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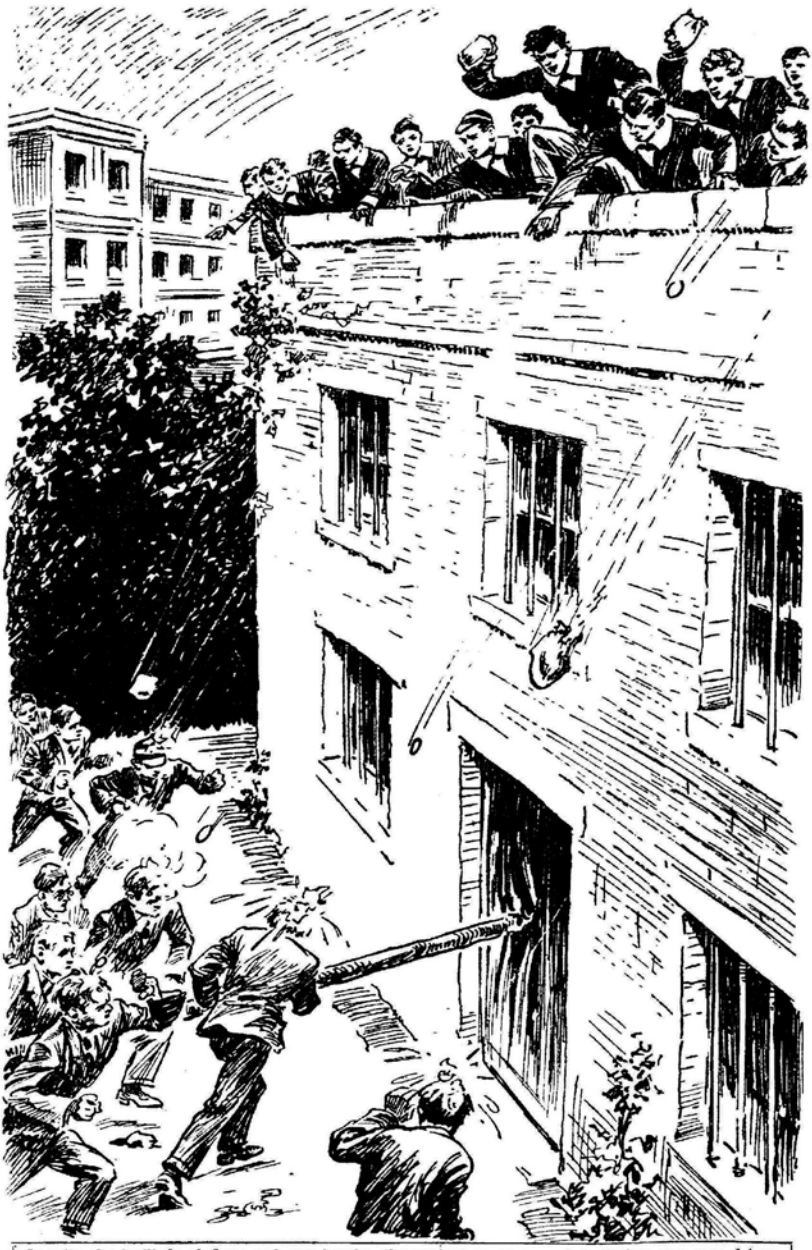
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New Series No. 83. OUT ON WEDNESDAY. December 3rd, 1927.



In spite of a fusillade of flour and egg bombs, the seniors came on. A battering ram was driven heavily against the door of the rebels' stronghold, and a splintering crash followed as the woodwork heaved in before the impact. The seniors were almost in now!

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By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.

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CHAPTER 1.

Handforth is Hungry!

SIR MONTIE TREGELLIS-WEST, of the Remove Form at St. Frank's, looked out of the window of Study C and beheld a dreary prospect.

"Rainin', dear old boys," he said dolefully.

"Never mind," said Nipper. "We're dry in here."

"And cold, too," said Tommy Watson pointedly. "Jolly cold, in fact!"

He joined Sir Montie at the window, and stood looking out between two of the barricades. There was a leaden sky overhead, and the West Square was dripping with water. There were puddles everywhere, and the rain was beating against the study window. It was a decidedly dreary December morning.



"Well, I wonder what's going to happen to-day?" asked Tommy Watson, as he looked across at Nipper again. "I wonder if they'll yank us out of these strongholds of ours and give us the sack?"

"It's no good wondering old man," replied Nipper quietly. "We've thrown in our lot with old Handy, and we're ready to stand by him—to the bitter end!"

"Begad, rather!" said Tregellis-West, nodding.

It was just about breakfast-time in the Ancient House, and in ordinary circumstances these juniors would have been in the dining-hall with the rest of the Remove. But, as it happened, the circumstances were very exceptional.

Study C was like an armed fortress.

The door was barricaded with the table, bookcase, and other articles of furniture. The window was barred with boards that had been torn up from the floor. There was no admittance into this study.

If it came to that, there was no admittance into three other studies along that passage. For a small kind of barring-out was in progress. It was really the most novel barring-out that had ever happened at the historic old school.

Only four junior studies were taking part in it, and the rebels, all told, numbered only eleven. They were Nipper and his chums, Handforth & Co. of Study D, Burton, Dodd and Jarrow of Study F, and De Valerie and Somerton of Study G. Everybody else in the Remove was sympathetic towards the rebels, and wholeheartedly in support of them, but, as yet, the great bulk of the juniors remained neutral so far as active participation was concerned.

In Study D, Handforth and Church and McClure, like Nipper & Co. were looking rather glumly out of the window at the wet and depressing prospect. Handforth was inclined to be indignant.

"Here's a nice kind of morning!" he grumbled. "Enough to give anybody the pip! It's a pity it couldn't keep fine while we are holding this barring-out! Wet weather always makes you feel miserable."

"They're having breakfast in the dining-hall," said Church dreamily. "And they've got a fire there, too—and heated radiators."

"That's right—go on!" said Handforth indignantly. "Why don't you tell us that the other chaps slept in their beds last night?"

"Well, so they did!"

"I know that!" roared Handforth. "And we slept on the floor, shivering nearly all the night! We slept on the floor without any blankets, and without any cushions or mattresses! And now we're all over aches and pains. But it's no good grumbling!"

"We weren't grumbling," said Church stoutly.

"Yes, but you were on the point of it," growled Handforth. "I don't see why we can't have some breakfast."

"My dear chap, there's no hope at all," said McClure. "We can't go out——"

"Why not?"

"Because it would be too jolly risky," said Mac. "We mustn't shift from these studies, or we're liable to get collared."

"I shouldn't get collared," retorted Handforth. "We've only got to get through the gaps in the cupboards, and we can slip out through Archie's study. I've a good mind to go on a food-hunting expedition, just on my own."

"Don't be so reckless, Handy," said Church, in alarm. "You mustn't think of anything like that."

Handforth only grunted, and frowned again. He and all the other rebels had passed a very uncomfortable night. They felt that this rebellion was justified, but it was beginning to get somewhat irksome. They had been bottled up in these studies for practically twenty-four hours. At least, Handforth & Co. had.

The chums of Study D had started the revolt—the previous morning. Towards nightfall the school authorities had turned off the hot water from the radiators, and so the juniors had passed a very chilly night, since they had had to let the fire go out owing to lack of coal and since they had no blankets. It was quite evident that the headmaster was hoping to make their lives so uncomfortable that they would lose heart, and surrender.

During the previous day Nipper and his chums had joined the revolt, and after that the other five juniors had thrown in their lot with the rebels. The situation was now somewhat precarious. All these fellows were convinced that the Head would make a determined effort to get them out this morning, and once they were out the consequences would be serious. The ringleaders would be expelled, and the others publicly flogged.

A tramp of feet sounded in the corridor, and Handforth looked rather wistfully at the barricaded door. He was beginning to realise that liberty was worth a great deal. Edward Oswald was an active fellow, and he hated being bottled up like this. But he was obstinate, too, and he would never give in.

"The chaps are out from breakfast," said Church, unconsciously licking his lips.

"That's right—go on!" growled Handforth. "It's a pity you can't speak without dragging breakfast into your conversation!"

"We ought to have saved some of that grub from last night," went on Church. "It was jolly decent of Archie to smuggle that food in to us. But what was the good of it? We're as hungry as hunters again."

Handforth compressed his lips.

"Don't you worry!" he said grimly. "I'm going to get some food! I'm going out—and I mean to come back loaded up with grub!"

There was something in his tone which gave his chums much alarm. For Edward Oswald Handforth evidently meant to risk everything in an effort to obtain food.



CHAPTER 2.

Handforth Means It!

THIS little barring-out had started very dramatically.

Merrell and Marriott of the East House, had played a cowardly trick on Mr. Horace Pycraft, the master of the Fourth. They had done it deliberately, so that Handforth should get the blame.

Edward Oswald had not only fallen into the trap, but his chums had shared the same fate. And as the Head had been about to flog Handy in front of the whole school, the Study D leader had rebelled against it. He had rushed his chums to Study D, and they had held a private little barring-out of their own.

Then Nipper & Co. had followed suit in support of the martyrs. After that, more by action than design, the occupants of Studies F and G, also, had thrown in their lot with the rebels.

The worst of it was Merrell and Marriott had gone away from the school for a period, and would be away for ten days, or perhaps a fortnight. It was impossible to make them go to the headmaster, and make them confess to the whole truth. Those two young rascals had known that they would be away, and they had told the Head a whole string of lies in order to make things worse for the unfortunate Handforth.

And now the situation was dramatic.

These juniors were bottled up in their own studies, and they had no heat and no food. It was evidently the Head's intention to make things so uncomfortable for them that they would be forced to surrender.

"Yes," said Handforth, "I'm going to find some grub."

"Don't do it, old man!" urged Church anxiously. "You'll only get collared!"

"Rats!" said Handforth. "I can dodge any of these silly prefects!"

"Yes, perhaps you can—but they might see you coming back into Archie Glenthorne's study," said McClure. "And what then? They'll know that Archie has been helping us, and he'll get into trouble!"

Handforth pursed his lips.

"That's true," he admitted. "But if I'm careful they needn't see me getting back into Archie's study."

"What's that?" asked a voice from the other side of the room.

The chums of Study D turned, and found that Nipper was just crawling through one of the cupboards. He entered, and bade the others a cheery good-morning.

"Handy's thinking about going out on a grub raid," said Church.

"It doesn't matter if he only thinks about it," said Nipper. "It's too risky—and the game's not worth the candle."

"Are we going to starve, then?" demanded Handforth sarcastically.

"We shan't starve, you ass!" grinned Nipper. "Going without food for twenty-four hours won't do us much harm."

"Twenty-four hours!" gasped Handforth.

"Well, you never know," replied Nipper, with a grin. "It's best to be prepared for the worst. We're ready to support you, Handy, as long as you act sensibly. You started this barring-out, and we're with you heart and soul. It's up to the Head to make a proper inquiry and to punish the real culprits As long as he remains obstinate we'll continue this barring-out. That's the way I look at the thing."

A voice came from the other side of the room.

"Say, you fellows!" it said cautiously. "Come along through if you want to!"

They looked round, and found Alf Brent standing half in and half out of the other cupboard. Neither Alf Brent nor Archie Glenthorne were members of the rebel force, but they were actively helping.

The four rebel studies were curiously situated. There were two on each side of Study E—which was occupied by Glenthorne and Brent. As each study was provided with two cupboards—both of which backed on to those in the adjoining studies—and as each cupboard only had a thin partition at the back of it, holes had been knocked through them all.

Thus all the rebels could communicate with one another, and the prefects—who were constantly watching—knew nothing of this fraternising. Archie Glenthorne's study was neutral territory, so to speak, and it had become a general meeting place for the rebels.

"Is it safe to come through?" asked Nipper.

"Safe as eggs!" replied Brent. "The door's locked. Come along if you want to hold a confab with those chaps from the other side."

They all went through, and found Study E occupied by De Valerie, Somerton, Burton, Dodd and Jarrow. Archie Glenthorne was there, too, and Archie was looking rather distressed.

"I'm frightfully keen on letting you chappies use the good old apartment as a meeting place," he said. "But it'll be rather frightfully awkward if your voices are heard in here. I mean to say. We shall have to barricade this dashed door—and join the rebellion!"

"That wouldn't matter," said Handforth.

"Odds disasters!" said Archie. "I mean to say, what? How about the good old food supplies, and so forth? I rather thought it would be a bright scheme to hold another feed in the study to-night, and then pass the grub through to you merchants."

"But why to-night?" asked Handforth. "Why not now? I'd like to point out that we're all hungry!"

"Absolutely," said Archie, worried. "At the same time, old cheese. I rather think the prefect chappies would smell a dashed rat if I held a feed in the study directly after breakfast!"

"No, Handy, it wouldn't do," said Nipper, shaking his head. "Archie can't very well get up another feast in this study until to-night."

"That means that we've got to go hungry all day?" demanded Handforth aggressively.

"Well, it looks like it—although I dare say Archie and Brent could smuggle in a few packets of biscuits and things during the interval, and after morning lessons," said Nipper. "We shall manage to subsist. The main thing is to hold out against the enemy."

"Bunkum!" said Handforth bluntly. "There's no reason why we shouldn't have some grub now. I believe in taking a chance.

In fact, I'm going to make a raid on the enemy—I'm going to fetch some grub."

"Chuck it!" said De Valerie. "You can't do that, Handy!"

"Can't I?" retorted Handforth obstinately. "You wait and see!"

"But you might be spotted!" protested Church.

"Might!" retorted Handforth, with scorn. "I might do all sorts of things! Nothing venture, nothing win! Anyhow, I'm going to try my luck!"

"Hold him!" said Nipper, in alarm. "If he goes out, he'll only get himself collared, and then——"

"Hi, Handy!" yelled McClure. "Come back, you silly idiot!"

But Handforth, who was near the window, made a sudden rush. The window was slightly open, and Handforth had shrewdly guessed that there would be no prefect standing out in the West Square. It was pouring with rain, and his exit would not be seen. The prefects were on guard in the passage, it was true, but there was no reason for them to be standing about in the pouring rain outside.

Before any of the fellows could stop Handforth, he reached the window, burst it open and jumped out. In another moment he was streaking across the Square towards West Arch—making a beeline towards the school tuckshop.



CHAPTER 3.

In the Hands of the Enemy!

MRS. HAKE, behind her counter in the school tuckshop, looked very doubtful.

"I don't know whether I ought to serve ye, Master Handforth," she said dubiously. "You're one of them boys defyin' the headmaster, ain't you?"

"Never mind about that!" said Handforth, casting a hurried glance towards the open door. "Buck up, Mrs. Hake! No time to lose! Give me all the grub that I can hold, and I'll scoot!"

This heavy rain was fortunate for the leader of the rebels. Scarcely a soul was outside—although, as a matter of fact, the school was attending prayers just now. Only a few prefects were about, doing sentry duty to watch the rebel studies.

It had been a rash move on Handforth's part, and quite characteristic of his reckless nature. More often that not, Handforth won through by sheer nerve. But this was not to be one of his lucky mornings.....

"That'll be enough," said Handforth eagerly. "Two tins of biscuits, a big cake, and all these tins of sardines and stuff. Good egg! That'll do fine. Mrs. Hake! Book it up to me—no time to pay now!"

Handforth seized the food supplies, and with his arms filled he hurried out through the doorway; he gave a quick glance up and down.

The old Triangle of St. Frank's was empty and deserted. The rain was still pouring down in torrents. Puddles and pools lay everywhere. With a quick dash, Handforth made for the West Arch.

And just then a shout came from the doorway of the Ancient House.

"Hi! Stop there!" came a yell.

It was the voice of Simon Kenmore, of the Sixth—the most unpopular prefect at St. Frank's. With him was Sinclair.

"Oh, corks!" said Handforth frantically.

He rushed through the archway, and he heard the patter of feet on the wet gravel in his rear. By a sheer piece of ill-luck, he had been spotted by those two prefects as they had come to the Ancient House door to have a look at the weather.

Burdened as he was, Handforth had no chance to reach safety. Long before he had got half-way across the Square, Sinclair and Kenmore were upon him. They seized him, and the boxes of biscuits and the other goods went clattering to the ground.

"Got you!" said Kenmore triumphantly.

"You—you rotters!" gasped Handforth. "You've got me, have you? Yes, by George, but I've got some fight left in me!"

"Hold him!" snapped Kenmore.

Handforth was game—he was full of pluck—but he had no chance against these two hefty Sixth-Formers. In full sight of all his fellow rebels he was practically carried off and whirled through the Archway, and then taken out of sight. Nipper and the others had had no opportunity of making a dash to rescue him.

"Well, that's done it!" said Nipper philosophically. "Perhaps it's all for the best."

"But how can it be for the best?" asked Church, full of anxiety. "Handy will be sacked, I expect."

"A fat lot he'll worry about that," said Nipper. "He was booked for the sack, in any case. This may bring matters to a head—and the sooner the better. I'm not worrying very much, anyhow!"

"Of course, when you come to look at it like that, perhaps there's something in it," replied De Valerie, nodding. "It'll be rather interesting to see how the thing develops."

In the meantime, Handforth was being triumphantly forced into Big Hall. He could not have been captured at a more opportune time.

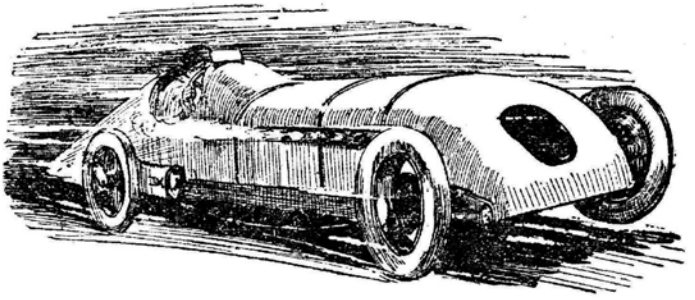
The whole school was congregated in Big Hall, and prayers were over. In fact, it had almost been time for dismissal when the doors burst open and the two prefects entered, forcing Handforth between them.

"Oh, my hat! They've collared old Handy!"

A buzz went up immediately, and everybody turned their eyes towards the prisoner. As it happened, the Head had been making a speech—warning the other juniors against having anything to do with the rebels. But now he paused, and a gleam entered his

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eyes as he beheld the nature of this dramatic interruption.

"We've captured Handforth, sir!" shouted Kenmore.

"So I see," nodded the Head grimly. "Bring him up on the platform."

"Yes, sir!"

Handforth was struggling every inch of the way.

"You've got me—but you won't be able to keep me!" he shouted. "I give you fair warning—as soon as you let go, I shall bunk!"

"We shan't let you go!" said Kenmore, digging his knuckles in Handforth's arm. "So don't kid yourself, my lad!"

They took him up the steps, and did not halt until they were facing Dr. Stafford. Handforth was flushed and defiant.

"I am sorry to see you in this predicament, Handforth," said the Head quietly. "You have made a very undignified entry. Kenmore, release him."

"Better not, sir!" said the prefect. "He's threatened to run away as soon as he's released, and he'll do it, too!"

"Very well—perhaps you are right," said the Head, who recognised the purposeful gleam in Handforth's eye. "Hold him tightly. Perhaps we shall now be able to bring this ridiculous insurrection to an end. Handforth, I am not going to argue with you—I am not going to beat about the bush. You will be flogged at once—before the entire school!"



CHAPTER 4.

Before the Head!

DR. MALCOLM STAFFORD was looking very determined.

He had not expected this capture, but, now that it had happened, he saw a way of ending this rebellion.

"Handforth, I have come to the conclusion that you are a very obstinate, wilful boy!" said the Head sternly. "However, I do not believe that you are really bad. It is only your high spirits—your stubborn, excitable nature. I am inclined to be lenient with you."

