can't see any pike!" said McClure dubiously.

"I haven't landed him yet!" hissed Handforth. "He'll struggle like the dickens. Pike always do! I've read about 'em! And it's quite likely he'll leap at one of you chaps and take a bite!"

Church and McClure didn't seem in any way perturbed. Perhaps they were rather sceptical about the pike. At all events, they regarded Handforth's movements with only a mild interest.

Edward Oswald was winding in his line—slowly, cautiously, and with exaggerated care.

"You'll land him by about breakfast-time at that rate!" said Church. "What you've got to do is to swing your rod up, and lift him right out! Better land him in the boat, so that he doesn't drop back. You can't afford to take any chances."

Handforth proceeded on his own tactics, and after winding in the line some more, he suddenly gave his rod a violent jerk. Something came out of the water with a swish. It dangled there, on the hook, wriggling.

"My goodness!" said Church faintly. "A tiddler!"

McClure yelled.

"Rats! It's a tadpole!" he exclaimed with a gasp.

Handforth looked at the catch blankly.

"Not so large as I thought, but still it's a catch," he exclaimed at last. "Now I come to look at it, I don't believe it's a pike at all!"

"Go hon!" said Church, in amazement.

"No, it must be a sturgeon!" decided Handforth.

"A sturgeon?"

"Don't be an ass!" retorted Handforth tartly. "It's no good trying to be funny with me. Anyhow, it's a catch. A few more like this, and we shall have enough for supper!"

"Far better open a tin of sardines!" said McClure practically.

Handforth ignored the insult, and examined his fish with care. It was dead now apparently, and it proved to be a diminutive creature with glistening sides. It wasn't, as Church had declared, a tiddler.

"There you are!" said Handforth, carefully taking it off the hook. "Where's the basket? Open the lid—"

"Better not put it in there—it'll escape through one of the cracks!" said McClure, who had picked up an enormous angler's basket. It was characteristic of Handforth to provide himself with a basket large enough to hold three or four cod.

"How can it escape when it's dead?" he asked, failing to appreciate the nicer point of McClure's remark. "Hold the lid open, you ass!"

At this moment, the fish, unexpectedly coming to life, slithered out of Handforth's hand, and fell with a plop into the water.

Handforth caught sight of it, just below the surface, whizzing away with enough energy for a miniature shark.

"Well I'm jiggered!" he gasped. "I thought it was dead!"

"You can never tell with these fish," grinned Church. "Not that it matters much; you couldn't have fried the thing, anyhow; after it was cooked you would have mistaken it for a breadcrumb!"

But for the fact that they were in a boat Handforth would have replied to this remark fistically. But he forbore, having no keen desire to receive a ducking.

He set his teeth, grabbed some more bait, and grimly resolved to have another shot. But a further interruption occurred. Gliding down the river came a neat little canoe. In it were three youthful figures, and the leader was wielding a paddle with fine effect.

"Whoa!" he sang

out suddenly "Somebody here!"

Handforth looked up and glared.

"Of course, you'd naturally come!" he exclaimed gruffly. "I can't go anywhere unless you follow me! Clear out of it, you young bounders! If you ask me how many fish I've caught, I'm not going to tell you!"

The trio in the canoe were those redoubtable heroes, Willy Handforth, Chubby Heath, and Juicy Lemon, of the Third. They were all looking particularly happy.

PORTRAIT GALLERY AND WHO'S WHO. Third Series—Fifth Form.

NOTE.—The average age of Fifth Form boys is 17.



No. 5.—Cuthbert Chambers.

The dandy of the Fifth. Cuthbert is an easy-going fellow, and in many respects he is also several kinds of an ass. He is much given to boasting, and he thinks an awful lot of himself.

Willy had paddled the canoe to a standstill, and it was now pausing in midstream.

"How many fish you've caught?" he repeated. "You needn't worry, Ted—we're not inquisitive!"

Handforth laughed bitterly.

"It's all the same if you are—I'm not going to tell you that I've been here for hours without a bite!" he retorted. "You can clear off and mind your own business!"

Willy looked concerned.

"That's hard lines!" he said. "Fancy that! Did you hear, Chubby? He's been there for hours without a bite."

"Clear off!" snorted Handforth.

"What do you think of it, Juicy?" asked Willy. "He's been there for hours without a bite!"

"He must be hungry," said Juicy Lemon.

"No, he means the fish haven't bitten," said Willy. "Poor old Ted! And he paid thirty bob for that angling set, too!"

Handforth breathed hard.

"Who told you I haven't had a bite?" he asked darkly.

"Why, you did!"

"Don't be a young ass!" snapped his major. "I had a bite just now, and the giddy fish slipped out of my hand! A whacking great roach, too; I could hardly hold it!"

"It lost itself in his palm!" explained Church thoughtfully.

Handforth turned red, and the fags rested in the canoe, and grinned with keen appreciation.

CHAPTER IV.

DIGNITY AND IMPUDENCE.



"WELL?" said Handforth, after a pause. "What are you sticking there for? Do you think I like to sit here, looking at your ugly faces? Clear off! You're giving me a pain!"

"There's a nice way to treat a chap when he comes here with sympathy!" exclaimed Willy indignantly. "As one angler to another—"

"What?"

"As one angler to another—"

"What do you mean—angler?" demanded Handforth, staring.

"You know—a chap who catches fish," explained Willy.

"I know that, fathead!" howled Handforth. "Do you think I don't know what an angler is?"

"I thought you might have forgotten," said Willy. "There's no sign of angling here, anyway, except that thirty bob rod, and a basket big enough to float the three of you down the river! Do you mean to say you haven't caught anything yet?"

McClure sneezed.

"Yes, I've caught a cold!" he growled. "I knew what it would be, coming out here, and staying till the evening! I say, you fags! Have you got any grub in the canoe? I'm peckish!"

"Plenty!" said Willy promptly.

"Oh, good!"

"But it isn't cooked!" went on Handforth minor sweetly.

"Look here, can't you idiots stop jawing, and let me speak?" demanded Edward Oswald. "What's that you were saying about angling, Willy? What the dickens did you mean—as one angler to another?"

"You're pretty dense; ain't you?" asked Willy, staring. "You can't misunderstand a statement like that! Still, I'll overlook it, and perhaps you'll let us go!"

"Let you go?" gasped Handforth. "Didn't I tell you to clear off? And if you think you can spoof me with a yarn that you've been fishing, you've made a mistake!"

"No need to spoof you, old man—we've got proof!" said Willy.

"Proof of what?"

"That we've been fishing."

Chubby Heath and Juicy Lemon cackled uproariously, and Handforth & Co. hadn't the faintest idea of what the laughter was about. Willy paddled the canoe a little nearer, and the expression on his face aroused his major to untold ire. It wasn't so much scorn, but pity. Willy was looking at Handforth's fishing tackle, and his expression was positively sad.

"What are you staring at?" asked Handforth thickly.

"Eh?" said Willy. "Oh! I was just thinking about all that money, old son. I mean, thirty bob! What a beastly waste! You could have done a lot better with an ash stick and a piece of cotton and an ordinary penny fish-hook!"

"You young duffer!" growled Handforth.

"Of course, you'd need a worm!" went on Willy. "You can't expect to catch fish without worms. And on second thoughts, it's rather better to have a fishing-line—you can get one for twopence, and it's stronger than cotton. My outfit only cost sixpence."

"Your what?"

"My outfit!"

"What outfit?" asked Handforth, with a start.

"My hat! Sitting there in that boat must have made you dazed!" exclaimed Willy. "Haven't I been telling you that we've been fishing? Haven't I explained that my outfit cost a tanner? And I'll bet I've caught more with my little lot than you'll catch in a month of Sundays with that brightly varnished contraption, with nickel-plated fittings. Why, the very look of it's enough to send fish away! They don't know my rod from a tree-branch!"

"Are you trying to tell me you've caught some fish?" asked Handforth aggressively. "You can't fool me with those yarns—"

"Who wants to fool you? What about these?"

Willy leaned over, and took something out of the bottom of the canoe. And Handforth and Co. stared with blank amazement when Willy brought into view a fine bunch of fat looking roach. There must have been six fish, at least, and they were all of a good size.

"Not so bad, eh?" asked Willy proudly. Handforth's brain reeled.

"Have—have you caught all those fish?" he asked faintly.

"Yes, of course."

"With a sixpenny rod and line?"

"My dear chap, there's no need to look so surprised," said Willy. "I've explained why you've failed, and why I've succeeded. There's something else, too—I fished in a part of the river where the fish are. You could stick in this spot for six months, and you'd never catch anything bigger than a tiddler! Still, that's your look out! So long!"

Willy dipped his paddle into the water, and the canoe moved off.

CHAPTER V.

ARMSTRONG'S ARM ISN'T STRONG!



ARMSTRONG looked at his watch.

"We shall have to be getting back soon," he remarked.

"Time's getting on, and we don't want to be late for

call-over. Hand that pole over to me, Doyle—you'll only shove us in the bank, or something. Punt poling is an art, if you only knew it."

Doyle grunted, and relinquished the pole. He wasn't so keen on propelling the punt, anyhow. It was a task which he readily gave over into Armstrong's care.

The river was rather deep here, and the pole went down a long way at every thrust. But Armstrong, who prided himself on his skill, went at it manfully. He was struggling hard, and the punt was slowly progressing when Willy and Co. came shooting by.

"Want any help with that barge?" asked Willy. "Better look out, you chaps—go easy round the bend! Girls!"

"What?" shouted Armstrong, staring.

"Irene and Co.!" called Handforth minor.

"They're in a boat—just had a picnic, or something. Tidy yourselves up, or they won't think much of you! And give your face a wash, Doyle!"

Doyle started.

"Cheeky young sweep!" he said gruffly.

All the same, he leaned overside and looked at his reflection in the water. He couldn't see much, owing to the ripples.

Besides, Armstrong made the punt lurch so much at that moment that Doyle nearly fell in head first.

"Steady!" he gasped. "What's the idea, fathead?"

"I can't help your troubles," growled Armstrong. "You shouldn't tip us over like that. Blow your face! Now I come to look at it—Willy's right. It is a bit grubby."

"My hat!" said Doyle, aghast.

The fact that he had a grubby face would not have worried him in the least two minutes earlier. Doyle was a shockingly untidy junior, and at the present moment he was even more untidy than usual. He had removed his collar, his jacket was torn and muddy, his hair was unbrushed, and his face resembled that of a farm labourer.

"Better tidy yourself up!" said Griffith.

"If those girls are just round the corner, we can't be too careful."

"Rats!" growled Armstrong. "I don't believe a word of it. Those fags are always trying to spoof us! It's about time Handforth minor was bottled up! He's got too much to say!"

But, at the same time, Armstrong kept a keen watch ahead. And, sure enough, he caught sight of gaily coloured figures just round the next bend of the river. Going a little closer, he beheld three of the Moor View girls in a rowing boat, just setting out. Their picnic, apparently, was at an end.

Violet Watson and Doris Berkeley were both wielding the oars, and Irene Manners was at the tiller. Marjorie Temple, another of these inseparable girl chums, had been compelled to go home across country, owing to a pressing appointment with her Form-mistress.

Armstrong started.

"It's the girls all right!" he murmured. "Take care, you chaps!"

Doyle was making frantic efforts to tidy himself. Griffith, who felt that he was quite all right, took only a casual interest in the proceedings. He had no particular use for girls.

He was watching Armstrong with more than casual interest, however.

For a subtle change had come over Armstrong. He was wielding the punt pole in a different manner now. His whole attitude was changed. In a nut-shell, Timothy Armstrong was "showing off."

With an air of pretended indifference, he plied the pole, and seemed as though he had not the faintest idea that any girl was within a mile. Armstrong was rather a conceited sort of chap. Furthermore, he had the mistaken idea that he was handsome. And he took it for granted that girls must naturally admire him.

His efforts were somewhat comic, and Griffith grinned.

"Cheese it, Armstrong!" he murmured.

"Eh? Cheese what?" asked Armstrong, with a start.

"Be natural—don't swank like that!" said Griffith severely.

"You—you ass! Who's swanking?" snorted Armstrong, turning red.

Griffith's remarks were, perhaps, unfortunate at the moment. For Armstrong had just pushed the pole in, and was giving an extra strong heave. But as he turned his head at the same moment he lost his judgment.

And when he looked back, it was too late.

"My hat!" he panted, aghast.

The punt was slipping away from him, and the pole, for some extraordinary reason, wouldn't come out of the mud! Armstrong's contortions as he attempted to retain his balance, were extremely comical.

CHAPTER VI.

THE BEGINNING OF SOME TROUBLE.



IRENE MANNERS laughed uproariously.

"Oh, wasn't that simply ripping?" she asked, when she could find her voice. "I wonder if he did it on purpose?"

"Not likely!" said Doris. "You know what Armstrong is—he was only showing off. Thought he was going to be SO clever, too! Poor old chap! What a fatal thing it is to swank!"

"Hallo, girls!" said Doyle, from the punt.



A second later, the three girls were precipitated violently into the river.

And Irene and Co. laughed merrily with keen appreciation.

That sound caused Armstrong sheer agony.

Just when he had been attempting to show off—to let the girls see what he could do—he goes and makes a hopeless mess of it!

With a last contortion, he decided to leave the punt pole to its fate. But he had left this decision until it was hopeless. As he took his hands off the pole, his balance went.

And Armstrong, with a mighty splash, dropped gracefully into the River Stowe.

"Don't take any notice of Armstrong—he's always trying to be clever."

Doyle prided himself upon the fact that he was now looking neat and tidy. As a matter of fact, he was still a sight, but he didn't appreciate this fact. In the meantime, Armstrong had bobbed to the surface, and was clinging to the edge of the punt.

It did not please him greatly when he heard the peals of laughter from the girls. As a matter of fact, he was shocked. He had naturally expected them to be frightened—to turn pale—and to express horror at his terrible position.

For them to calmly sit in their boat and yell with laughter was startling.

All Armstrong's finer qualities deserted him.

"Funny, isn't it?" he shouted breathlessly.

"Rather!" agreed Doris promptly. "The funniest thing I've seen for days! You might do it again, old son—I'll get my camera ready!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The other girls laughed long and loud.

And, after all, nothing else could be expected. Armstrong was in no danger, and there is always something extremely comical in the sight of somebody falling out of a punt. When that somebody happened to be a swanker like Armstrong, the humour was all the more apparent.

But Armstrong simply flew into a rage.

He felt that he was being insulted. Of all the confounded cheek! These giggling, simpering girls laughing at him because he had had the misfortune to fall into the river! If Timothy Armstrong possessed any gentlemanly feelings—which is doubtful—they now fled.

"Stop that giddy yelling!" he said furiously. "You may think it's funny, but I don't! How would you like to get a wetting?"

With three or four powerful strokes, he reached the side of the boat, and seized it violently. The girls changed their expressions. There was something aggressive and ugly-looking about Armstrong's attitude.

"Don't be silly!" said Doris. "Leave go! Go back to your punt, and—"

"I'll go when I like!" snapped Armstrong rudely. "And first of all I'm going to see how you girls like a bathe! I'll teach you to laugh and giggle at me!"

He commenced rocking the boat alarmingly.

"Chuck it, Armstrong!" shouted Griffith and Doyle.

They watched, glaring with anger. They didn't approve of Armstrong's action in the least. It is quite possible that Armstrong intended no real disaster. His words were only a threat—he had no actual intention of upsetting the boat. As he afterwards explained, he had only wanted to scare the girls.

But he did it so thoroughly that the boat rocked too much. And as Violet Watson started getting to her feet at the same moment—with the intention of rapping Armstrong's knuckles with a stick—the thing was over almost before the watchers could realise it.

Violet swayed, gave a little scream, and slipped. She fell half overboard, clung there for a flash, and helped to overturn the boat. A second later the three girls were precipitated violently into the river.

"Great Scott!" said Doyle blankly.

Armstrong gave a gulp.

"I—I didn't mean—" he began.

He made a grab at something which came near him. It was Doris, and she raised a

wet hand, and slapped Armstrong's face with no little force.

"Don't you touch me!" she exclaimed angrily. "You rotter! We'll make you pay for this one of these days! All right there, Irene? Good! We'd better make for the bank."

All three girls were excellent swimmers—not that this was even necessary, for the bank was only a yard or two away. They reached the shore, and pulled themselves out, looking sorry spectacles.

Armstrong, having been carried a few yards down stream by the current, decided to make for the other bank. It would be safer! He didn't know that Boots and Co., of the Modern House, had witnessed the entire incident from the cover of some willow trees.

There were two other juniors with Boots—his own particular set of chums. At first they had been inclined to rush forward. But then the wily John Busterfield Boots held the others back.

"It's all right—the girls are safe!" he whispered. "And Armstrong's swimming over this way! The beastly Ancient House cad! I've never seen a dirtier trick! When he comes ashore, we'll pounce on him and chuck him back!"

"Hear, hear!"

Armstrong, all unconscious of his impending fate, reached the bank at last, and dragged himself out. But he had only just got to his feet when there was a sudden rush.

He found himself surrounded by the Modern House fellows. They wasted no time in words.

"Grab him!" roared Buster briefly.

"Hi, steady on—" gasped Armstrong.

Splash!

With one heave, Armstrong was pitched back into the river—to the intense satisfaction of Irene & Co., on the opposite bank.

CHAPTER VII.

MORE DUCKINGS!



THAT evening was so fine that most of the Fourth Form fellows were attracted towards the river. So there was nothing remarkable in the fact that Hubbard and Owen major and several others should pass along the towing-path while the ducking incident was in progress.

In fact, they came from behind the trees exactly as Armstrong was being flung back into the river by Boots & Co.

"Well, what do you think of that?" ejaculated Hubbard warmly. "These three Modern House rotters chucking Armstrong into the river!"

"Nerve!" said Owen major.

If Armstrong had been a Modern House junior himself, these newcomers would have

watched with keen interest. But he was an Ancient House boy. And the newcomers were shocked. A member of their own House was being ducked by these beastly Moderns!

House rivalry at St. Frank's seemed to be increasing of late, and there had been bitter feeling creeping into the exchanges. There was an evidence of it now.

Without waiting to ask questions, or to consider matters, Hubbard, Owen major, and the others rushed pell-mell upon Boots & Co. and took them completely unawares.

The three Modern House juniors were standing on the extreme edge, making uncomplimentary remarks to Armstrong, who was stuck among the reeds. They were at a disadvantage, and had no possible chance of saving themselves.

The first they knew of any danger was a sudden rush. The next moment they were butted from the rear, and they went, shouting and yelling, into the shallow water.

Splash! Splash! Splash!

In quick succession, the Modern House juniors plunged in.

"All right, Armstrong—we've avenged you!" panted Hubbard excitedly. "It's likely we're going to see an Ancient House chap ducked in the river by these Moderns! Come on, old son!"

Armstrong came struggling out.

But it seemed that everybody was looking on. It was extraordinary how fellows got to know the happenings by the river. At all events, about seven Modern House juniors appeared unexpectedly. Their object was to avenge the insult to their own House.

And Hubbard & Co. fled.

One glance was enough for them—they realised that to remain meant a ducking on their own account.

It was a small beginning—as is usually the case in such affairs—but Armstrong's simple action in rocking Irene & Co.'s boat had already led to serious strife. It was destined to lead to something infinitely more serious.

A boat came along in the midst of the excitement, and Handforth, who was rowing, quickly took in the situation. It was quite enough for him to see the three dripping girls on the bank, and their boat bottom upwards near the reeds.

"Great Scott! There's been an accident!" he ejaculated. "Over with that tiller, Church! Into the bank, here! We've got to go to the rescue!"

"We're a bit late, aren't we?" gasped Church. "They're saved!"

"Yes, but they want to go home!" said Handforth. "It's quicker by river—and we can shoot them up in no time! There's been some dirty work here, by the look of it—but we can't stop to investigate now."

