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SPOOFING THE RIVER HOUSE!

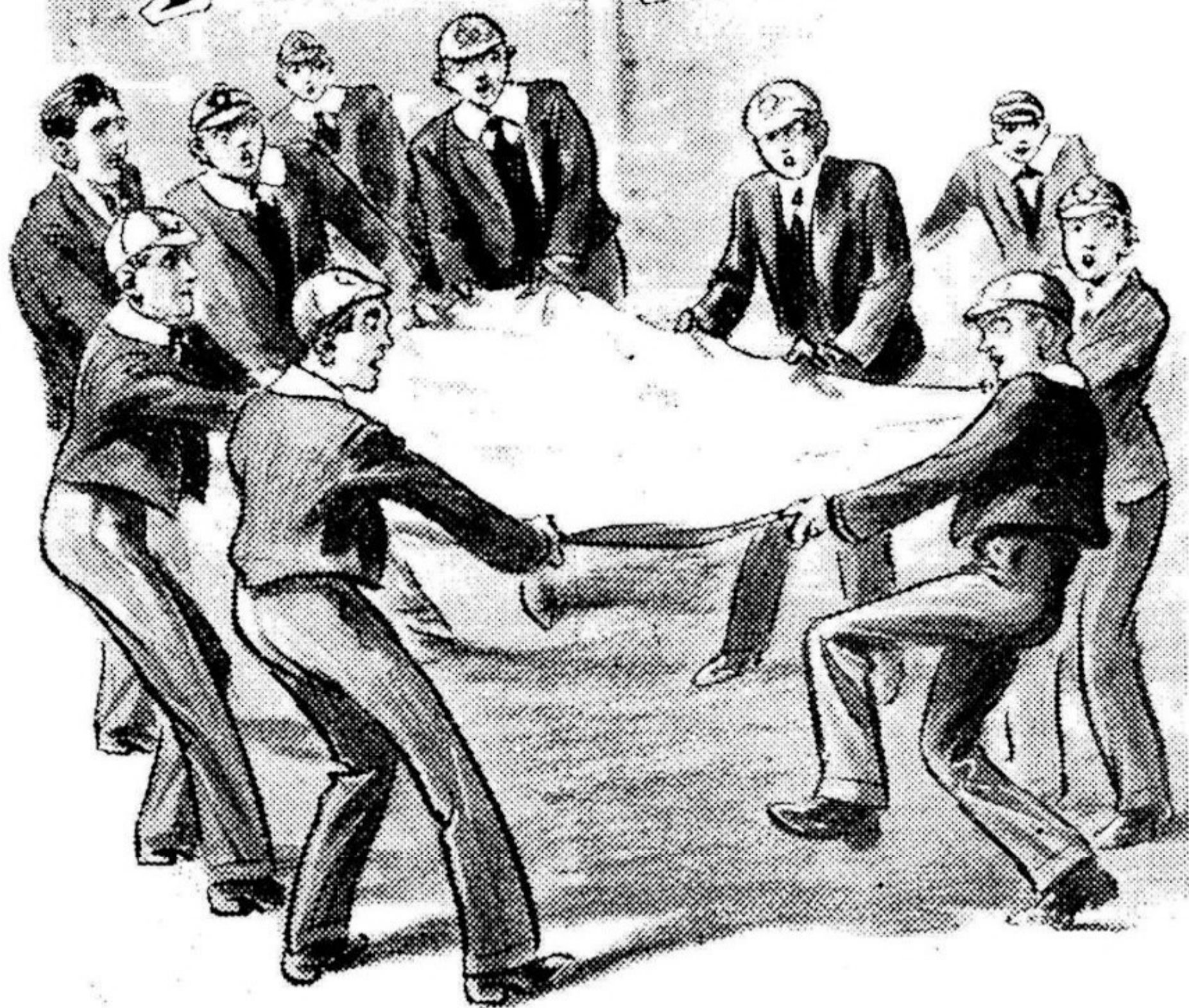
A side-splitting long complete yarn of schoolboy fun and adventure, featuring the cheery chums of St. Frank's.

New Series No. 176

OUT ON WEDNESDAY

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SPOOFING THE RIVER HOUSE!



By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS.

Meek and mild and inoffensive looked the new boy—or so thought Hal Brewster & Co. when they first arrived at the River House School for the new term. Little did they realise that they were being japed, japed “up to the eyes”; that the new boy was none other than Waldo, the Wonder Boy of the St. Frank’s Remove!