"It's no good being lenient, sir," growled Handforth. "There's only one thing to do—pardon me, and all the other rebels. We shan't give in unless you do."

"That is no way to speak to me, my boy," replied the Head. "You have defied the rules and regulations of this school, and you must be severely punished. At first I decided that expulsion was the only possible method of dealing with you. But, perhaps, I will reconsider that decision. You are the ringleader of this unfortunate mutiny, and I shall flog you for your action. You are to go, under escort, to your misguided com-

panions, and you are to persuade them to surrender unconditionally."

"You want me to ask them to surrender, sir?" said Handforth, staring.

"Yes, Handforth," replied the Head. "If they do so, they will be virtually pardoned. I realise that you are the leader of this affair, and you will be the one to receive the punishment. You will be flogged, and the matter will then end."

"And what if I refuse to ask them to surrender, sir?"

"In that case, Handforth, you will be expelled!" replied the Head sternly. "And you must not think that you can escape this punishment. You will be held a prisoner—since you are such an obstinate boy—and you will be taken to the station, and escorted the whole way to London, until you are delivered into the hands of your parents. I am not going to have any further nonsense!"

Handforth flushed deeply

The Head had uttered a grim ultimatum! If he persuaded the others to surrender, he would be flogged, and the whole affair would be over. But if he refused, he would be expelled, and taken home in disgrace!

Not for a second did Handforth hesitate.

"I refuse, sir!" he said stoutly.

"Good man!" came a murmur from Reggie Pitt, of the West House.

"Hear, hear!"

"Stick it out, Handy!"

Many murmurs came from the junior section of the school.

"I'm not going to tell these chaps to surrender, sir, unless you give me your word that nobody will be punished," said Handforth doggedly. "It's not fair that I should be flogged."

"Handforth!" thundered the Head.

"I mean it, sir!" went on Handforth, his eyes blazing. "I don't want to be disrespectful, sir, but you've accused me of playing a dirty trick on Mr. Pycraft. I'm not guilty—neither are Church and McClure. We had nothing to do with that affair! So it's not right that I should be flogged!"

"I am amazed, Handforth, that you should still protest your innocence!" said the Head hotly. "How dare you?"

"I dare, sir, because I'm innocent!"

"You young rascal!" stormed the Head. "You are only making things much worse for yourself by adding falsehood to your——"

"That's not right, sir!" shouted Handforth excitedly. "It's not my habit to tell lies! If I was guilty, I would admit it!"

"It may interest you to know, Handforth, that I have received positive information regarding your recent bullying," said the headmaster sternly. "Two boys have complained against your persecuting tactics——"

"What!" gasped Handforth. "Who has been complaining against me? By George! I bet you mean Merrell and Marriott!"

"Since you have guessed, I will tell you that Merrell and Marriott have complained against your bullying habits," said the Head coldly. "It was from those two boys, Handforth, that I heard the full truth regarding the unfortunate episode of Mr. Pycraft. Merrell and Marriott not only heard you plotting to have revenge upon Mr. Pycraft, but they actually saw you digging that pit into which Mr. Pycraft fell. With such evidence as this I have no alternative but to punish you——"

"Hold on, sir!" shouted Handforth fiercely. "So Merrell and Marriott told you that, did they? The cads—the lying hounds! They're away from the school now—and they think they can blacken my character like that, do they? I'm blowed if I'll surrender! No, by George! There's only one thing for you to do, sir—and that is to bring Merrell and Marriott back, and make them tell the full truth! They know a good deal about that outrage on Mr. Pycraft! I'm not saying anything—but if you fetch those two chaps back, they can tell a whole lot!"

"Hear, hear!" echoed the Junior School.

"Good old Handy!"

"Stand up for your rights, old man!"

"Yah, sneak!" came a solitary shout from one of the East House juniors.

"I'm not a sneak!" roared Handforth. "It was the Head who dragged the names of Merrell and Marriott into this! I shouldn't have said anything!"

"You had better be silent, boy!" said the Head dangerously.

"Well, it's up to you, sir!" retorted Handforth. "Will you promise to bring those chaps back, and question them closely? All we want is justice!"

But Dr. Stafford was angrier than ever before.

"I refuse to listen to you!" he said coldly. "You are an obstinate boy, Handforth—a wilful, wicked boy. I shall give you no alternative now. I have only one course left—and I shall expel you from the school in utter disgrace. I shall send you back to your parents this very morning—and I shall not take any chances."

"But—but——"

"Indeed, I shall escort you the whole way to London myself!" went on the Head relentlessly. "Two prefects will come with me, and we shall travel by car! Oh, no—there will be no mistake, Handforth! I mean what I say—and I am not to be defied any longer!"



CHAPTER 5.

Handforth's Appeal.

THIS was a bombshell, indeed.

Never had the school seen Dr. Malcolm Stafford so grimly determined. His words were very much like a death knell to the hopes of the rebels. Handforth was stunned for once—staggered by the picture that the Head had conjured up.



Burdened as he was, Handforth had no chance to reach safety. Kenmore and Sinclair seized hold of him roughly, and the boxes of biscuits and other goods were sent clattering to the ground. "Got you!" said Kenmore, triumphantly.

He was expelled—in dire disgrace!

He was not to be sent home in the ordinary way, because the Head feared that he would refuse to go. He would probably return to the rebels, and aid them, in spite of the fact that he had been officially sacked. No, the Head meant to take him all the way home, and Handforth knew that once he got into the Head's car, there would be no escape for him. He would be held by prefects—like a convict between warders! And thus he would be delivered to his parents, in London!

It was a terrible prospect.

For Handforth's father was a man of somewhat violent habits. Handforth, indeed, was a chip of the old block, and Edward Oswald knew well enough that if the Head took him home, Sir Edward Handforth would be not merely angry, but drastic. Besides, there was the disgrace to be thought of. To be taken back home—like a handcuffed prisoner!

With his face flushed with excitement, Handforth suddenly became a whirlwind. He pulled himself free from the grip of Kenmore and Sinclair; then, running to the edge of the platform, he stood there, with his arms outstretched, his eyes blazing.

"Up, the Remove!" he shouted, at the top of his voice. "Are you going to see me sacked? Are you going to see me treated like this? Up, the Remove!"

"Hurrah!" yelled a dozen voices.

"If I'm sacked, and taken home, it'll be rank injustice!" roared Handforth. "All you fellows know it, too! Now is the time for you to support me! If you don't, I'm disgraced for good—and you know jolly well that I never did anything to Mr. Pycraft! Rescue, Remove! I call upon you to support me!"

Dr. Stafford was appalled.

"Seize that boy!" he commanded furiously. "Kenmore, hold him tightly, and——"

"Now!" yelled Handforth. "Come on, you chaps! It'll be too late in another minute!"

Reggie Pitt ran out from the ranks of the Remove. Handforth's appeal had gone right to Reggie's heart, as it were. For Reggie knew quite well that Edward Oswald had never deserved any punishment. He had rebelled because he had been unjustly treated, and the Headmaster was still determined to punish him for something that he had never done. Pitt was filled with a sudden excitement.

"All right, Handy!" he shouted. "I'm with you! Come on, the Remove! Now's our time!"

The Remove hesitated, excited and flurried. They didn't know what to do—they wanted to support Handforth, but they were afraid to.

"Hold that boy!" shouted Mr. Pycraft excitedly. "Fenton—Wilson—seize Pitt at once, and hold him!"

That simple little incident was like a spark to a keg of gun-powder. It was Mr. Pycraft who had been the cause of all the trouble—and his interference now fired the Remove on the spot. If the Head had given the command, the Remove might not have acted. But Mr. Pycraft had no authority whatever over the Remove—he had no right to order anybody to hold Reggie Pitt—and the Remove was incensed.

"We're with you, Reggie!" shouted Singleton at the top of his voice. "Come on, the rest of you! It's for Handy's sake—and he's got Right on his side!"

"Hurrah!"

"Come on—all together!"

There was a kind of swaying movement in the ranks of the Remove. Half the fellows broke free, and surged towards the platform. Then the others, their uncertainty vanishing, joined the movement, and during the next minute an amazing scene took place in Big Hall.

The entire Remove, to a man, broke from its place, and went sweeping towards the platform like a flood!

"Hurrah!" yelled Handforth, as he saw what was happening. "Come on, you chaps! They've got me!"

This was true enough. Kenmore and Sinclair were holding on to Handforth like grim death. There was no escape for him. He struggled with all his strength, but it was useless—those two burly Sixth-Formers were more than his match. And the headmaster stood there, on the platform, utterly startled. Never for a moment had he realised that he would raise a storm of this sort.

"Order—order!" he shouted. "Boys, how dare you? I command——"

"Hurrah!"

"Come on, the Remove—we're the victors now!"

These and many similar shouts went up from the excited juniors. They swarmed round the platform in a disorderly mob. Prefects were rushing about, trying to stop them, but it was useless. The other Forms were standing by, looking on in amazement! They did not interfere. There was no reason why they should. This was not their quarrel.

"Come on—make a bee-line for Handy!" shouted Reggie Pitt desperately. "We've got to release him first—and then we'll rush out. We're all in this rebellion now, and we mean to stick it out until the Head comes to his senses!"

"Hear, hear!"

The next moment, fifteen or twenty of the juniors were rushing up upon the platform. Kenmore and Sinclair were sent flying. They were bowled over by the terrific onrush, and Handforth was released. In one leap he was off the platform, and he raised both his arms.

"Good men!" he bellowed. "We've done the thing properly this time! They're not going to sack me for nothing! Come on—all of you! Out of here!"

The Remove, yelling at the top of its voice, went sweeping out of Big Hall, taking no notice of masters and prefects. And this time it was a real rebellion!



CHAPTER 6.

The Rising of the Remove!

D. STAFFORD mopped his brow rather feebly.

"Good heavens!" he muttered. "What a terrible thing! what a shocking catastrophe!"

"The boys must be mad, sir—absolutely mad!" said Mr. Stokes, the Housemaster of the West House. "We did our best to control them, but it was useless."

"Quite useless!" agreed Mr. Pagett, of the Fifth. "I greatly fear that Mr. Pycraft precipitated that dreadful scene."

"Perhaps you are right—but it is not quite fair to blame Mr. Pycraft," said the Head wearily. "I have no doubt that he was acting for the best. It is a terrible affair altogether. The entire Remove has rebelled, and I am sure I do not know what to do! I wish that Mr. Lee were here—his influence would be very valuable just now. But I do not think he will return until next week."

The other masters were silent, and the Head suddenly pulled himself together.

"But this is only an admission of weakness," he said grimly. "I am in control of the school, and I shall restore order. Gentlemen, I shall be obliged if you will retire. I want to think—I want to decide what is the best thing to be done."

Dr. Stafford was no longer on the platform. He had retired into a room in the rear, and he was very agitated. From outside came the shouts of the rebels, and the entire school was in a state of wild excitement.

In justice to the headmaster, it must be said that he was convinced that Handforth was guilty of that assault upon Mr. Pycraft. All the evidence pointed to it. The Head could not bring himself to believe that Merrell and Marriott had deliberately plotted to get Handforth into trouble. It seemed too ridiculous—too outrageous. No, Handforth was defiant because he had burned his boats. He knew that he was expelled, and so he was causing all the trouble he could. That was the long and the short of it. Now he had succeeded in getting the whole Remove to back him up, and Dr. Stafford could not imagine how this dreadful affair would end.

But he, as headmaster, was determined to remain firm. Never could he show weakness now. If he pardoned Handforth, his authority

over the school would be gone for ever. His only course was to squash this rebellion, and to send Handforth away from the school. Any other course would be set down as weakness, and he would lose the respect of the entire body of boys.

While the Head was coming to this decision, the Remove was out in the Triangle, shouting excitedly. The rest of the school still remained in Big Hall—for it had not yet been dismissed. The Head was purposely keeping the boys there, so that there should be no further spread of the rebellion.

"We were forced to back you up, Handy, old man," said Reggie Pitt, as he clapped Handforth on the back. "We couldn't see you sacked like that."

"Thanks, you fellows!" said Handforth gratefully. "You've acted like bricks!"

"Rats!" said Fullwood. "We're jolly glad to be in the rebellion. We felt that we ought to be in it from the very first. We're with you to the bitter end, Handy. We don't care if it lasts until Christmas!"

"Absolutely!" said Archie Glenthorne. "You can count on us, dear old lad!"

"Hurrah!"

"But what are we going to do?" asked Pitt, in business-like tones. "We can't all lock ourselves in our studies, can we? We can't hold a barring-out like that! We've got to do something quick—or some of us will be rounded up, and taken up to the punishment-room. Whatever we do, we must do it quickly."

But it seemed unlikely that anything could be done just then. The juniors were altogether too excited. They were rushing about the Triangle, careless of the rain. True, it had nearly stopped now.

The skies were clearing a little, and there seemed a prospect of the day turning out fine later on. Not that anybody gave a thought to the weather. A rebellion was on—and the whole Remove was involved.

"The first thing to be done is to fetch those other chaps out of the studies!" shouted Handforth. "Then we'll decide what to do. Obviously we can't stay in the studies any longer. We shall have to find a proper stronghold! In fact, we'd better seize the whole Ancient House, and hold it!"

"Hurrah!"

"That's the idea, Handy!"

"Let's grab the Ancient House, and bar everybody out!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We'll decide that later!" yelled Pitt. "We'll get the others out first, and then we'll come into the Triangle again—every man-jack of us. We've got to decide on some policy, and we mustn't lose a minute."

As it happened, it was quite unnecessary for them to get Nipper and the other original rebels out. For they had heard the shouts, and they knew, at once, what had happened. There could be no mistaking those cheers—and those wild yells.

Nipper & Co. went out of the window of Archie's study, and De Valerie and the others followed. They went tearing across the West Square, and came out into the Triangle just as the main body of Removites were about to make a move.

"Here we are, you chaps!" shouted Nipper. "What's happened? Have you all joined the rebellion?"

"Yes!" went up a score of shouts.

"Good men!" said Nipper. "I'm not going to ask any questions—I don't want to know how it happened. But the more the merrier! We're all in it now, and we'll stick it out until we've won the day!"

And the whole Remove yelled with enthusiasm!



CHAPTER 7.

Nipper in Command!

BARRING-OUT!

And this time a real, genuine one! The Remove had at last thrown in its lot with Edward Oswald Handforth, and everybody was utterly reckless. Even the fellows who were generally weak now displayed as much enthusiasm as the hotheads. It was like a fever, which had spread with lightning rapidity.

"We shall have to move quickly!" said Nipper. "The prefects haven't come out yet, but they're bound to be here soon."

"They're afraid to come out!" yelled Doyle of the West House. "They know they'll be bowled over in the mud if they come out!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We're not standing any interference!"

"Let's swarm into the Ancient House and seize it!"

"Hold on!" shouted Nipper. "We mustn't do anything silly. We couldn't hold the Ancient House—it's too big. There are only thirty or forty of us, all told, and we want to choose a fairly small fortress. Then we can hold it better. We may have to continue this barring-out for days, and we want some sleep, don't we? We shall have to take it in turns to hold the fort!"

"Yes, that's true enough!" said Pitt.

"I know!" yelled Handforth. "Let's all rush into the gymnasium, and slam the door. It'll be a pretty easy building to defend, too. They'll never be able to drive us out!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Let's get to the gym.!"

"Hurrah!"

Some of the fellows started moving towards the gymnasium at once, for the excitement was still at its height, and nobody was taking much notice of the leaders. Indeed, it was hardly known who *was* the leader yet. It was Nipper who came out strong, a minute or two later.

Nipper could see that unless these fellows were quickly brought under control, they would lose everything by their very impulsiveness. It would be a fatal policy to seize

the gymnasium—as Nipper could see at once. Handforth thought only of the immediate future. The gym. seemed to be a handy place to grab, and it would certainly be a comparatively easy place to hold. But there were other points to be considered.

"Wait a minute, you fellows!" shouted Nipper, as he ran to the gym. and stood in front of the door. "It's no good grabbing this place—as a fortress."

"Why not?"

"Get out of the way, Nipper!"

"The gym's the best place!" roared Handforth. "I'm leading this revolt, remember, and I'm not going to stand any nonsense!"

"You can lead it if you like, Handy—you started it, anyhow," said Nipper. "But do be sensible! If we bottle ourselves up in the gym, here, we shall be starved out in less than a couple of days. There'll be no hope of getting any food—and we shall be terribly cramped, too."

"By Jove! He's right!"

"There's no grub in the gym!"

"Why not seize the tuck-shop?" shouted somebody.

A yell went up, but Nipper raised his voice above the din.

"Don't be such asses!" he roared. "It's no good pinching the tuckshop—it's not big enough for us. We want to select a strategic position—where we shall be safe for weeks, if necessary. The very holding of such a place will probably make the Head give in to us. We've got to pinch the school stores!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"The which?"

"The school stores!" shouted Nipper. "Then we shall be able to command all the food supplies of the whole school! Don't you understand? We shall have plenty of grub for ourselves, and we shall be able to hold out for the rest of the term, if necessary! The stronger our position, the more chance we shall have of victory!"

"By George, old man, that's a brainwave of yours!" shouted Handforth excitedly. "The school stores, eh? Why, it's the very place! Why the dickens didn't I think of it?"

"Hurrah!"

"Let's try and get some kind of order!" went on Nipper, rather anxiously. "We shall never do anything as long as we remain a mere mob. Cool down, you chaps—remember that everything depends upon this first hour. If you lose your heads now, everything is lost!"

"What shall we do, Nipper?" shouted Doyle. "You're the chap for us! You're the best leader!"

"Rats!" said Nipper. "I'm no better than anybody else—but if you'll only be sensible we'll soon be in a strong position. I suggest that we divide ourselves into three or four sections. I want a dozen chaps to support me. Another dozen can rally round Handforth, and take orders from him. A third dozen can look upon Reggie Pitt as their leader. Come on—let's get into order!"

"Good man!" shouted Pitt. "He's right, you fellows! Let's divide ourselves up, and form ourselves into regiments. Then we'll make for the school stores, seize them, and hold them against all comers!"

In less than five mintues the first excitement had died down, and the Remove settled itself for grim work!



CHAPTER 8.

Seizing the School Stores!

NIPPER'S suggestion was more like a stroke of genius than a mere idea.

In a barring-out, a crowd of excited schoolboys is liable to seize any old building, and hold it defiantly. Not much thought is given to the future, and thus defeat is almost inevitable, since the rebels find it impossible to maintain their position. Sooner or later they are beaten.

But this suggestion to turn the school stores into a fortress was a veritable brain-wave.

For the school stores was not part of the school itself, but a detached brick building, at the rear of the main premises. It stood quite by itself, beyond the garages. It was a picturesque little building, in keeping with all the other structures at St. Frank's, with a flat roof and many turrets.

The architect had designed it in this way, so that its true nature should be disguised. On the ground floor there were many storerooms, all filled with a hundred and one foodstuffs. There were cellars, too—and even a complete refrigerating plant. The school's cold-storage room was here.

On the other floors there were further stores of food. St. Frank's was a very big establishment, and large stocks were necessary. As the various Houses required stores, so the stuff was sent over.

And the rebels were contemplating the seizure of this building! It was an audacious scheme—a daring project—and if they succeeded in their effort, it would be a master stroke, for they would hold a strategic position from which it would be almost impossible to drive them.

Being a store building, the windows were comparatively small, and all of them were protected with heavy bars. The place was almost a fortress already. Once the doors were barricaded, and held secure, a small army would not be able to drive the juniors out.

But everything depended upon speed.