The situation was certainly surprising to somebody who had just come upon it. On the bank the three girls were standing, wet through—on the other bank Boots & Co. were just crawling out, and in the middle of the river Armstrong was hauling himself

into the punt, which was now helpless without any means of propulsion.

Handforth cared nothing for the juniors—his one thought was for the girls.

"The rotters!" ejaculated Church. "Did you notice some chaps rushing along the towing-path just now, too? This looks to me like the beginning of some big trouble! I shouldn't be surprised if there's a House row!"

"It'll be jolly serious if there is one," said McClure. "What with the Fifth and Sixth at one another's throats, there'll be an unholy shindy if the Fourth starts the same game."

"If!" echoed Church. "It's started already!"

The boat dug its nose into the bank, and Handforth leapt ashore.

"What's happened?" he asked breathlessly. "Hi, Church! Chuck my coat over! Your own, too—and yours, Clurey! Buck up!"

In spite of the girls' protests, Handforth insisted upon the coats being used. He put his own round Irene, and Church's and McClure's round the other two girls.

"You'll catch cold here!" he went on, before any of them could speak again. "Better jump into the boat, and we'll row you up the river. Jump in! If we take you as far as the third bend, it's only a few yards to the Moor View School. Get out those extra oars, Church!"

And the girls were rushed on board, and the boat pushed out again. Once Edward Oswald Handforth made up his mind, he generally caused things to hum.

CHAPTER VIII.

LOOKING SERIOUS.



IRENE MANNERS pulled Handy's jacket more tightly round her.

"It's awfully good of you to do this," she exclaimed. "Thank goodness it's a hot evening—there's not much chance of our catching cold. I shall never forgive Armstrong for—"

"Armstrong!" echoed Handforth. "Did he tip your boat up?"

"Yes, the idiot!" put in Doris. "Tried to be funny, and started rocking it, and then Vi helped things a lot by standing up—"

"I was going to rap his knuckles!" interrupted Violet indignantly.

"Well, anyway, we all went in!" said Doris.

Handforth and Church were wielding the oars vigorously. The boat was fairly skimming up the river, kept true to her course by McClure. In a very few minutes it would reach the necessary bend.

Irene & Co., although cold, were in no real danger. Possibly they would catch

chills, but there was not much chance of anything serious developing.

"I'm going to find Armstrong when I get back! And I'm going to smash him to pulp!" said Handforth grimly. "Of all the cads——"

"No, don't touch him!" interrupted Irene.

"Don't touch him?"

"Promise me, Ted!" said Irene.

"Oh, but I say! Look here——"

"He's had his punishment already—he was thrown back into the river by Boots and two other fellows," explained Irene. "Besides, I don't think he really meant to tip us up. It was an accident more than anything else. Please let it drop, Ted."

"Oh, all right," said Handforth reluctantly. "But it's not the thing, you know! Armstrong ought to be smashed for acting like that!"

"Will you girls get into trouble?" asked McClure.

"Heaps of it!" replied Doris cheerfully. "But don't you worry about us—we can live through it. There's just a chance that we may be able to sneak in the back way and pop through a window. Then old Bondy won't know anything about it. You can bet we'll try!"

"Rather!" said Violet. "That's a ripping idea, Doris!"

"I say, can we help?" asked Handforth eagerly.

"Help?"

"I mean, can we open a window, or something——"

"You're a wonderful chap when it comes to action, Ted, but I'm afraid your ideas are a bit warped!" said Doris frankly. "It's going to do us a lot of good, isn't it, if Miss Bond sees three St. Frank's chaps in the grounds. Besides, you're not exactly celebrated for your silence!"

"Thanks all the same, Ted, but we'd rather sneak in alone," said Irene.

Handforth shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, all right—only a suggestion," he growled.

A few minutes later the girls disembarked, very grateful for the help which Handforth & Co. had given them. They ran off along a footpath, and would soon be at their school.

"I hope they get in all right," said Handforth slowly. "But I'm blessed if I can understand why they turned my offer down."

"My dear chap, it's far better for them to slip in alone—they know all the ropes," said Church. "We should only attract attention, and then the fat would be in the fire."

"Let's get back," said McClure. "It'll be time for call-over soon, and I'm fearfully hungry. We haven't had any tea to-day—and we shan't have any of that pike, either, for supper!"

"Blow the pike!" said Handforth, turning red.

He dipped his oars into the water, and drove the boat out into the river. The re-

collection of his fishing failure annoyed him. It brought back the recollection of Willy, too—Willy and his half a dozen roach.

"I don't believe he caught 'em at all!" said Handforth gruffly.

"Eh?"

"Oh, nothing—I was only thinking," said Handy, with a start. "By the way, the sooner we can get back the better—there'll probably be some excitement. After those duckings the fellows are bound to be wild. And one squabble leads to another. We don't want to miss the fun if there's a free fight!"

"It all depends upon what you call fun!" said McClure. "Personally, I'm more interested in a good feed than a good fight!"

"You can't scrap on an empty stomach!" said Church sagely.

"It doesn't matter whether you have a feed or not—if there's a fight going on when we arrive, we're going to join in!" said Handforth.

It was of no interest to him what the fight was about. But he and his chums had a pretty shrewd idea that there would be trouble. They had their reasons, of course. Just at that moment, things were in a very touchy condition at St. Frank's. The famous old school was full of internal strife.

The juniors were getting on pretty well together, but during the last day or two there had been one or two little "breezes" which had promised to fan themselves into regular storms. But they had died down with any particular development.

With the Fifth and Sixth it was a different matter.

First, the lordly Sixth had quarrelled, and now the rival seniors of both Houses were practically at one another's throats. It was exactly the same with the Fifth. No Ancient House Fifth-Former would demean himself by even speaking to a Modern House Fifth-Former.

Was the trouble going to spread to the Fourth?

CHAPTER IX.

THE FOURTH CATCHES THE FEVER!



IF Handforth & Co. could have seen into the old Triangle at that moment, they would have had no further doubts.

In a word, the Fourth was already involved.

The Triangle was crowded with shouting juniors, and already there had been some exchanges of blows.

The first trouble had started, a week or two earlier, in the Sixth. Edgar Fenton, the school captain, for excellent reasons of his own, had thrown Guy Sinclair, of the Sixth, out of the First Eleven.

Promptly on the heels of this, two other Sixth-Formers, supported by Swinton and Hitchen of the Fifth, had gone to Fenton, and had told him point-blank that unless he

reinstated Sinclair, they would refuse to play in an important match.

Fenton had remained firm, and the First Eleven had played without the services of the Modern House players. In fact, the Moderns were completely out of the Eleven not merely for that one game, but for good.

They had asked for it themselves—they had gone on strike—and the entire Ancient House supported Fenton in his strong action. But it was only natural that every Modern House Sixth-Former should resent the affair.

And then, on top of this, the redoubtable William Napoleon Browne, of the Fifth, had fought with Grayson, the bully. Grayson had fouled, there had been a fearful row, and the Fifth joined the feud.

For days past, the seniors had been like wolves at one another's throats. They "cut" one another practically every minute of the day, and the feeling of tension had been getting worse and worse.

Contrary to general belief, the passage of time was not relieving the feeling. The enmity grew worse and worse from day to day. So far the Junior School had kept out of the quarrel.

But now, at the slightest excuse the Fourth joined in.

Armstrong had been chucked in the river by Boots & Co., and Boots & Co. had been thrown in by Hubbard and a few other non-entities. The chief men of the Form knew nothing until the trouble was beyond hope of repair.

Nipper and Pitt and several others became aware of a hubbub in the Triangle, and went out to make investigations. Almost before they knew it, they were in the midst of a melee.

Grayson of the Fifth had contributed largely to the original scrap. Being a bully, he could never resist the temptation to strike a smaller boy. And when Hart, of the Fourth, had blundered into him near the fountain, Grayson swung his hand round and knocked Hart flying.

In the present excited condition of the juniors, this was enough to cause a riot.

"You bully; what do you mean by biffing Hart like that?"

Grayson started violently. Practically before he knew it, he was surrounded by a dozen juniors, and in less than ten seconds he was flung headlong into the fountain.

Several Modern House juniors had seen the incident, and although they regarded Grayson with contempt, he was, after all, a Modern House fellow.

"That's an insult to the Modern House!" roared Webb.

"Are we going to stand it, you chaps? Come on! Let's bump these fatheaded Ancients!"

A crowd of Moderns rushed forward, regardless of all consequences, and the Ancient House fellows found it necessary to defend themselves. Nipper and Pitt were caught in the rush, and were compelled to fight.

The original cause of the trouble was almost forgotten. But Boots & Co. were in evidence — wet through, but fighting gamely. And the whole Triangle was in a state of uproarious commotion.

Handforth & Co., arriving five minutes later, were just in time to see the fight at its highest pitch. They came running across the playing fields, and paused at the Triangle gate.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" gasped Church.

"My hat! It's a regular fight!" roared Handforth. "Hurrah! Come on, my sons!"

This is where we turn the tide!"

It was no idle boast.

Handforth, fresh as paint and ready for war, plunged into the battle and did terrific damage. There was nothing he liked better than a free fight. Church and McClure were certain that Handforth had some Irish blood in him. He didn't enter a fight because he had to, but because he loved it.

Slowly the tide turned in favour of the Ancient House.

And then Mr. Pycraft, the master of the Modern Fourth, arrived on the scene with a

PORTRAIT GALLERY AND WHO'S WHO.

Third Series—Fifth Form.

NOTE.—The average age of Fifth Form boys is 17.



No. 6.—PERCIVAL DRAKE.

One of the learned men of the Fifth. Drake is a terrible fellow to argue with—he always knows everything, and can reel off facts on a thousand-and-one subjects with the ease and fluency of a professor.

cane. He was closely followed by a platoon of prefects, who were also thoroughly armed.

They sailed in with a will.

Unfortunately, Mr. Pycraft was a little too eager, and he dashed into the fray with such gusto that he found himself lying on the ground, with juniors practically walking over him.

When he jumped up he was a wreck, and the fight, as far as Mr. Pycraft was concerned, was over. He fled indoors, and sank down, and sent a note to the Head to say that he wouldn't be fit for duty for three days.

It was left to the prefects to restore order.

They did this by a manly exhibition of force. By the time the Triangle was cleared and the juniors were packed off into their respective Houses, the arms of the prefects were aching severely, and their canes were hot with friction.

And nobody knew what was going to happen next.

CHAPTER X.

ALL EXCEPT THE THIRD.



TWO hours later peace reigned. But it was a curious kind of peace—a volcanic kind. There had been one preliminary eruption, and now the volcano was quiet. But everybody felt that it was liable to break out, with intensified vigour, at the tiniest possible excuse.

The Head had given strict orders that no boy, junior or senior, was to leave his House that night. In this way the possibility of friction was averted for the time being. The Head was hoping that on the morrow the excitement would have completely cooled down.

For it would be impossible to keep the rivals apart during the daytime. They not only had equal rights in the Triangle and the playing-fields, but the majority of them used the same class-rooms. The Head was rather thankful, however, that the Fourth Form was divided into two distinct sections, one in either House. Otherwise, the next day's lessons might possibly have been a riot.

Feeling ran high in both Houses.

There had been feuds before, but never one like this. The seniors openly sympathised with the juniors, instead of condemning the whole affair, as hitherto. Fifth-Formers and Sixth-Formers went about congratulating the juniors on their strength, and urging them to smite the enemy at every opportunity.

The juniors needed little encouragement under any circumstances; but to feel that they had the senior school behind them was tremendous in its moral effect. They were

encouraged to go to any lengths. Many, indeed, talked of ignoring the Head's orders, and invading the rival House. But these firebrands were talked down.

Curiously enough, the Third was still at peace.

Willy Handforth, always active, had called a complete meeting of the Third in the midst of the Triangle trouble. Everybody had arrived—for when the youthful skipper gave the order, it had to be obeyed.

And Willy solemnly told the Form that there was to be no friction. They hadn't any quarrel. It was all very well for the seniors to be at enmity, and for the Fourth to scrap—but why should the Third interfere?

"We'll distinguish ourselves by remaining aloof?" Willy had said. "Understand? It'll be an honour—we shall stand out with glory. The seniors may fight, the Fourth may brawl, but the Third remains dignified! Get the idea?"

"Good old Willy!"

"We're all at peace now, and there's no reason for any quarrelling," declared Willy. "So that's settled. And don't forget that I shall be watching! The first chap who starts a shindy will have to answer to me! And as you all know, I carry my answers in this fist!"

So the Third, much to the astonishment of masters and prefects, remained at perfect peace.

As the rest of the school ignored the Third, however, the matter didn't seem to be very important. As far as the seniors and the Fourth were concerned, the fags were beneath contempt. What did it matter whether they quarrelled or not?

By bedtime the trouble had simmered down slightly. Perhaps this was partly due to the fact that the Headmaster had taken strong action. He had posted notices to the effect that he would overlook the disturbances, but if there was any recurrence of them, the entire school would be placed within restricted bounds, all holidays would be cancelled, and all games abandoned.

So everybody thought that it was just as well to cool off.

At the same time, boys are not always strong enough to make up their minds. It would only require a small incident to precipitate further rioting—the Head's threats or no. The prefects, although they performed their duties with a strict sense of discipline, could not help displaying certain sympathies.

But when bedtime arrived there was comparative peace. A night's sleep, and early morning reflections, would probably make all the difference. Nothing, however, could alter the fact that the trouble had been getting gradually worse and worse, and that even now only a truce had been called.

Nipper was rather concerned. He was tremendously keen on the cricket, and it would be awful if a hitch occurred, and games were cancelled. For the first time in

St. Frank's history, three Fourth-Formers were included in the First Eleven, and Nipper had been doing well.

As Nipper was going upstairs to the dormitory, Nelson Lee came along, and drew him aside. Nipper looked rather uncomfortable. He was afraid that Lee was going to speak to him about the big trouble.

"Only a moment, Nipper," said Lee softly. "Come to my study at eleven o'clock—and be careful that nobody knows."

Nipper started.

"You mean that affair in Bellton—" he began.

"Yes—but we needn't talk now," replied Nelson Lee. "Eleven o'clock."

"Right you are, sir," said Nipper promptly. "Thanks awfully!"

He went on into the dormitory with his heart beating a little faster. He and his guv'nor were to go out on an investigation after lights-out—a real detective adventure. It was hardly surprising that Nipper glowed with a keen sense of satisfaction.

CHAPTER XI.

MAINLY ABOUT CRICKET.



EDWARD OSWALD HANDFORTH smote his palm forcefully.

"It's no good taking half measures!" he declared. "Those Modern House rotters have got to be wiped up! My policy is to do a thing thoroughly—and to do it at once! So I want volunteers! Hands up everybody who's willing to raid those beastly Moderns in their own dormitories!"

Handforth stared in amazement when no hands were raised.

The Fourth Formers were getting undressed for bed, and most of them, indeed, were already in their pyjamas. Handforth, who never took any account of the time, hadn't even started.

"Dry up, old man," said De Valerie wearily.

"Cut it out, Handy!"

"Don't be an ass!"

"You weaklings!" said Handforth scornfully. "You—you broken reeds! What's the good of relying on you to take strong action? Here's our chance to reduce those rotters to pulp, and you won't take it!"

Reginald Pitt strolled forward.

"Sorry, Handy, but you've got to be quiet," he said grimly.

"Eh?"

"You heard."

"Why, you fathead, I'm not taking orders from you—"

"I'm not giving you orders, duffer!" said Reggie. "But I'm captain of the Form, and I'm not going to have the Fourth penalised for your fatheaded rot! If you go on like this Mr. Stokes will come, and

then we shall all get it in the neck. I've got to think about the Form."

Handforth stared in astonishment. As a rule Reggie Pitt was smiling and genial, but he could be firm when he liked. He liked now.

"We ought to raid those Modern House chaps," argued Handforth. "Look at the way they went for us in the Triangle—"

"My dear chap, we went for them in just the same way," interrupted Pitt. "It was six of one and half-a-dozen of the other. As far as I can see, the whole squabble's idiotic. But that doesn't alter the fact that it happened—and I'm ready to stick by my House through thick and thin. At the same time, if we can have peace, it'll be better for everybody."

"Hear, hear!" said many voices.

"And there's the cricket to consider," went on Pitt grimly.

"The cricket?" repeated Handforth.

"It's a game, you know," said Reggie.

"You silly ass—"

"Within the last week or two Fenton has made revolutionary changes in the cricket—mainly owing to old Browne, of the Fifth," continued Pitt. "And the day after tomorrow we're going over to Helmford to beat Helmford First Eleven—"

"Stick to facts!" interrupted Handforth tartly. "There's no 'we' about it. You may be going, but I'm not! I'm blessed if I know what Fenton means by leaving me out of the First."

"You're in the Second, and you ought to be satisfied," said Pitt. "If it comes to that, I'm only in the Second—and I'm proud to be skipper of such an Eleven. When I say 'we're' going over to Helmford, I'm not talking individually, but generally. I shan't go, either, if it comes to that. But three of our men are in the First Eleven, and they're going. And we naturally want them, to succeed. What do you say Nipper?"

"I say 'Yes,'" agreed Nipper. "We had our big chance in the Redcliffe match, and we made good. Fenton is sending exactly the same team to Helmford—and it's a particularly important match, because Helmford wiped the First Eleven to nothing on its own ground. It'll be rather great if we can go over there and get our revenge."

"Hear, hear!"

"And everything depends upon peace," put in Pitt. "If this squabble continues, the Head will cancel cricket fixtures, and then we shall be in the cart. So cool down, Handy, and don't let's have any more talk about raids. With the cricket at stake, we can't afford it."

And most of the other fellows were in agreement with the Form captain.

Pitt's concern was entirely disinterested. He would not be playing in the Helmford match, but he was just as keen for the First Eleven to succeed as any member of the First Eleven itself. Pitt had the honour of the school at heart, and wanted to see the school win.

The new cricket arrangements were going splendidly.

In previous seasons St. Frank's had had a First Eleven—picked from the Fifth and Sixth—and a junior Eleven picked entirely from the Fourth.

But now, thanks to Browne's suggestions, St. Frank's conformed to many other great public schools. There were three big representative Elevens—First, Second and Third. And selections for each Eleven were made entirely according to merit. The best men went into the First.

It didn't matter whether these best men came from the junior school or the senior school. If they were tip-toppers, they played for the school—and that expression means playing for the First.

There was a Second Eleven which was as important, in its own way, as the First. For it met strong teams, and had big responsibilities. Reginald Pitt, although his form was not quite good enough to admit him into the First, was considered the best of all possible skippers for the Second. And his team was doing exceedingly well.

The Third Eleven was captained by Bob Christine, and even the Third contained a couple of Fifth Formers in its number. On the opposite scale, Willy Handforth also graced the Third Eleven. He was the only Third Former good enough to be included in one of the big elevens. But Christine had not hesitated to give Willy his place.

And just as these new arrangements were getting into their swing it would be a terrible pity if all cricket was cancelled. It was necessary, therefore, to keep peace as long as it was humanly possible.

CHAPTER XII.

THE PLOTTERS.



MEANWHILE, another discussion was taking place.

It occurred in a Sixth Form bedroom. Sinclair was entertaining visitors. Strictly speaking, it was against the rules, but that was of no account. There were three other seniors in the little apartment.

Grayson, of the Fifth, was doing most of the talking, and he and Sinclair were smoking cigarettes. On the dressing-table stood a bottle of whisky and a syphon of soda.

The other two were Carlile and Mills, of the Sixth. This pair smoked, but they were partaking of no whisky. They weren't such bad fellows, taking them all round. But of

late, since becoming "thick" with Sinclair, they had greatly deteriorated.

"I tell you something's got to be done," Grayson was saying. "It's no good you fellows sitting down, and taking everything tamely. You've got more spirit than that, haven't you?"

"Don't be an idiot, Grayson," growled Carlile, as he sat on the edge of the bed. "What on earth can we do?"

"All sorts of things."

"Suggest one of them."