CHAPTER 1.

A Very Special Occasion!

“OUT of it, Archie!”
“Eh? I mean, what?”
“Get out of that couch and come along to the Common-room,” said Brent briskly.
“Absolutely imposs, laddie—”

"I'll give you just ten seconds!" interrupted Brent. "If you don't make a move by then, I'll grab you by the ears!"

"Good gad! Really, Alf, old scream——"

"One—two—three——"

"Odds life!" gasped Archie Glenthorne in dismay. "That is to say, odds ultimatums and edicts! You can't absolutely mean——"

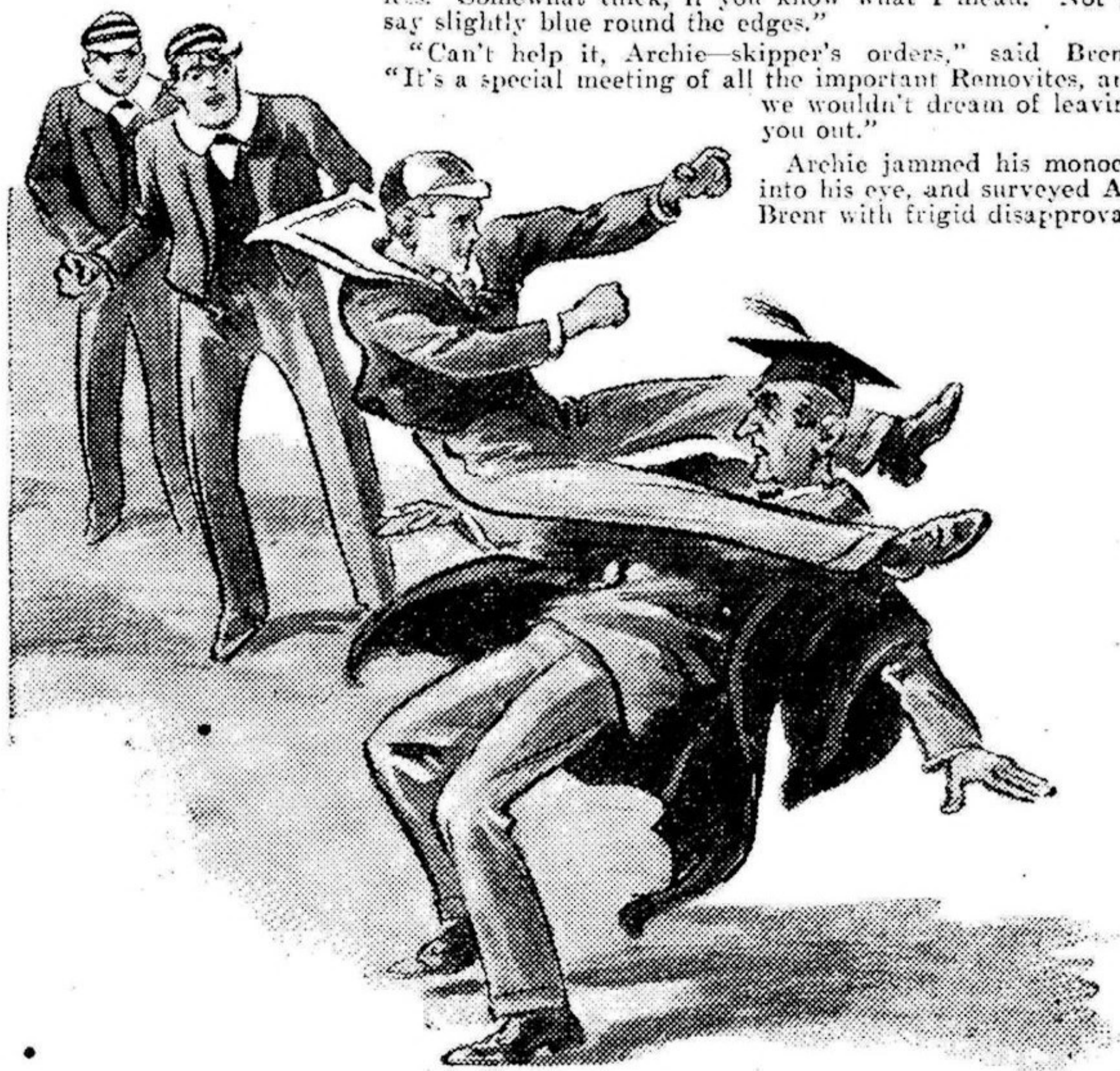
"Eight—nine—ten!" said Brent grimly. "Ready? I thought that would make you move, my son!"