As the rebels hurried round towards the rear, they beheld large bodies of prefects

sallying forth. Evidently some kind of activity was afoot, and the rebels were only just getting to work in time.

The next five minutes proved to be very exciting.

In a swirl, the rebels arrived at the store building, and fairly over-ran it. There were two workmen in the building, busy sorting and stacking what was obviously a fresh consignment of foodstuffs.

"Now then, young gents, now then!" said one of these men, in surprise. "You know you ain't allowed to come in here! This is out of bounds——"

"Sorry, old chap, but we're going to seize this place," said Nipper briskly. "You'll have to leave."

"Oh, will I?" said the man aggressively. "I don't take orders from you young gents."

"Not as a rule—but you will this time," said Nipper. "You see, we've rebelled, and we're going to hold the stores as a kind of fortress. If you'll leave quietly, so much the better—for you. We don't want to handle you roughly, old son."

The man stared.

"You're joking, young gent, ain't you?" he asked, in amazement.

"You'll soon see whether we're joking or not!" growled Handforth. "You know there's a rebellion on, don't you?"

"Well, I've heard say as some of you young gents have defied authority," replied the man. "None of my business, of course. Nothing to do with me. But I'm in charge of this store, and I'll trouble you young gentlemen to keep out of it. I'm answerable for——"

"That's all right!" interrupted Nipper. "You won't be blamed for anything. Perhaps, on the whole, we'd better eject you by force. We shall do it quite gently, so you needn't worry. Then you'll be able to say that you were chucked out."

Before he could protest the surprised workman was seized, and hustled outside. He and the man who had been working under him were startled—and they ran off as quickly as possible to report this extraordinary affair. The Removites cheered lustily.

Everything was going well.

They had seized the school stores without the slightest trouble; there hadn't even been a fight, and now they were in full possession. There was another glad thought in their minds, too. They had plenty of food here—enough to last them all for a month, if necessary! And not emergency food, either.

They were in full possession of the entire school's supplies. There was something rather humorous in this situation. These boys—these rebels—were able to command the food stocks of the whole of St. Frank's! It was a weapon that was likely to be of some use to them later on.

True, the school could obtain fresh supplies from outside, but it would be a very awkward position, and the sooner it was brought to an end, the better. There was some chance that the Head would consent to a general pardon—and a full inquiry.

"Well, we're all in!" said Handforth. "Now we've got to put up the barricades, and prepare our defences."

"What about some grub?" suggested De Valerie. "We've had no breakfast this morning, remember!"

"Fatty Little's preparing some now!" said Reggie Pitt, with a grin. "You can bet that Fatty made a beeline for the grub as soon as he got in. He's taken down a whole side of bacon, and he's getting busy."

"That's the best piece of news I've heard for hours!" said Tommy Watson, licking his lips. "But how the dickens can Fatty prepare the food here? He hasn't got a frying-pan, and there isn't a fireplace that I know of."

"When it comes to grub, Fatty's a kind of magician," said Nipper, with a chuckle. "If he doesn't produce a first-class meal within half an hour, you can call me a Dutchman!"

HOW TO FOLD THIS WEEK'S PRESENTATION MODEL!

First fold down two sides, next press down tail and fasten by bending over both lugs. Now push down front of car and fix to sides by bending over lugs. Next fold back strips with wheels at end, and then half bend forward again to bring into position. Finally push up head of driver.



CHAPTER 9.

Masters of the Situation!

WELL I'm hanged!"

Fenton, the captain of St. Frank's, came to a halt in front of the school stores, and compressed his lips. Morrow was with him, and they were both rather startled. They had just heard that the Remove had mysteriously vanished in this quarter—and now the puzzle was solved.

"The young beggars!" said Morrow. "They've seized the stores!"

"Cunning young scamps!" growled Fenton. "This is going to be serious!"

There could be no question that the Remove had acted swiftly and effectively.

There were two main doors to the building, and both these were closed and barred. From behind them came the sound of heavy hammering. Barricades were evidently being placed into position.

Above, some distance from the ground, was a kind of loft, with a door set in the wall. There was a small hand crane over the top of this, and several juniors were standing in the open doorway, waving their hands cheerily to the two seniors. Other Remove fellows were up on the roof, looking over the parapet. Everywhere were bustling signs of activity.

"We won't go near them!" said Fenton. "We shall only get a few catcalls if we do. We'd better go and report this to the Head at once. I'm afraid the poor old boy will have a fit."

"Yes, it'll be something of a shock," agreed Morrow. "The thing was bad enough when these juniors were bottled up in their own studies. But this is a very different proposition. The cunning of it, you know—grabbing the food supplies of the school! I wouldn't mind betting that Nipper thought of this scheme. That youngster's too clever by half!"

The two prefects hurried back, and when they got into the Triangle, they came face to face with Dr. Stafford and Mr. Beverley Stokes and Mr. Stockdale. All three were looking grave and troubled. The Head turned sharply as he noticed the two seniors approaching.

"Well?" he asked. "Where are the boys?"

"I'm afraid they've taken up a very strong position, sir," said Fenton. "They've seized the store building and they've barricaded themselves in!"

Dr. Stafford started.

"Good gracious!" he ejaculated. "You—you mean the food stores?"

"Yes, sir," said Fenton. "They're in full command of the building and all the supplies."

"Upon my soul!" said Mr. Stockdale, looking grave. "This is serious indeed! You were just saying, sir, that we should soon be able to bring the boys to their senses by refusing to let them have any food. But it seems to me that they will refuse to let us have any."

The Head pursed his lips.

"The whole situation is impossible," he said testily. "It cannot go on—it is too ridiculous! I must go to the stores at once, and persuade those boys to surrender. The whole project is mad."

"Would it not be a good policy, sir, to let the boys come back into the school without inflicting any punishment?" suggested Mr. Stockdale mildly. "For the sake of peace——"

"No, Mr. Stockdale—I am not going to be weak!" interrupted the Head. "Handforth is the ringleader of this outrageous rebellion, and he shall be severely punished. I realise, of course, that he was acting in great excitement, and there may be some excuse for him. But he must be punished, nevertheless. There are several other boys, too, who deserve floggings. I must go at once."

The Head, without any further delay, hurried off towards the school stores, and arrived just as the Removites were shouting out a wild chant of victory. By this time, of course, all the other Forms were at morning lessons, and the various Form-masters were having a great deal of trouble with their restless and excited pupils.

The Head was looking very stern as he came in front of the store building, and beheld the preparations that were afoot. But he noticed that the shouting died away, and a complete silence reigned. Fully half the juniors were now on the roof, leaning over the parapet, and watching in silence.

The Head didn't know it, but Nipper and Handforth and Pitt were going about speaking very earnestly to the other rebels.

"Don't forget, you fellows—no disrespect to the Head!" they were saying. "We've rebelled because an injustice was being done—but we all respect the Head, and we want to show him that we're not doing this in an insolent spirit. It may make all the difference later on. Besides, the Head's a good old chap in his own way."

The other juniors were taking notice—and the catcalls that might have been raised were stifled.

The Head came nearer, and looked up at the fellows who lined the parapet.

"Boys, don't you think this has gone far enough?" asked the Head quietly. "Not content with rebelling, and defying authority, you have had the audacity to seize this building—a building which contains the food supplies of the entire school."

"We thought we would be on the safe side, sir," said Handforth. "If necessary, we can last out for two to three weeks. And we're not going to give in. We're out for victory, and we mean to win it!"

"I refuse to talk with you, Handforth," replied the Head angrily. "Hamilton is the captain of this Form, and it is to Hamilton that I wish to speak."

Nipper came forward, and he raised his cap respectfully.

"Yes, sir?" he said. "If you want us to give up this mutiny, we're ready to come back into the school at once—within one minute. It's up to you, sir."

"Hear, hear!"

"We don't want to hold the barring-out, sir, if you'll only be reasonable!" shouted somebody else.

But the Head was not in any mood to parley. He had come here to give orders—not to argue!



CHAPTER 10.

A Firm Stand!

DR. STAFFORD was acutely conscious of the fact that he was cutting an undignified figure. There he was, the headmaster of St. Frank's, talking with these rebellious juniors, who were crowding the parapet of the school stores.

It was an incongruous situation, but it had to be faced.

"I have come to you personally, boys," because I want to make you see reason," said the Head steadily. "You have done a very foolish thing in rebelling against authority—but I will acknowledge that you were all excited, and hardly responsible for your actions. I am hoping that you will now have cooled down, and that you will be ready to obey my orders."

"We hate being disrespectful, sir, and we want you to know that we mean no impertinence," said Nipper. "In all ordinary school matters we're prepared to obey orders without question—and to respect the rules and regulations."

"That is an absurd statement, Hamilton!" said the Head sharply. "You are defying rules and regulations by your very actions now."

"But we don't mean to flout authority, sir," said Nipper, "We know that discipline is necessary, and we are ready to obey. But you practically expelled Handforth this morning, and we want you to give us your assurance that you will cancel that sentence."

"I have not come here to bargain with you, Hamilton!" said the Head curtly. "I am ordering you to leave this building at once, and to return to your normal places in the school. I am giving you fair warning that unless you do so the results will be very serious—not merely for the ringleaders, but for all of you."

"We'll surrender at once, sir, if you will give us your promise that Handforth is to be allowed to remain in the school," said Nipper. "We also want you to send for Merrell and Marriott, of the Fourth, and to have them closely questioned. They can explain the full details of this affair, and——"

"Stop!" commanded the Head. "I have already told you that I will make no bargain! I am your headmaster, and you must obey my orders without question."

A murmur went up from the rebels—a murmur of defiance.

"That's hardly fair, sir," said Nipper. "You can't expect us to obey."

"Hardly fair!" thundered the Head. "Are you daring to——"

"I'm not daring anything, sir," interrupted Nipper gruffly. "But the circumstances are altogether peculiar. We have rebelled, and we know that we are liable to very severe punishment. But as we were justified in supporting Handforth, we consider that we ought to be allowed to come back, and no questions asked. You were going to flog Handforth, in the first place, for a serious offence which he did not commit."

"Enough!" interrupted the Head angrily. "We are merely going over the same ground, and I refuse to listen any longer. I shall make no conditions—I shall make no bargain. Every boy here is to surrender at once—and in no circumstances can I overlook Handforth's insolence and insubordination."

"If we give in, sir, shall I be expelled?" shouted Handforth.

"Yes, you young rascal, you will be expelled!" retorted the Head hotly.

"Then we won't give in!"

"No fear!"

"Never!"

"We'll hold the fort—and you won't drive us out!"

"Good old Handy!"

A wave of excitement went through the rebels, and they cheered rather wildly. They felt safe here—behind these barricaded windows and doors. The Head was startled by that outburst.

"Silence!" he shouted. "I have already given you orders——"

"We won't obey them!"

"Down with tyranny—down with injustice!"

"Hurrah!"

A perfect storm broke out, and the headmaster realised that he had made a blunder. In his anger he had told Handforth that he would certainly be expelled—and that had started this fresh demonstration. It was too late to make any alterations to the statement now. There was only one course for Dr. Stafford to pursue. He retired—with as much dignity as he could muster.

"Well, we did our best!" said Nipper regretfully. "We told the Head that we meant no disrespect, but he made it jolly hard for us."

"I should think he did!" said Handforth indignantly. "Said that I was sacked!"

"Well, you're not, old man," said Fullwood. "We'll stand by you right to the last—until the Head promises that you won't be punished. As long as we stick together we're bound to win in the long run, and there's no reason why we shouldn't hold this fortress for days—weeks! There's plenty of food here—enough for an army corps. Fatty has found a fireplace downstairs, and there are hundreds of packing cases for fuel."

"Yes, and piles and piles of packing, too!" said De Valerie. "All that stuff can be used, at a pinch, as bedclothes. We shall be O.K. here—and what with these barred windows and the barricaded door, half the force will be able to hold it against any attack. Night and day we shall be safe."

"Hurrah!"

"And we'll hold out until we win!"

"Rather!" said Handforth fiercely. "If

necessary, we'll hold out until Merrell and Marriott come back—and then they'll be forced to tell the truth! We'll make them confess that they committed that outrage on old Pycraft, and then the Head will realise that he has been in the wrong from the very first!"

"Hear hear!"

The rebel Removites were more determined than ever before to stand by Handforth, to see that he had justice.



CHAPTER 11.

The Sixth Take a Hand!

MORNING lessons were over.

But none of the Fourth Formers, or the fags, went near to the school stores. That part of the St. Frank's property had been placed strictly out of bounds. Prefects had gone round to the various class-rooms while lessons were still on, and had given these orders.

Nevertheless, many juniors belonging to the Fourth went as near to the stores as possible, in the hope of catching sight of the rebel Removites But they were turned back by prefects who were watching.

The headmaster had retired, baffled, to his own house.

The truth of the matter was, Dr. Stafford did not know what to do. The situation was difficult in the extreme. These boys would not obey orders, and the Head deemed it impossible for him to give way. He was convinced that he had been acting in the right. He really believed that Handforth & Co. were responsible for that outrage upon Mr. Pycraft, and he felt that it was just that they should suffer. Handforth, in particular, was the main culprit But Handforth, apparently, had influenced all his Form-fellows, and they were blindly faithful to him. As long as that sort of thing lasted, the Head was helpless.

There had been barrings-out at St. Frank's before this, but never before had there been one against the kindly Dr. Stafford. This was something new—something startling.

John Busterfield Boots, the skipper of the Fourth was frankly sympathetic towards the rebels And most of the other members of the Fourth were of the same opinion. They had decided to remain neutral, but that was no reason why they should hide their views.

The seniors, on the other hand, were decidedly opposed to the rebellion. They considered that it was a disgrace to the school. As soon as morning lessons were over, large groups of Sixth Formers and Fifth Formers gathered in the Triangle, discussing the general situation There was plenty of talk, but no action.

Mr. Pycraft, crossing from the School House to the East House, paused as he beheld a large crowd of Sixth Formers animatedly talking about the mutiny. Kenmore was prominent, and he was surrounded by Parkin, Sinclair Payne and a good many other Sixth Formers

"Well?" said Mr. Pycraft, as he approached the group. "Have you decided anything?"

"What do you mean, sir?" asked Payne.

"I mean that it is about time that you boys did something!" retorted Mr. Pycraft scathingly. "Surely you are not going to allow these insolent juniors to defy the school authority in this way?"

"But it's not up to us, sir," growled Kenmore. "What can we do?"

"Fiddlesticks!" snapped Mr. Pycraft. "What can you do! Drive them out, of course—force them out of this stronghold of theirs. What about the honour of the school? Do you wish to see St. Frank's the laughing stock of the whole country?"

"It's all very well for you to go on at us, sir, but you happen to be the master of the Fourth!" said Kenmore, with a show of insolence. "I don't see why you should give us orders."

Mr. Pycraft scowled.

"I am not attempting to give orders," he said. "I am only expressing my disgust at your inactivity What are you boys made of?"

"Look here, sir——"

"You can do quite a lot of talking!" went on Mr. Pycraft bitingly. "You can gather in groups and you can tell one another what should be done But that is no use. There is only one way to deal with these insubordinate youngsters, and that is to treat them drastically They should be driven out of that so-called fortress, and made to realise that they cannot play fast and loose with the school regulations It is your duty as seniors to take this work on your own shoulders. I am not giving orders—I am not even attempting to persuade you I am just pointing out what you should do. I am amazed that you have no initiative of your own."

And Mr. Pycraft walked on.

"Nosey rotter!" said Payne angrily.

"Yes, why can't he mind his own business?" growled Carlile.

"It was like his nerve, of course—but there's something in what he said," remarked Kenmore. "After all why shouldn't we take action?"

"You're not suggesting that we should attack those rebels, are you," asked Sinclair, in astonishment. "Gad, Kenmore, that's a bit too thick! We don't want to get mixed up in any brawl Things are bad enough as they are, without making them worse."

But Kenmore's eyes were gleaming.

"There wouldn't be any brawl," he said. "And if we could only drive these kids out, just think of the triumph it would be for us!"

"Come to think of it, you're right!" said Wilson. "There's the honour of the school, too. Everybody will be talking about this rebellion soon. If we could only squash it



The entire Remove swept forward round the platform in a disorderly mob, while the Head gazed on in helpless consternation. "Come on, let's release Handy first, then we'll join the Rebels!" yelled Reggie Pitt.

now—straight away—we should do the school a good turn. Why shouldn't we make an attack on the stores?"

"Oh, I say!" protested one or two of the others, horrified.

"Thinking of your wonderful dignity, eh?" said Wilson. "Well, what does it matter for once? Let's forget our dignity, and go wholeheartedly into this business. The Head has failed to break the rebellion, but that's no reason why we shouldn't have a shot at it. Let's drive these kids out—and put them in their proper places!"

"Hear, hear!"

And, surprisingly enough, quite a large number of Sixth Formers agreed.

It really seemed that the Remove would soon be in action!

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CHAPTER 12.

An Unexpected Attack!

IT was a half-holiday that day, and the school had the afternoon to itself. Among the seniors a movement was growing—to drive the rebels out of their stronghold.

During dinner-time the matter was discussed up and down the Sixth Form table, and by the time the meal was over fully eighty per cent of the seniors were wholeheartedly in favour of the project.

That is to say, eighty per cent of the Sixth Form. So far, the Fifth had not joined in this scheme, mainly owing to the leadership of William Napoleon Browne. Browne, it seemed, was all in favour of leaving the juniors to themselves.

But the Sixth were very determined.

They felt that a serious scandal would result unless the rebellion was promptly put down. So, soon after dinner, various batches of Sixth Formers collected, and there was a general air of activity.

Willy Handforth, of the Third, did not fail to note what was going on.

"Poor chumps!" he remarked, as he regarded some of the Sixth Formers. "They are going to ask for trouble, and I shouldn't be surprised if they get it."

Chubby Heath and Juicy Lemon, Willy's bosom chums, were not quite so sure.

"If you ask me," said Chubby, "those Remove chaps are going to be wiped up."

"Think so?" said Willy coolly. "I'll grant that there'll be some excitement this afternoon, but my major is a pretty determined sort of chap—and all those Remove fellows are backing him up all along the line. You needn't worry—the Remove isn't in any danger. Good luck to the rebels!"

"Dry up, you ass!" said Juicy in alarm. "Better not let a prefect hear you saying that!"

"Why not?" demanded Willy. "Good luck to the rebels! I don't care who hears me! I'm entitled to my opinion!"

"You might get swished for saying a thing like that," said Chubby uneasily.

"Rats!" retorted Willy. "I believe in speaking my mind."

"Yes, but——"

"Oh, dry up," said Willy. "Let's go round and see what those Sixth Form chaps are up to. It's something new for these high and mighty seniors to move themselves. I believe they're going to attack the school stores—and it ought to be interesting to watch Chubby, buzz round and collect the chaps. You too, Juicy. Tell them that it's an order from me. And tell them that if they don't obey I'll come round!"

In the meantime, the seniors were preparing for a big battle. They were now entering into it with a will. Battering-rams were being prepared—they consisted of heavy logs of wood—and definite plans had been arranged, too. The attack was to take place from two or three different angles simultaneously. The seniors were convinced that they would be able to break through in one sweep.

There were no prefects among these Sixth Formers; Kenmore had dropped out—after he had had a word with the other prefects. It was felt that the ordinary Sixth Formers could do this job without any help—and it might be very bad for the authority of the prefects if they participated in the attack and it failed.

If the headmaster had ordered the Sixth to attack the stores, the Sixth would have done it under protestation. But it was a very different thing when they decided to do it on their own initiative. True, Mr. Pycraft had put the idea into their heads, but he had given no orders. He was not in a position to give any orders. The Sixth considered that the Remove was damaging the school's good name, and so the Sixth was intent upon putting an end to the rebellion quickly.