"I can't suggest anything on the spur of the moment," said Grayson. "It wants thinking out. That's what I've come here for. I'm surprised at you fellows taking everything so meekly. It's none of my business, of course, but I thought I'd come along and offer a few remarks. I don't like to see you knuckling under."

"Who's knuckling under?" demanded Carlile. "Look here, Grayson, you've got a nerve to come into my bedroom and talk like that!"

"It's the truth," said the Fifth Former. "Hang it all, you've only got to look at the facts! Until a week or two ago, you were one of the best bats in the First Eleven—with a regular place in the team, and a certainty of getting your colours. Is that right?"

"Of course it's right!"

"And now?" asked Grayson. "You're kicked out of the team, you've got no prospect of getting back, and the season will end without you having any colours at all! And yet you're a fine batsman, and one of the best cricketers of the Modern House."

"Don't keep reminding me—"

"And there's Carlile and Mills, too," went on Grayson. "They're good cricketers—they had their regular places in the First. But Fenton's kicked them out neck and crop."

"It was all because of that business some time ago—" began Mills.

"We know that," interrupted Sinclair. "Fenton hoofed me out, and you chaps tried to force his hand. Instead of being sensible, he turned nasty, and now we're all in the cart."

The four Modern House seniors nodded in unison.

"That's right enough," said Grayson. "But there's no need to worry. I'm not interested in cricket—I don't give a toss for the game. I'm only here to give you some advice, and to offer my help. The fact is, I've got my knife into those confounded juniors, and want to dish them."

"You mean Nipper and Dodd and Kahn?"

"Of course," said Grayson. "Ye gods! Imagine it! Three infernal Fourth Formers in your places! Do you mean to say that you'll let that sort of thing stand? Three juniors usurping your places in the team! Why, it's madness!"

"Confound you, Grayson! What the deuce is the good of talking like a parrot?" demanded Sinclair irritably. "We know those juniors got our places, without you

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2s

keep reminding us! If we could do anything it would be a different matter. But we can't. Fenton's as hard as nails."

"It doesn't matter about Fenton," said the Fifth Former. "You don't seem to understand that if those juniors let the side down they'll be kicked out in no time."

"But they won't let the side down—they're keen as mustard."

"There may be a way of wangling it," said Grayson thoughtfully. "You never know. Even now they're only on trial—they haven't got their colours. What's going to happen if they mess things up Saturday? Fenton won't be very kind to them if Helmsford win because the three juniors have failed him. That's where you can do something."

"But how?" asked the Sixth-Formers eagerly.

"I don't know how—we'll discuss that now," replied Grayson, with a cunning look in his eyes. "I've got a bit of an idea—and I'll explain it soon. But here's my point. Supposing Fenton chucks out the juniors? Who will he turn to? You three, of course! There are no other decent players he can shove in as substitutes. Once those juniors are discredited, you'll get your places again."

"By Jove, I believe there's something in it!" said Sinclair tensely. And thereafter the conversation in that Modern House bedroom became exceedingly interesting.

CHAPTER XIII.

THE NIGHT ADVENTURE.



NELSON LEE looked up as the door of his study opened, and Nipper appeared.

Eleven o'clock was just striking.

"Splendid!" said Lee softly.

"You're well on time, young 'un."

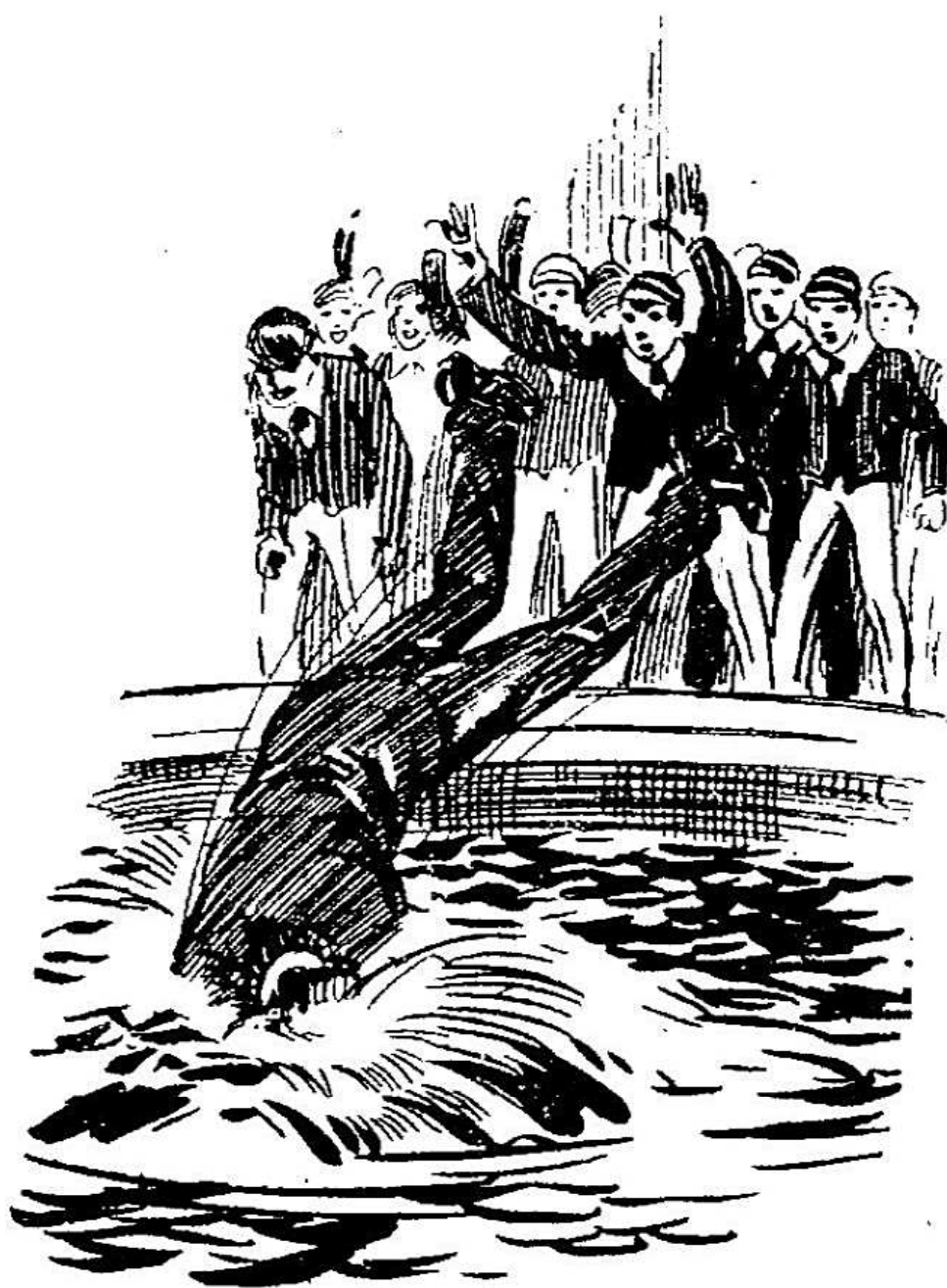
"Rather, sir," said Nipper. "I wouldn't miss this for worlds."

He entered the study, and closed the door. It was some little time since he had been out with Nelson Lee on a real investigation. He was thrilled at the prospect.

Nelson Lee, while no longer being House-master, held a responsible position at St. Frank's. He lectured on science, on criminology, and he was, in many ways, Dr. Stafford's understudy. The Head was learning to rely more and more upon Nelson Lee's judgment.

Strictly speaking, it was against all rules for Nipper to be out of bounds after lights-out. Any other junior would have got into serious trouble for leaving his bed. But Nipper, while being the same as any other Fourth-Formers on ordinary occasions, enjoyed the one privilege of assisting Nelson Lee if there was detective work to be done.

"You're going to have a look at that



In less than ten seconds Grayson was flung headlong into the fountain.

trap-door in Bellton Wood, sir?" asked Nipper. "I've been wondering if you'd done anything—"

"I have certainly been active, Nipper."

"Have you found out any facts, sir?"

"A few, but nothing definite," replied Lee. "However, we will leave that for the moment. I want to talk to you about this trouble in the Fourth. The Headmaster is very worried—the spread of the bad feeling is grave. What is the general situation, as far as you know it?"

"I'm afraid everybody's pretty excited, sir," said Nipper. "Pitt's a brick—he's doing his best to quieten things down, but I'm a bit dubious. Goodness knows what may happen to-morrow. Personally, I think everything will be quiet for a few days. But once a feud like this gets a hold, it has a knack of keeping on."

"Yes, it's very trying," said Nelson Lee. "Do your best, Nipper, to keep the boys calm. Use every effort you can to avert a further eruption. Nothing but harm can come of that sort of thing. It isn't as though the boys had any grievance—the whole feud, from start to finish, is founded on insignificant, intangible trifles."

Nipper knew that Nelson Lee was speaking the truth. Previously, when there had been a strike or a barring-out, the fellows had always had good reason for their strong action. But in this affair it was really difficult to discover the cause of the bitter-

ness. And it was this very factor in the case which was causing Dr. Stafford such intense worry.

"Well, Nipper, we will waste no further time now," said Nelson Lee, getting to his feet. "Yes, we're going on a little trip. I don't suppose we shall go into action, and it isn't really necessary for you to come."

"I say, sir!" protested Nipper.

"At the same time, it was you who brought the matter to my notice in the first place, and so I feel that it is your due to join me in the work," proceeded Lee. "And a little preliminary scouting work will put you in trim for anything that might come later."

Nelson Lee's words were not particularly welcome. Nipper enjoyed scouting work, but it wasn't quite what he had expected. He needn't have worried, however. Although they didn't know it, he and his master were booked for quite a remarkable adventure.

They left the Ancient House, and passed quietly across the Triangle, and Lee directed his footsteps towards the old monastery ruins, which stood out grim and sinister against the night sky.

"I thought we were going to the wood, sir," breathed Nipper.

"I didn't say so," replied Lee. "It is my intention to descend to the vault, and then proceed along the tunnel."

"But the tunnel's blocked, sir."

"Exactly—but don't talk here."

Nipper was very thoughtful as he and his master descended the old, crumbling stone stairway which led into the ancient vault. Nipper knew that the tunnel led to the deserted quarry workings and the curious natural caverns which old Mother Earth herself had fashioned.

And Nipper thought of the events which had led up to this trip.

There was some mystery concerning Goolah Kahn, the young Rajah of Kurpana, who was at present staying at St. Frank's. There was nothing criminal about the smiling, genial Goolah. He was heir to one of the richest states in India—and, incidentally, he was Hussi Kahn's elder brother.

But he had been seen in company with some mysterious Indians. And the meeting had taken place within the recesses of Bellton Wood. Nipper and Willy Handforth had witnessed the extraordinary business. Strictly speaking, Willy had been the very first to see anything unusual.

In a barren clearing a portion of the earth had opened up like a door—a cunningly contrived tunnel entrance. And Nipper suspected that this tunnel joined up with the caverns.

By going down the vault, therefore, and proceeding along the well-known tunnel beneath, the caverns could be reached from the opposite direction. But Nipper also knew that this tunnel was blocked. And he wondered why his master was wasting time by going down at all.

And his curiosity concerning Goolah Kahn was at fever pitch. He rather liked the cheery young rajah, and was anxious to establish the truth. Although he feared otherwise, he wanted to obtain evidence that Goolah was as honest and as clean as he appeared to be.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE CAVERN OF MYSTERY.



THE light from Nelson Lee's torch split the darkness.

They had reached the vault, and the tunnel entrance loomed before them. This tunnel was no secret.

Practically every junior at St. Frank's knew of its existence, and if it had been explored once, it had been explored hundreds of times.

At an earlier date, one had been able to enter the vault within the school grounds, proceed along the tunnel, and emerge in the disused quarry on Bannington Moor. But now the roof of the tunnel had given way, and it was completely blocked and impassable.

There was another tunnel—a more recent one—which led off towards Willard's Island. But Nelson Lee was not interested in this just at the moment.

He and Nipper passed along the tunnel, and soon came to the fallen mass of rock and stone. It filled the entire space before them, and made any further progress out of the question.

"I told you, sir!" remarked Nipper.

"I am aware of it," remarked Lee. "But surely you did not think I should come here for no purpose. It will interest you to know, young 'un, that I have paid many visits to this tunnel during the last day or two, and if you'll watch you'll see what I've been doing."

Nipper looked on eagerly. Lee bent down, after giving the light to his young assistant, and gently eased one of the big blocks of stone. It moved, and came silently away. It almost seemed as though it were hinged, so perfect was the balance.

Crawling into this cavity, Lee moved another great rock, and then returned.

"The way is now clear, Nipper," he whispered. "It took me a considerable time to make that excavation, and to fix the blocks so that they could be easily moved and replaced. The rest of the rock is safe—there is no fear of a collapse while we are getting through."

"I say, sir, that's a brilliant idea!" said Nipper admiringly.

"My object was to provide a method of entering that is known only to myself—and now you are included in the secret," murmured Lee. "The Indians firmly believe this tunnel to be blocked, and never give it any attention. So while we display caution we are safe."

"But who are these Indians, sir?"

"I don't know—I have been down here before, and I have seen them at work in one of the caverns," proceeded the detective. "There is machinery there—an electric dynamo. But you'll see for yourself. Be careful not to speak, except in the merest whisper, and keep close by me."

"Right you are, sir," said Nipper tensely.

One after the other they crept through the opening in the blocked tunnel, and Lee moved one of the rocks back into position, so that the obstruction again seemed solid.

Then, in utter darkness, they proceeded.

It was too risky to keep the light going. Furthermore, it was unnecessary. For Nelson Lee knew every inch of the tunnel, and he was aware that there were no pitfalls. He was able to progress by mere sense of touch alone.

And after a while they came to a narrow opening in the stonework. It was, in fact, the entrance to a branch tunnel—this latter being so small that no more than one person could squeeze through at a time. And the roof of it caused Lee to crouch as he walked onwards.

It seemed to Nipper that they must have been going for well over half an hour, and yet, in reality, barely ten minutes had elapsed since the electric torch had been switched off.

Although Nipper had been in these tunnels before, he felt hopelessly lost.

One reason, perhaps, was that he knew there were perfect catacombs here. Once off the main tunnel, one could easily get astray. These narrow workings branched in all directions—criss-crossed, and led from one depth to another.

But a minute later Nipper knew where he was.

Lee had held up a warning hand, for his companion to feel. Nipper paused, and then became aware of a glow. They proceeded with extreme caution. A bend in the tunnel and then they saw before them a patch of light.

And the next moment they came to the tunnel end. It finished abruptly near the roof of one of the caverns. From a kind of ledge they were able to look straight down into the strange, natural formation. Nipper remembered it. He had been here before.

He recalled many adventures in this very place, and it rather thrilled him to think that here was another mystery connected with the cavern. And this time it was an extraordinary one.

Lee and Nipper lay down at full length, and only just allowed their eyes to project beyond the ledge.

The sight which met their gaze was astonishing. The cavern was gleaming with electric lights. On the far side a small motor was throbbing, a dynamo was humming next to it. But this plant was

not there merely for the purpose of providing light.

Standing by itself was a curious contrivance which Nipper finally recognised as an electric furnace. While he was watching, a turban-clad Indian went to the furnace and opened a door with a long iron implement. A white glare shot out.

CHAPTER XV.

GOOLAH KAHN'S REMARKABLE ACTIVITY.



WHAT could it mean? What was the reason for this white-hot electric furnace? And what on earth were these Indians doing with such modern, scientific machinery? And there were other contrivances, too.

Along one side of the cavern ran a great bench. There were further instruments—retorts, test-tubes, and everything connected, it seemed, with a fully equipped chemical laboratory.

Most surprising of all, a figure who worked at the bench was undoubtedly the figure of Goolah Kahn himself. The young rajah—staying at St. Frank's as a cricket coach—was down in this secret cavern, engaged upon some mysterious and unknown work.

"My only hat!" breathed Nipper amazedly.

There were other Indians—three of them.

And all were working, all engaged upon some intricate task. No word was spoken, and the silence was only broken by the throbbing of the motor and the humming of the dynamo.

"What do you think it is, sir?" whispered Nipper.

"It is impossible to hazard a guess."

"But it's something criminal, surely?"

"I'm not even certain of that," replied Lee. "During the next day or two I shall make an attempt to discover things—"

"But aren't you going to do anything to-night, sir?"

"No; it would not be worth the risk," replied Lee. "I have brought you here to have a look, and that must be sufficient. Indeed, I am rather surprised myself. There was none of this activity during my last visit. The electric furnace is an innovation."

Nipper was rather disappointed.

He was hoping that he and his guv'nor would take one of the downward tunnels and enter the cavern proper. But perhaps Nelson Lee was right. It would never do

to take unnecessary risks. The whole investigation might be jeopardised by hasty action.

"Why not have a few words with Goolah to-morrow, sir?" asked Nipper. "Of course, you can't mention anything about this, but he may let something slip which will serve as a clue—"

"I'm afraid not," said Lee. "I have already talked to him on general subjects, and he seems to care for nothing except sport. That is why this activity on his part is all the more extraordinary."

"They're not getting up to any of their religious fakes, are they, sir?"

Nelson Lee could not help smiling.

"Religion—particularly Indian religion—scarcely goes with dynamos and electric furnaces, Nipper," he replied. "No, there is nothing religious here. And I cannot see how there can be anything criminal. Goolah Kahn is a millionaire in his own right, and he is the heir to fabulous wealth. These operations are not being made for gain. Of that we can be quite certain."

"What exactly are they doing?"

"Chiefly making experiments with that furnace, by what I can see."

"H'm! It's jolly queer!" commented Nipper. "I'd give anything to pop down there and have a real look."

Nelson Lee gave the word that they should depart. There was nothing further to be gained by waiting. But as the detective half turned, in order to raise himself from his crouching position, his muscles became tense. He had seen something of which Nipper was still unaware.

That one rearward glance had given Lee a start.

Immediately behind him, crouching in the tunnel, was a strange-looking Indian—a man whose name was Chandra Jungh. His eyes were burning, his high cheek-bones seemed to stand out prominently, and there was a set expression of hatred upon his dark face.

And in his hand he held a long, gleaming dagger.

It was a dreadful moment.

With true Oriental cunning and silence the man had crept up without disturbing his would-be victims. Even Nelson Lee, with all his keenness of ear, had failed to hear the newcomer.

That one rearward glance—that providential glance—had warned him. So far, Nipper was still in ignorance.

Chandra Jungh's intention was clear. It shone in his eyes. He had intended to stab Nelson Lee in the back, and then immediately afterwards to deal with Nipper.

Even now the peril was acute.

Chandra Jungh lunged forward.

CHAPTER XVI.

A NARROW ESCAPE.



NELSON LEE acted like lightning.

He was cool and deliberate. He knew well enough that any mistake on his part in this fateful moment would lead to catastrophe. In a split fraction of a second his leg shot upwards, and jerked Chandra Jungh's arm as it struck. The blow was a heavy one.

At the same second Lee hunched himself up.

The Indian, carried forward by the force of his lunge, blundered headlong over Nelson Lee's form, and hurtled forward.

"Great Scott!" gasped Nipper.

It was all over in a flash.

The Indian gave a wild scream of terror as he fell over the ledge and dropped into space. He fell like a stone, but fortunately for him, immediately beneath stood a pile of empty packing-cases.

The crash as he struck them was terrific.

Again he was fortunate, for he had somersaulted in mid-air and landed feet foremost. The other Indians in the cavern ran up, shouting and excited.

Lee took one look, and just saw Chandra Jungh pulling himself out of the debris, and talking with maddened rage. Extraordinarily enough, the murderous Indian had come to practically no harm.

"Quick, Nipper—quick!" hissed Lee.

"But—but I don't understand—"

"We mustn't talk; come with me!"

Lee dragged Nipper down the tunnel, and at the same instant he flashed on his electric-torch. There was no need for secrecy now. He knew that it would take the enemy some time to get up from that lower level, and this would allow a chance for Lee and Nipper to reach the obstruction in the tunnel.