Archibald Winston Derek Glenthorne, of the Remove at St. Frank's, gazed at his study-mate more in sadness than in anger. Alf Brent was a good sort. Incidentally, he was the son of Sir John Brent, who was the Chairman of the St. Frank's Board of Governors. Not that this relationship gave him the slightest prestige at the old school. He was just an ordinary Removite.

"Kindly allow me to remark, you frightful blighter, that this sort of thing is unnerving," said Archie coldly. "I mean, dashing into a chappie's study and digging him out when he's indulging in a spasm of the good old dreamless. Somewhat thick, if you know what I mean. Not to say slightly blue round the edges."

"Can't help it, Archie—skipper's orders," said Brent. "It's a special meeting of all the important Removites, and we wouldn't dream of leaving you out."

Archie jammed his monocle into his eye, and surveyed Alf Brent with frigid disapproval.



"Oh, I say!" he protested. "What rot! I mean, I'm not one of the important chappies of the Remove, dash you! Kindly trickle away and leave me in peace."

"We'll both trickle together," said Brent determinedly.

"Imposs, old horse!" declared Archie. "I mean, Phipps is coming presently——"

"Bother Phipps!"

"But, good gad, Phipps is my valet——"

"That doesn't make any difference."

"You don't understand," said Archie. "Phipps is coming along to display some new autumn suitings, and the young master will thereupon select—"

"The young master will get a dot on the nose unless he moves himself!" broke in Brent, losing patience. "Blow Phipps, and blow your silly autumn suitings! I tell you this is an important meeting—and your presence is necessary. Now are you coming quietly, or shall I empty the inkpot over your waistcoat?"

He reached towards the desk, and the way Archie leapt from the lounge was a certain indication that he was by no means as languid as he would have people believe.

"You frightful fright!" he ejaculated. "Leave that dashed inkpot alone! This waistcoat is one of the latest models—"

"Come along!" said Brent, linking his arm into Archie's.

"Well, of course, if you absolutely insist, I suppose I must resign myself," said Archie sadly. "At the same time, Alf, old cheese, I regard you as a blot on the dashed landscape!"

They went out of Study E, and presently they entered the Ancient House Common-room. As Brent had indicated, a meeting was in progress—a meeting of all the more important fellows in the Remove. Even Reggie Pitt and Jack Grey and Nick Trotwood and Castleton and a few other stalwarts had come over especially from the West House. Nipper, the genial Remove skipper, was there, with Tregellis-West and Watson, De Valerie, Fullwood, Travers, Potts, Gresham and a number of others.

"Here's two more," said Jimmy Potts, as Brent and Archie appeared. "Might as well be getting on with the business now, Nipper. You've kept us waiting long enough—"

"Handy isn't here yet," interrupted Nipper, looking round.

"Never mind about Handy," said Reggie Pitt. "He's not an important chap, anyhow—"

"What's that?" demanded an aggressive voice from the doorway. "By George! Did you hear what that fatheaded West House idiot said?"

Edward Oswald Handforth, of Study D, strode into the Junior Common-room—and Church and McClure were in close attendance. Handforth strode straight up to Reggie Pitt and planted an enormous fist under Reggie's nose.

"See that?" he demanded grimly.

"Take it away—it blots out the view!" said Reggie.

"It'll blot out your silly nose if you say I'm not an important chap!" snorted Handforth. "What are these West House wasters doing here, anyhow?"

Nipper sighed.

"My only hat!" he said. "Handy's only got to see a crowd and he thinks there's a fight on! Put your fists down, Handy, you chump! This is a peaceful gathering."

"It can't be peaceful with these West House fatheads in the room!" retorted Handforth promptly.

"Yes it can," said Nipper. "It's a Remove meeting. Not a full meeting—because the unimportant fellows aren't needed."

"The whole thing is a dashed frightful bore," said Archie Glenthorne complainingly. "I mean to say, there was I, indulging in forty of the best on the good old lounge, when Alf dashes in and ruins the good old tranquillity. And what for? I mean, I'm not interested in this dashed meeting."