But it must not be supposed that the rebels had been inactive all the morning.

Quite the contrary. Fatty Little and a small army of helpers had been busy with foodstuffs. A splendid luncheon had been provided for all—mainly consisting of thick rashers of bacon, roast potatoes and biscuits. Tin lids, and all manner of other metal articles, had been utilised as frying pans. But the juniors were not particular—as long as they got the food. Fatty Little was a bit of a marvel when it came to preparing grub.

The rest of the rebels had been consolidating the defence. The main doors were now so securely barricaded that they would withstand any amount of battering. All the lower windows, too, had been boarded up, so that there was scarcely any space left.

And on the roof, in various piles, great collections of ammunition had been placed. It was no good waiting until the attack came. Nipper believed in being fully prepared for any emergency.

There were sentries on duty, too, watching every corner of the compass. There was no telling when an attack would come, or how it would develop.

At about half-past two the first intimation of coming trouble was seen. A number of Sixth Formers were moving towards the store building, and they were carrying logs and lengths of scaffold pole. Others were bringing long ladders. There could be no mistaking these signs.

"Better get ready, you chaps!" sang out Nipper. "They're going to try to drive us out by force, by the look of things. Are we going to let them beat us?"

"Not likely!" yelled the rebels. "The sooner they come, the better!"

"Hear, hear!"

"We're just in mood for a scrap now!" roared Handforth exultantly. "By George, if these fatheaded Sixth Formers think they can drive us out—— Well, they'll get a shock. Buck up, Remove! We'll show them something, won't we!"

Nipper glanced at the piles of ammunition. "I rather think we shall!" he said dryly.



CHAPTER 13.

Not So Easy!

T. FRANK'S was agog with excitement.

The news had quickly spread round that the Sixth Form had taken upon itself to drive the rebels out of their stronghold. The Fifth Formers were collecting in groups everywhere, discussing the moot point whether they should help the Sixth, or remain neutral.

John Busterfield Boots and his Fourth Formers had collected at all the upper windows they could command. Some had even gone up into the old tower, where they could obtain a fine view of the entire battle. The fags were congregating in the West Square in response to Willy Handforth's summons.

Willy was an autocrat in the Third, and a command from him was tantamount to an order from the Head. Anybody who disobeyed Willy became very sorry for himself later.

"This is going to be interesting," said Buster Boots, as he stood on the clock tower, and watched the preparations. "Those Sixth Formers are in force, and they mean to drive their battering rams through the door. I rather think we ought to help somehow."

"No fear" said Bray, shaking his head. "We don't want to get mixed up in it. This is purely a Remove barring-out, you know. We don't want to be involved."

"Perhaps you're right," said Boots. "In any case, those Remove chaps can look after themselves. I don't think the Sixth will meet with much success."

"I don't know," said Yorke dubiously. "I believe they'll win."

In the meantime, the Sixth were almost ready for the assault. Stanhope was in command of the main body of attackers, and he was in a very determined mood.

Stanhope was a fairly big fellow—a great footballer, too. Incidentally, he was the editor of the senior school magazine, and he had literary ambitions. But this did not alter the fact that he was a man of action, and that he was indignant at the thought of these juniors bringing St. Frank's into disrepute.

Stanhope was a good fellow in his way, but he regarded all juniors with stern disapproval, entirely forgetting the fact that he had been a junior himself at one time—and that he had been a pretty mischievous young scamp, too.

"The main thing is to make a quick, sudden rush," he was saying. "We'll jam this scaffold pole against the main door, and it'll burst through in no time."

"And what then?" asked Goodchild. "I don't see that we shall be much better off."

"That's what I was thinking," said Mills. "When we get into the stores we shall have to fight the young blighters; they'll be desperate, and they'll scrap like young demons. Supposing we drive them out?"

"Well, they'll be beaten that's all," said Stanhope. "Once they're out of the school stores, they'll have no other stronghold, and they'll be scattered. And once they're scattered, the majority of them will soon lose their boldness. It's always the same with these rebellions. Unity is strength, remember."

"That's true enough," nodded Rees. "Divide them up into scattered twos and threes, and they'll give in. Well, come on—let's get to it."

And they all prepared for the charge.

On the roof of the stores, Nipper and Handforth and the other rebel "officers" were watching closely. Many fellows were busy with the ammunition, getting ready for the big moment. It was a period of anxiety.

"Do you think we shall be able to beat them back?" asked Tommy Watson anxiously. "Once they're in, it'll be a pretty difficult job too——"

"Oh, dry up!" interrupted Handforth. "They'll never get in!"

"I don't think they will," agreed Nipper. "I expect the poor chaps believe that we're without any means of defence. They think they only have to charge up with their battering-rams, and they can get in. I rather think we shall give them a little surprise!"

"Here they come!" yelled somebody.

"By George, so they are!"

"Get ready, there!" roared Nipper. "But don't fire until you get the order!"

"Hurrah!"

The Sixth-Formers were rushing forward, and suddenly the entire roof of the stores had become alive with figures. The parapets were lined thickly, and the air was filled with yells. Nearer and nearer came the attackers.

Then, at a signal from Nipper, all the rebel officers gave one yell:

"Fire! Let 'em have it!"

Swish! Whizz!

The air became thick with curious missiles. They went hurtling across the open space with unerring aim, and they struck the attacking Sixth-Formers in a swift succession of popping bursts. The air instantly became hazy with white powder, and the Sixth hesitated, wavered, and momentarily fell back.

"Hurrah!"

"Let 'em have another round—and aim carefully!"

That ammunition consisted of specially prepared "bombs." They were made of paper, and were, in fact, nothing more harmful than small bags of flour. As they struck their objectives, the bags burst asunder, smothering the attackers with flour. They were perfectly harmless, but they were very confusing in their effect.

There were scores of sacks of flour in the stores, and the rebels could easily afford to use a sack or two for defensive purposes. But Nipper had thoughtfully chosen this flour from a small stock which had been set aside as obviously unfit for consumption. Some of it was mouldy, and none of the rebels felt any compunction in using it for their ammunition.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Another volley went across, and the effect was decidedly disconcerting to the Sixth. Those home-made bombs came shooting over the intervening ground in a continuous rain, and they burst with devastating effect.

Clouds of white "smoke" arose from the ground and from the persons of the Sixth-Formers, and everything was enshrouded in a haze. The battering-ram party, in fact, never got to the main doors at all. For they received the brunt of the attack, and, after wavering, the seniors dropped the scaffold-pole and turned about. It was clear that they were taken by surprise.

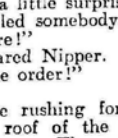
"Hurrah! They're retreating!"

"Good! Let them have another volley!"

Whizz! Whizz!

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Stanhope.

His men were falling back on every hand, and he followed their example, while the rebels, up on that roof, cheered themselves hoarse. The first onslaught had failed, and the enemy was retiring in the utmost confusion!



CHAPTER 14.

Holding the Fort!

HANDFORTH grinned with satisfaction.

"Well, that gave them a bit of a surprise, didn't it?" he said breathlessly. "By George! They didn't get within ten yards of us!"

"No fear!" said Church. "And we'll let them have it hotter if they come again!"

"Rather!"

"And they *will* come again, too," said Nipper, as he took stock of the enemy. "They're preparing now—and the next attack will be more dangerous."

"Why will it?" asked Handforth.

"Because these seniors know what to expect now," replied Nipper. "They'll be prepared. They're all over flour, so they won't care if they get smothered a bit more. They only wavered and retreated just now because they were taken completely by surprise. They haven't done with us yet, my sons!"

"Isn't it a bit thick for the Head to set these Sixth Form chaps on to us?" asked Doyle. "I'm surprised at Dr. Stafford! I didn't think he'd do a thing of this sort! And I'm surprised at the Sixth for agreeing!"

"Don't you believe it," said Handforth. "These silly seniors have taken it on their own shoulders. There's not a master here, and there hasn't been a sign of one, either."

"Yes, and if you'll look closely, you'll see that there aren't any prefects on view," remarked Reggie Pitt shrewdly. "This isn't an official attack at all. I suppose the Sixth feels that we're a cheeky lot of rotters, and that we ought to be squashed. Well, we're ready for them if they make another attack—and it's something to keep us amused."

There was no question about a second attack. The Sixth-Formers had retired, and they were by no means disheartened. On the contrary, they were more determined than ever to get the better of these juniors. At first they had entered into the affair in a spirit of indignation—they had been incensed at the idea of these Removites rebelling against authority. But now the Sixth-Formers were thoroughly angry, and when they were angry they threw their dignity to the winds.

"We'll show them!" said Stanhope fiercely. "By Jove! The nervy young beggars! Chucking bags of flour at us like that! We'll make them pay for this, you fellows! We'll make them smart!"

"Rather!" said the other Sixth-Formers hotly.

"Come on—let's make another attack straight away," went on Stanhope. "We know what to expect now—and they won't catch us on the hop twice. We'll smash that door down, get in, and drive the young monkeys out. So they think they can defy us, do they? We'll show them!"

TELL YOUR PALS
about these
Gorgeous Gifts
BOYS—
you will be doing them a
good turn!

And the other Sixth-Formers were in hearty agreement.

They lost no time. Now that they were smothered in flour, they didn't care a hang for their appearance. They were angered. It was like the cheek of these juniors to resist them! Truth to tell, the majority of the seniors were beginning to enjoy themselves. Here was a chance to indulge in a real rag again—a reminder of their own juniors days! It wasn't often they had such a chance!

On they came, yelling at the top of their voices, their heads down and their shoulders hunched. They weren't going to be driven back this time—not by any flour bombs!

The rebels waited—eager to let fly again. The signal to fire had not yet come. There was no sense in wasting ammunition. The closer the range, the more effective the fusillade.

"Now, then!" roared Nipper. "Let 'em have it!"

"Hurrah!"

"Never say die, you chaps!"

Whizz! Whizz! Whizz!

The bags of flour went hurtling down, to burst on the heads and shoulders of the Sixth-Formers as they rushed along. But they knew the nature of these missiles now, and they weren't scared of them. The attackers plunged on, without wavering for an instant, without checking their onrush.

"We've got you this time, you young beggars!" roared Stanhope, looking up.

Whizz!

"Bull's-eye!" yelled Handforth.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Whizz! Squelch! Squelch! Swish!

Leslie Stanhope gurgled and gasped and hooted. Something had struck him in the very centre of the forehead, and had exploded with a wet, sticky plop. A moment later he was aware of an awful odour—and then, with a shudder, he realised that a highly ripe egg had hit him between the eyes! The other Sixth-Formers were making the same discovery.

In fact, the eggs were coming across in a continuous stream now—and practically everyone found a mark. The bags of flour had been abandoned for the moment. Aged eggs were now the order of the minute. They came from the parapet of the stores in a continuous stream.

"One more volley!" roared Nipper. "Now then—all together! One—two—three! Fire!"

"Hurrah!"

Whizz! Squelch! Squelch! Whizz!

That volley was absolutely devastating in its effect. About fifty eggs struck the Sixth-Formers at the same moment. They had all come from a big case that Reggie Pitt had found in the same store-room as the mouldy flour. Obviously a dud box! But such eggs, when used as ammunition, are far better than the new-laid variety. The effect was miraculous.

Once again the attackers wavered, and then dropped their battering-rams. Once again they recoiled. Then, amid the yelling of the defenders, the Sixth-Formers broke away, and straggled off in full retreat. They were beaten for the second time—and now they were in a truly distressing condition. Smothered in flour, streaming with egg-yolks and covered with bits of shell, they looked utterly ludicrous.

"That's given them something to be getting on with!" chortled Handforth. "By George! They think they'll get us out of here, do they? Not likely! If you ask me, they'll give it up as a bad job after this, and leave us in peace for the rest of the afternoon."

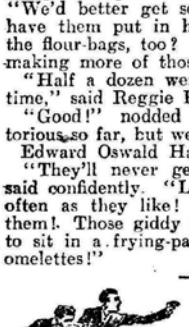
"Let's hope so—but we mustn't take anything for granted," said Nipper briskly. "We'd better get some more eggs up, and have them put in handy piles. How about the flour-bags, too? Are some of the fellows making more of those bombs?"

"Half a dozen were busy on them all the time," said Reggie Pitt.

"Good!" nodded Nipper. "We're victorious so far, but we mustn't be too sure."

Edward Oswald Handforth laughed.

"They'll never get us out of here!" he said confidently. "Let 'em all come—and as often as they like! We're ready to plaster them! Those giddy Sixth-Formers only need to sit in a frying-pan, and they'll cook like omelettes!"



CHAPTER 15.

Reinforcements!

WILLIAM NAPOLEON BROWNE shook a deprecating head.

"I would point out, brothers, that this desire for strife is to be strongly condemned," he said. "We have no quarrel with our young brothers of the Remove. Why should we desire to fight them? I am all for standing by, and watching developments."

"Same here!" said Stevens, nodding. "Let the juniors get on with it. There's no need for us to butt in."

A big crowd of Fifth Formers stood in the paddock, watching the development of the battle. The Sixth Form force had just been driven back for the second time, and a breathing space had arrived. Many of the Fifth Formers were very excited, and they would have been in the battle long ago but for the influence of William Napoleon Browne.

Chambers was the most keen of them all.

"Oh, you're sure to agree with Browne," he said, glaring at Stevens. "You're a pair! But I don't believe in this spirit of pacifism! Those juniors ought to be driven out—and it's our duty to help the Sixth!"

"Hear, hear!" said Phillips and Bryant loyally.

At that moment Mills, of the Sixth, came hurrying up.

"Aren't you fellows going to join in?" he asked angrily. "What's the good of standing here, looking on?"

"Brother Mills, you appear to be in a most unhappy condition," remarked Browne. "At a rough venture—very rough—I should suggest you have been somewhat deep in the ox-tail. I deplore this spirit of violence. Why not allow these juniors to go their own road? Their quarrel is not with us. Therefore, let us watch, and——"

"Oh, hang you!" interrupted Mills savagely. "We all know what you are, Browne!"

"Alas," sighed Browne, "I am discovered!"

"We know that you've got a sneaking sympathy for these juniors," went on Mills, with a glare. "It's a rummy thing to me that you don't resign from the Fifth, and get put into the Remove. It would suit you down to the ground!"

"I will grant that there are certain advantages in the scheme you suggest," admitted Browne. "But let us not enter into any long arguments. My policy is simple. These juniors are up against the Head. Therefore, let us remain neutral."

"I believe you sympathise with the young rascals!" said Mills.

"A belief, brother, that is astonishingly accurate," said Browne, nodding. "Why should I be against these valiants of the Remove? I am aware that Brother Handforth is several kinds of a chump, but, at the same time, I believe in him. Brother Handforth is one of the best. It would be a sad day for St. Frank's if he were to leave in disgrace. Therefore, I am all for this revolt—since its failure will mean the inevitable submersion of Brother Handforth. It would pain me to see him vanish beneath the surface, leaving only a few gurgles to remind us of his volatile presence."

"Rot!" said Chambers. "Handforth has defied the Head—he has defied all the rules and regulations of the school. And those other Removites have backed him up. They ought to be taught a lesson. I'm inclined to join these Sixth Formers."

"And get yourself all messed up with flour and eggs?" asked Stevens.

"Oh, you needn't worry about that," put in Mills. "The Head will compensate us, you can bet, if we spoil some of our clothes. He'll be only too jolly pleased to have those rebels under control."



At a signal from Nipper, the air became thick with flour "bombs." They struck the attacking Sixth Formers in a swift succession of popping bursts, and the seniors momentarily wavered. "Give 'em another round!" yelled the rebels excitedly.

"That's true enough!" said Parry. "The Head will be as happy as a cat with two tails if we only squash this rebellion. So we needn't worry about our clothes. Besides, it's like the nerve of these juniors to chuck eggs and things at the Sixth! Come on, you fellows, let's all join in!"

"Rather!"

"Brothers—brothers——" began Browne.

"You dry up, Browne!" interrupted Grayson harshly.

"I would remind you, Brother Grayson, that I am your captain——"

"I don't need reminding of that—and you can keep your advice to yourself!" interrupted Grayson. "We're joining the Sixth Formers now—and we're going to get the rebels out of their stronghold. Come on, you fellows! Don't take any notice of Browne!"

Stanhope came hurrying up.

"Good!" he said, with a gleam in his eye. "Are you Fifth Form fellows going to help us?"

"Yes!" went up an enthusiastic chorus.

"Fine!" said Stanhope. "Come on! With these reinforcements we shall be able to get the better of the young monkeys!"

Practically all the Fifth Formers hurried off to join forces with the Sixth, and Browne and Stevens were left isolated. William Napoleon uttered a sigh.

"Alas, we have failed," he said mournfully. "And yet we did our best, Brother Horace. We certainly did our best."

Stevens grunted.

"Oh, well, what else can you expect?" he said. "When you come to think of it, Browne, these juniors are a bit too thick, aren't they? I mean, chucking flour and stinking eggs at the Sixth!"

"I would remind you, Brother Horace, that the Sixth asked for it—in a perfectly loud voice," said Browne. "You surely do not imagine that our compatriots of the Remove will stand by and let themselves be taken? Perish the thought! I admire them for their ingenuity and resourcefulness. More power to their elbow!"

But Stevens was about the only other Fifth Former who agreed. The rest had joined forces with the Sixth. Other members of the Fifth had come up by now and all told, fully ninety per cent of the form had enlisted under Stanhope. The rebels were now watching the preparations with rather less complacency, for the enemy's force had now become a menacing one.

"This looks pretty serious, you chaps," Nipper was saying. "With the Fifth in the game, we shall have all our work cut out to repel them now."

"There are plenty of eggs!" said Handforth. "And plenty of flour bombs, too."

"All the same, we shall have to look lively," declared Nipper. "Once they batter down the doors and get inside, there'll be precious little hope for us. In fact, we're outnumbered. The Fifth and Sixth combined are almost double our own numbers. And they're bigger chaps, too—hefty bounders, most of them. Once they get in, we shall be routed."



At a signal from Nipper, the air became in a swift succession of popping bursts,

"I believe you're right, old man," said Reggie Pitt, with a rueful expression on his face. "Well, we mustn't let them get in—that's all. There must be fifty or sixty of the seniors, all told. I say, this affair is getting pretty big, isn't it?"

"Big isn't the word for it," said Nipper, with a growl. "We didn't bargain for this. How were we to guess that all the seniors would combine forces, and attack us? Oh, well, we'll give them something for their pains!"

"Never say die!" roared Handforth. "Are we downhearted, you fellows?"

"No!" roared the other rebels, in defiant tones.

"And we won't be taken either!" thundered Handforth. "We've held the fort so far, and we'll hold it against all attackers!"

In spite of this outward show of optimism, however, the rebels were not feeling any too sure.

The Sixth and Fifth Forms combined made a formidable force, and everything depended upon the rebels preventing the seniors from crashing their battering-rams against the doors of the stores. Once the attackers got inside the position would be hopeless, and the barring-out would fall through—a failure!



...ombs." They struck the attacking Sixth Formers ...mentarily wavered. "Give 'em another round!" ...xcitedly.



CHAPTER 10.

Smashing Through

"READY?" asked Stanhope grimly.

"Yes!" went up a general chorus.

"Then let us go ahead!" said Stanhope. "And this time we'll smash the door down! Look out for those bags of flour—and look out for the rotten eggs, too! These juniors can't have any other cards up their sleeves, thank goodness! Now that we know what to expect we can drive straight on, and burst the doors in. Come on!"

"Hurrah!"

And the Fifth and the Sixth went forward for the third attack. These seniors were determined now—grimly determined. They had been beaten twice, and had no intention of being beaten for a third time! They would be the laughing stock of the whole junior school if they failed to drive these rebels out now!