They raced along with fleet feet.

At any moment Lee expected to hear the pursuers, but he and Nipper had a good start. And at last, breathless, they reached the main tunnel and ran for the obstruction.

Gaining it, it was but the work of a few seconds to move the rock and get through. Once safely beyond the pile, Lee replaced the rocks and stones and flashed out his torch.

"We will wait!" he panted. "I want to see if this exit is discovered. If they find a way through—"

He broke off significantly, and Nipper tried to rid himself of some of his bewilderment. The whole affair was startling to him. He had known nothing until he had seen Chandra Jungh go hurtling over the brink of the ledge.

"What happened, sir?" he breathed.

"The man came up behind us, and it

was touch and go!" whispered Lee. "I wouldn't have brought you if I'd known, Nipper. By Heaven! I'd no idea these men were so murderous! It convinces me that there is something deeper and more sinister here than I at first suspected."

"But—but even now I don't see—"

"The man was about to stab me in the back," interrupted Lee quietly. "But I managed to kick his arm, and his own force took him over the ledge. It was an exceedingly narrow escape."

"By jingo! I should think it was!"

"Confound my carelessness!" muttered Lee, seriously annoyed. "It was entirely my own fault, Nipper; I should have been more cautious."

"Dash it all, sir, we didn't give ourselves away!" protested Nipper. "But these Indians have got ears like foxes; they can hear for miles! You can't blame yourself for what happened."

"Perhaps not, but it's awkward—awkward!" said Lee tensely. "Hitherto my movements were unsuspected. But now these infernal fellows will be on their guard. What is more, Goolah Kahn himself may know the truth. I don't think he saw our faces, and if it comes to that, I am convinced that the would-be murderer did not see us. At the most he only glimpsed our shoulders against the light. I don't think there is much chance of our identity being known."

"Then it's all right, sir?"

"In one way, yes, but in another way, no," whispered Nelson Lee. "I may be free from suspicion myself, but these Indians will now be ultra-cautious. And that will make my task infinitely more difficult. But I shall go on with it, Nipper, and I mean to find out the truth of this devilish business."

He ceased speaking, and Nipper silently worried. The thought of his master prowling through these tunnels alarmed him. For he knew now that danger lurked everywhere.

He was about to speak when a faint sound came. A pressure from Lee's hand warned him to keep silent. Soft, stealthy footsteps, muffled and thick, sounded from beyond the rock barrier. And once or twice Nipper caught a glimpse of light as it percolated through the great stones.

But after a while the light vanished, and all sounds ceased.

"Good!" breathed Nelson Lee. "They only gave a cursory glance at the debris—they do not suspect that we escaped by this means. That is one relief, at all events. Come, we will get back."

Nipper was feeling rather relieved when he reached the Triangle, with the stars gleaming overhead, and the warm summer breeze blowing gently against his face.

"Look here, sir, you'll be careful, won't you?" asked Nipper anxiously. "I mean,

what's going to happen if you suddenly get caught in those tunnels? They'll finish you off—"

"You needn't be worried about that," interrupted Lee. "I am on my guard now, and I shall be very careful. Make no mention of this affair to anybody, Nipper, and do not worry if I am absent from the school at any time. I am going into this investigation with all my energy."

And Nelson Lee spoke with grim intent. He knew the enemy was relentless, and he was determined to pursue his investigations with even greater zest.

CHAPTER XVII.

OFF TO HELMFORD.



THE next day the whole school was quiet.

There were one or two minor outbursts, it is true, but they were soon quelled. Nevertheless, there was as much bitter feeling as ever, and it was only by holding themselves in check that the juniors prevented further serious hostility.

And the enmity even spread to former friends.

Such fellows as Bob Christine and Boots and Clapson of the Modern House kept strictly aloof from Nipper and Reggie Pitt. Until this week they had always been on the very best of terms.

But House "feeling" rose above all else.

And as there were only two Houses at St. Frank's, this feeling was greatly intensified. Indeed, when there were these troubles, the whole position became serious in the extreme. For an outburst of enmity meant that the whole school was involved.

In other big Public schools, where there are five or six Houses, it is not a very serious matter when two of these Houses enter upon a period of hostility. They only represent a small section of the school, and the trouble can never become grave. Such outbursts generally die down after a very brief life.

At St. Frank's the situation was acute.

But, somehow, the day was got through without much trouble. And by Saturday morning the position was slightly eased. The seniors, at all events, were keeping the peace. They managed this by avoiding one another as much as possible. Ancient House and Modern House did not mix.

There was something else to-day, too—the big Helmford match.

In spite of the hostilities—dormant, but nevertheless ever present—cricket rose above all else. And the First Eleven was off to Helmford to avenge the recent home defeat.

Juniors now took almost as much interest in First Eleven cricket as the seniors. The Fourth had its own representatives in the principal school team, and they were as keen

as mustard to see the junior trio do their share towards gaining victory.

The seniors had gone off directly after breakfast. They took an earlier train, and Nipper and Jerry Dodd and Hussi Kahn were planning to go by the next. It would be quite satisfactory if they arrived at Helmford by 11.30.

"It's better to go by ourselves," explained Nipper. "These seniors are a bit lordly, and I'm a free and easy chap. Besides, we don't want to hang about at Helmford while Fenton is having a long jaw with his friends there."

So they prepared to leave leisurely in time to catch the 9.45 train. This was half an hour later than the other one, but it could land them in Helmford with heaps of time to spare. And they started off early as the morning was rather warm, and hurrying was not pleasant.

"Good luck, you chaps!" said Reggie Pitt, as he saw them off. "Don't forget to bring back the laurels."

"We'll do our best," smiled Nipper.

"That's no good!" said Handforth tartly. "You've got to bring 'em back—there's no two ways about it! By George, if you lose this match, you'd better not come home at all!"

"Why? Shall we be slaughtered on the spot?" grinned Jerry Dodd. "There's one thing, we're going to do some perspiring. By jings, it looks like being the hottest day of the year—real Australian weather."

Handforth mopped his brow.

"You're welcome to it," he said. "If it's always like this in Australia, no wonder our Test Eleven is up against it! All the more credit to 'em when they win!"

"We don't want to get into any arguments about the M.C.C.!" grinned Reggie Pitt. "You don't seem to realise that we're keeping these chaps. They'll lose their train next."

"No fear!" said Nipper. "We're off!"

"You must honourably excuse us from further conversational moments," beamed Hussi Kahn. "The august train awaits us,

but will, I fear, continue on its disgusted way without presence if we linger."

"Of all the long-winded asses!" said Handforth. "He wants to say two words, and he uses about fifty! I like a chap to be blunt, to the point! You never hear me jawing for nothing—"

"So long!" interrupted Nipper. "If we wait here to hear you out we shall miss the next train, too! I suppose you chaps will be along after lunch?"

"Rather!"

"Good! Wish us luck!"

Nipper and Dodd and Kahn went down the lane, and the other juniors gave them a departing cheer. The trio walked leisurely, for there was still plenty of time. And just when they drew opposite the old stile, four figures appeared from Bellton Wood. They came out grimly, and barred the way.

CHAPTER XVIII.

AN UNEXPECTED SEIZURE.

SINCLAIR, of the Sixth, was looking rather excited.

"Do you think it'll work?" he asked tensely.

"Of course it'll work," declared Grayson.

"But what if somebody spots us?" put in Carlile. "It's a great idea as far as it goes, but I'd like to be more certain—"

"Don't make so many difficulties," interrupted Grayson gruffly. "Who's likely to spot us in the lane? It's always deserted in the morning. Besides, nobody would take any notice, in any

case. For we four to grab three juniors is nothing particularly startling at any time of the day. If somebody saw it, they'd only grin."

"He's right," said Sinclair. "By Jove, I believe it'll work!"

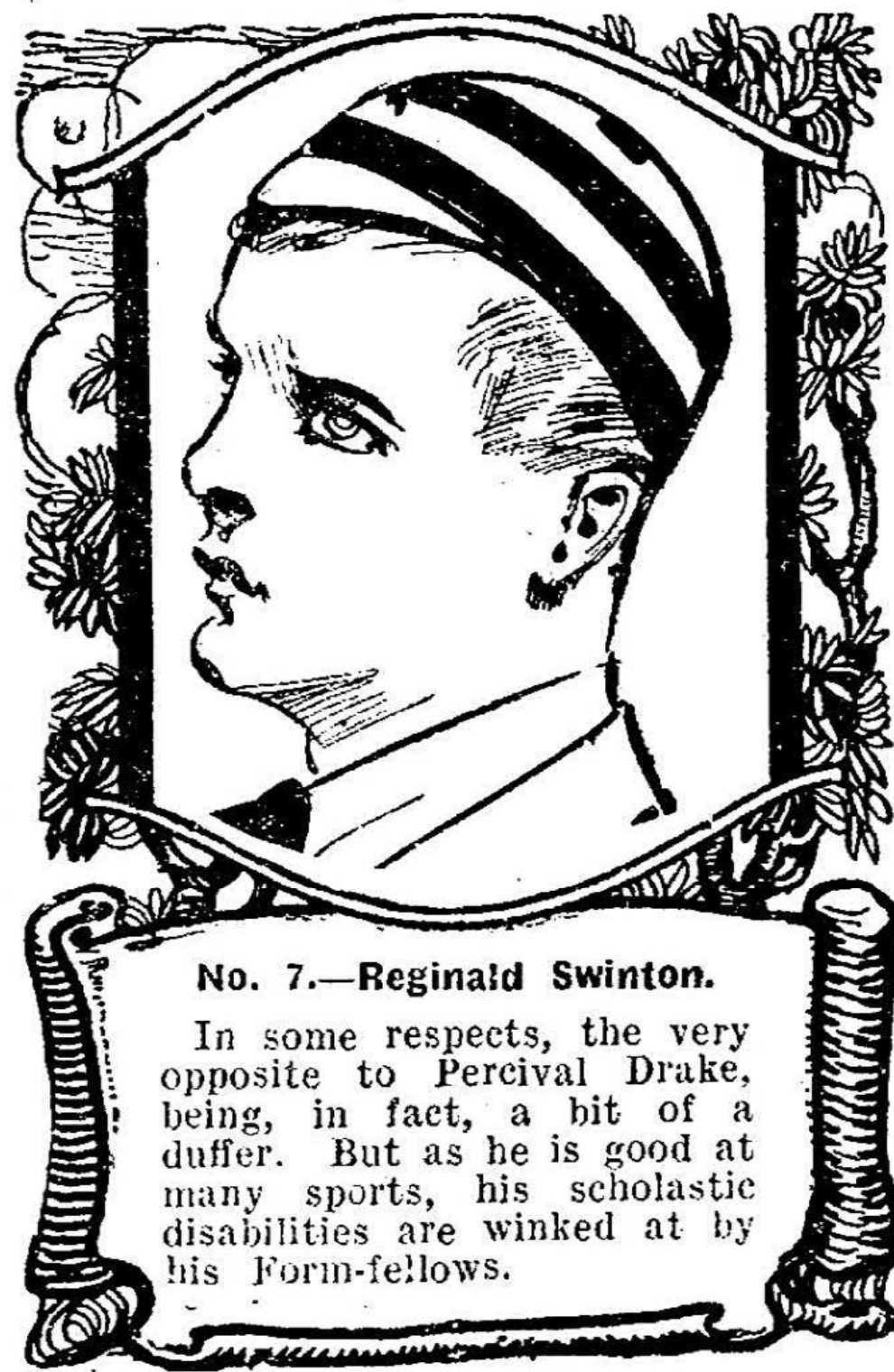
The four seniors were waiting just inside Bellton Wood. It was shady there, and they were protected from the hot morning sun. A fair wind was blowing, and Bellton Lane was dusty.

As yet there was no sign of the Fourth Form trio. But they would be coming down

PORTRAIT GALLERY AND WHO'S WHO.

Third Series—Fifth Form.

NOTE.—The average age of Fifth Form boys is 17.



No. 7.—Reginald Swinton.

In some respects, the very opposite to Percival Drake, being, in fact, a bit of a duffer. But as he is good at many sports, his scholastic disabilities are winked at by his Form-fellows.

presently, as Grayson well knew. Grayson had been delighted to find that the senior members of the First Eleven had gone off earlier—and he had lost no time in seizing the opportunity.

And, at the risk of being late for lessons, the conspirators were waiting. It was an old dodge they were planning, but quite simple. And perhaps it was all the better on this account.

"By Jove! Here they come!" ejaculated Mills tensely.

He had taken a peep out beyond the stile, and he was right. Down the lane came three figures in flannels. They were not looking particularly hurried, and as they came down they conversed cheerily.

Grayson & Co. stepped out from the stile, and barred the way.

"Just off to Helmsford?" asked Grayson carelessly.

"You know we are," said Nipper.

He eyed the seniors rather uneasily. Instantly he suspected their purpose. Sinclair, Carlile, and Mills were the three disgruntled ex-members of the First Eleven, and they had every reason to be bitter against their successors. Grayson, of course, was always ready for unpleasantness.

"Quick!" shouted Nipper. "Run for it!"

But even as he spoke, the seniors acted.

Grayson and Mills dashed at Nipper, and flung him to the ground. He was the most formidable opponent, and so he had two against him. Sinclair, a big fellow of nearly nineteen, was easily able to deal with Dodd—although Jerry put up a game fight.

And Carlile settled Hussi Kahn by delivering a heavy punch on the side of the head as a preliminary.

In less than three minutes the defeated juniors were dragged into the wood, and flung down among the dry, dead leaves. They were in a little hollow, just off the footpath. And even if people came along, they would know nothing of this little drama.

"Confound you!" snarled Grayson, as he dabbed his nose. "What's the idea of punching me like that?"

"I'd like to knock you out!" said Nipper furiously. "I suppose you mean to keep us here, so that we can't play in the match?"

"That's the idea."

"You're mad!" said Nipper. "Do you think we shan't tell the truth afterwards? What good is it going to do you—"

"Fenton isn't likely to listen to any such excuses after you've let him down!" interrupted Grayson sneeringly. "Anyhow, we're going to keep you bottled up until further orders. How do you like the idea?"

While they were speaking, the seniors were rendering their prisoners fully helpless. Ropes were tied round their ankles, and their wrists were bound behind their backs.

When this task was completed, the three were rolled in a row, and the victors stood round. They dusted themselves down, and



In a split fraction of a second Lee's leg shot upwards, and jerked Chandra Jungh's arm as it struck.

regained some of their breath. They were all hot and perspiring.

"I'm not surprised at you, Grayson, but I'm amazed at you other fellows," said Nipper quietly. "No wonder Fenton kicked you out of the Eleven! Haven't you any better feeling for the school than to jeopardise an important match?"

"Jeopardise it?" sneered Sinclair. "You conceited young puppy, do you think the first eleven can't get on without you kids? Fenton's only keeping you in to have his revenge on us! You can't play!"

Nipper did not demean himself by answering. In the Redcliffe match he and his two junior companions had put up the best performances of the day, and nothing could alter that fact.

"What are you going to do with us?" asked Jerry Dodd fiercely. "I reckon you brutes ought to be kicked out of the school—"

"What are we going to do with you?" repeated Grayson. "Sinclair's going to stay here all the morning—and watch you. Bound up like that, you can't do anything. What's more, we're going to establish an alibi—and when you tell your pretty story, we shall deny it, and prove that you're wrong. How's that?"

Grayson was grinning, and Nipper's heart sank.

He was not dismayed about the truth coming out. Grayson's talk about an alibi was just bluff. But there was every prospect of being kept prisoners. Bound as they were, they could not hope to escape—

particularly as Sinclair would be watching them all the time.

Pitt and the others had seen them off, and would naturally assume that they had caught the train. As far as Nipper could see, the position was just about hopeless.

But it wasn't—by any means!

CHAPTER XIX.

THE THIRD TAKES A HAND.



WILLY HANDFORTH scratched his head thoughtfully, and looked at Marmaduke out of the corner of his eye.

"Marmy, old son," he said, "there's something up!"

Marmaduke, the little monkey, looked at Willy with bright eyes.

"I believe there is!" he said promptly.

At least, that is what he meant. He just chattered and showed his teeth, in obvious agreement with his young master. Marmaduke was one of Willy's favourite pets. Willy certainly had Septimus the squirrel and Rupert the rat and Ferdinand the ferret—but Marmaduke the monkey was undoubtedly first favourite.

Willy had just been taking him out for a walk across the meadows. Marmaduke liked the exercise, and, in this hot weather, Willy believed in giving him as much fresh air as possible.

"Now, what were those rotten seniors doing with Nipper and his pals? They pounced on 'em, knocked 'em out, and dragged 'em into the wood. Marmy, it's time we had a look into things."

Willy was quite shrewd.

By chance, he had been near the hedge at the time of the seniors' attack. Hearing Nipper's original shout, Willy had looked over the hedge, and had seen everything taking place, a couple of hundred yards down the lane.

And now he was standing just behind the hedge, with Marmaduke in his arms.

It only took Willy a minute to put two and two together. The seniors, he had seen, were Grayson, Sinclair, Carlile and Mills. And the very fact that these particular four had captured the first eleven juniors was significant in the extreme.

In fact, it was so significant that Willy knew the truth in a flash.

"I'll tell you what it is, Marmy," he said grimly. "Those bounders have captured Nipper and Dodd and Kahn so that they can't play in the giddy match. I read something like that in a story once. I'll bet they pinched it."

"I'll bet they did," said Marmaduke.

The intelligence in his eyes, and the way he chattered, proved that he would have said these words if he had been able to. He was rapidly becoming as excited as Willy. He instinctively felt that there was something special in the wind.

But soon afterwards Marmaduke was thoroughly disgusted.

For Handforth minor rushed him back to his cage, locked him in, and went off without even pausing to give him more than one hug. Such scurvy treatment was unlooked for from Willy.

But Willy was in earnest.

He knew that this was no time for delay, and Marmaduke could do nothing in the way of helping him. Having got rid of the monkey, he glanced at the school clock, found that it was nearly time for lessons, and that it was impossible for him to go off on a preliminary investigation.

He stood in the Triangle, placed his fingers between his lips, and blew. He gave three piercingly shrill whistles.

The effect was magical.

From all quarters fags came tumbling out of the two Houses. Some dropped out of windows, some came through doorways, and about half of them poured out of the school shop.

Willy and his army were ready.

The fags knew that whistle only too well. One blast meant instant obedience, two blasts meant that the case was urgent, but three blasts were so absolutely vital that fags would have answered it even if they were in the bath.

"What's up, Willy?"

"What's the idea?"

The fags crowded round, shouting questions. Willy regarded them coldly.

"Is this what you call discipline—stampeding round me like a lot of infants?" he asked. "Dry up and form into line! Not so many questions! Now then, Tommy Hobbs! Eat that doughnut, or chuck it away! Don't keep messing it about!"

"Look here, it's nearly time for call-over—" began Juicy.

"What do I care about call-over?" interrupted Willy. "Duty calls! Nipper and Dodd and Kahn have been grabbed by four of those rotten Modern House seniors—"

"What!"

"They're in the wood, and we've got to rescue 'em!" said Willy crisply. "Don't you understand? They're trying to keep 'em away from the match—so that St. Frank's will lose!"

"The awful cads!"

"The rotters!"

"The beasts!"

"My hat! I know all that!" said Willy. "I could call 'em something a lot better, only I can't stop to think of the right words! Now then, come on—and if we're late for lessons, I'll take all the blame!"

CHAPTER XX.

WILLY AND CO. ON THE WARPATH.



WILLY'S offer to take the blame was not exactly cheerful news to the Third.

It was one thing for him to make the offer, and another for Mr. Suncliffe to believe him. Somehow, the Third had an idea that they would all be punished with an impartial hand.

But Willy had given the order, and it was better to risk Mr. Suncliffe's wrath than to displease the Form captain. In the Third, Willy was more powerful than any feudal baron of the Middle Ages.