"You will be soon, Archie," said Nipper patiently. "Now then, everybody, dry up! Give me a chance to speak! To-day, as you may know, is Tuesday—"

"Go hon!"

"Tuesday evening, to be exact," continued Nipper.

"Yes, and we ought to be outside practising footer," said Handforth, accusingly. "It isn't dark yet, and here you are, messing about in the Common-room instead of taking advantage of the daylight—"

"It's Tuesday evening, and to-morrow is a half-holiday," continued Nipper calmly, ignoring the interruption. "As you chaps know, our term started about a week ago, and we're now nicely shaken down. Everything is running smoothly. But in order to start the term really well we ought to get in a good smack at Brewster & Co., of the River House School."

"How can we do that?" asked Handforth, staring. "Brewster's crowd hasn't turned up yet. Term hasn't started at the River House."

"Term starts to-morrow," said Nipper.

"Lucky beggars, having a week more than us," said Reggie Pitt enviously. "I think we ought to do something about it, you chaps. Send a petition to the Head, or—"

"The River House School starts term to-morrow," went on Nipper. "It's some little time since we had the pleasure of japing those River House chaps—and here's the opportunity."

THERE was a general buzz, and everybody started talking at once. The prospect of japing Hal Brewster & Co., of the River House School, was certainly alluring. The River House boys were old rivals of the St. Frank's juniors, and as to-morrow was a half-holiday, the occasion would certainly be convenient.

"By George! He's right, you chaps," said Handforth eagerly. "It'll be just as well to put those River House fatheads in their proper places on their first day of term."

"Yes, rather!"

"Hear, hear!"

"You can leave it all to me," continued Handforth briskly. "I'll take the lead, and you can rely upon me to—"

"Make a mess of the whole thing!" interrupted Nipper. "Dry up, Handy! This is my wheeze. I'm the Remove skipper, and if

there's any leading to be done, I'll do it."

"Rot!" said Handforth warmly. "My idea is to ambush those River House chaps, and to slaughter them!"

"Trust Handy to think of something violent," said Vivian Travers, with a chuckle. "Well, well! The thing's settled, dear old fellows."

"As a general rule," continued Nipper, ignoring the interruptions, "it isn't good policy to give a new kid the honour of japing a rival school. But on this occasion I think we shall be justified —"

"A new kid?" broke in Handforth, staring.

"Exactly!"

"Do you mean that chap Waldo?"

"Yes."

"But what's he got to do with it?" demanded Handforth. "He's only been at St. Frank's a few days——"

"I know it," said Nipper, "and I've already said that in the exceptional circumstances we shall be justified in giving this honour to Waldo. He's the fellow who is going to jape the River House chaps tomorrow."

"Oh, is he?" growled Handforth. "And where do I come in?"

"Dry up, Handy!" grinned Reggie Pitt.

"By Jove! I'm beginning to spot the wheeze!"

ALL eyes were turned upon Stanley Waldo, the new boy in the Remove. He was smiling appreciatively, and he seemed to be duly impressed with the responsibility that was being thrust upon his shoulders. There was nothing special in his appearance; he seemed to be quite a normal schoolboy, sturdy, well-built, and clean-cut.

His face was frank and open; his eyes were blue, and his hair was inclined to be fair. Upon the whole, Stanley Waldo was a credit to the Remove.

He had only been at St. Frank's a few days—since the beginning of the new term—but in this short space of time he had firmly established himself, and he was already one of the most popular fellows in the Junior School.

WHO'S WHO AT ST. FRANK'S.



TOM BURTON

This cheery Removeite is popularly known as the "bo'sun." He is the best swimmer at St. Frank's, and last year succeeded in swimming the English Channel.

Most of the Removeites grinned joyously as they realised Nipper's game. Waldo was no ordinary junior. His looks belied his true characteristics.

As a matter of fact, he was the son of Rupert Waldo, the Peril Expert—the man who had once been world-notorious as Waldo, the Wonder Man, the crook who had baffled the police of two hemispheres.

But even at the height of his criminal career Rupert Waldo had always been an exceptional crook. He had been known to the police as a clean fighter, and he had made a practice of victimising men who were engaged in shady undertakings—men who were beyond the reach of the law. So although Rupert Waldo had had the police on his trail on many an occasion, the police had always

a sneaking regard for him.