Having taken it upon themselves to squash the rebellion, they had to go on until they had finished their job. If they gave it up, or if they admitted defeat, they would be for ever humbled. The whole affair had taken on the aspect of a war between the Remove and the seniors, and it was not likely that the seniors were going to give up!

Nipper realised the dangerous nature of the position. No longer did he smile. He was very serious—very concerned.

"We must prepare ourselves for them getting in!" he said quickly. "If it comes to hand-to-hand fighting, we must battle on until we're ready to drop. Once we're driven out of here it'll be all up with us. If we're disorganised, there'll be no longer any possibility of resistance."

"They won't drive us out," said Handforth confidently.

"By Jove!" sang out Pitt. "Here they come! Over the top, you chaps!"

"Hurrah! We'll keep them back!"

"Rather!"

"Let 'em have a volley!"

If any masters were watching this dramatic scene, they took very good care to remain in obscurity. They felt that it was far better for them to turn a blind eye to these proceedings. If the Sixth and the Fifth failed, well the position wouldn't be any worse.

But if the seniors succeeded—so much the better. The Head knew all about this latest move, and he was anxiously waiting in his

own house. He was glad the seniors had taken it upon their own shoulders to attack the rebellious Remove.

The whole affair was distressing—and the Head was worried in the extreme. He did not like his boys fighting in this way. It was detrimental to the name of the good old school. But it might have one good result. It might bring this rebellion to a sudden and dramatic end.

"Here they come!"

The attackers were swarming up to the rebels' stronghold and there were now two or three parties of them. It was a cunning scheme. Stanhope, in the lead, failed to get through. He and about a dozen other seniors were compelled to drop their battering rams by the sheer force of the whizzing flour bombs and eggs. They simply couldn't continue against that fusillade.

But the second batch was coming through. In fact, the long scaffold pole that they were carrying crashed heavily against the main door.

"Once more!" yelled Grayson of the Fifth. Crash!

The battering ram was driven heavily against the doors and a splintering crash followed—an ominous sound, indeed!

"They're through!" yelled Church excitedly.

"Eggs—eggs!" roared Handforth. "Let 'em have some more eggs!"

Swish! Whizz! Splosh!

The eggs hailed down continuously, and the attackers wavered for a minute or two. But just at this critical moment, a shout of alarm came from the other side of the roof.

"Quick, you fellows!" gasped Doyle, running over. "They're smashing down the other door now—and we can't beat them off!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"They're going to get in!" said Nipper. "Some of you had better rush downstairs and guard the doors, and prevent these seniors from bursting through. It's no good staying up here. Half of us will do up here."

Something like confusion reigned in the rebel camp now. Nobody had thought that the attackers would get so near—that the barricades would be broken down. But that calamity had now happened.

For the victorious seniors were smashing their battering rams against the doors, and were rapidly demolishing the barriers.

In response to Nipper's warning, Pitt and Fullwood and many others went rushing to the narrow doorway which gave on to the roof. The only means of getting down was by a perpendicular-arm ladder, which led into the loft. Shouts were coming from the lower floor—shouts of alarm and anger.

"Hi, you chaps!" came Fatty Little's indignant voice. "By pancakes! These blessed seniors are breaking through! Just when I was cooking, too!"

"Hold them back!" sang out Pitt urgently. "Look lively, you fellows—get a move on!"

But it was too late!

By the time the main defending force had got downstair the doors were smashed in—broken to smithereens. The seniors were pouring into the store-house, and they were in such an excited condition now that they didn't care what happened. They were ready to fight—and they were fighting! Grimly the juniors put up a desperate battle, but it was hopeless.

Things were made much worse by the fact that a third party of seniors had followed up the rest, and when nearly all the defenders had gone down from the roof, this third party came with a ladder.

The seniors swarmed up it, took possession of the roof, and had the rebels in full retreat down the iron ladder. There was no fighting against these hefty seniors—for fighting would have meant defeat. The rebels were greatly outnumbered, too.

Altogether, the situation had become desperate in the extreme!



CHAPTER 17.

Beaten!

"HEY'RE whacked!" said Kenmore, with a grin.

"Looks like it!" agreed Sinclair complacently. "Well, we expected it, didn't we? And those other fellows have had all the fighting. I suppose we can say that this rebellion is over now?"

"Practically," agreed Kenmore. "Of course, we prefects couldn't join in—it wouldn't be the thing. But as soon as ever the rebels are marched towards the school, we'll walk up and take control. And we'll see that these juniors don't get another chance of breaking loose."

Kenmore and Sinclair were standing by themselves, watching the exciting scene round the school stores. Further away, Fenton and Morrow and one or two other prefects were standing in a group. They were not enjoying themselves. They didn't like this affair at all—but they felt it was for the best. Once these rebels were reduced to subjection, the whole trouble would be over. It was far better to get it done with like this.

Within the fortress, things were in a bad way for the rebels.

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While a number of juniors were desperately attempting to hold the main entrance, a door in the rear had been forced, and the seniors were swarming in. The juniors received a big surprise, too, for these Sixth and Fifth-Formers were fighting determinedly. They were hitting out, and their superior weight was much in their favour.

In fact, the battle was over—and the seniors had won.

Handforth, of course, would not admit defeat. He never would. He was still fighting gamely in the main entrance of the store. Stanhope and two or three others were attempting to hold him, but they were finding it a hard task. Handforth, in his shirt sleeves, was fighting with his back against the wall; Nipper, Reggie Pitt and Fullwood were beside him. They were practically the last of the rebels to hold out. The others were either standing idle, admitting defeat, or they were being held by the victorious invaders.

"Come on—we're not whacked!" Handforth was roaring. "Take that, you interfering beggars!"

Slam! Biff!

Handforth was hitting out with deadly effect.

"Why don't you give in, you young idiots!" roared Chambers. "We've got you beaten now!"

"Not yet!" said Nipper hotly. "We're not beaten until there's no fight left in us!"

Nipper battled on—knowing full well that it was a hopeless sort of fight. Indeed, at the end of five more minutes, Handforth and Nipper and all the rebel "generals" were finished. They had fought until they had nearly exhausted themselves. And now they were securely held by grim-faced seniors. Handforth was in the grasp of two of them; Nipper and Reggie Pitt and Fullwood were also honoured by two guards each. Most of the other fellows were helpless in the grip of a single senior. What could they do against an overwhelming force like this? What was the good of fighting any more? They were beaten—they were hopelessly vanquished.

Handforth, now that he realised that defeat had really come was furious.

"Who told you idiots to interfere?" he demanded wrathfully. "Did the Head tell you to attack us?"

"Never mind who told us," said Stanhope "We've driven you out of this fortress of yours, you obstinate young rascals! We're not going to have a scandal like this at St. Frank's."

"It's a pity you couldn't mind your own business," said Nipper bitterly. "A fine lot of sportsmen, aren't you? Why couldn't you leave us to fight our own battles? You were juniors yourselves once!"

Stanhope had the grace to flush.

"Nonsense!" he blustered. "If you juniors had a good cause, it might be a different thing. But this whole rebellion started over nothing. Handforth refused to receive a flogging, and——"

"Of course I refused to receive a flogging!" interrupted Handforth hotly. "The Head was going to swish me for committing an assault on Mr. Pycraft. I didn't do it! Those cads Merrell and Marriott were responsible. And they told a lot of lies about me, too. Do you think I'm going to accept punishment for something I didn't do?"

"Oh, we needn't argue!" said Stanhope gruffly. "You juniors have had the nerve to defy the Head, and that's good enough for us. We're not going to allow it."

"Well, what's the programme now?" asked Nipper glaring. "What do you think you're going to do with us? You're holding us here like convicts, but you can't keep it up. What do you think we'll do when you let us go?"

"I don't know what you'll do, but I'm pretty certain what you won't do," said Stanhope. "You won't find another fortress. This place is lost to you, and there's nowhere else that you can go to. Besides, we shall take jolly good care that you're all locked away—in different parts of the school. By the time you've cooled down there won't be any more fight left in you."

"You—you rotter!" bellowed Handforth. "If you divide us up like that you'll make it impossible for us to keep up the rebellion!"

Stanhope nodded.

"Exactly," he said. "That's what we're aiming at."

"It was like your confounded nerve to pelt us with eggs," said Chambers angrily. "We'll teach you to play those games on the senior school!"

"Rats!" said Nipper. "You asked for it. You wouldn't have been pelted if you hadn't attacked us."

"That's true enough," said Payne of the Sixth. "We can't grumble at these juniors for pelting us. All the same, it's a good thing they're beaten. I don't approve of this rebellion at all. It's detrimental to the school's good name."

"Well, let's get them out of here," said Stanhope briskly. "We're not taking any chances, either. We'll march them out in a double file, and we'll keep a close guard over them. I suggest that we humiliate them a bit, too."

"That's a good idea," said Grayson nodding. "We'll march them into the Triangle, and let the other fellows see what happens to a Form when it rebels against the rules and regulations. And we'll jeer at them, too. We'll drive it right home, eh?"

"Yes, rather!" said one or two of the other seniors. "They've had the nerve to chuck things at us, and we've got to show the school our strength."

"Hear, hear!"

And preparations were made for the final humbling of the Rebel Remove!



CHAPTER 18.

The Fourth Refuses!

"H, my hat! They're whacked!"

John Busterfield Boots spoke in a tone of consternation. He was up in the big clock tower with Bob Christine, Bray, Talmadge, and many other Fourth-Formers. From this high point of vantage they had seen the progress of the battle, and now they could tell that the Remove was defeated. For there were no longer any signs of strife. Peace had descended upon the school stores. A few seniors were visible, hovering about outside the smashed doors, but as yet most of the combatants were inside. It could be easily guessed what had happeneed in there.

"We've got to go to their help!" said Buster Boots grimly. "Come on, you fellows—the Fourth to the rescue! We didn't mean to join in this revolt, but we've got to now!"

"Rats!" said Armstrong. "Why should we interfere?"

"Interfere, be hanged!" said Buster, glaring. "We ought to help! This affair has resolved itself into a battle between the juniors and the seniors. By jingo! We're not going to let the Fifth and the Sixth crow over the lower school, are we?"

"Not likely!" agreed Bob Christine stoutly. "Come on, you chaps—Buster's right; we've got to go to the Remove's rescue!"

"Well, you can go alone!" said Armstrong. "I'm not joining in."

"You—you weakling!" roared Boots. "In a case like this——"

"Oh, don't be an ass!" interrupted Armstrong gruffly. "What can we do? Those seniors are determined, and they won't knuckle under just because we go to the rescue. Besides, I'm in favour of the seniors."

"What!" shouted Boots.

"So I am!" said Armstrong obstinately. "Handforth played a dirty trick on Mr. Pycraft, and he's our Form-master. It's only right that he should pay the price."

"Are you standing up for that mouldy beast, Pycraft?" asked Bob Christine aghast.

"No, of course not," said Armstrong flushing. "Pycraft's an old rotter, I know. But two wrongs don't make a right, and you all know that Handforth deserved to be flogged

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for what he did. If he chooses to defy the Head, that's his business, not ours!"

"But Handforth wasn't guilty!" shouted Boots indignantly.

"You can believe his yarn if you like, but I don't!" said Armstrong. "Anyhow, I don't see any reason why the East House fellows should interfere. You Modern House fellows can do as you like."

"You—you traitor!" frowned Boots. "I'm captain of the Fourth— "

"Very likely you are," interrupted Armstrong. "But I'm the leader of the East House section of the Fourth, don't forget."

Boots found it impossible to influence Armstrong and his own clique. They had made up their minds not to interfere, and when the rank and file of the Modern House Fourth-Formers discovered this, they were not disposed to support Buster. They could only see defeat

"It's no good, Boots!" growled Oldfield, when Buster had gone down into the Triangle. "The only hope was for all the Fourth-Formers to attack together. A handful of us would do more harm than good. We should only get ourselves into trouble, and we shouldn't even help the Remove."

"Of course, it's no good if I can't get any support," said Boots angrily. "I never thought you were such a crowd of rotters. You're all right, Oldfield, and so are you, Christine, and a few others. But the majority are backboneless. I'm ashamed of my own Form."

"So am I," said Bob Christine hotly.

If Boots and Christine had had enough time to argue with the Fourth-Formers, they might have persuaded them to go to the rescue. But the Removites were already being led out of their stronghold. In double file they were marched into the open, with the seniors closely guarding them. It was an awful humiliation for the recently victorious rebels. So much for their wonderful plans. So much for their determination to keep up this barring-out until the headmaster capitulated!

They had been beaten by the Fifth and the Sixth, and these seniors had acted without any authorisation. It was a bitter pill to swallow. But what could the Removites do? They were outnumbered, and their attackers were all big fellows of seventeen or eighteen.

"It's no good, you chaps," De Valerie was saying. "We put up a good fight, and we had some sport; but they whacked us. What's the good of kidding ourselves?"

"Quite right!" said Grayson, of the Fifth, with a grin. "What's the good of kidding yourselves, my infants. When the senior school takes on a job like this, there's only one end to it. You surely don't think that the junior school could possibly win?"

"We should have won if we had had any support," roared Handforth wrathfully. "Where are those beastly Fourth-Formers? Why couldn't they give us a hand?"

"Let 'em come along, and see what they can do!" said Shaw sneeringly. "We have got you out of that fortress of yours, my lads, because you were bringing St. Frank's into disrepute."

"You're a fine chap to talk of bringing St. Frank's into disrepute!" retorted Handforth bitterly. "You and Grayson don't mind playing cards and smoking and attending race-meetings, do you?"

"You cheeky young hound!" shouted Grayson hotly.

"Yes, that's touched you on the raw, hasn't it?" said Handforth. "You do all those sort of things without a second's thought. But just because we juniors stand up for justice you say we are bringing St. Frank's into disrepute. You're a fine lot—all of you. It's a pity you couldn't leave us to settle our own affairs."

"That's about enough of that!" said Stanhope uncomfortably. "Don't talk to them, Grayson. We routed them out because they had too much nerve. The affair's over now, and there won't be any more rebellion. Come on—march, all of you!"

And the defeated rebels were compelled to march.

They came out of the school stores in a double file, depressed-looking and very dishevelled. They had all been fighting desperately, and they were all in a very disordered condition. And now they were beaten, without any hope of making another fight for liberty, for these seniors were guarding them too closely.

All the rebel leaders, such as Handforth and Nipper and Fullwood and Pitt, were honoured by the close attentions of at least two warders each. The others were held, too. There was no denying the fact that the rebellion had come to a sudden and ignominious end.

And then—swoop!

Without any warning, without the slightest notice, Willy Handforth and the Third arrived upon the scene!



CHAPTER 19.

Willy to the Rescue

WILLY had timed his attack very cleverly. Not until the seniors were well out of the stores with their prisoners did Willy give the order to "go over the top," as it were. Then, at that crucial second, the Third arrived.

Many of those fags, truth to tell, were awed by the thought of fighting against the seniors. But Willy Handforth had gone through the ranks of the Third, arguing, ordering, and putting forth the full power of his personality, and at last he had suc-

ceeded in getting the fags to obey him implicitly.

He had pointed out that there was no danger. There wasn't a single prefect in that senior force—so none of the fags could get into trouble for attacking a person of authority. As for the "nerve" of it, the Third was quite equal to it. The Third had nerve enough for anything—under Willy Handforth's volcanic leadership.

"Here we are!" roared Willy, as he came tearing up. "Now then, you chaps—remember my instructions!"

"Hurrah!" yelled the Third excitedly. "Go for 'em!"

"What the thunder——" began Stanhope, starting round.

He and the other seniors stared in amazement. Never for an instant did they suspect that there was any peril. Just a mob of Third Formers, coming round to shout and caper about. What else? The very thought that these fags could attack them did not enter the heads of the seniors. It was an outrageous thought. Many of these fags were cheeky young bounders, but they wouldn't dare——

"Hi!" yelled Grayson furiously. "What the——"

Crash!

Willy Handforth's fist thudded into Grayson's face, and the bully of the Fifth went over with a howl of agony. For weeks Willy had been longing to punch Grayson, and now his moment had come!

"Come on, the Third!" he bellowed. "Fight for all you're worth! Up, the Junior School! Down with these seniors!"

"Good man!" roared Handforth, at the top of his voice. "Good old Willy! By George! The Third's come to our rescue!"

"Rather!" shouted Owen minor. "We're here!"

"You cheeky young fatheads!" roared Stanhope. "It's like your nerve to—— Hi! Oh, my goodness! What the——"

Stanhope sat down suddenly, three or four fags clawing round him like young tigers. The other seniors found themselves similarly attacked.

In less than a dozen seconds, the entire senior force was in a state of utter confusion. They had been taken by surprise—and even now they weren't fighting. It was beyond the limits of their dignity to fight with mere fags. But Willy & Co. possessed no dignity, and they were going into the battle like Trojans. It was an amazing business.

But it was noticed that Willy was shouting encouragement the whole time. Never for an instant did he allow his voice to cease. It was his leadership that was making this attack possible, and the Third backed him up loyally.

"There's nothing to be afraid of!" yelled Willy. "They can't touch us—and we've got them whacked! Hurrah for the rebellion!"

"Hurrah!" echoed the Third frantically.

"By Jove, you chaps, this is our chance!" shouted Nipper. "Come on—let's get free, and then rush back into the stores. They won't get us out a second time!"

"No fear!" yelled Handforth. "Good old Willy!"

"Never mind about good old Willy—you get back!" panted Willy. "Buzz into the stores again, and barricade those doors. We'll keep these seniors busy! Buck up! Everything depends upon speed!"

Nipper and the other rebel juniors realised this to the full. If they could only take advantage of this momentary confusion, they would turn the tables, and win back the position. The sudden intervention of the Third made all the difference!

Stanhope, Payne, Phillips, Chambers and all the other prominent seniors were being considerably mauled by the Third Formers, and while all this was going on the Remove came to life again. The depression of a minute ago had vanished. A new, wild hope had seized the rebels. If only they could seize the stores again, all would be well!

And here was the chance!

The battle developed into a terrific fight. Handforth and Pitt and the rest tore themselves away from their captors, and started punching out. They were allowed to get free because the Third Formers were harassing the seniors considerably

Once the Remove had regained its liberty the situation was changed. The Fifth and the Sixth found themselves outnumbered. There were over thirty of those fags—and they were fighting like a lot of bantam cocks.

After the first few seconds had passed the fags were wildly enthusiastic for the fight. Here was a glorious opportunity! A scrap with the Fifth and Sixth—and no possibility of punishment! For the seniors had not been authorised to attack the rebels, and no master could punish the fags for their interference.

Many a time the Third Formers had expressed a desire to "go" for fellows like Grayson and Shaw and Chambers. Many a time had these seniors cuffed their heads, and twisted their ears. What a glorious opportunity it was for them to get some of their own back!

So Willy's urging was not necessary after the first onrush. The fags were so excited that they were quite ready to fight on until they were exhausted.

At first, the seniors had regarded this interruption with amazement—but never with real consternation They simply wouldn't admit that there was any danger of defeat. But when the Remove got free, and fought side by side with the Third, the thing became a nightmare.

Many of the seniors were rolling on the ground, with fags swarming over them, punching, hitting, sitting on their heads, and pushing their faces into the turf.

Many of the fags, of course, were swept aside and dealt with drastically. But they came up again, smiling. Age counted for

little in a scrap of this sort. In fact, many of these nimble fags had all the advantage over the seniors.

By now the Remove had got free, and many of them were running back into the stores. Others stayed behind, to help the fags. But Willy required no help.