Mr. Stokes, from the Ancient House steps, was astonished to see the entire Third Form marching out of the school gates shortly before the bell was due to ring. It looked to him much like a strike, and he was puzzled.

For the Third, so far, had taken no part in the general hostilities. And the very fact that they were united here proved that there was no internal disruption. Willy had managed to maintain control. Higher forms had failed to keep the peace, but Willy had engineered it by the force of his fist—which, in a way, was a bit of a contradiction.

The fags went down the lane in a crowd. Willy was always bemoaning the fact that his men utterly failed to keep order. No matter how much he drilled them, they didn't seem to have the faintest inkling of what a double line should consist of. But this was no time for carping criticism.

"Come on as far as the stile, and then halt—mind you, not a word!" ordered Willy. "Everybody keep quiet, and wait for the signal!"

With this, he rushed off in advance, leaving Chubby Heath in command.

He arrived at the stile, cleared it in one leap, and raced along the footpath. But he didn't go far. After about twenty yards he came to a halt and stood listening.

He wasn't at all sure where the prisoners had been taken, but he had an inkling that they must be somewhere near by. Those Sixth-Formers wouldn't carry their captives very far on a hot day like this.

Sure enough, after listening intently for a few moments, Willy heard voices. They were faint and indistinct, but, nevertheless, proceeding from the wood. He wormed his way through the trees like a Red Indian, and then suddenly became very cautious.

Passing some bushes, he found himself looking down into a hollow.

And at the first glance, his suspicions were verified.

Nipper and Jerry Dodd and Hussi Kahn were lying in a row, bound hand and foot. Sinclair was lolling on the grass near by,

smoking a cigarette, and Grayson, Carlile and Mills were standing up.

Willy didn't wait to take a second look.

He wormed his way back, reached the footpath, and then became aware of a confused babel from the road. His eyes gleamed. So this was the way his men kept quiet!

He rushed the stile, and found the Third waiting there in a confused body.

"What's the good of me giving any orders?" he shouted warmly. "I'll make you pay for this to-night by giving you some extra drill! Come on—we've got to do some rescue work! Four seniors, don't forget—and let 'em have it! Follow your uncle!"

He ran off, and the Third streamed after him like a pack of hounds.

In the meantime, Grayson was glancing at his watch.

"Time we made a move," he remarked. "Calling-over in a few minutes, and we shall only just be able to get back. You'll be all right here, Sinclair?"

"You bet!" said Sinclair. "I've got a magazine and plenty of cigarettes, and I managed to wangle the morning off. You'll relieve me at lunch-time, won't you?"

"Carlile and Mills are coming down," said Grayson. "Well, we'll be off. Whatever you do, don't let those young demons escape—"

"What's that noise?" interrupted Carlile, starting.

"Noise?"

"I thought I heard something—"

"Some kids or other," said Grayson, frowning. "If they come anywhere near here—"

He broke off, looking alarmed. The voices were growing nearer and nearer, and all the seniors exchanged startled glances. The approaching voices were accompanied by the crashing of undergrowth. And a moment later, before any of the four could attempt to get away, Willy Handforth burst through the bushes like a thunderbolt.

"Good old Willy!" shouted Nipper. "Quick, old son!"

"Leave it to me!" roared Willy. "Come on, you fatheads! Don't let these rotters escape!"

Grayson & Co. realised with sudden fury that their plot was exposed, and that nothing could make it successful now. And it was quite evident from all the noise that the fags were in force. Usually, the fags wouldn't dare to lay hands on Sixth-Formers; but this was an exceptional case.

The fags knew that they could act with impunity.

For the seniors would find it impossible to complain, for if they took that course they would expose themselves by their own mouths. The only course was to flee, leaving dignity to the winds.

Unhappily for them flight was out of the question.

For even as they attempted to dash off, the whole dip became crowded with fags, and they pounced upon the four seniors like a pack of wolves.

CHAPTER XXI.

CROCKED!



GRAYSON & CO. crawled away.

The scrap was over, and they were really lucky to be able to crawl at all. The fags had mauled them from head to foot. They were wrecks. Torn, battered, and bruised, the defeated plotters had at last been allowed to escape. Undoubtedly they would have fared much worse but for the fact that Chubby Heath heard the school-bell clanging in the distance.

"Good! You've just got time!" panted Willy. "There's always two minutes; you can do it if you rush! Don't mind me; I'll come on later!"

"But old Suncliffe'll ask about you—"

"Let him ask!" said Willy. "That's the worst of these masters—they always want to know so much. But I can deal with old Sunny; I know how to twist him round my little finger. Ten to one I don't get any lines!"

The rest of the Third rushed off without even exchanging any words with the released prisoners. The awful prospect of being detained for the afternoon loomed before them.

And this was not to be thought of. They fled.

But Willy was satisfied. The good work had been accomplished and the plotting seniors were put to flight. Peace reigned in the little dip. It now contained only Willy and the three Fourth-Formers.

"How did you know anything about it?" asked Nipper, as Willy deftly untied his ropes.

"I spotted you being collared, and knew what the game was," replied Willy briskly. "These fatheaded seniors aren't any good at planning things. It takes the Third to get good ideas!"

The other two were quickly released, and they stood up, rubbing their wrists and restoring their circulations. Jerry Dodd was looking very concerned.

"Hurt?" asked Willy quickly.

"Not much," said Dodd. "Only a bit of a sprain; I expect it'll be all right soon. This wrist, you know—the hand I bowl with, too. Perhaps it'll be all right—"

"It's swelling," said Nipper anxiously.

It was—considerably. But Jerry Dodd didn't like to admit it, even to himself. He had received a savage twist in the original fight, and he had known at the

time that his wrist was hurt. But its now swollen condition filled him with alarm.

"You won't be able to play," said Willy.

"By jings! I've got to play—"

"If you can hold a bat properly with a wrist like that I'll be jolly surprised!" said Willy, shaking his head. "It's no good kidding yourself, old son! By the time you get to Helmford you'll be no good. You're crocked!"

"You're a fine optimist—"

"What's the good of making any bones about it?" asked Willy practically. "The best thing you can do is to realise it and get the disappointment over. Fenton won't let you play, I know. Something's got to be done!"

Nipper was looking at his watch.

"I say!" he exclaimed quickly. "If we rush back and get our bikes we can just catch a fast train at Bannington, and still arrive in Helmford by eleven. But we shall have to whizz!"

They whizzed. Unless they caught this train they would not be able to get to Helmford ground in time. And this would be a serious matter if Helmford won the toss and batted first.

So they hurried back to the school and got their bicycles without anybody being the wiser, since the entire school was at prayers. Jerry Dodd was determined to go, even though he was convinced that Willy's prediction was right.

They thanked Willy for the excellent services he had rendered, and then hurried off. They caught the train with a margin of two minutes, and during the seventeen-mile trip they were able to cool off.

"Hard luck!" said Nipper, looking at Jerry with concern. "Only our second match with the First, and you're crocked already. I say, Jerry, I'm awfully sorry!"

"We are both supremely sorrowful that you should be so exquisitely crocked," said Hussi Kahn. "Pray let me examine the wrist, and see if the swelling has in any way decreased in its immensity!"

"Don't bother!" growled Jerry. "Thanks for what you say. By jings, it is a bit of a blow, I'll admit! I was hoping for a ripping game to-day."

"Never mind—you'll be fit for next week's match."

But this was not much consolation for the unhappy Jerry. He examined his wrist practically every mile, and he concluded that it was getting better and better. The swelling was practically gone; he could move the wrist easily. He wouldn't have any difficulty at all in bowling. As for batting, he wouldn't know he'd even had a sprain.

"Yes, it's getting a lot worse," said Nipper.

Jerry came to himself with a jolt, and stared.

"Why, I was just thinking it was better!" he said blankly.

"Of course you would; but it's no good, old son," said Nipper. "You're trying to kid yourself that the swelling's going down, but it isn't. It's getting worse all the time. Man alive, if you handled a bat to-day you wouldn't be able to play again for weeks! But give it rest, and it'll be O.K. by Tuesday."

And Jerry, convinced at last, was compelled to admit that he was out of the Helmford match.

cerned. It was only a little after eleven, and there was nothing doing yet. The three Fourth-Formers had just arrived.

William Napoleon Browne, of the Fifth, lounged over.

"A somewhat blistered-looking proposition," he observed gravely. "Brother Dodd, correct me if I am wrong, but it seems to me that you have landed yourself squarely into the middle of the Mulligatawny."

"I'm afraid I can't play," said Dodd.

"It is a sad, sad world," said Browne. "Dodd can't play! Already the Helmford

STORIES OF SPORT, SCHOOL AND ADVENTURE

THE Boys' Friend Library

No. 761. THE ROTTER OF THE ROVERS.

A Splendid Story of the Footer Field, introducing DICK DARE. By RANDOLPH RYLE.

No. 762. THAT TERRIBLE TERM!

A Rollicking Summer Story of Schoolboy Fun and Adventure. By SIDNEY DREW.

No. 763. DON DARREL ON THE TURF.

A Magnificent Yarn of Racing and Adventure on the Turf. By VICTOR NELSON.

No. 764. THE CADDIES OF ST. CUTHBERT'S.

A Novel and Exciting Sports Story of a Boy Golfer's Career. By A. S. HARDY.

THE Sexton Blake Library

No. 379. LIMITED LIABILITY.

A Story of Detective Work, introducing Sexton Blake and Tinker.

No. 380. BY ORDER OF THE KING.

A Magnificent Tale of Mystery and Detective Adventure in England and ABYSSINIA.

No. 381. THE MYSTERY OF THE POT-BANK.

A Romance of the Potteries and the Peak District.

No. 382. THE TRAINER'S SECRET.

A Fascinating Story of the DERBY, featuring Sexton Blake and Tinker.

THE SCHOOL- BOYS' OWN LIBRARY

No. 3. THE GREYFRIARS BUSINESS MAN.

A Mirth-provoking Story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars. By FRANK RICHARDS.

No. 4. THE FIGHTING FORM OF ST. FRANK'S.

A Ripping Yarn of School Life at St. Frank's, featuring Willy Handforth the Boy who Wouldn't be Bullied. By EDW. SEARLES BROOKS.

NOW ON SALE!

PRICE FOURPENCE EACH!

CHAPTER XXII.

THE SUBSTITUTE.



"CROCKED?" said Fenton sharply. "I'm awfully sorry—" began Jerry Dodd.

"You confounded young ass!" interrupted Fenton angrily. "What do you want to go and crock yourself for? Come here, Browne. What do you think of this duffer? Turns up with a wrist looking like an inflated balloon! He's no good for to-day!"

They were on the Helmford playing-fields, and Edgar Fenton, the Captain of St. Frank's, was looking angry and con-

men are beginning to cheer. It strikes me forcibly, Brother Dodd, that you have considerably blotted your exercise-book."

"How on earth did you do it?" demanded Fenton gruffly. "It's no good making a fuss about it now, of course, but you ought to be more careful."

Browne stroked his chin.

"An idea, Brother Fenton," he observed. "I think I shall institute an insurance for cricketers. The scheme strikes me—"

"Bother you and your insurance!" interrupted Fenton. "I want to know how Dodd crocked his wrist."

"And right so," said Browne, nodding. "We will waive the point regarding insurance. Some other day, Brother Fenton. In

the meantime, I will chew over certain great thoughts, and have the scheme lined up for discussion. But in the meantime, let us hold an inquest upon Dodd's wrist."

"It wasn't carelessness at all, Fenton," said Nipper. "As a matter of fact, we're lucky to be here."

As briefly as possible he explained what had occurred. Fenton listened in blank amazement when he heard about the attack in Bellton Lane.

"Sinclair and Carlile, and those others," he repeated incredulously. "They roped you up and kept you prisoners?"

"Yes."

"I can't believe it," said Fenton. "It's impossible!"

"Ah, Brother Fenton, I fear that your knowledge of human nature is faulty!" sighed Browne. "Alas, such duplicity is far more common than you imagine. Once, at Uxton, I was forcibly held while a fight progressed. And thus a tragedy took place. I will go into full details—"

"No, you won't!" interrupted Fenton grimly.

"Ah, well—another time!" said Browne. "Remind me, Brother, to relate you the sad story of the Uxton tragedy at some future date. I can assure you that it will be entrancing."

Fenton was fairly aghast when he heard the full truth.

"Jolly decent of those fags to come and rescue you like that," he said at length. "That young Handforth minor is a little wonder. He's about the cheekiest kid under the sun, but you can't help liking him."

"Thanks awfully!" said Willy, strolling up in Fenton's rear. "I wondered why my ears were burning as I came along. But you're wrong in one respect; nobody can possibly call me cheeky!"

They stared at Willy blankly.

"What are you doing here?" asked Fenton.

"Oh, I just came along!"

"Just came along!" said the school captain. "What about lessons?"

"Old Suncliffe let me off," said Willy cheerfully. "He's not a bad old stick!"

"He really let you off?" asked Nipper, with a stare.

"Well, I didn't exactly ask him," explained Willy. "I'm going to do that when I get back. You can't take any risks with these masters, you know. For some reason or other, they don't look at things in the same way. So I just came along, and when old Suncliffe finds out what I've done he'll pat me on the back and give me his blessing."

"Well, you're about the biggest optimist I've ever known!" said Fenton. "I'm not going to interfere; it's your business!"

"Thanks, Fenton!" said Willy. "As you're a prefect, I thought you were going

to jaw at me. The fact is, I've come along to play."

"To play what—marbles?"

"You see, Dodd's crocked, and so I'm here to take his place."

Willy said this so innocently, and in such a matter-of-fact way, that the full significance of it didn't strike Fenton for the moment.

"Yes, we need somebody," he said. "I'm afraid Dodd—What?" he went on sharply. "You cheeky young ass! What are you talking about?"

"I play for the Third Eleven, you know," said Willy. "There are two or three Fifth-Formers in the team, and I'm just as good as they are! Anyhow, I'm here to offer my services. If you don't like to accept them, that's your funeral," he added carelessly.

Fenton frowned darkly, and then his face suddenly cleared, and he burst into a roar of laughter.

"Upon my word, you're the limit!" he ejaculated.

"That's what lots of people tell me," said Willy. "Well, it's all settled, then! I thought about going in first, with you, Fenton—"

"Then you'd better think about clearing off, and preparing for your interview with Mr. Suncliffe!" interrupted Fenton.

"One moment, Brother Edgar—one moment!" interrupted Browne. "Allow me to observe that our reserves have not yet arrived. Dodd is crocked, and if we go into the field first we shall be a man short. Just a mere reminder, of course—"

"You don't mean—play this young beggar?"

"Why not?" asked Browne blandly.

"Even Willy's better than nothing—and, in my humble opinion, he deserves recognition for restoring Nipper and Kahn to the ranks. In the kindness of your heart, Brother Fenton, let him show us of his best!"

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE REWARD OF CHEEK.



FENTON looked very dubious.

"It's all very well to talk like that, Browne, but we don't want to make the First Eleven a laughing-stock," he said

slowly.

"Don't mind me!" observed Willy.

"It's all right, sonny, I didn't mean anything disparaging to you," said Fenton, smiling slightly. "But, you see, there's a risk of people laughing if I put a fag in my team."

"Look here, that's not fair!" said Willy promptly. "The fact that I'm a fag hasn't got anything to do with it. I'm in the Third Eleven—and so are one or two Fifth-Formers! Supposing you chose one of those as a substitute, would anybody laugh?"

"Well, no—"

"Then what's the difference?" asked Willy triumphantly. "You're not playing a fag as a substitute—you're playing a member of the Third Eleven. There's nothing particularly degrading in that, is there? What's the Third Eleven for but to provide for the First and Second Elevens?"

Browne beamed.

"If I may say so, Brother Fenton, the lad has a neat way of putting things," he remarked. "In face of such convincing argument, you can do nothing but accept his kindly offer—put forward in the true spirit of sportsmanship—and deposit him into the midst of the gang."

corking. If it will relieve you, I will announce to the populace that we are playing a Third Eleven man as a substitute for Brother Dodd."

Fenton grinned.

"Well, I'll tell you what," he said, "if those reserves don't turn up, and we have to take the field first, Willy's in the team."

"Then all is settled," said Browne.

Willy didn't quite know whether to be pleased or anxious. Even now he wasn't sure whether he was going to play or not. There were two reserve men coming along, and they should have arrived. There was not much prospect of these fellows being required, and perhaps they wouldn't turn



Nipper, Jerry Dodd, and Hussi Kahn were lying in a row, bound hand and foot. Sinclair was lolling on the grass near by, smoking a cigarette, and Grayson, Carlile, and Mills were standing up.

"But he's playing truant!" protested Fenton.

"A mere detail," said Browne. "A detail, by the way, of which you are supposed to be in ignorance. Let me further point out, if he plays for the First, he automatically receives permission—and thus escapes the somewhat severe swishing which I have no doubt that Mr. Suncliffe is now corking up."

"My hat!" said Willy. "You've got it right there!"

"I am glad, Brother Willy, that you see my point of view!" exclaimed Browne. "Come, Brother Fenton, do not allow Brother Suncliffe the opportunity of un-

up until the luncheon interval. They were Phillips and Bryant, of the Fifth.

To Willy's supreme joy, Helmford won the toss.

At any ordinary time he would have snorted with disgust at such luck—for with such weather conditions it was always to the advantage of the winners of the toss to go in first. Helmford would probably be able to set up a big total and thus make sure of the match.

Just as the Saints were getting ready to go out into the field, William Napoleon Browne started. He had happened to glance out of the dressing-room window in the

pavilion. Phillips and Bryant, of the Fifth, were hurrying up at the double.

"It seems," murmured Browne, "that something must be done."

He had seen Phillips and Bryant at the nets, and he had no great opinion of their skill. He had seen Willy, and it rather appealed to Browne's unconventional outlook to have Willy in the team.

But he knew that if Phillips and Bryant turned up now, Fenton would instantly choose one of them—if only for the sake of appearances.

"Alas and alack, I fear that Brother Fenton is sadly conservative," murmured Browne, as he hurried out. "He's too prone to think of appearances. These tendencies must be checked!"

He met Phillips and Bryant just round the corner, and seized them grimly. The expression upon his face was tense.

"You wish to do the side a service?" he asked quickly.

"Eh? What on earth—"

"Waste no time, brothers—waste no time!" said Browne impressively. "Rush to the school, seek out Mr. Spottiswoode, and urge him to come here with fleet footsteps. Search high and low, but find him! Go, or all is lost!"

Phillips and Bryant, rather confused, hurried off to the school buildings, wondering why on earth Mr. Spottiswoode was wanted so urgently. They were wondering still some ten minutes later when they found that there wasn't a Mr. Spottiswoode in the entire school!

CHAPTER XXIV.

ANOTHER WIN.



BY the time Phillips and Bryant returned, hot and mystified, the match had begun, and Willy was in the field. It was too late to play now. And the two Fifth-Formers singled Willy out, and gazed at him blankly.

"Great Scott! Handforth minor, of the Third!" ejaculated Bryant.

"Playing for the First!" breathed Phillips. "But what the dickens did old Browne mean—"

He broke off, and gaped.

"I say," he went on tensely, "Browne must have known about this! He sent us off on a wild-goose chase so that Fenton would pick young Willy! We've been swindled! Just wait till Browne comes off!"

But Browne had plenty of confidence, and he was in no fear for the extra men. And he was particularly pleased when Willy proved his worth. After all, his inclusion in the First was nothing to laugh about.

Being a representative cricketer of St. Frank's—even though he was in the Third Form—he had a perfect right to play for the school. He had earned his place in the Third Eleven by merit alone.

His fielding was excellent.

More than once Fenton mentally congratulated Willy as he made a quick return. And Handforth minor's real triumph came when he ran for a catch, and made a remarkably agile success of it.

"That," said Browne, "has consolidated Brother Willy to no small extent. How now, Brother Fenton?"

"I'm glad I played him," said Fenton, nodding. "He's good!"

"Meagre praise, but we must be content,"

said Browne.