Now, of course, he was established in sumptuous offices in the West End of London as "The Peril Expert." He was earning an honest living, and his present occupation was one that suited him down to the ground. In a way, he was a kind of detective—but a detective of a very special order. He only accepted commissions that involved peril and risk. Dangerous missions were the spice of life to him. And now he no longer feared the police. On the contrary, he worked with

them and for them, and he was an honoured and respected member of society.

So firmly, in fact, had he established himself as a man of honour that the St. Frank's governors had not hesitated to accept his son as a pupil. And Stanley Waldo was proud of his remarkable father.

What was more to the point, and what interested the Removites more than anything else, was the fact that young Waldo inherited most of his father's extraordinary qualities. During the past week at St. Frank's he had created something of a sensation.

For Stanley Waldo was possessed of really uncanny strength. All his faculties were several hundred per cent better than any ordinary human being's. His eyesight was almost unbelievably keen; his hearing was so acute that his ears could pick up sounds that were quite beyond the range of other ears. His sense of smell was astonishing. He was as agile as a monkey—he could climb the face of buildings with the ease of a fly. He was in all truth a phenomenon. All these extraordinary characteristics he had inherited from his father, who was truly a wonder man. There was something special in their composition—something which no doctors could rightly understand. They were both impervious to pain; indeed, they did not know the meaning of pain. Their staying powers were positively abnormal.

Yet in all other respects Young Waldo was just the same as any other schoolboy. His appetite was healthy, he was keen on games, he was always ready for a jape, and he was moderate to good in the class-room. He hated to be regarded as a freak or a monstrosity, and nothing pleased him better than to be treated in exactly the same way as any ordinary new boy.

But this, after all, was impossible.

Young Waldo was a Wonder Boy—just the same as his father was a Wonder Man—and it was inevitable that he should be regarded in a special light. And here, it seemed, was an opportunity for him to bring into use those powers which were so peculiarly his.

CHAPTER 2.

Ready for the Fray!

"Of course," said Handforth, "I'm ready to admit that Waldo is something special in new kids. He's different—he's a regular caution. Still, when it comes to japing the River House chaps, I don't see why he should have all the limelight."

"It's a chance that won't occur again," said Nipper. "We either take advantage of it now or it's gone for good. You see, Hal Brewster and his pals don't know anything about Waldo. They've never met him, never seen him, don't even know that he's here at St. Frank's."

"What's that got to do with it?" asked Fullwood.

"Everything," replied Nipper. "Brewster & Co. don't even know that this new chap is—well, peculiar."

"Am I peculiar?" asked Waldo, pained.

"Only in the sense that you're a bit of a marvel," replied Nipper. "Once these River House chaps get to know the truth about you we shan't be able to pull their legs. But supposing Brewster & Co. arrive at the River House to-morrow afternoon and find you there?"

"Find me there?" repeated Waldo.

"Exactly!" said Nipper. "Suppose they find you there, wearing one of their school caps, and looking about as meek as a rabbit?"

"You're dotty!" said Handforth. "How the dickens can Brewster & Co. find Waldo there? He's a St. Frank's chap."

"But Brewster & Co. don't know it—yet," said Nipper. "I'm suggesting that he should masquerade as a new River House kid—and Brewster's crowd will find him there when they arrive. I can leave you to imagine what will happen when he starts letting off the fireworks."

"By George!" said Handforth. "That's not a bad idea, either. Fireworks, you know. We can let off a few cannon-crackers and squibs——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I didn't mean real fireworks, you ass!" grinned Nipper.

"Eh? But you said——"

"I meant his own fireworks," continued Nipper with a chuckle. "Waldo doesn't need any gunpowder when he's full of dynamite of his own particular brand. Being a new kid here, the River House chaps won't suspect a thing. They'll accept him as one of their own new boys, and then he'll proceed to spoof them up to the eyes. Later, of course, we'll blow the gaff, and then we'll have our laugh. It ought to put Brewster in his place for quite a time."

"H'm! It's not a bad stunt," admitted Handforth grudgingly. "I dare say the new chap will be able to work it off pretty well. But there's one drawback."

"You mean, we shan't be there to see the fun?" asked Reggie Pitt.

"Yes," said Handforth.