"Don't stay here!" he was shouting. "Get back into the stores, and barricade those doors again! It's your only chance! Buck up, you fellows—we'll keep these seniors busy!"

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Willy—you've saved the day!"

It really seemed that this was true. The Third had come to the rescue—and the whole complexion of the situation was altered!



CHAPTER 20.

The Tables Turned!

HURRAH!"

"Now then, altogether—charge!"

"Down with the seniors!"

The Third was in its glory. Two minutes had passed since the attack had come, and the Removites were streaming back into the school stores, determined to regain the position, and to consolidate it. Willy Handforth and his men, having retired momentarily, now came on to the attack again—a yelling mob.

The clash came—and the seniors, much to their discomfort, found themselves fighting a losing battle against those fags. It was most humiliating for the Fifth and Sixth Formers.

The rout was completed by a move on the part of Edward Oswald Handforth.

About half the rebels had hurried back into the stores, but the others were still outside. Handforth rushed up, rallied them, and bellowed out his instructions.

"Come on, you chaps—let's make one big charge!" he roared. "These Third Formers are doing marvels, but they can't beat the seniors unless we lend a hand. Come on—all together!"

"Hurrah!"

"Down with the seniors!"

With one accord the Removites swept across the intervening ground, and hurled themselves at the seniors. It was the last straw. The Fifth and Sixth already dumbfounded by the Third's attack, found it impossible to withstand this fresh onslaught. For the Removites were fired with the certainty of victory, and they were invincible.

Stanhope, Chambers, Grayson and the others were bowled over. They were simply swept up like so much rubbish, and the juniors poured over them. Many of the other seniors, seeing the state of their companions, fled. Yes, they fled! It was a staggering business, but nothing could alter the fact that the seniors bolted.

"Good egg!" sang out Willy. "They're done now—and the situation is saved!"

The defeated seniors were retreating—a wrecked and disordered crowd.

Stanhope and one or two others were the last to go, and they were so dazed and dizzy that they hardly knew whether they were on their heads or their heels.

"Willy, my son, you're a young marvel!" said Handforth, clapping his minor on the shoulder. "Good man!"



The seniors can't hurt me," Willy was saying to the rebels on the roof. Just then Kenmore, of the Sixth, came striding up. "We'll see about that!" he grated harshly and, grabbing Willy by the shoulder, held him in a vice-like grip.

"That's all right, Ted. You buzz back into the stores, and barricade those doors again," said Willy cheerfully. "No time to lose, you know."

"Right-ho!" said Handforth. "And the rebellion goes on!"

Within five minutes the mutineers were back in their stronghold, and they were all working feverishly. The wrecked doors were

slammed into place again, the barricades were built up at a rapid speed. While this was going on. Willy and his fags stood about as though defying the seniors to make another attack. Most of the fags were in a frightfully dishevelled condition. Nearly all their collars were missing, they were tousled and smothered in mud and earth. But they didn't care. They had had a glorious time.

Willy himself was cool and satisfied.

"I told you what would happen, my lads," he grinned. "It only wanted just one swoop, and those seniors were wiped up. Good luck to the rebels!"

"My hat!" gasped Chubby Heath. "But it was a bit of a nerve, wasn't it?"

"Those seniors will never forgive us," said Juicy Lemon. "They'll be down on us for evermore!"

"Let 'em!" said Willy coldly. "Who cares? If any of those chaps try to persecute the Third, they'll regret it! It would have been different if we had attacked the prefects. But there weren't any prefects here. We've been on safe ground all the time, my sons. Trust me to know what's what."

"You said we'd win, Willy," remarked Owen minor. "My aunt! It was worth getting a black eye, wasn't it?"

"No need to have got a black eye, my lad—that was pure carelessness on your part," said Willy, as he looked at Owen minor's disfigured countenance. "Never mind, it'll soon get right. Besides, it improves your appearance."

"You silly ass!" said Owen minor.

Willy turned and had a look at the stores. Many of the Removites had appeared on the roof by now, and they were cheering triumphantly. Only ten short minutes earlier they had been a defeated crowd—in the hands of the victors.

Now the old position was restored, and there wasn't a sign of the seniors. All of them had gone—hurrying back to their own Houses, filled with consternation. Before long the whole school would be laughing at them, and the news would probably spread to other schools, too.

But Stanhope, at least, was unbeaten.

"We can't let the thing stand like this, of course," he was saying. "Ye gods and little fishes! We shall be the laughing stock of the whole country if we allow these juniors to get the better of us."

"They *have* got the better of us!" said Mills pointedly.

"Yes, for the moment," growled Stanhope. "But we'll have those rebels out later on. Oh, yes! This is a challenge to the Senior School. D'you think we're going to ignore it? D'you think we're going to be beaten by a crowd of Removites and fags? They have won this round, but we'll have the bounders out of that fortress of theirs again—sooner or later."

While the seniors were talking in this strain, Willy was making cheery remarks to the rebels; the rebels, for their part, were saying all sorts of flattering things about the Third. Never had the Third been so popular, and Willy Handforth was the hero of the hour.

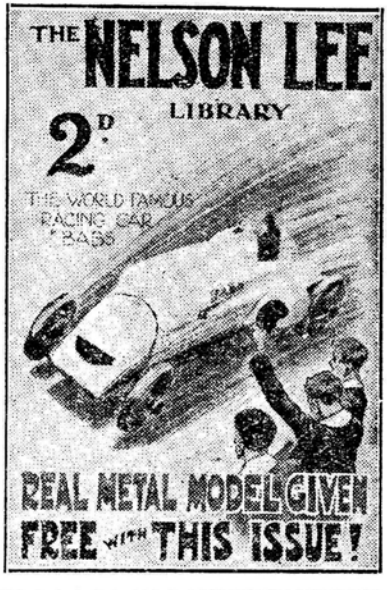
"I hope you don't get into trouble for this, old son," called Handforth major from the roof. "These seniors are bound to be down on you——"

"I don't worry!" interrupted Willy coolly. "They can't hurt me."

"We'll see about that!" said a harsh, angry voice.

Willy turned round, and found Simon Kenmore by his side. The next moment Kenmore grabbed Willy by the shoulder and held him in a vice-like grip.

NEXT WEDNESDAY!





CHAPTER 21.

Hauled Before the Head!

SIMON KENMORE was in his grimmest mood. He had expected Willy to cringe, to make an attempt to wriggle away; but the leader of the fags did no such thing. He looked up at Kenmore quite coolly, then nodded.

"No need to grab like that," he said. "I'm not going to run. What's the matter? What d'you want me for?"

"You're coming with me, you young demon!" snarled Kenmore.

"Just as you like," said Willy. "Are we going for a walk?"

"Yes, we are!" roared Kenmore. "To the Head's study!"

"That'll be very pleasant," said Willy calmly. "But what are we going to the Head's study for? I don't think he wants to see me, Kenmore. I'm jolly certain that he doesn't want to see you. Nobody in his right senses would want to see you."

"You cheeky young fag!" yelled Kenmore.

"You shouldn't roar like that," said Willy. "Your face is ugly enough at the best of times, Kenmore—and it looks positively revolting when you're in a rage. Now, don't hit me—prefects aren't allowed to swipe the heads of fags. You know that as well as I do."

Kenmore gnashed his teeth. He was the Head Prefect of the East House, and he had taken no part in the recent battle. But now that it was all over, he had come forward and had seized Willy Handforth—Willy being the ringleader of the rebel reinforcements. But Willy had all his wits about him. He made no attempt to escape—he made no effort to strike Kenmore. For Kenmore was a prefect, and at the first false move on Willy's part he would lay himself open to punishment. But while he obeyed Kenmore's orders he knew that he would be safe.

"Hi!" yelled Handforth excitedly. "You leave my minor alone!"

"Rescue, the Third!" shouted another Remove fellow. "Why don't you go for him and make him release Willy?"

But Willy Handforth twirled round towards his fellow fags.

"You stay where you are, my sons!" he said quietly. "If you bowl Kenmore over, you'll be caned for attacking a prefect. It was different with those other seniors, don't forget. You mustn't touch Kenmore—and there's no need to, anyhow. He's going to take me for a nice walk to the Head's study."

"That's about enough!" snapped Kenmore savagely. "Come along!"

Willy's coolness exasperated him to a point of mania. This was not the first time that Kenmore had been beside himself with rage because of Willy's supreme "nerve." But now Kenmore felt that he had the upper hand.

He had decided to take a certain action, and he was not going to be shifted from it. For one moment he had feared that the fags would swarm over him and bowl him over. But Willy's order had had effect. The Third hung back, watching.

Willy was marched off, and he vanished from sight. He seemed to be in no way perturbed. In fact, even when he was thrust into the headmaster's study he remained perfectly cool. Dr. Stafford had heard the news that the rebels had been driven out; he had heard, too, that they had been saved, at the last moment, by the Third—and the Head was disappointed and angry.

"I've brought this young rascal——" began Kenmore angrily, but the Head silenced him with a gesture

"Calm yourself, Kenmore," he said quietly. "There is no need for you to shout at me. And you needn't hold that boy so tightly, either."

"If I let him go sir, he'll bolt," said Kenmore harshly.

"No, I won't," said Willy. "I wouldn't leave your presence, sir without permission"

"Release him, Kenmore," said the Head.

And Willy was released. He tried to arrange his disordered clothing, then stood to attention. There was something so calm and serene about him that even Dr. Stafford felt uncomfortable. This was by no means his first encounter with Willy Handforth—and always there was something about Willy's personality which seemed to weaken him

"Now, Kenmore," said the Head, "why have you brought this boy to me? What misdemeanour has he committed?"

"I'll tell you, sir," said Kenmore fiercely. "Those rebels were all out of their ridiculous stronghold—every man-jack of them. The Fifth and the Sixth did the trick. And then this young hound——"

"You must not call him that, Kenmore!" interrupted Dr. Stafford sharply.

"Handforth minor and all the other fags

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Everybody should have a souvenir of this gallant British car, and you can obtain yours—a correctly-coloured metal model of the actual car—by getting next week's issue of NELSON LEE LIBRARY. Ask your newsagent to reserve you a copy now.

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ORDER IN ADVANCE!

suddenly swept down on the seniors and attacked them!" said Kenmore hotly. "Fags, sir! I mean, it's—it's outrageous! These rebels were absolutely defeated, and they were being led away when Handforth minor led his young ruffians to the attack."

"You must not call them young ruffians, Kenmore!" said the Head angrily. "I will not have you using these terms." He turned to Willy. "Handforth minor, is this true?" he added.

"Quite true, sir," said Willy steadily.

"Good gracious! You admit it, then?"

"Why shouldn't I admit it, sir?" asked Willy coolly. "I saw that the Remove fellows were in trouble, so I led the entire Third to the attack. We beat the Fifth and Sixth, sir, and routed them."

"Upon my word!" said the Head, swallowing something. "You—you routed them, Handforth minor?"

"Yes, sir—whacked them hollow!"

"Dear me! I—I—— You do not hesitate to tell me, Handforth minor, that you wilfully attacked these senior boys?" asked the Head, becoming stern. "Do you realise that you have committed a very grave offence?"

Willy elevated his eyebrows.

"A grave offence, sir?" he repeated, in surprise.

"Yes, Handforth minor."

"I hate to contradict you, sir, but I think you're wrong," said Willy. "There weren't any prefects in that senior force, and it's only an offence if we attack a prefect. Besides, these seniors weren't authorised to attack the Remove, were they?"

The Head looked at Willy very steadily.

"As a matter of fact, no," he admitted reluctantly. "I cannot truthfully say that these seniors were authorised by me, or by any other master, to—to attack the Remove."

"Just what I thought, sir," said Willy, nodding. "They acted entirely on their own initiative. So I don't see how we could have committed any grave offence. It was a purely personal affair. We thought the Remove wanted some help, so we gave it to them. No harm in that, was there, sir?"

And there was such calmness in Willy's tone that Dr. Stafford had absolutely no answer.



CHAPTER 22.

Willy Wins!

WILLY turned casually towards the door.

"So I can go, sir?" he asked, after a short pause. "Sorry if I have upset you at all, sir, but these quarrels will happen, you know."

"One moment, Handforth minor—one moment!" said the Head sternly. "I have not given permission for you to go!"

"Sorry, sir!" said Willy. "I'll stay as long as you like, of course. Always ready to oblige."

"You are a most extraordinary boy, Handforth minor!" exclaimed the Head, gripping himself.

"So I've heard before, sir, but it's all wrong," nodded Willy. "There's nothing extraordinary about me at all. I'm blessed if I can understand why people say it! I'm no different to any of the other chaps——"

"You—you impudent young rotter!" snapped Kenmore, unable to keep silent any longer. Good heavens, you're not going to let him escape, sir? Aren't you going to cane him? Aren't you going to flog him? He deserves the sack——"

"That will do, Kenmore!" interrupted the Head coldly. "I know what to do with Handforth minor. I need no instructions from you!"

Kenmore gritted his teeth in silence.

"I'm afraid I've upset you, sir, by helping the rebels," remarked Willy, "but you can't punish the Third for it."

"Indeed!" said the Head angrily.

"Well, I mean, sir, we didn't break any school regulations by having a scrap with the seniors," replied Willy. "They didn't act under your orders, and so I was justified in leading my Form to the attack."

"And were you justified, Handforth minor, in breaking bounds?"

"Ah!" said Willy, nodding. "I'll admit, sir, that you can punish me for that. And you can punish the whole Third, too. Sorry, sir, but we had to break bounds in order to attack the seniors. Still, breaking bounds isn't a particularly serious offence, is it?"

"I shall see that you are heavily punished for the offence——"

"I suppose we shall have the same punishment as the Fifth and Sixth, sir?" asked Willy.

"What do you mean, young man?"

"Well, the Fifth and Sixth broke bounds, too, didn't they?" asked Willy coolly.

"Upon my soul!"

"You can't deny it, sir!" went on Willy. "The vicinity of the school stores was placed out of bounds for the whole school; I've seen the notices! Well, the Fifth and Sixth——"

"Ahem!" coughed the Head. "You are quite right, Handforth minor—yes, you are quite right. If the Third Form is punished for breaking bounds, the Fifth and Sixth must also be punished."

"Then we can't grumble, sir," said Willy. "But it wouldn't be fair to punish the Third for going to the help of the rebels. After all, we're all entitled to our own opinions, aren't we, sir? The Third isn't rebelling—not yet."

"What do you mean—not yet?" asked Dr. Stafford sharply.

"Oh, nothing, sir!" replied Willy. "But you know what these fags are. Very excitable, and all that. If they're punished too heavily they might—— Oh, well, I won't exactly say anything, but you never know! You've got to be jolly careful, sir," he added confidentially. "There's a rummy feeling about the school just now. With the Remove in rebellion, and the Fourth nearly on the verge of it it's quite likely that the Third might catch a bit of the fever. It's always best to go easy, sir."

"Good gracious!" ejaculated the Head, startled.

He did not fail to appreciate the inner meaning of Willy Handforth's words. Never for a moment could it be said that Willy was using a threat. But yet he had clearly given the Head to understand that if any punishment were forthcoming the Third could not be relied upon to keep out of this rebellion!

The Head realised that it was a delicate situation.

"Now that I am here, sir, I'd like to say a few words about my major," went on the fag leader. "You know, sir, you're all wrong about Ted. He didn't do anything to Mr. Pycraft. It was all a mistake—a misunderstanding. The evidence looked pretty black against Ted, but——"

"I do not need any statement from you, Handforth minor," interrupted the Head coldly. "Whether your brother was guilty of that original offence or not, nothing can alter the fact that he rebelled against my authority. He defied me to my face—he barred himself in his own study—and the entire Remove Form has now supported him. The whole affair is disgraceful from start to finish."

"But Ted was only standing up for his rights, sir," Willy pointed out. "He was only jibbing because he was about to be unjustly treated. That's all sir. We believe in justice in the Lower School, you know, and we're liable to get excited if there's any harsh treatment. Ted was going to be flogged for something that he didn't do. So how can he be blamed for rebelling? I know it's not my place to say anything, but a full inquiry might be very useful, sir."

The Head felt rather hot.

"Handforth minor, I have come to the conclusion that your action this afternoon is not punishable under the ordinary rules," he said curtly. "Since these senior boys acted entirely upon their own initiative, I find it impossible to punish you for attacking them. But you knew well enough that the school stores was placed out of bounds."

"Yes, sir," nodded Willy. "I knew that—but the circumstances were exceptional."

"Very well—you may go," said the Head. "I will consider the whole matter, and I will decide what punishment shall be inflicted later."

"Thank you, sir," said Willy, moving towards the door. "I hope you'll remember that the position is pretty wonky."

"What did you say, Handforth minor?"

"Well, delicate, sir," amended Willy. "You never know with these fags. If I were you, sir, I'd go easy——"

"That is enough, Handforth minor!" interrupted the Head. "You can go."

"Thank you, sir."

Willy, with a wink at the enraged Kenmore, took his departure from the headmaster's presence. As he went out he grinned cheerfully to himself. He had scored a victory—and he knew it!

DON'T FORGET

NEXT WEEK'S SPLENDID ISSUE will contain

A TOPPING MODEL OF "BABS"

THE MONSTER RACER!

CHAPTER 13.

The Flying Squad

BUT Willy Handforth made no song about his victory.

It wasn't like him to crow. He knew, in his heart, that Dr. Stafford would not dare to punish the Third for what had happened that afternoon. For the Head knew perfectly well that if he "came down" on the fags, the fags would promptly go over to the rebel force, and that wouldn't improve the situation in the slightest degree!

Of course, it would have been altogether different if the seniors had been ordered to the attack. But they had acted on their own, and that put Willy and his fags in a safe place.

Cool and grinning, Willy returned to the fortress, and found many of the fags still there. They were out of bounds, of course, and Willy had come with a definite object.

"Now then, my lads," he said, as the fags crowded round him, "you mustn't stay here!"

"What's happened?" asked Chubby Heath quickly. "What did the Head do to you?"

"You don't look very sore!" said Juicy Lemon.

"You're out of bounds here—and so am I!" said Willy. "We've got to get back into the Triangle. Mustn't defy orders, you know."

The other fags looked at him in astonishment.

"But hasn't the Head swished you?" yelled Chubby.

"Of course not," said Willy. "Why should he swish me?"

"But Kenmore——"

"Bother Kenmore!" said Willy. "Kenmore didn't know what he was doing. You needn't worry, my sons—we shan't come to any trouble. The Head won't dare to punish us."

"Won't dare?" repeated several fags.

"Of course not," said Willy. "He knows jolly well that we're liable to go over to the rebels—and that wouldn't improve the situation, would it? We're safe enough. Trust me!"

"My goodness!" said Juicy Lemon, staring. "You're a cool card, Willy!"

"No reason why I shouldn't be cool," replied Willy. "There's nothing to get excited about." He turned, and waved towards the Remove fellows who were on the roof of the stores. "Al' right, you chaps! Got everything fixed now?"

"Yes, rather!" shouted his major. "I'll bet they won't push the doors down again! We've piled dozens of sacks of flour and split peas, and other things against the doors. There's a barrier now that a steam-roller couldn't push down!"

"Yes, I think we're safe against another attack of that last sort," said Nipper. "There's nothing like experience as a teacher. Thanks to you, Willy, we're in full possession again."

"That's all right, then," said Willy, nodding. "We're going off now—we're breaking bounds, you know. I've just come to collect my men, and to scoot. Good luck to the rebellion!"

"Hurrah!"

"Thanks to you, old son!" sang out Reggie Pitt. "We shan't forget the Third!"

"That's good!" nodded Willy. "I'm afraid you fellows don't appreciate the Third enough in normal times. You don't realise what the Third is really made of! And don't forget that we're on hand all the time, in case you get into trouble again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nerve!"