Helmford were all out an hour before tea, and they made a good total score of 266. But St. Frank's opened with confidence. They weren't going to be frightened by a score of that kind.

Fenton and Morrow, in an excellent first-innings partnership, knocked up a smart 54 between them. And then Browne, with some of his usual fireworks, made a spectacular innings, and looked settled for a century.

Nipper made 37 off his own bat, and Hussi Kahn delighted Fenton's heart by knocking the Helmford bowling to every

PORTRAIT GALLERY AND WHO'S WHO. Third Series—Fifth Form.

NOTE.—The average age of Fifth Form boys is 17.



No. 8.—Stanley Hulbert.

Another one of the learned tribe. Great on classics, and considers himself a wonderful poet. His essays form a regular feature of the "Senior School Magazine"—but nobody ever reads Stanley's poems and essays.

corner of the field, and adding 31 to the score before being unluckily stumped.

Willy, much to his disgust, was left practically to the last. Obviously, he was of no importance, and he saw himself being put in with the ninth man—probably a duffer—and having about three minutes at the wicket before the innings ended.

But this tragedy did not occur.

Browne kept up his end, and he was still in when Willy's turn arrived. Nothing could have pleased Willy's heart better. There was a round of ironical applause when this extremely youthful member of the St. Frank's First walked briskly and confidently out of the pavilion. One might have thought that Willy was accustomed to playing in county matches.

"What's size got to do with it?" he asked, appealing to the wicket-keeper. "What about Hearne, of Middlesex? He's no giant!"

The wicket-keeper grinned, and Willy played the first ball with all his usual coolness. He wasn't in the slightest bit nervous. He wondered, in fact, how on earth anybody could be nervous. There was nothing in cricket to put the wind up a chap!

And, to prove it, he delighted the crowd by hitting with all the force and fire of

his elder brother. In less than twenty minutes the game was won, for Willy and Browne knocked off the runs with beautiful precision and speed. Fenton was frankly astonished, and he did not regret the experiment. Willy made 21 runs off his own bat.

St. Frank's had won the match with comparative ease—a striking contrast to the result in their last meeting.

And this Helmford match clinched matters.

The juniors in the team were now practically certain of their colours. One more good performance, and the coveted caps would be theirs. Fenton was making ready to complete his list. And the three juniors were grimly determined to keep up their form, so that they should win through.

Jerry Dodd's chances were not impaired. He would be fit again for the next match, in all probability, and that would be the deciding factor.

The First received a great ovation when it arrived home that night. And when the school learned about Willy Handforth's escapade, the school not only rocked with laughter, but congratulated Willy upon his skill—and upon his cheek.

If Handforth minor had been the hero of the Third hitherto—he was now nothing more nor less than an idol!

THE END.

KEEN ON RACING?

Well, naturally you're fond of horses, and you're interested in the big races in which the best horses in the United Kingdom compete. That being so, you'll love a tip-top racing yarn, and you won't want to miss—

"WHIP AND SPUR!"

By JOHN GABRIEL

This ripping new yarn, by one of the most popular racing authors, is something Extra Special. It's full of real-life racing thrills, and there is an absorbing mystery underlying the adventures of Tom Tempest, the boy jockey, whose father was a well-known private detective.

"Whip and Spur!" is positively starting this week. You'll find it, together with a superb new County Cricket Serial and FOUR other rattling stories, in—

THIS WEEK'S "BOYS' REALM"

Now on Sale.

Price 2d. Everywhere



IN REPLY to YOURS

Correspondence Answered by
Edward Oswald Handforth.

(NOTE.—Readers of THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY can write to me, and I will reply on this page. But don't expect a reply for three weeks or a month. Address your letters or postcards to E. O. Handforth, c/o The Editor, THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.—E. O. H.)

"FUNNY BUNNY WUNNY SUNNY" (The Land I Know Not Where), "ENIGMA" (Willesden, N.W.10), SAM BERNSTEIN (New York), S. SIRRAH (Nottingham), ETHEL MAYON (Putney, S.W.15), EILEEN (Manor Park), "A" (Leicester), BOLL (Meekatharra, West Australia): There isn't even room for a Trickett Grim tale nowadays. So you've got a fat chance of getting those glorious replies you're expecting, haven't you?

"ISZCKABIBBLE" (Toronto), PEGGY EVANS (Thames Ditton), ARCHIE & MAY (Ealing), FLORRIE (Leytonstone), "LONELY LILIAN" (Hull), "TIGER TIM" (Cobh, Ireland), J. W. (Lambeth, S.W.8), GLADYS W. D. (Hornsey, N.8): It's really a good job I'm so cramped for room, because cricket is taking up so much of my time that I jolly well shouldn't have any left to waste on long answers, anyway!

"FELIX" (Bolton), ERNEST BIRD (Kilburn, N.W.6), E. S. LAWSON (Leeds), "ACME" (Manchester), L. WATT (Charlton, S.E.7), J. HEARNE (Bath), ARTHUR WALLER (Bletchley), J. PRANGLE (Arundel): Have a look at what I told the last lot! And be thankful you've got these few lines! You wouldn't have had them if I hadn't snatched the time for them in class and done them under old Crowell's giddy nose!

JACK GHOST (Manchester), DICK (Woodthorpe, Notts), JOHN G. (Hornsey Rise, N.4), JOHN CROWNE (Ilford), JOHN ROBBINS S.E.1), "YE TONGS" (Dun

Loaghair), JAMES AGOMBAR (Bethnal Green, E.2), F. W. B. R. (Finsbury, E.C.): After I've told you all I can't promise to even acknowledge your letters, you ought to be jolly pleased to get a decent answer like this. It's my conscience, I suppose!

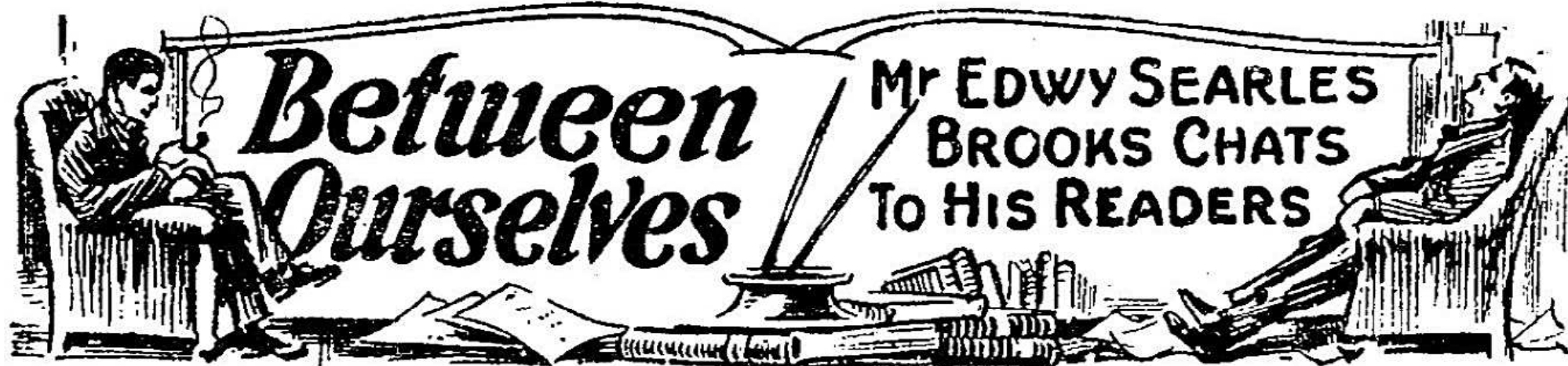
"EAGLE FEATHER" (Hale), "A NEW ZEALAND READER" (Epsom, Auckland), WALTER NICKLESS (Marrickville, N.S.W.), WILLIAM P. BARNETT (Cadell, S. Australia), RONNIE B. (Capunda, S. Australia), E. H. B. (Capunda, S.A.), T. G. S. (Coburg, Victoria, Australia), "ENZEDDER" (Wanganui, N.Z.: Don't write and thank me for this reply! You've only got it because old Crowell hasn't spotted me yet! Hope he doesn't see this!

CYRIL L. R. (Mount Albert, Auckland, N.Z.), BARRY KEEN (Hunter's Hill, N.S.W.), "A DINKUM AUSSIE GIRL" (Murrumbidgee, Australia), E. A. MITTELHOLZER (Berbice, British Guiana), "GOALIE" (Beddingfield), "B." (Leicester), A. B. C. (Wolverhampton), "A YORKSHIRE TYKE" (Halifax): What's the good of attempting to answer you in this small space? No good at all! So I'm blessed if I'm going to bother about trying!

"A CROSS - WORDER" (Birmingham), ARCHIE (Ealing), P. BRIDGMAN (Birmingham), G. G. L. (Nottingham), A. S. (Nottingham), SPRATT (Cambridge), "TALKING BEAR" (Warwick), E. MILES (Forest Gate): As I've promised to go cycling this afternoon with some of the other fatheads, it's not likely I'm going to waste the half-holiday by staying at home to think out clever answers to this week's letters!

JIMMIE SILVER (Liverpool), "A FIVE-YEAR READER" (Catford), E. V. G. (Forest Gate, E.7), "HANDFORTH II." (Leyton, E.10), "TWO PALS" (Bridport), MARGARET WATCHORN (Nottingham), MINNIE CANNON (Walthamstow, E.17), F. COOMBER (Kentish Town): By George! This clubbing-up business is fine for polishing off a big dose of correspondence! Can't stop to say more—something on the wireless I simply can't miss!

TED.



(NOTE.—If any readers write to me, I shall be pleased to comment upon such remarks as are likely to interest the majority. If you have any suggestions—send them along. If you have any grumbles—make them to me! All letters should be addressed to EDWY SEARLES BROOKS, c/o The Editor, THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4. Remember, my aim is to please as many of you as I possibly can. So it's up to you to let me know your likes and dislikes.—E.S.B.).

Letters received: E. Wigley (Battersea), James Innes (Port Elizabeth, S.A.), Peter Chrysafis (Montreal), Zoe Papayanni Congreve (Brighton), Len G. Waterman (South Chingford), Mabel Hooper (Worcester Park), Bentley Robinson (Bradford), W. Sayer (Canterbury), Frank Voce, Junior (Seaforth), Jack Wright (Chelmsford), G. Allen (Birmingham), D. Higgins (Dublin), Harry Goldstone (Manchester), Humour (Cardiff), Alfred Ernest Potter (Plymouth), N. P. Flynn (Waterford), Kitty Lee (Walthamstow), Izschabibble (Toronto), Percy G. Jones (Morecambe), Eric J. Flecknell (Westgate-on-Sea), A. Staunch Reader (Folkestone), Douglas Are (Doncaster), F. Coomber (Kentish Town), E.O.H. 2nd (Finsbury Park), Sidney Taylor (Dursley), Harry C. Mersereau (Montreal), An Interested Reader (Clevedon), Morris Stodel and J. Stodel (E.2), Henry Thompson (Glasgow), G. Burgess (Selsey), The Chief of Cubbyland (Address unknown), T. G. Oakley (Gateshead), A Keen Reader (Rhondda), Lightning (Islington), Frederick R. Parks (Hailsham).

So many readers have sent in their votes regarding the summer holiday stories that I am left in no doubt as to the course I must adopt. First and foremost, I am given to understand that Lord Dorrimore and Umlosi **MUST** be featured in these yarns. All right, they'll both be there. Furthermore, there'll be some awful trouble for me unless I take the boys off on some tropical adventure. So that's settled, too. But be-

fore they go they'll have some good times under canvas in England— But if I go on at this rate I shall be letting out a secret.

That was a very nice letter of yours, Zoe Papayanni Congreve, and I have answered your query about Lord Dorrimore and Umlosi above. I never thought for a moment that your second name was a joke. As a matter of fact, I think your whole name is wonderful.

With regard to the request in your last paragraph, Len G. Waterman—yes, certainly. Send it along, by all means.

You've placed me in a difficulty, Mabel Hooper. I generally make a point of only mentioning "general interest" letters in these columns; but yours is so interesting that I can't ignore it—although, at the same time, there's hardly anything I can reply to. You didn't mention if your three younger brothers read the Old Paper. I hope they do.

Bravo, Frank Voce, Junior! Your sketches of Handforth and Dr. Stafford are absolute works of art. I'm not flattering you in the least. But please let me know one thing—are they copies, or are they originals? Your sketch of that school is also excellent. Another budding artist!

About those back numbers you want, Jack Wright. A few weeks ago I mentioned that I'm doing my best to get hold of as many back numbers as possible, after which I will supply them to those readers who urgently need them. You're on the list. It all takes time, remember, and I can't do everything at once.

I fear you are right, Freestater, when you say that lots of boys smoke. But you can take my word for it that it does them a lot of harm. Any medical man will tell you that nicotine has a detrimental effect upon

growing boys. After they have finished growing it is quite a different matter—and whether they smoke or not is of no consequence. But smoking DOES have a harmful effect upon the young. I'm not preaching, you know—I'm just stating a plain fact.

* * *

Good luck to you, Ernest Alfred Potter! You tell me that you haven't got a single copy of the Old Paper because you give it away every week to somebody who can't afford it. That's a fine, generous spirit.

* * *

I don't quite know what your father means, N. P. Flynn, by describing the Old Paper as "fireside chat," and it pains me to hear that your people disapprove of your reading my yarns. Please ask your father to read the following, which I am quoting from "An Interested Reader's" letter: "I am neither boy nor girl, but a more than middle-aged woman; but I confess to enjoying your stories, and looking upon Nelson Lee, Nipper, and the rest, rather in the light of old friends." Surely there is no need for anybody to bar the Old Paper because it is mainly a boys' journal? Plenty of boys and girls read grown-up magazines. So why shouldn't grown-ups read boys' and girls' magazines? What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander!

* * *

I particularly like your reference to THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY in your letter, Eric J. Flecknell. Twice in the course of your letter you refer to "Our Paper," with emphasis on the "Our." That's a great idea! In fact, it's so good that I intend to pinch it, and in future, instead of referring to the "Old Paper," I shall always put it down as "Our Paper." It sounds more pally, doesn't it? And it's so strictly true, too. Because it IS our paper.

* * *

I'll admit, Harry C. Mersereau, that you have a real grievance, and I shall have to see what I can do about it. Being a Canadian boy, you are naturally upset because there are two American juniors in the Fourth, but not one Canadian. It certainly is a bit thick. Wait until the autumn comes along, when St. Frank's will be enlarged and improved, and I guarantee that you won't have any cause for further grumbles. Now to answer your questions. The first stories of St. Frank's appeared in 1917—the very first one being in No. 112 of Our Paper, and it was called "Nipper at St. Frank's." Hunter the Hun was a temporary headmaster who caused ructions at St. Frank's, and goaded the boys on to a barring-out.

* * *

Harry C. Mersereau possesses the real Empire spirit, and I should like to quote a

few words of his letter—and I hope he won't mind. "Now, in closing, I wish to say that I regard the N.L.L. and your stories as a link which binds the boys of the Empire together. When the boys of to-day grow up they will then be men of the Empire, and you are doing a noble work in strengthening the ties that bind them to their relations across the seas." If Harry is right, I feel that no amount of effort on my part is the slightest trouble, and I'd like everybody to join in the toast he gives in his concluding paragraph: "Long live St. Frank's and the British Empire, and God Save the King."

* * *

Here's a nice thing! A Keen Reader, hailing from Rhondda, tells me that I possess a heart of stone! I shall have to get myself X-rayed, to see if he's right or not. And he gives me this flinty character just because the map of St. Frank's hasn't appeared yet! But there's really no need to despair. The map is receiving the attention of the Editor and myself, and will appear in the autumn in its full glory—when the Magazine is restored to its old form.

* * *

There's another point I'd like to mention—and this concerns the St. Frank's League. I haven't referred to the League for some weeks, but please don't imagine that the scheme has been dropped. Not at all! You've only got to curb your impatience a little longer, and then you'll find that there'll be something doing with a capital "S" and a capital "D."

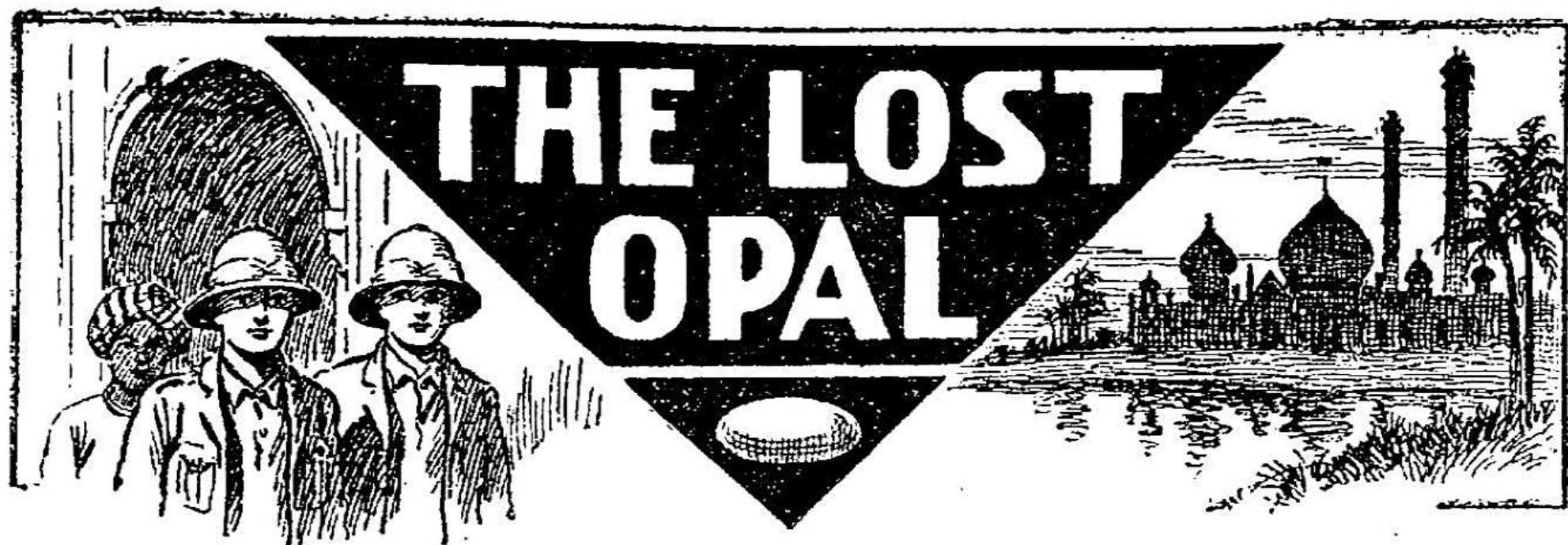
* * *

There's an extraordinary coincidence about your letter, Frederick R. Parke. The suggestions you make at the end of your letter regarding future stories—the summer term, the holidays, and the return of the boys in the autumn—are PRECISELY what I have already planned! In fact, many of the stories are written, and you'll find the sequence of events take place in just the same order as you have outlined. Funny, isn't it? It seems to me there must be some wave of telepathy between us!

* * *

Well, my space seems to be about full for this week, so I must reluctantly close down. I'd very much like to know how you care for the cricket stories, and if they are keeping up to the standard you evidently expect. I think I know the stuff you want, but a little hint now and again is always useful.

**A GRAND NEW SERIAL OF
STIRRING ADVENTURE IN THE
DAYS OF THE SPANISH ARMADA
BEGINS NEXT WEEK!**



or, **THE SECRET OF
THE GHAUTS.**
By **WILLIAM MURRAY.**



*A Wonderful Romance of
the Adventures of Two British
Boys in India.*

FOR NEW READERS.