"There's no reason why we shouldn't be there," replied Nipper. "We can go over to give the River House chaps a welcome, and we can easily pretend that we don't know anything about the new kid. How will Brewster & Co. guess that he's really one of us? Of course, we can't take any part in the actual jape, but we can be on the spot to see it. And then, when matters come to a head, we can join in. Anyhow, I think it's worth fixing up. It's a chance that won't come again."

And the others, after a very brief discussion, decided that Nipper was right. They knew how Waldo had surprised them, even after they had been aware of his identity. What would the surprise of

Brewster & Co. be like when Waldo sprang his bombshells?

The prospect was undoubtedly joyous.

THERE wasn't much plotting during the evening. It was felt that the whole matter could safely be left in the capable hands of Stanley Waldo. There was really no sense in making a lot of plans in advance. The new boy would use his own judgment, and spring his surprises as the opportunities arose. To make all sorts of advance plans would only be a waste of time.

Even Handforth was obliged to admit that this wheeze was "the goods." Yet he felt that the whole thing was wrong. Stanley Waldo was only a new kid, and it was like his cheek to jape the River House fellows entirely on his own. Handforth considered that he ought to take a hand in the affair somehow, but when he was asked what kind of a hand he could take he was stumped. This was essentially a job for Waldo to tackle alone.

After morning lessons the next day Nipper made a point of ringing up the River House School, and he was gratified when he got into touch with Mr. Marshall.

Brewster & Co. were known as the "Commoners" at their school. As a matter of fact, they were all the decent fellows, and they boarded in Marshall's house. There was another set at the River House School in Mr. Wragg's house, and these were known as the "Honourables." They were led by the Hon. Aubrey de Vere Wellborne, one of the most priceless snobs breathing.

Nipper got all the information he wanted out of Mr. Marshall. The bulk of the fellows, it seemed, would arrive on the mid-afternoon train. A few boys had arrived, but as yet the school was quiet.

"As it's a half-holiday, sir, we thought we'd like to come over and give your chaps a welcome," said Nipper innocently.

"By all means, Hamilton—by all means!" replied Mr. Marshall. "I like to see this spirit. I—er—trust that there will be no scenes of violence, however. I seem to remember that there is a spirit of rivalry—"

"Violence, sir?" said Nipper, in tones of astonishment. "But surely, sir, you can't think that we would do anything violent in the grounds of your school? It would be too risky. I mean, perish the thought, sir!"

"It would indeed be rash, Hamilton, if you came here with any thought of a—er—rag," said Mr. Marshall mildly. "But if you come in a spirit of friendliness you will be sure of a hearty welcome."

"Why, Hal Brewster is one of my best friends, sir," replied Nipper truthfully. "Of course we shall come in a spirit of friendliness. You've got my word on that, sir."

"Splendid!" came the Housemaster's voice.

"Many new boys this term, sir?" asked Nipper casually.

"Quite a few, I believe," said Mr. Marshall. "Yes, we shall have a bigger number

than ever this term. One or two of the new boys have already arrived, and no doubt some of the others will turn up during the afternoon. Don't forget to look me up when you come over, Hamilton; I shall be pleased to see you."

"Thank you, sir," said Nipper.

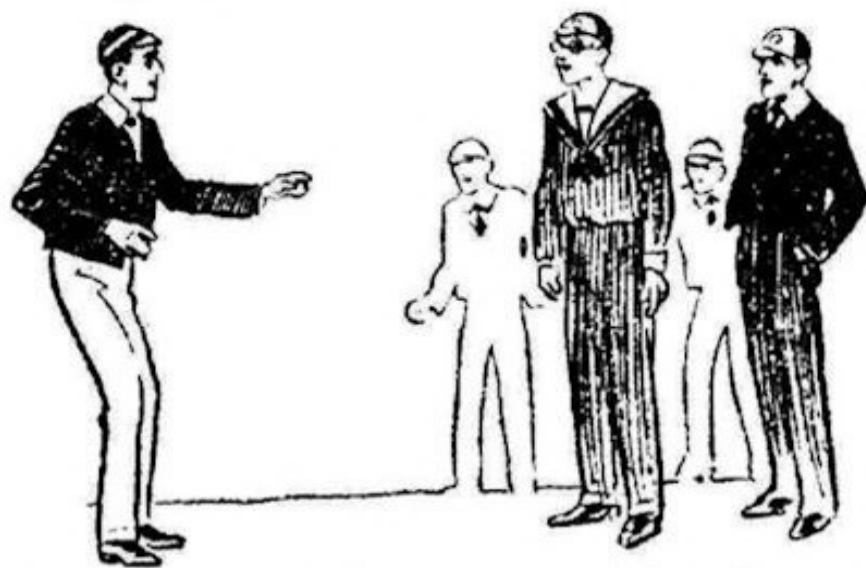
And he rang off, quite satisfied. He had been perfectly truthful when he had assured Mr. Marshall that he and his chums would go over to the River House School in a spirit of friendliness. He had not thought it necessary to add that a jape was considered to be—by St. Frank's fellows and River House fellows alike—a perfectly friendly form of amusement.