"Rats!" said Handforth. "My minor has every reason to be nervy, if it comes to that! If it wasn't for him we shouldn't be here now!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Good old Willy—always on the spot!"

"From now onwards you can regard the Third as a Flying Squad," went on Willy coolly. "That's what we are—a Flying Squad."

"What the dickens do you mean?" demanded his major.

"Well, if you're attacked again, and you want some help, just give a loud whistle," said Willy. "Has anybody up there got a referee's whistle?"

"Yes, I have," said Nipper with a grin.

"That's all right, then," said Willy. "If you find yourselves in need of help, just blow that whistle loudly enough, and the Flying Squad will come to the rescue!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a great idea!" said Nipper enthusiastically. "So don't you laugh at it, you chaps. Willy and his men can be a lot more use to us outside than they could if they joined the rebellion. Good luck to the Third!"

"Begad, rather!"

Willy Handforth and his men walked away, feeling that they had done well. And Willy meant what he had said, too. He was ready on the instant to help the rebels again, if necessary, for he had no fear of the Head punishing him. And thus he was perfectly serene when he walked full tilt into Fenton and Morrow, of the Sixth.

"We were just coming after you kids!" said Fenton angrily. "You've been breaking bounds, and——"

"We know that," interrupted Willy. "I just went along to collect the chaps and to bring them away. Now, Fenton, you needn't say that we're liable to be punished, because that's stale. And if you report us to the Head, we shan't mind a jot. The Head won't do anything."

"Oh, won't he?" said Fenton. "You're a bit too clever, young Handforth! It was like your impudence to lead that attack on the seniors. Haven't you any respect for your elders?"

"It all depends who they are," replied Willy. "For example, I've plenty of respect for you, Fenton—you're the captain of the school, and one of the best. But if you expect me to have any respect for rotters like Grayson and Shaw and Kenmore—well, I'm sorry I can't oblige."

And Willy then walked on with a calm nod. The other fags were feeling slightly nervous. They weren't so confident as their leader. They had half an idea that some drastic punishment would fall upon them.

"By Jove, the kid was pretty near the truth!" said Morrow, after Willy and the other boys were out of earshot. "I don't blame him for having those sentiments, Fenton. That youngster's got plenty of sense!"

Edgar Fenton frowned.

"He may have plenty of sense—but he's got plenty of cheek, too," he said. "Too much cheek—and too much nerve! He's going to cause more trouble in this rebellion before he's done."

"I shouldn't be at all surprised," said Morrow.



CHAPTER 24.

The Victorious Remove!

BACK in Dr. Stafford's study, Simon Kenmore was inwardly fuming.

He had been startled at the way in which Willy Handforth had serenely gone

off, without receiving an atom of punishment. Kenmore did not see that the Head's hands were tied. He did not appreciate the fact that it was impossible to punish the fags with any justice. It was not an offence for a Third Form boy to fight a Sixth Form boy—any more than it was an offence for a Sixth-Former to fight a fag. If the Head punished the one, he would have to punish the other. That was inevitable. But Kenmore couldn't see it in this way.

"I hope you're going to be very severe with those fags, sir," said Kenmore, glaring across at the Head. "Particularly with Handforth minor. He's the most impudent young ruffian in the Lower School. There's no end to his cheek. In this particular case he's broken bounds, and attacked the Sixth, and——"

"That will do, Kenmore," interrupted the Head. "I know all the facts, thank you. These Third Form boys have not attacked any prefects, and they have not broken any school rules. They have certainly ignored the new order regarding bounds, but the Fifth Form and the Sixth Form are equally guilty in that respect."

"But the Fifth and the Sixth broke bounds in order to drive the rebels out, sir!" ejaculated Kenmore, in amazement.

"I know that—but one offence is precisely the same as the other," replied the headmaster. "It will be better, Kenmore, if you leave my presence. I am sorry to see that you have a vindictive spirit. I can well understand your feelings, of course, but there is no need for you to be so vindictive."

"And you're not going to punish that young puppy, sir?" gasped Kenmore. "Why, he deserves to be expelled!"

"I have already told you, Kenmore, that I do not need your advice!" snapped Dr. Stafford. "You are a prefect, and I wish you to make it known at once, in the Fifth Form, and in the Sixth Form, that I shall not countenance any further attack on these rebels. Events have proved that such activity only tends to make the position worse. I appreciate what these senior boys have done, but it was a mistake."

"You mean that you want these rebels to remain in full power, sir?"

"I can detect a certain sneer in your tone, Kenmore," said the Head sharply. "I shall seriously consider whether you are to retain your prefectship."

"I—I'm sorry, sir!" ejaculated Kenmore, in alarm. "I—I didn't mean——"

"You may go, Kenmore!" interrupted the Head. "I do not wish to continue this discussion."

Simon Kenmore went, raging inwardly. It was only too clear to him that the Third-Formers were to escape scot-free. But yet the Head could do nothing else. How could he punish the Fifth and the Sixth for attempting to quell the rebels? That would look ungrateful, indeed! And yet the seniors had broken bounds just as much as the fags. So the Head's only course was to wink at the entire affair.

Thus the position remained unaltered.

Never for an instant did Dr. Stafford consider the possibility of giving in. He was not going to be defeated by his own junior schoolboys.

As for sending for Marriott and Merrell, he would have none of it. These rebels had given him an ultimatum to the effect that they would only return to their duties if Merrell and Marriott were sent for, and questioned. But the Head was not going to stand any dictation from the Remove. He was obstinate—he was stubborn. The Remove had challenged him, and he was going to continue this fight, to teach these insolent juniors that they could only defy him at their peril.

Once or twice a tiny doubt crept into the Head's mind. Had Handforth been justified in rebelling? Was he really innocent of that assault upon Mr. Pycraft? If so, the Head would not have a leg to stand on—since he would be compelled to admit that he had been about to commit an injustice. But no, he would not consider this point at all. The evidence against Handforth had been conclusive. The boy was guilty, therefore he deserved to be expelled. And he would be expelled as soon as these rebels were subdued.

But when would they be subdued? That was a question which Dr. Malcolm Stafford could not answer. And while he paced his study, frowning worriedly, utterly unable to cope with the situation at the moment, the rebels were celebrating in the school stores.

It was tea-time, and Fatty Little had excelled himself. With the aid of many willing helpers, he had prepared a sumptuous tea.

"Well, we've won the first battle, and we're going to win the entire campaign," said Handforth enthusiastically. "The seniors have failed to get us out——"

"Well they got us out, but the fags helped us in again!" said Nipper, smiling.

"It's the same thing," frowned Handforth. "The juniors have beaten the seniors"

"Hurrah!"

The feast went on amid much enthusiasm. Meanwhile, the rest of the school were agog with excitement and wonder. Nobody knew what was going to happen next.

There were the rebels barricaded in the school stores, holding one of the most spectacular barrings-out that St. Frank's had ever known. So far they were in complete mastery, and they were letting everybody know it! And with the Christmas holidays looming near, nobody could hazard a guess as to how things would develop.

But the Fifth and Sixth were not done with yet—as events in the near future were to prove!

THE END

(Look out for next week's grand yarn entitled "Martial Law at St. Frank's," and also for the superb metal model of "Babs," which will be given away free with every issue. ORDER YOUR COPY NOW!)

ALL ABOUT Capt. MALCOLM CAMPBELL'S "BLUE BIRD"



the subject of this week's unique Free Gift.

Out For the World's Record.

The world's land speed record will be seriously challenged before very long, when Captain Malcolm Campbell's three-ton racing car, the Blue Bird, gets going on Daytona Beach, U.S.A.

The present holder of the world's record—Major Segrave, a model of whose giant Sunbeam car was given away with last week's NELSON LEE LIBRARY—whizzed over that same stretch of sand at the terrifying speed of 207 miles per hour. That speed was maintained only for a short distance, however, the official record for the Sunbeam's complete "run" being just over 203 miles per hour.

That is the figure which the Blue Bird, with Malcolm Campbell at the wheel, has been designed to beat. Captain Campbell has already done wonders with his mighty machine, two of its achievements being the breaking of the world's flying mile and kilometre records, on the sands at Pendine, in Wales, last February.

Nearly Three Miles a Minute!

Then the Blue Bird was out to reach the speed of three miles a minute. It all but managed it, just falling short of the 180 miles per hour by three-fifths of a second!

Valuable lessons have been learned from the performances of the late Parry Thomas' "Babs" (a model of which will be given away with next week's NELSON LEE) and the great Sunbeam. And with these in Major Campbell's mind, it may be that the Blue Bird will put up a very wonderful show against that 203 miles per hour record.

This car, which is to fight the next great duel with Father Time—otherwise the clock—is fitted with a 450 horse power twelve cylinder Napier-Lion aero engine, similar to the one which helped the tiny Supermarine Napier seaplane, piloted by Flight-Lieut. Webster, to capture the most coveted air prize in the world—the Schneider Trophy—at 281 miles per hour in September last.

Though rated at 450 horse power, the Blue Bird's engine may yet, under favourable conditions, be able to develop another fifty, making a total of 500 horse power.

British Throughout!

Whether the Blue Bird succeeds or fails in its great objective, the attempt will be yet another tribute to Britain's sterling worth in men and materials. Captain Malcolm Campbell is British, of course. And so is the Blue Bird, right through—from the Vickers steel of which it is largely built, to its British Thomson-Houston magnetos, its Claudel Hobson carburettors, and its Dunlop racing tyres on Rudge-Whitworth wheels; the body itself was made by Jarvis' of Wimbledon.

The Blue Bird has all this in its favour—and it will have more when put to the tremendous test on Daytona Beach. That long run-way of smooth and level sand is almost ideal in every way, while the Pendine Sands "track," on which the Blue Bird's best-yet run has been made, is not.

Pendine Sands' Difficulties!

At Pendine there is the big double handicap of a limited length for getting up speed, with only a very narrow margin at the end of the run in which to slow down. These obstacles do not exist at Daytona Beach. When Malcolm Campbell was breaking records at Pendine, the course had first to be partly drained by means of sand ploughing. And spectators who arrived there in cars realised something of the difficulties to be faced there by racing cars when their own machines started to settle down and sink in the sodden sand. Keen wits soon found a remedy for that unpleasantness, however. The car-owners locked their front wheels right over and let their machines slowly circle round on their own, in bottom gear, thus defeating the dumb challenge of the sands to stand still and be swallowed!

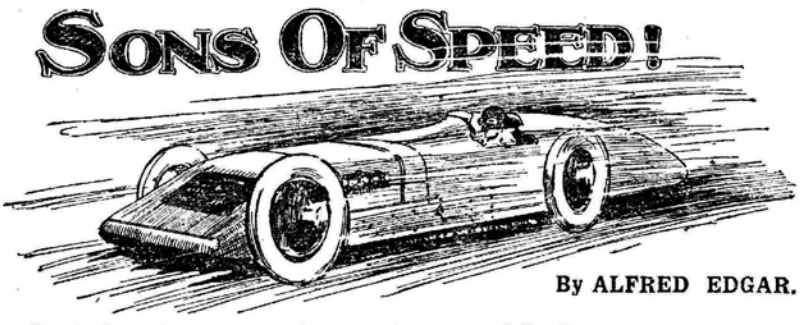
The beach at Daytona provides the longest straight course and the fastest natural track in the world. 500 feet wide at low tide, as level and smooth as a billiards-table top, the fine sand is hard-packed enough for boys to roller-skate on it—very different from the Pendine Sands, from which the sharp shells have to be picked up and carted away in lorry loads to prevent the tyres of racing cars being torn to shreds!

Whatever the Blue Bird does on those better sands in the U.S.A., it will without doubt translate into practical terms the proud motto of British racing motorists and car and engine designers and manufacturers—"We'll show the world!"

GRAND NEW SERIAL JUST STARTING!

Here's a speed yarn that'll send a thrill through you, boys!

SONS OF SPEED!



By ALFRED EDGAR.

Deadly rivalry exists between the Kent Car Co. and the Ince Eight Co., for both firms are out to bag the world's speed record. But Ince Eight turn out some pretty hot specimens in spies as well as racing cars, and it's one of these amiable gentlemen who plunges young Dick Barry into the adventure of his life!

HOW THE STORY STARTED.

DICK BARRY acts as racing mechanic to his brother—

BIG BILL BARRY, who drives Kent racing cars, and who is also to handle a tremendously powerful speed machine which is being built to break all world's records by attaining 250 miles an hour. The designer of this wonderful car is—

"PROFESSOR" KENT, owner of Kent Cars. The first test of the giant engine is spied upon by a speedman named—

MARK LYNCH, the crafty driver of Ince Eight racing cars. His firm is also building a monster machine to attack world's records; Kent Cars and the Ince Eights have always been in dead rivalry. Something goes wrong with the professor's engine during the test, and Dick returns with Bill to Brooklands, where a team of Kent racers are being made ready for the Italian Grand Prix. When Bill takes his racing car out for a trial run in the morning, Mark Lynch goes on to the track with an Ince Eight. His appearance is in the nature of a challenge to Bill, and the big fellow sends his car all out around the speedway in an effort to pass Lynch. Just as they are coming off a banking, it looks to Dick as though Lynch pulls his car high, forcing Bill's machine into a parapet at the top of the bank. Instantly, Bill's car gets out of control, it skids madly on the track in slithering circles, dives down the bank, and plunges into the bushes. Dick sees his brother's machine bucking and leaping wildly; there comes the awful screech of riven metal, and then everything is hidden by a spraying welter of smoke and dust and new-torn earth.

(Now read on).

After the Smash!

"HE'S killed himself—he's crashed!"

The hoarse, gasping voice of the mechanic rang in Dick's ears as he raced along the inside edge of the track. Behind, he could hear Lynch's machine storming onwards. The crackle of its exhaust sounded jeeringly, as though the rival driver and his car were laughing at the disaster they had brought on big Bill Barry.

Smoke and dust, tufts of torn grass and clods of earth were still flying on the air, and right in the thick of them Dick glimpsed a wheel. It whirled momentarily in the dust-cloud, with shreds of rubber and canvas flapping madly, then it smashed down out of sight.

Dick ran on, unconscious of effort as he strove to pierce the murk and see what had happened to his brother. On the concrete of the track he made out two broad, white scratches, where a tyre had been torn from one wheel ere the racing machine left the speedway.

Then he saw bushes with broken, splintered stumps jutting upwards from the earth, branches shredded of their leaves, and then a great swathe of ploughed-up earth, which marked the course the car had taken.

He jumped into the path the machine had made, half falling over the mangled shape of a twisted tyre. Behind him, the Kent mechanics were racing up More men were running from the paddock, tearing across the grass towards the smother of smoke that hid the wrecked machine.

Dick saw that two of these men carried a stretcher between them. At sight of it, and at thought of its meaning, his heart almost stood still. Next moment he was diving into the reeking smoke, and then he saw the car.

The front axle had been torn clean away. Both rear wheels were just crumpled things, all spiny with broken spokes. The radiator was dug into the ground, cluttered up with earth and twigs, but the machine hadn't turned over.

It lay there, right way up, and with Dick's brother still in the driving-seat. He was sitting with both hands on the steering-wheel and staring straight in front of him, like a man whose brain is completely dazed.

Dick stumbled towards him.

"Bill! Billy, are you all right?"

His brother did not move. There was a thin trickle of blood down his bronzed left cheek, and out from the foot-grid blued smoke surged into the cockpit, making him look weird and ghostly. Dick reached to try and get him out of the car, and then it seemed that a score of men appeared from nowhere.

Half a dozen pairs of hands gently lifted Bill from the shattered machine, and carried him to a clear patch of grass. They took off his goggles and helmet, and loosened the neck of his overalls. It was then that Dick saw that his brother's eyes were wide open all the time. He dropped on his knees beside him.

"Are you hurt, Bill? Bill! Are you——"

"'M all right!" grunted the big speedman, and he tried to sit up. Men thrust him down again, and someone drew Dick out of the way while they tended his brother.

For a minute or two he hovered about the edge of the little crowd. He saw that a man was putting out a fire which had started on the wrecked car, and there was another man busy taking photographs. Then he heard a Kent mechanic saying in relief:

"He's all right, Dick! It's shaken him, but the old 'bus didn't turn over. He's all right, boy; you needn't worry!"

As though to support his words, Dick saw his brother on his feet and waving aside men who would have helped him to stand.

"I'm all right, I tell you! Bit shaky, that's all. Let me alone for a bit, and I'll be—— Where's Dick?"

"Here I am, Bill!" Dick pushed forward. He saw that his brother was now very white under his tan, his lips were twitching and his hands were shaking.

Big Bill had crashed at very little short of a hundred and forty miles an hour. If the car had turned over, nothing could have saved him from death. As it chanced, the machine had remained upright and he had escaped uninjured. That is, uninjured so far as his body was concerned.

But every accident means a terrific shock to the nerves, and Bill was suffering from shock now. There was the chance that the crash would break his nerve for good—just as it might have broken a limb.

There was one remedy, and one remedy only, for this. It was to get in another car, and drive until his nerves had settled again, and prevent the strain of the crash getting a grip on him. This was why he gasped:

"Dick, get another car out—the reserve machine! Bring it round here, quick!"

Dick stared at him in amazement.

"You're not going to drive now, are you?" he exclaimed. "Not right after——"

"Get the reserve car!" His brother dropped a shaking hand on his shoulder and half pushed him in the direction of the paddock. "Don't argue—do it!"

"He's right. Come on, Dick; I'll give you a hand!" One of the Kent mechanics caught the boy's arm, and they raced away together, with the mechanic panting: "Bill can't afford to risk losin' his nerve. The best thing he can do is to take another machine round now—so long as he don't collapse in it, or something. By gosh, but he's born lucky to have got out o' that lot!"

Inside two minutes they had one of the three cars of the Kent racing team started up, and Dick himself drove it round the track until he came level with the scene of the smash. Bill was waiting there, his face still pallid and his hands still shaking.

Without a word, he climbed into the narrow cockpit as Dick vacated the driving seat. The boy stood looking at his brother, and it seemed to him that Bill was keeping himself on his feet only by a tremendous effort. Suppose that he did faint or something while he was driving the car; he'd crash again, for certain—unless someone were with him to snatch at the wheel and keep the machine straight.

With the thought in his mind, Dick slid into the mechanic's seat.

"I'm coming, too!" he exclaimed, above the roar of the engine.

Big Bill didn't seem to notice him. He crashed into bottom gear, and the car jumped away. Then they were rocking down the railway straight, with Bill changing up clumsily and the car weaving and swaying all over the track under his shaking hands.

Dick clung to the handholds under his seat, expecting every moment to see the machine run clean off the speedway!

— —

The "Blue Bird"!

BIG BILL'S idea of getting his nerve back seemed to be to slam the throttle wide, and keep it wide. That was all right, but the trouble was that he was all but incapable of holding the car.

They came off a bump at the end of the Byfleet banking in a terrific skid that slewed the car sideways for yards along the track. The tail of the machine seemed just to miss the corrugated iron fencing that stood there; then, somehow, Bill straightened the car and sent it hurtling on.

He sat bolt upright behind the wheel, his hands knuckle-white and his eyes wide and staring. His teeth were gritted, and every time that the leaping car flung him against his brother, Dick could feel that Bill's muscles were as taut as strained rope.

For five mad, wild laps of the Brooklands circuit Dick felt as though they were rushing to smoking disaster. He was crashed and battered in the narrow seat, deafened by the roar of the engine and the sobbing whine of its supercharger. His heart was in his mouth a score of times as the machine skidded, or rode perilously high to the lip of the banking ere Bill could haul her down.

But after those five fierce laps, some of the colour came back to the big speedman's cheeks, and he sat more easily behind the big steering-wheel. He got more control over the machine, although his speed did not lessen.