Pink Triscott, a private of the Bedfordshire Regiment, stationed at Mysore, learns the secret hiding place of the lost opal, the possession of which by the rajah is the signal for a rising in the province. Myles Chesney and Jack Wynward, two brave British lads, with Paltu, a native stable lad, accompany Pink on an expedition to recover the opal. They are closely pursued by the rajah's mounted troops. After many exciting adventures they come to a deep and narrow gorge. In a cavern underneath a lofty stone barrier, they discover the lost opal. But they are too late, for before they can get away with the precious stone, they are captured by the rajah's troops and death now awaits them.

(Now read this grand long concluding instalment.)

FOR an instant Pink reeled like a drunken man, and glared at the drawn weapons. He made a step forward, lifting up one arm.

"Stop soubadar!" he exclaimed in a tone of hoarse and agonised entreaty. "Grant me a word before you begin the massacre!"

The troopers flourished their tulwars in a closer circle, and broke into angry murmurs of discontent.

"Chup, chup, (silence) impatient ones!" growled Mogul Mir. "Let the dog speak!"

Pink inclined his head gratefully.

"I ask the lives of these lads 'ere," he pleaded. "They 'ad nothing to do with this affair. I dragged them into it, and I'm willing to die for them. By the Colours you once served under, soubadar, show mercy now."

"No, no!" cried Jack, springing forward. "Don't kill Pink! You dare not! If you harm one of us you will surely be shot or hanged! This mad uprising will end as did the Great Mutiny!"

The lad's imprudent threat, and the allusion to the terrible year of '57, roused Mogul Mir to a greater degree of passion

than he had yet shown. He swore savagely, and his eyes blazed like living coals.

"Feringhee dogs, better had ye held your peace!" he thundered. "It were too great a mercy now to give your necks to the sword. By Brahma, I would that I had a cannon heré! Ye should be blown from its mouth as were our sepoys before the walls of Delhi. Yet shall your fate be a terrible one. By lingering tortures will ye die."

Turning to the troopers, he added:

"Put up your tulwars, and bind the three Feringhees to yonder trees. The Hindoo lad is a son of Motee Mal, a true servant of the rajah. He shall be taken back to his father. These dogs have led him astray with poisoned words."

The ruffians sheathed their weapons with a reluctance that showed how eager was their thirst for blood.

Then they stood Paltu to one side, and sullenly dragged Pink and his companions to three great ironwood trees that stood in a row beyond the fire.

After pinioning each one's arms behind his back, they bound them to the trees with

many feet of straps and tough, flexible vines, wrapping the coils painfully tight about them from ankles to shoulders.

Two burly ruffians lifted the brass box to their shoulders, and supported the weight with apparent ease. Two others placed Paltu between them.

The little Hindoo seemed actually indifferent to the fate of his companions, for he did not once glance toward them.

The troopers were now awaiting the order to start, but Mogul Mir had yet a sting to inflict upon his wretched captives. He swaggered up to them, flashing the torch in their faces and leering at each in turn with a demon-like grin of triumph.

"This is a more fitting punishment than to die by the tulwar," he said mockingly—"more fitting than slow starvation. Hark, you dogs! Ere to-morrow's sunrise, the fierce beasts of the jungle will mangle your limbs, and leave your bones to the vultures. Chains could not bind ye more tightly, nor will your cries be heard by human ears."

"Fiend!" muttered Pink. "'Ave you no mercy?"

Mogul Mir laughed.

"None," he replied; "nor do you deserve any. You refused the rajah's offer of wealth and honour, and chose to play the spy with your accursed knowledge of Hindustanee. But you failed to hear one thing—the secret pass by which I entered the gorge to-night. Aha! We trapped you cleverly! Now die—die, dogs and heretics that ye are!"

With this the soubadar turned on his heel, and gave the order to march. An instant later the ruffianly band, with Paltu in the midst of them, were tramping swiftly up the gorge.

For a period of some minutes Pink and the boys failed to realise their terrible plight, so great was their relief at being rid of Mogul Mir's presence.

They half expected the bloodthirsty troopers to return, and put them to the sword. They started at every sound that the breeze wafted to their ears; they strained their eyes into the gloom.

Jack uttered a groan, and Myles let a stifled sob escape him. All at once the horrible truth flashed upon them. They realised that they were face to face with certain death—that they had far better have perished by the sword.

It was a hideous awakening, and, brave lads though they were, it threatened for a time to crush and break them—to drive them frantic with terror and despair.

How long a time passed thus the boys never knew. They could dimly see each other and Pink, who was between them, by turning their heads. Myles was the first to break the silence.

"If it was only some other way," he whispered hoarsely—"if it could come quick and sudden. But to be torn to pieces by wild beasts—"

He ended in a shuddering moan.

"And it's all my fault," muttered Pink. "I wouldn't mind 'alf so much if you lads were safe. Can you forgive me for what I've done?"

Pink's noble disregard of self stirred a sense of shame in his companions, and the shadow of death seemed to grow lighter.

"Don't feel bad, Pink," said Jack. "We don't blame you, old fellow."

"There's nothing to forgive," added Myles. "We were only too glad to come. It was our duty."

Pink tried to thank the boys, but his voice broke down. They could not see the tears that dimmed his eyes.

Again there was silence for a long time. Then Jack said:

"I'm glad Paltu is safe. We made a mistake to bring him. I don't suppose he had the least idea of what we were trying to do."

"I didn't think he was so hard-hearted," replied Myles. "Why, he went off without saying good-bye—without even looking at us. And he always thought a lot of me."

"That's the way of the world, lads, when a fellow gets in trouble," said Pink. "Thank God my old parents are dead. I 'aven't any kin living. There's one I'd like to send a last message to, though. She's far away in England in the Kentish village where I was born. I can see 'er pretty face yet. Poor girl! She's waiting on me to come 'ome with the Victoria Cross. I'd 'ave it by this time, ay, and an officer's sword, too, if I 'ad led a different life instead of tumbling into scrapes. But it's too late now."

"I have no one but Captain Dundas," said Jack, after a sympathetic pause. "He'll be sorry, though. He was almost as good as a father to me."

The lad involuntarily lowered his head, and gave a little cry.

"What's the matter?" exclaimed Myles. "I see something shining on your breast."

"Nothing," replied Jack. "I—I mean it's only my gold locket. Those ruffians must have torn it out of my shirt."

"It has an ivory portrait of a lady inside," he went on slowly. "Pink knows all about it, but I never told you, Myles, that there was a mystery in my father's life. Wynward was only his adopted name, and he never knew—"

The sentence was abruptly cut short by a husky cry from Pink. Looking straight ahead, the boys saw a sight that chilled their blood with horror. On the flat rock projecting from the mound stood a monstrous tiger clearly outlined in the dim light.

No words can portray the feelings of the hapless prisoners. Here, at last, was the fulfilment of Mogul Mir's prophecy.

For a moment they were dumb and weak with terror. Then, heedless of pain, they exerted every muscle to break or loosen

their bonds. No use; they were held as tightly as though chained with steel.

Now the tiger, scenting a feast, sprang lightly across the dry channel, and landed on the dead embers of the fire. There he crouched, the very picture of rage, his blood-red jaws open to show his sharp teeth, his eyes like balls of flame, his tail lashing the ground.

"Oh, he's going to spring!" cried Jack, closing his eyes with a shudder.

"Yell with all your might, lads," shouted Pink. "We may scare 'im off."

But just then a dull, thrashing noise was heard close by. The tiger twisted about,

interruption to his anticipated banquet. He valorously proposed to give battle, and announced his intention by a series of mighty roars.

With a hoarse bellow, the buffalo charged. The tiger rose in the air like a flash, cleared the wicked horns, and landed on his enemy's hindquarters, which he at once began to rip open with teeth and claws. The maddened buffalo swerved aside into the dry channel, and stupidly blundered against the wall of earth on the opposite side of the pool.

Here the tiger fell off, and for a moment he seemed to be under his adversary's feet



With a hoarse bellow the buffalo charged. The tiger rose in the air like a flash, cleared the wicked horns, and landed on his enemy's hind quarters.

and stared intently up the narrow strip of grass that lay between the channel and the timber.

The next instant a huge buffalo shot out of the forest twenty feet away, and checked himself with difficulty in half that distance.

No animal of the Indian jungle is more dreaded, and this was a particularly savage fellow. He had evidently been running from some danger up the gorge, and now he was far from pleased to find his progress barred by another peril. He pawed the ground, and shook his lowered horns, and bellowed thunderously.

The tiger was equally enraged by this

and horns. But he quickly rolled out of danger, and when next seen he was clinging to the throat and neck of the buffalo.

The latter was at a disadvantage, owing to the soft sand and gravel into which his hoofs sank deeper and deeper at every moment. He finally dropped on his knees, bellowing with rage and pain.

The struggle that followed was of thrilling interest to Pink and the boys. For a time they forgot everything else, and they were recalled to their cruel plight only when the tiger let go of his victim, and crouched, panting and growling, in the shallow water of the pool.

"I was sure the buffalo would win," exclaimed Myles, in a tone of despair. "He must be dead."

"Pretty nearly," assented Pink; "but I can see 'im stir a bit yet. And the tiger ain't satisfied. I 'oped 'e would let us alone now."

"Oh! He's coming!" cried Jack. "Look! Look!"

Yes, the monster was already approaching the wretched little party, his craving for human flesh as strong as ever. Plainly he was hurt and crippled, for every movement drew a snarl of agony as he crept slowly across the pool and out upon the shore.

"Better 'ave it over than starve to death by inches," muttered Pink.

Then, prompted by the instinct of preservation that lives to the last with doomed men, he added loudly:

"Try 'im with a yell, lads."

Three voices blended in a hoarse shout that rang far through the gorge. The tiger paused, and crouched flatter in the grass.

"Again!" cried Pink; but before the lads could obey, a dusky little figure leaped out of the forest and ran swiftly forward, yelling at every step in a shrill, treble voice.

Then there was a ruddy flash and a sharp explosion, and in less than no time the now disgusted tiger was climbing the opposite bank of the channel, where he vanished from sight in the direction of the temple.

With a joyous shout, and a flourish of his pistol, the dusky figure danced up to the captives.

"Paltu! Paltu!" cried the boys, and a fervent "Thank God!" fell from Pink's lips.

It was indeed the little Hindoo, scratched from head to foot, and with dripping wet garments.

He whipped a sharp knife from his girdle, and vigorously attacked the straps and vines. He first cut Myles loose, then Jack and Pink.

They crowded around him with husky words of gratitude, and fairly hugged him in their mad joy. They felt as though they had stepped out of yawning graves.

For a time they could think of nothing but their unexpected rescue. The tiger and the dying buffalo were forgotten.

"This won't do, lads," exclaimed Pink, coming suddenly to his senses. "Look 'ere, Paltu, where are the troopers? 'Ow did you get away?"

"Me tell you," replied the little Hindoo, with a grin of triumph. "Sahibs no be 'fraid of troopers now. They take me far up valley. Me no say good-bye, so they not watch me sharp. By an' bye they go up steep place. Me steal knife from one fellow, and he no see. Then me slip back an' run fast. Troopers they turn around an' shoot. Bullet hit near my head, an' make me scared, so I fell. Me tumble down big, high rocks—fall on back in stream. Me pretend shot, an' let current drift me off. Troopers throw torch down so they see me. Then they

think me dead, an' go 'way. By and bye me get up, an' wade out of water. Run fast to save sahibs, an' find pistol what troopers lost in grass."

Such was brave Paltu's story, and it meant, in brief, that the band of ruffians had gone on their way, satisfied that he was dead.

"Lads," cried Pink, "there's a slim chance left. We must try to beat the troopers to Mysore. The odds are that they'll travel slow and roundabout, so as to spread the news of the finding of the opal. We won't lose any time in looking for the outlet from the gorge. I 'ave a better plan."

"What is it?" exclaimed Myles.

"To follow the stream under the barrier," was the reply. "We can do it at the cost of a wetting. I made sure of that when we came up."

In less than a quarter of an hour after Paltu's timely arrival, the little party were tramping down the valley along the avenue of stone tigers.

At the barrier they found a small arched passage, through which the torrent swiftly poured. There was no time for fear or hesitation. One by one they trusted themselves to the darkness and the rushing waters. Feet first they plunged safely down the cataract, dived under the grating, and stood once more on the lower side of Tippoo Sahib's barrier.

There is no need to describe in detail their further adventures on the homeward journey. In spite of hunger and weariness, they found themselves, when morning dawned, near the spot where they had encountered the zemindar of Mercara.

Here they ventured to sleep for several hours, and then pushed on in an easterly direction. Toward noon they struck the upper part of the Cauvery River, which was unusually full and swift.

Following the shore down for several miles, they found a small settlement of jungle men, or "Pariahs," from whom they purchased, with pocket-knives and what coins they had, a rude boat, paddles, and a supply of food.

Thus equipped, they started down the river. They paddled with the current all of that afternoon and night, and all of the next day, fortunately without encountering any danger from rapids or human enemies.

About midnight traces of civilisation began to appear, and a couple of hours later they saw in the distance the lights of Seringapatam—a town that lay only five miles to the north of Mysore.

With thankful hearts the voyagers at once landed, and crept up the bank to the plain. As they hurried through the starry night in the direction of Mysore, they momentarily

dreaded to hear the cracks of rifles and see the sky turn red with the fires of incendiarism and revolt.

Would they be in time, or were they even now too late?

CHAPTER X.

HOW THE OPAL FULFILLED ITS DESTINY.

FOUR whole days had gone by since the fire at the palace. It was now an hour before dawn on the fifth morning, and the audience room of the residency was lighted by a cluster of wax candles.

Up and down the floor Colonel Teversham paced with restless steps. He had risen thus early in order to transact some important business in the cool of the morning, and was momentarily expecting his private secretary.

The colonel had returned to Mysore on the previous day, as had also the shooting party from the Neilgherry Hills, owing to one of the officers having been seriously trampled by a mad elephant.

It was a sad home-coming for Captain Chesney and Captain Dundas. They found the town excited over the mysterious disappearance of the boys, of whom no trace had yet been discovered, though search parties had been scouring the neighbourhood for three days.

The missing arms and horses pointed to premeditated flight, and from the fact that four horses were taken it was believed in barracks that Pink Triscott had decoyed the lads away.

On this assumption Colonel Teversham at once telegraphed to all available points. His attachment to Myles was well known, and now he openly expressed a hitherto unexpected interest in Jack Wynward.

Pershad Jungh was as deeply distressed as the Resident. He disclaimed all knowledge of the boy's flight, and stated that he had slept soundly on the night in question.

He did not think it worth while to explain that his turban was worn very low in order to hide a half-healed wound on his forehead.

The rajah sent a message of condolence, and wanted to know if he could be of any service. Baboo Sing, who had a story to tell, lurked in the fortress, and nursed the prints of Lassa's teeth. Montee Mal likewise remained invisible, but Paltu's mother was seen to weep and tear her hair.

Little else but the mystery was talked or thought of, and perhaps that is why English civilians and soldiers alike failed to notice three very significant things.

These were the sudden increase in the Hindoo population of Mysore, the groups of earnest talkers in the native bazaars, and the travel-worn strangers who were constantly passing in and out of the fortress gates.

Such, then, was the situation when we find Colonel Teversham impatiently awaiting his secretary in the cool of the morning, and with no premonition of what the coming day held in store.

Captain Chesney finally appeared, looking haggard and anxious, and with blue circles under his eyes that told of a sleepless night.

"No news yet?" were his first words.

"None, I regret to say," replied the colonel.

"I feared so. This suspense is breaking me down. My poor boy!"

"There is no reason to despair, Chesney. They will be found sooner or later. You are taking it too hard. I'll wager you did not sleep a wink."

"Very little, colonel, I admit. So there is less excuse for my being late."

"No matter," interrupted the colonel. "I am tempted to send you back to bed. Still, since you are here, we may as well attend to these dispatches before the heat of the day."

He seated himself at a long, flat desk, and Captain Chesney sank wearily into a chair on the opposite side. Between them was a great stack of documents, which speedily engrossed their attention.

Five minutes slipped by. Then hasty steps were heard in the hall, and a very scared-looking soldier burst unceremoniously into the room.

"What does this mean?" thundered the colonel, as he rose and pushed his chair back. "I gave orders not to be disturbed. Who are you?"

"John Hoskins, your excellency, a private of Company B," blurted the man excitedly. "I was off duty all night, watching for a leopard in the nullah west of the town. On the way back, hardly an hour ago, I saw four or five hundred armed natives marching into town by the Jodpoor road."

"You must be mistaken, my man," exclaimed Captain Chesney, rising to his feet.

"The scoundrel is drunk!" cried the colonel angrily. "He shall pay dear for this intrusion. Call the sentries, Chesney, and—"

The colonel stopped abruptly, for Captain Dundas had suddenly appeared in the doorway, and his face and uniform were streaked with dust and perspiration.

"Have you heard yet?" he demanded, in a hoarse tone. "Some devilry is brewing—mutiny, in all likelihood. Half a dozen sentries just hurried into barracks, and they report armed bands of natives entering the town from all sides. Several hundred, headed by Mogul Mir, are said to have passed into the palace enclosure at midnight."

There was a brief and thrilling pause. Captain Dundas mopped his reeking forehead, and the private of Company B looked triumphant.

"A mutiny!" gasped Colonel Teversham, in a tone of dazed astonishment. "A mutiny in Mysore!"

"Everything points that way, sir," said Captain Dundas. "I entreat you to believe that the situation is grave and critical—that there is not a moment to lose."

Colonel Teversham seemed suddenly to understand. He took a step forward, and a grim and terrible expression came into his face.

But before he could utter a word a confused noise was heard outside, followed by voices and footsteps in the hall.

What happened next fairly stupefied the occupants of the room, for through the curtained doorway filed a quartette of panting, limping figures, all stained with blood and powder-grime and dust and perspiration.

There was a muffled cry or two, and someone said, "Thank God!" Then Captain Chesney had Myles in his arms, and Jack was trying to wring Captain Dundas' hand off. Paltu suddenly remembered his mother, and slipped through the rear door.

Colonel Teversham looked wistfully at Jack and Myles, as though he would embrace both. Seeing no immediate chance of doing so, he turned indignantly to Triscott.

"You are a deserter, sir," he said sharply. "and I doubt not that you tempted these lads away. I am glad that your conscience prompted you to bring them back."

"Me a deserter!" exclaimed Pink. "Indeed, and I'm not! As for taking the boys off, why, that's another story. 'Ere, Myles, spin the yarn quick. Tell 'is excellency what's going to 'appen. 'E won't believe me."

These words recalled all to the threatening crisis, and warned them that the present was no time for emotion or rejoicing.

Briefly and simply, Myles gave a hurried outline of all that he and his companions had passed through in the last four days, and every ear listened with rapt attention.

The narrative, amazing and startling though it was, bore conviction with it, and when the lad concluded the situation was as clear as daylight.

"Mogul Mir arrived hours ago," exclaimed Captain Dundas. "At any moment the insurrection may break out."

"If it does, God help the women and children in Mysore," said Captain Chesney, in a hollow voice. "God help us 'all!"

"But first we will try to help ourselves, gentlemen," declared Colonel Teversham's stern voice. "Prompt action may avert the peril, though I admit that the chance is very slim. But my resolve is made, and I shall carry it through at any cost. Now to the barracks without delay."

Two companies, with several pieces of artillery, were at once sent off to guard the Residency, and two were left under arms on the parade ground.

The rest of the regiment, four companies strong, marched noiselessly up the avenue leading to the palace. At the head rode Colonel Teversham and the mounted officers.

Pink was in the ranks with his company, but Jack and Myles were not allowed to share the perils of so forlorn a hope. They occupied points of vantage on the roof of the mess-hall.

Dawn was now breaking, and as the grim columns advanced the misty grey light revealed swarming masses of natives down each side street.

When the frowning walls of the fortress were but fifty yards distant the main gates swung suddenly open, and a body of horsemen trotted out.

In front was the rajah, and to right and left of him rode Mogul Mir and Pershad Jung. Behind came a motley throng of horse and foot, at least eight hundred strong, and all armed with rifles.

At the same time a shouting rabble entered the avenue from a point beyond the palace, and an equally large force swarmed out of the side streets in the rear of the troops, thus enclosing them in a trap.

It was a critical and seemingly hopeless moment, yet Colonel Teversham never faltered in his duty or resolve. Putting spurs to his horse, he galloped boldly to within twenty feet of the rajah, in whose turban the magic opal could now be seen gleaming.

"In the King's name, I command you to throw down your arms and disperse," he shouted, in a stern, ringing voice.

Mogul Mir laughed harshly, and Pershad Jung showed his teeth in a mocking smile.

"The rule of the English in Mysore is ended," cried the rajah.

And, as he waved his turban overhead, probably as a signal of death, a strange and momentous thing happened. The glittering opal fell from his turban to the stony street, and burst instantly into a score of fragments.

The catastrophe was witnessed by many of his followers, and the news spread like wild-fire. To the superstitious Hindoos it came as a swift and terrible warning.

The rajah was the first to turn his horse about, and in less time than it takes to tell all was rout, and panic, and confusion. The bloodthirsty horde melted away like wax, and the fortress and palace were soon in possession of the soldiers. The rajah was captured, but his more guilty confederates, Mogul Mir and Pershad Jung, had made good their escape, and could not be found.

That evening, after his budget of dispatches had been wired to Calcutta, the Resident found time to interview the four heroes.

They had eaten, and bathed, and slept, and now looked radiantly clean and happy, though they still felt some fatigue. Even Paltu was arrayed in spotless white linen, as befitted so great an occasion.

Most of the colonel's staff were present, and, before this audience, Pink and the boys told in detail the story of their marvellous mission to the ghauts.

When they had nearly finished, an interruption came in the form of a servant, who announced in a loud voice:

"Holkar Singh, a zemindar of Mercara, awaits your excellency's pleasure. He begs permission to make a complaint."

The colonel's eyes twinkled merrily.

"The gentleman shall have speedy satisfaction," he said. "Show him in."

A moment later Holkar Singh entered the room, salaaming profoundly, and there was much astonishment and perplexity on his face when he recognised Pink and the boys.

Behind him came his old Hindoo servant, who, after a quick glance around, tottered up to Colonel Teversham, and fell on his knees, crying in a loud voice:

"My master! Oh, my master! Have I found you again?"

The florid colour faded from the colonel's cheeks, and his cigar fell to the floor. He stared intently into the old man's face.

"Mohendro!" he gasped. "Can it be possible?"

"You know me, my master!" cried the Hindoo, with tears of joy in his eyes. "You know me after long years, even as I knew you!"

The colonel covered his face with both hands, and his head drooped on his breast. Then he slowly rose, and turned to his companions.

"You will understand my emotion, gentlemen," he said, "when I tell you that this man was my most trusted servant when I was stationed in North Assam. I believed him to have perished with my family."

"Mohendro, how did you escape?" he added, in a tone of hoarse entreaty. "Why did you leave my wife and child to the flames?"

"I did not, my master," replied the Hindoo. "The mem-sahib and child fled with me, and for miles we drifted down a river in a canoe. We upset on a rock, and—and the mem-sahib was drowned."

"Go on," said the colonel, with a groan. "What of my boy?"

"I swam with him to shore," resumed Mohendro. "It was now morning, and we were seen by some Naga tribesmen. They shot me in the breast, and left me for dead. When I came to life again the child was gone, and I was alone. I was found by friends—humble people of the forest of Soonput—who cared for me until I was well, when I heard that you were dead. After vainly seeking trace of the child, I took service with a great Afghan chief, and for many years I have lived at Cabul. Only lately did

I return to India, as my present master, Holkar Singh, will tell you."

Mohendro paused and looked slowly around the room. Suddenly he started, and pointed a trembling finger at Jack.

"The young sahib again," he muttered. "He has the face of your lost child, my master."

"Yes, it is a strong likeness," said the colonel dreamily. "I saw it from the first."

"And it may be more than a mere coincidence," exclaimed Captain Dundas excitedly. "Jack's father was found among natives somewhere in Assam when he was a little bit of a chap. Tell the Resident your story, Jack. You know it better than I do."

"Quick, my lad," said the colonel imploringly. "Tell me all. Who was your father?"

"He never knew himself," replied Jack. "A missionary named Wynward found him beside a dead native woman in the jungles of Assam. He was then five or six years old. All that he could remember was that his parents used to call him Jack. The missionary and his wife adopted him, and called him Jack Wynward. They lived up in the Punjab for a good many years, and then went home to England. My father was educated for the Army at Sandhurst, and he married an orphan girl in London. My mother died when I was eight years old. Then my father went to Burmah, and left me with his adopted parents. When they died, a year ago, he sent for me to come out and—"

"Is there no clearer proof, my boy?" interrupted Colonel Teversham. "Did your father have no clue whatever to his real parentage?"

"Oh, I forgot!" exclaimed Jack. "This was about his neck when he was found."

From under his collar the lad produced a tiny gold locket attached to a chain. He snapped it open, revealing in one side a faded lock of hair, and in the other a tiny face painted on ivory.

"My wife's locket!" cried the colonel; "and Mary's dear face, just as I remember it! My boy, your father was my lost son! Thank God!"

The words ended in a sob, and then the colonel caught Jack in his arms and strained him to his breast. There was a hush, and Holkar Singh forgot the complaint he had come to utter.

This ends the story of Pink Triscott's mission, and the Rajah Cham Bahadur's foolish conspiracy, and the result was a grandfather for Jack Wynward, and a grandson to comfort Colonel Teversham's declining years.

Holkar Singh, when he had heard the whole story, concluded that it was an honour to have an elephant stolen in so laudable a purpose, so he withdrew his complaint and

returned to Mercara. But Mohendro stayed behind, henceforth to serve under his old master.

After a prodigious amount of red tape, the Government concluded, for official reasons, to treat the conspiracy as the freak of a spoiled child.

So the rajah, who had really been a tool in the hands of his advisers, was restored to the throne, but under far more restricted conditions than formerly.

Pershad Jung managed to escape to Russia by way of Afghanistan, and Mogul Mir was shot down while resisting arrest near Hyderabad. Of the other ringleaders, some were pardoned and some were imprisoned.

The vast treasure that had been in the

brass box disappeared utterly, and not a rupee's worth was recovered. There is a strong belief that Mogul Mir buried it on the way back from the ghauts, and that it may be found some day.

Pink Triscott is a corporal now, and will probably rise still higher from the ranks. Paltu has been promoted to a post in the household, and Jack and Myles are the very life of the Residency. There is a bright future before them, and the plucky lads well deserve it.

Under a glass case in Colonel Teversham's library lie the fragments of the magic opal of Mysore—mute, but eloquent witness of the providential accident that averted a frightful tragedy.

THE END.

In Next Week's Adventures of the Boys of St. Frank's, the Fags, Led by Willy Handforth, take a Prominent Part in the War between the Ancient and Modern Houses.

**“Out For Their Colours ;
or, The Fighting Fags of St. Frank's !”**
is the Title of this Great Forthcoming Yarn

Neither must you miss the First Instalment, next week, of our thrilling new serial :—

“IN THE DAYS OF THE ARMADA !”

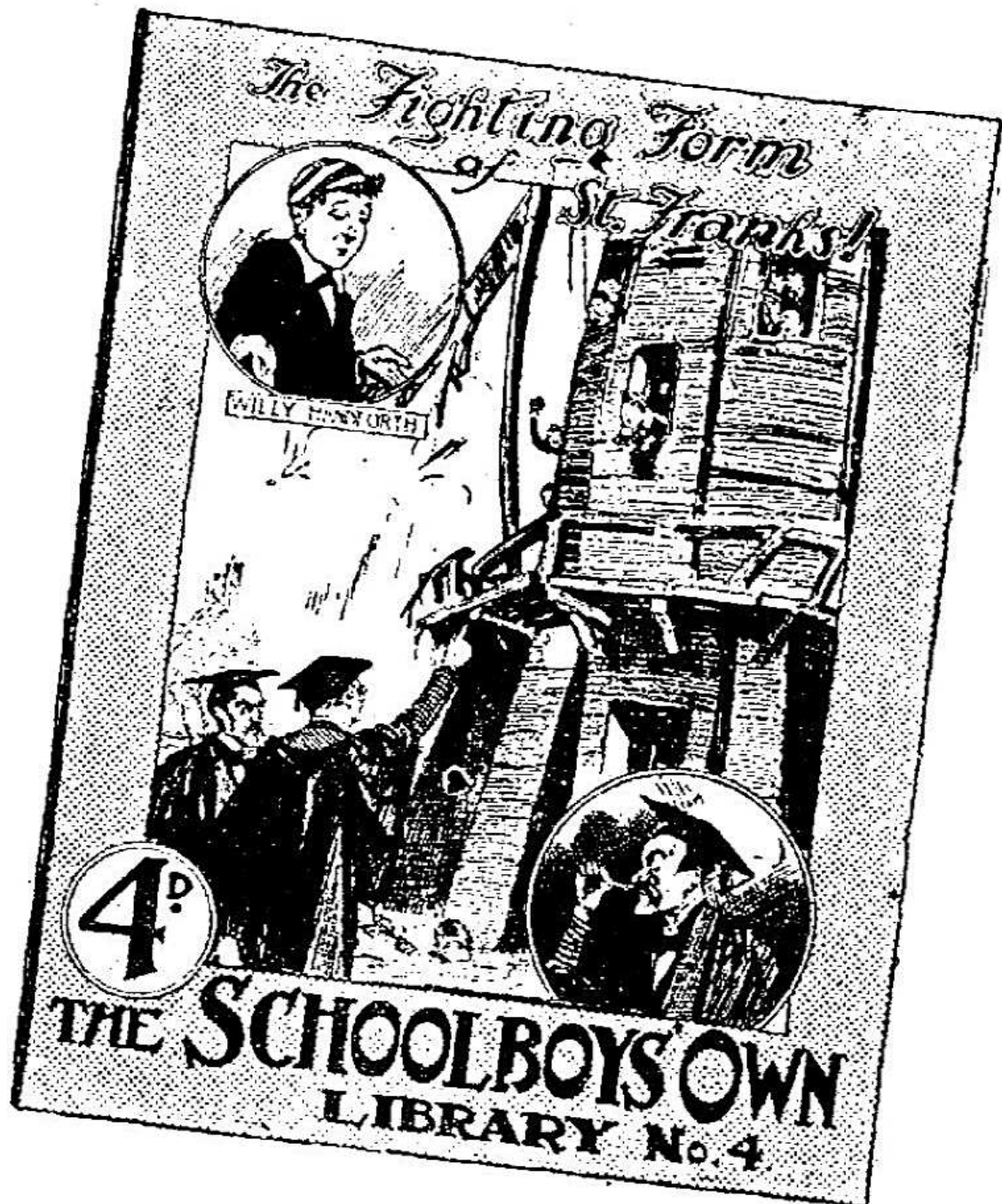
It is a story that rings with the glory of brave British deeds, when DRAKE, HAWKINS and RALEIGH made England feared and respected.

A STORY YOU OUGHT TO READ!

Featuring Willy Handforth, the lively leader of the Third, in a rousing story of school life at St. Frank's, by

EDWY S. BROOKS

the popular author of the famous St. Frank's stories in "The Nelson Lee Library."



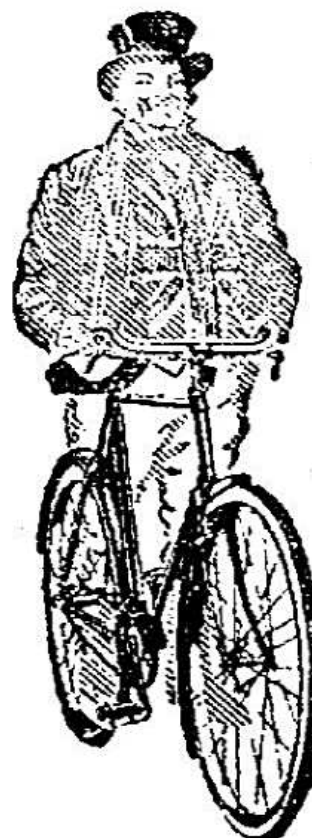
GET A COPY OF "THE SCHOOLBOYS' OWN LIBRARY"
No. 4—Now on Sale.

RACING SPECIAL!

Since the death of Nat Gould, that most famous of all racing authors, there has been no finer writer of racing yarns than John Gabriel. This great author's latest tale of the Turf is called "Whip and Spur!" and it is starting in this week's

BOYS' REALM!

Now on Sale. Price 2d. everywhere.



26 A WEEK
OR CASH
£4 15/-

The Best Cycle in the British Empire, "JUNO," sent on 14 DAYS' FREE APPROVAL, CARRIAGE PAID and GUARANTEED FOR EVER. Money refunded if dissatisfied. Art List FREE. Write NOW! (Dept U2),
JUNO CYCLE CO.,
168 & 248, Bishopsgate,
London, E.C.2.
Proprietors: — Metropolitan
Machinists Co., Ltd.

JUNO

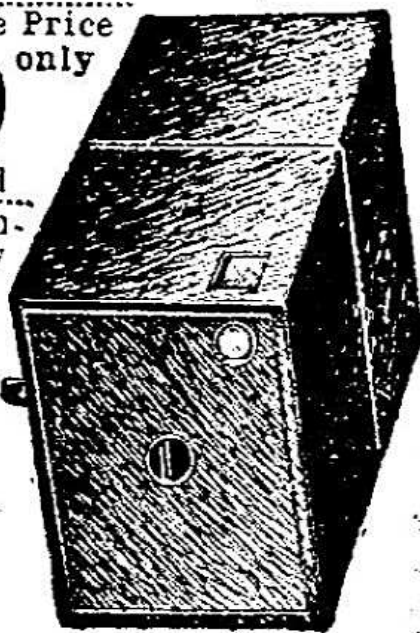
WONDERFUL "MONARCH" Regd. Offer of Large CAMERAS (Sold Last Season at 2/9)

Takes perfect Photos 3 1/2" x 2 1/2" Special Sale Price
British Made with latest 1925 improvements. Optically ground Lens, View-finder, &c. Also complete accessories—best quality Plate, Developing & Printing OUTFIT, together with easy & clear instructions for use. Send P.O. 2/- to-day. Thousands of Testimonials received.

1/9 only

Postage 3d

Miss E. Le Cheminant writes: "I was astonished to see the result of my first effort. The picture is as good as that done by a proper photographer." W. J. Thomas, Esq., writes: "Developed and printed photo and think it as good a photo as if it was taken with a camera which cost £3." 1925 Illustrated Catalogue, 1,000 Bargains, Post Free. The Leeds Bargain Co. (U.J.), 31, Kendal Lane, Leeds.





MY GREAT OFFER

Write for my free E.V. gain lists of the best Coventry made cycles sent on 14 days approval. Carriage paid. Thousands of testimonials.

O'Brien THE WORLD'S LARGEST CYCLE DEALER
118 COVENTRY

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

Stop Stammering! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars **FREE**.—**FRANK B. HUGHES**, 7, Southampton Row, London, W.C.1.

STAMP COLLECTOR'S OUTFIT AND 60 DIFFERENT STAMPS FREE!
Triangulars, Brit. Cols. Just request approx.
Lisburn & Townsend, London Rd., Liverpool.

All applications for Advertisement Spaces in this publication should be addressed to the Advertisement Manager,
THE NELSON LEE LIBRARY, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

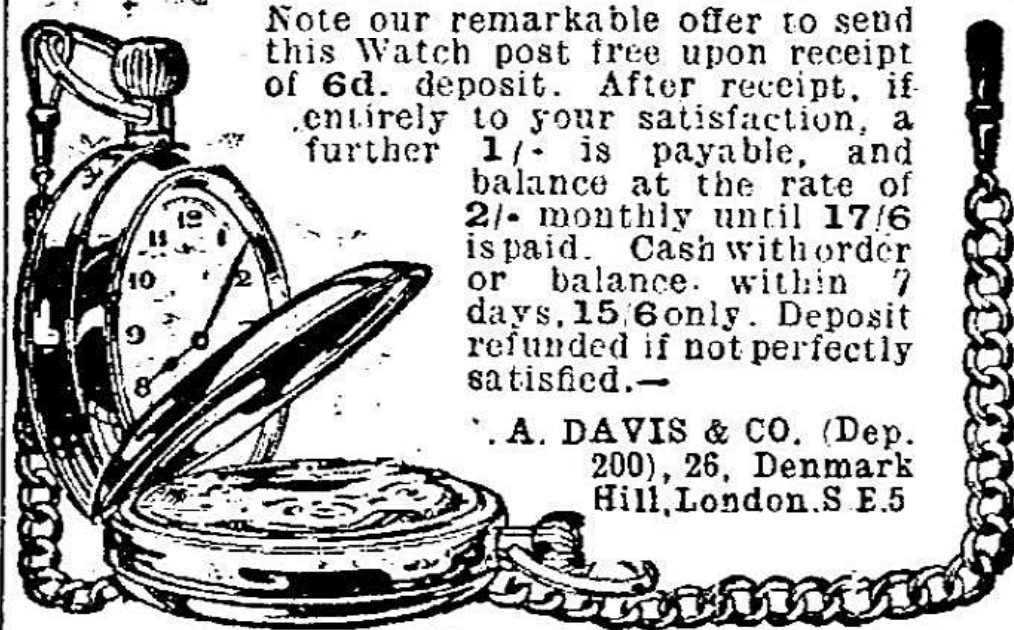
YOURS for 6^d. Deposit.

Our World-famous Gent's Full-size **KEYLESS LEVER POCKET WATCH.**

Highly polished cases, accurate timekeeper, patent recoil click. Soundly constructed.

Official 10 Years' Warranty with each Watch.

FREE A Solid Silver English Hall-marked Double Curb Albert given **FREE** to every purchaser.

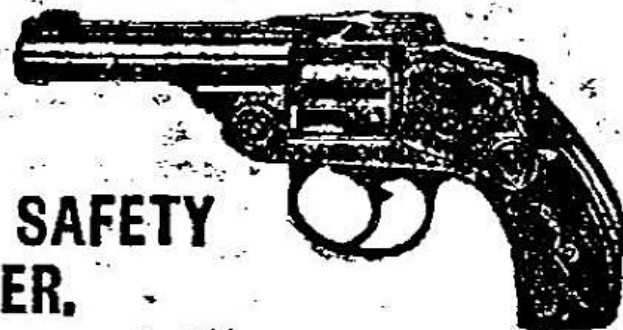


Note our remarkable offer to send this Watch post free upon receipt of 6d. deposit. After receipt, if entirely to your satisfaction, a further 1/- is payable, and balance at the rate of 2/- monthly until 17/6 is paid. Cash with order or balance within 7 days, 15/6 only. Deposit refunded if not perfectly satisfied.—

A. DAVIS & CO. (Dep. 200), 26, Denmark Hill, London S.E.5

NO LICENCE REQUIRED

8-CHAMBER SAFETY REVOLVER.



Exact replica of real revolver converted to Fire Blank cartridges only. Accidents impossible. Safe and Harmless. Useful for Theatricals, Race Starting, &c. Can easily be carried in pocket. 8—NICKEL or BLUE 12/-; 6—NICKEL or BLUE 9/6. SAFETY-PISTOLS, 3/9. Cartridges, per 100, 2/-; Carriage 9d. Illus. Cat. Cinemas, Cameras, Cycles, &c., post free. **James Mansfield & Co., 71, High Holborn, W.C.1.**

DON'T BE BULLIED.

Special offer. Two Illus. Sample Lessons from my Complete Course on **JUJITSU** for 4 penny stamps or a Large Illus. Portion of Course for P.O. 3/6. Jujitsu is the best & simplest science of self-defence and attack ever invented. Learn to take care of yourself under all circumstances. **SEND NOW. 'YAWARA'** (Dept. A.P.11), 10, Queensway, Hanworth, Middlesex.



Be sure to mention "The Nelson Lee Library" when communicating with advertisers.