For over half an hour they circled the famous speedway, and then Bill ran the car down the finishing straight, turning at the end into the paddock. Kent mechanics came swarming round as it stopped.

Dick climbed stiffly out, and his brother grinned at him as he eased himself out of the cockpit. All the normal colour was back in his cheeks, and his hands were quite steady now.

"Well, that's that!" he grunted. "You're a good kid, Dick—bet I must have scared you a bit at first. Scared myself, anyway! I feel all right now, boys." And he grinned round at the mechanics in his old cheery way. "What about the other car? Pretty badly knocked about, isn't she?"

"Frame's bent and all the steering's smashed," a man told him. "We found the front axle about twenty yards away. She's a scrap, except for the engine!"

"My fault," Bill growled. "I oughtn't to have gone after Lynch like that, and——"

"You ought to go after him now, anyway!" Dick said fiercely. "He pushed you up the banking, right into that parapet! Did it deliberately, Bill!"

Dick stood looking at the big speedman, and he saw his brother smile slowly.

"Now, don't try and blame it on to Lynch; it wasn't his fault," he growled. "It was just my bad judgment!"

Nobody said anything. That was Big Bill Barry all over. He wouldn't believe anything rotten of anybody, if he could help it. Although he knew that Mark Lynch hated him, he wouldn't admit that the rival speedman had deliberately tried to crash him.

He turned away, just as a wide-shouldered man with a sun-tanned face and clear-looking eyes came up to him and offered his hand, congratulating him on his escape. Beyond this man, Dick saw a little crowd grouped about a long, low-built racing machine, which was painted a magnificent blue from radiator to tail.

Sight of the car made him forget, for the moment, all that had happened. He caught the arm of a man near him.

"What car's that?" he gasped. "Isn't it——"

"That's the Blue Bird," the man answered. "Captain Malcolm Campbell's record-breaker. That's him talking to your brother now. The car's down here for tuning up, or something. It's just come."

"Gosh!" Dick barely breathed a word as he stared from the famous machine to the great speedman who owned it. The crowd around the car was growing every moment, and Dick crossed over to it.

This machine had travelled within a fraction of 180 miles an hour. Its body seemed to snug down between the big wheels; there was a stream-lined casing over the front dumb-irons, and a great, smooth bulge where the exhaust pipes ran from the engine. It looked strangely strong and fierce, and its every line showed that it had been built for terrific speed.

The tail was short and wedge-shaped, and on the side of the scuttle a painted Union Jack glowed against the smooth blue. This great car had held the world's record for the fastest speed on land, until the 1,000-horse-power Sunbeam had snatched it away—and Bill was now shaking hands with the man who had driven the car!

Dick wondered if Bill would call him over and introduce him; he would have been proud to shake Captain Malcolm Campbell's hand. He half turned towards his brother, then he started as he found himself staring full into the dark, mocking eyes of Mark Lynch, who had come up just behind him!

Bill's Mad Scheme!

THE rival speedman's thin lips were twisted into a sneering grin, and his stone-white teeth showed as he grated:

"Picking up hints for record-breaking?" Dick swung round to face him. He wasn't scared of Lynch, and he meant to let him see it.

"You were trying to pick up some hints last night, anyway!" Dick ripped the words at him. "I saw you, spying round our works!"

Lynch frowned a little, but his jeering smile did not fade.

"Did you?" he asked coolly. "The professor's patent engine blew up, didn't it? That old fool couldn't build up a box of bricks, let alone a car that'll go!"

"Couldn't he? When that car's ready, it'll be good enough to beat you for the big record, anyway!" Dick answered back quickly. His fists were bunched, and his eyes glittered as he spoke. Then he went on: "Take a tip from me, and clear out of here before some of our mechanics get at you. We all saw you try to send Bill over the banking and——"

The smile vanished from Lynch's face, as though it had been wiped away. He bent, and when he spoke his voice was almost a hiss.

"You're asking for trouble, my lad! D'you know what you're trying to accuse me of?"

"Yes, I do—and you know it's true!" Dick exclaimed. "For two pins, I'd——" He broke off as he saw Lynch raise one of his bunched fists.

Dick's own hands went up. There was nothing he wanted more than to lash out at the leering, dark face of the man who had tried to kill his brother. He was on his toes, when a big hand fell on his shoulder and yanked him back.

"Go easy, young 'un, I want you!" It was Big Bill's calm voice growling in his ear. An arm that was like the trunk of an oak tree for strength dropped about his shoulders, whirling him round away from Lynch. Then, without a word or a glance towards his rival, Bill was leading Dick away across the paddock to the sheds where the Kent racing cars were housed.

"Next time Lynch tries to get your rag out, you walk off," Bill growled, before Dick could say anything. "The first thing a speedman learns is to keep his head an' control himself. Got that? Then he——" He broke off as Dick started to protest, then cut in again: "All right; I don't want to hear what Lynch said, or anything about it! I've got a job for you to do, and this is no time for you to go about collecting yourself good hidings. Lynch is about twice as big as you are, and he'd have knocked you flat!"

"P'r'aps he would, but I bet I'd have got in a couple of smacks at him first!" Dick said.

Bill chuckled a little.

"Anyway, you steer clear of him. And, listen, Dick, I know as well as anybody that he deliberately crashed me this afternoon—only I'm not going to admit it to anyone, except you, because it would only make trouble. But we'll lick Lynch and his Ince Eights in the long run, and we'll do it fair and square. That clear?"

Dick nodded. Bill was a queer sort of chap in his way. Dick felt that if anybody had crashed him, he'd have wanted to go two-fisted

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for the fellow. But Bill was all for peace and quiet, until he got in a machine on the track, and then he'd ride until his car fell to bits beneath him.

"Besides, if anybody's going to fight Lynch, nobody's got a better right than I have," Bill went on in his growling way. "And when I do set about him, I'll—I'll——"

He broke off, and Dick glanced at him. Bill's jaw was set and his eyes were narrowed. His big, oil-stained hands were bunched and half lifted, so that the tool-scarred knuckles showed white and tense.

They went on in silence to the shed. The two other Kent cars were standing there, and most of the mechanics were now out bringing in the wreckage of the smashed machine.

Bill stood for a space, staring at the streamlined shapes of the two cars in the shed, then he turned to Dick.

"Forget about fighting Lynch for a bit," he said, "and listen to this. You know that car was the machine I was going to drive at Monza. Well, Lynch was driving the reserve machine of the Ince team—that's the car they haven't specially tuned or given much attention to.

"Now, when I started racing out there against Lynch, I was matching the best machine in our team against the worst of their cars. See what that means? I ought to have wiped the track with him—but I didn't! It was as much as I could do to hold him, let alone pass him. What d'you make of that, Dick?"

There was only one thing that Dick could make out about it. The Ince Eights were entered for the race in Italy, and if Bill hadn't been able to beat Lynch's poorly-tuned machine on the Brooklands track in their impromptu race, then it was a certainty that he'd never lick him in the big event. Dick said as much.

"That's how it struck me," growled Bill. "Our cars are miles an hour slower than theirs! I reckon Lynch was simply trying to find out what we could do. Well, what we want is more speed, Dick. There's the cars we'll have to run—two of 'em in here an' one where we left it in the paddock. How're we going to make 'em go faster."

"Only by making them lighter, so that the engines won't have so much weight to pull," Dick answered slowly. "But if you do that, it'll make them dangerous to drive. They won't hold the track."

"It'll make 'em dangerous, all right," Bill agreed. "Still, that don't matter so long as we beat the Ince Eights!" He stood frowning at the machines, then he went on: "We'll have to get them back to the works, and we'll pare everything down to the last ounce. It'll mean that we shall miss the chance to practise for the big race over in Italy, because we'll be late getting there, but that can't be helped."

The big speedman stepped further into the shed, and there was something very grim in his expression as he regarded the cars. He was still staring reflectively at them when two mechanics came in, carrying the wrecked front axle from the smashed car.

Bill strolled over to examine it, but Dick saw that he was not eyeing the damage, he was looking to see how much metal could be taken off the axle. He spoke to one of the two mechanics, telling them what he intended to do to the cars.

The two listened, their eyes a little wide. Presently, Bill turned away, and the two came out of the shed, pausing near Dick.

"Hear that?" one of them gasped. "He says he's going to take weight off 'em. He's going to bring 'em down to the very limit. Gosh, if he does that it'll be impossible to hold the machines! They'll be all over the track!"

"Yes, but they'll be fast!" the other man said.

"Fast! You bet they'll be fast. An' you know what Big Bill is when he gets up against the Ince Eights. He'll ride until something smashes, and something will smash if he takes any more metal off those cars. They're as light as they can be with safety now. And if he makes 'em lighter still—well, I wouldn't drive one, not for a million quid! If Bill tries it, he won't come out of the race alive!"

The mechanics moved on. Dick stood looking after them, then he glanced to where his brother was moving between the cars in the shed. Dick looked again to the retreating backs of the mechanics, and he grinned suddenly.

"Won't come out alive, won't he?" he grunted to himself. "I bet he does, an', what's more, he'll win! Those chaps don't know Bill!"

—

The Man in the Shed!

THE team of Kent racing cars were rushed back to the works. They were stripped, and Bill got busy with his mad scheme for lightening the machines. Everybody at the works said that he would kill himself in the race, but the two drivers of the other cars in the team said they were game to do whatever Bill thought best, so the work went ahead.

Dick helped his brother on his machine, but there was not an awful lot that he could do, because most of the work had to be done by skilled mechanics.

"Better go and give the professor a hand," Bill told him. "He wants somebody he can trust in the test shed."

Since the midnight test of the record-breaking engine, "Professor" Kent had been busy overhauling the machine, and he welcomed Dick's offer of assistance. For two days Dick laboured on the giant engine in the strange atmosphere of the test shed. The professor seemed never to tire, and he didn't seem to appreciate the fact that Dick wasn't made of iron.

The boy worked until he almost dropped asleep on his job. There were times when his every muscle ached, and his nerves seemed strained to breaking point. But always there was the grey head of the professor bent over the engine, with his white, skilful hands working swiftly and tirelessly, and Dick felt ashamed to admit that he himself was ready to drop.

In the big test shed, the professor was as ruthless and as inexorable as the mighty engine which he was building. He worked with a queer concentration, and it was easy to tell that his whole heart and soul was in this monstrous creation, designed to drive a car over the earth at the stupendous speed of two hundred and fifty miles an hour.

If he succeeded, then the feat would undoubtedly restore the fortunes of Kent Cars. Party because of this, partly because Big Bill would drive the car when it was ready, Dick slaved to the limit of his strength. Until at last the professor was satisfied, and the engine was ready for her second test.

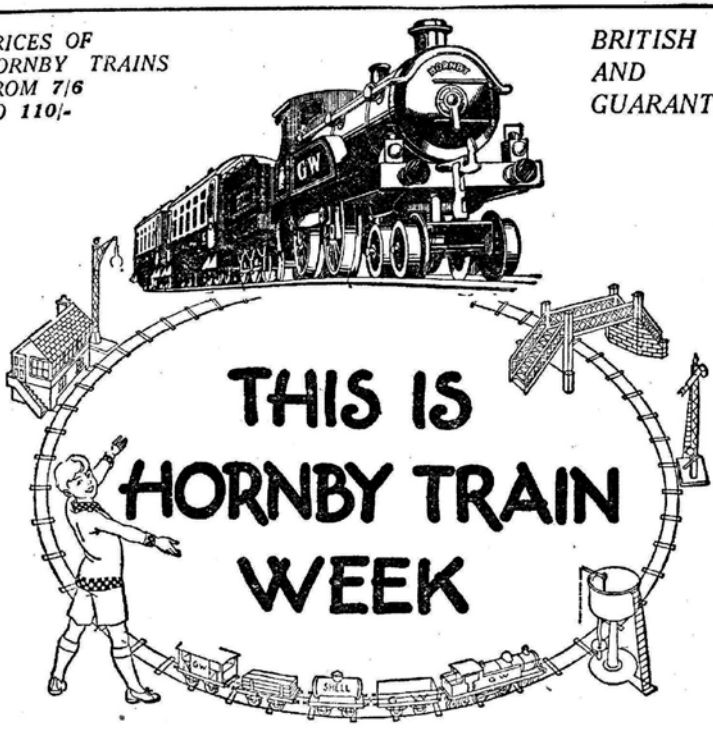
"We'll try her at midnight again, when there's no one about, Dick," the professor said. "But I shan't let the workpeople know, and I'll have only the usual watchmen on duty. I think that Lynch came spying here at the last test only because everybody knew that it was coming off—somebody told him, you see. If we keep it to ourselves, the information won't get about all round the place, although some of the racing mechanics are bound to hear about it.

"I'll tell your brother, Bill, of course," he went on. "But we won't even have any mechanics in to help; we'll do everything ourselves. Well, you'd better get along home for a sleep and——

(Continued on page 42.)

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"SONS OF SPEED!"

(Continued from page 40.

Heavens, boy, you look tired!" He stared at Dick for a few moments. "H'm! I've been working you rather hard, I'm afraid. I didn't realise that. Perhaps you'd better not come to-night. Get a good sleep instead."

"No, I don't want to miss the test!" Dick exclaimed. "I'll be here, sir!"

Dick hadn't forgotten the last time he had seen that great engine on test, when the shed had been filled with a roaring, shuddering sound, when the powerful electrics had flung vivid light down on the banked dials and gauges, with the professor's steady hands on the controls.

In those moments Dick had had a glimpse of enormous power held in leash, and he wanted to see the engine tested again. Because, this time, the professor would run it to its limit, with success or failure dependent on the result.

Dick snatched a few hours' sleep, and it was barely eleven o'clock when he returned to the test shed. He was early because he wanted to give the mighty casing of the engine a clean up before the professor arrived; also, there were one or two connections which Dick had still to make before the thing was quite ready.

The watchman let him through the main gate, and he passed alongside the dark and silent buildings of the works towards the shed. There was nobody about, and there were no more watchmen to challenge him.

The test shed was in darkness, and Dick was surprised to find the door unlocked and open. It was just as he reached it that he glimpsed a flash of light inside. A second later, he saw that the light came from a carefully-shielded electric torch, and against the clear beam was silhouetted the head and shoulders of a man.

He wore a mechanic's overalls, and Dick recognised him as a man who worked as a labourer in the racing stable—a "labourer" being an unskilled mechanic in a motor works. The light from his flash-lamp shone down on the oil-filler of the engine's sump. The cap had been unscrewed, and when Dick saw the man he was pouring the last of some black, gritty substance into the sump.

He shook the remainder from the tin that he held, then slipped the tin into his pocket, screwed home the cap, dusted round the filler with a lump of rag, then snapped out the light and came striding towards the door.

In that moment, Dick swung the door fully open.

"What are you doing here?" he demanded.

Dick knew well enough what the fellow had done. The stuff he had poured into the sump was carborundum—the hardest material in the world, after diamonds. When the engine was started up, the carborundum would circulate with the oil. It would grate through all the delicate mechanism of the engine, scoring the cylinders, blocking oilways, grinding its way through every part of the engine until the whole thing was a complete and useless wreck!

The fellow was a spy. Someone in the pay of Mark Lynch!

Through the half-light, Dick heard him draw a hissing breath, then, ere the boy could move, the man came at him. Dick lashed out with one hand, while with the other he reached for the switch on the wall.

Dick's figure was silhouetted against the lighter darkness of the sky, and the man could see him clearly. In his hand the fellow still held the heavy iron bar which he had used to unscrew the filler cap. The weapon slashed up, and then came crashing down full on Dick's head.

A blaze of red-edged light seemed to split his brain. He felt himself staggering, and then dropping down. Through his mind flashed the thought that he must keep his senses, must shout, must warn the professor somehow not to start the engine. If it were started up, it would wreck itself irretrievably!

Dick struggled against the blackness that gripped him. Weakly, dazedly he struck out again. Then the iron bar smashed down a second time!

Dick pitched forward, and the man bent over him, turning him on his back and peering down into his face. Then he stepped to the door and looked out. There was no one in sight.

For a moment or so, the man stood undecided, then he bent over Dick and hoisted him up, pitched him across one shoulder, and started away for the wall which marked the boundary of the works.

At the foot of the wall he clambered to a pile of scrap-iron which stood there, and he pitched Dick up until he lay half across the top of the wall. The man climbed over, dragged Dick down, and trotted steadily with him along the lane to where the black shape of a car stood, all its lights out.

"Done it?" A man who stood by the car called the words softly through the darkness as the other approached. "Have you—— What the deuce have you got there?"

"Young Dick Barry—copped me in the shed just as I finished!" the man snarled. "Must ha' recognised me, too!"

"What the——" The other man broke off as he surveyed the boy's inert figure. "Wiped him over the nut, didn't you?" he asked callously. "What did you want to bring him for?"

"They'd find him, wouldn't they? Then they'd fetch him back to his senses, and he'd tell 'em I'd doped the engine!" the mechanic growled viciously. "Shove him in the car, and we'll dump him somewhere out on the moors!"

As he spoke, he pitched Dick on to the cushions at the back of the machine, then they both climbed in. The car started up and surged away with swiftly increasing speed—carrying with it the boy who alone could save the two-hundred-and-fifty-miles-an-hour machine from disaster!

(Thrills—thrills—and yet more thrills! Next week's roaring instalment abounds with them, and you'll enjoy every line of it. Look out, too, for the handsome Free Gift presented with every copy!)

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A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR.

The Talk of the Country!

BY this time you fellows have seen for yourselves what the coloured metal model of Malcolm Campbell's famous racer, "Blue Bird," given away with this issue, looks like, and I'll wager you are agreeably surprised. Now, of course, you're mighty keen to add Free Gift Number Three to your set—that goes without saying. Well, I must fall back on that old phrase, "Order your NELSON LEE in advance," for that is the only way to make sure of getting next week's remarkable Free Gift. You chaps will appreciate that, I know. The casual reader is apt to get left if he leaves his visit to the newsagent over till "to-morrow," for, with him, to-morrow is a long time coming. I'll say no more on that subject, as the great majority of you will safeguard yourselves against disappointment. Now next week's handsome metal model is, if anything, better than its predecessors. Most of you remember that very gallant gentleman, Mr. J. G. Parry Thomas, and how he set out in "Babs" on that last fatal ride to beat the world's record. That this glorious and plucky attempt ended in disaster is one of the biggest tragedies of recent years. "Babs," the car which was practically the product of his own brains, was reckoned in racing circles to be a world-beater. Now, alas, "Babs" is no more. But next week's metal model is a faithful reproduction of this historic speed car, and all readers of the NELSON LEE LIBRARY will agree, I feel sure, that this is a souvenir worth having.

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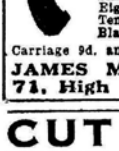
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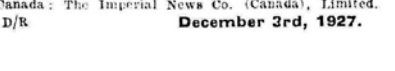
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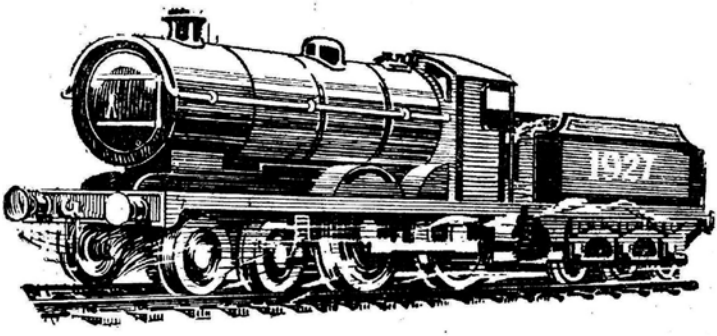
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