"Well?" asked a chorus of juniors, when Nipper emerged from the telephone box in the Junior Common-room.

"It's all serene," said Nipper. "I had a word with Mr. Marshall, and he says that the bulk of the fellows aren't arriving until the mid-afternoon train. And there is quite a number of new chaps this term, too."

"Good egg!" said Handforth. "That's what we wanted to know. With luck, Waldo will be able to wander about the River House School, and he won't be bothered by a lot of awkward questions."

AFTER the midday meal, Stanley Waldo had occasion to run down to Bellton, and in order to reach the village it was necessary for him to pass the White Harp Inn. There was plenty of time yet; for it would be risky for him to venture within the grounds of the River House School so early. The idea was for him to get there only a few minutes before Brewster & Co. were due. They would thus find him there, and jump to the obvious conclusion that he was a new fellow for the River House.



Stanley, of course, was overjoyed at the prospect, and he felt duly honoured by this responsibility which had been thrust upon his shoulders. He had hardly expected to achieve such prominence after only one week at St. Frank's. Indeed, he felt that he was being unduly privileged, and he wasn't quite comfortable about it.

"That's him—that's the kid!"

As he was passing the White Harp, he heard a whisper from one of the upper windows. It was only a soft whisper, and it was certainly not intended for his ears. Any

normal fellow could not have understood those words; but Waldo was different. He heard them quite distinctly, but he took not the slightest notice. He walked on just as though he knew nothing.

Out of the corner of his eye, however, he had caught a glimpse of two figures, vague and indistinct, behind the curtains of one of the inn's upper windows. And he rather wondered why anybody should be pointing him out in this way. It made him rather thoughtful, for the White Harp was a disreputable establishment. He concluded that he had been pointed out because he was already something of a celebrity in the neighbourhood.

But behind those curtains there was a man with an evil, vindictive light in his eyes. He was a small, wiry man, and his expression had become almost a snarl as he watched Stanley Waldo go by.

"You're a fool, Sam Wilkes," said the man who was with him. "I've said it from the first, and I say it again. You're a fool for stayin' here, risking recapture—"

"It's no good, Jim," said Sam Wilkes. "Fool or not, I'm stayin' here—until I've got even with that boy."

Jim Newton shook his head.

"It's a marvel to me that you're still safe, Sam," he said. "If it wasn't for the fact that Porlock is a friend o' mine, it couldn't have been done."

"He doesn't know who I am," growled the other.

"Maybe not—but Porlock, as the landlord of this inn, has a pretty keen idea that you ain't an ordinary gentleman o' leisure," said Jim Newton grimly. "He knows you're lyin' low—and, like as not, he guesses who you are, too."

"Well, he's a pal o' yours, an' he won't split, will he?"

"Not likely," said Newton. "All the same, I'm darned if I can see your game, Jim. That kid that just passed handed you over to the p'lice, didn't he?"

It seemed an incredible statement, but Sam Wilkes' muttered curse was eloquent enough. It was a fact that Waldo had encountered Wilkes on the new St. Frank's Golf Links, and he had captured him single-handed, and had given him in charge. For Wilkes was an escaped convict—and even now the police were on the look out for him.

"That kid's got the strength of a dozen men!" snarled Wilkes. "You don't understand it, Jim—an' you never will understand until you've had his grip on you, like I 'ave."

"But what are you kickin' about?" asked Jim Newton. "You got away from the police, didn't you? An' instead o' clearing right off, when you might be safe, you stick here in the very district—"

"I'm safer 'ere than anywhere else," interrupted Wilkes shrewdly. "The cops reckon that I've cleared right out, an' there's no hue-and-cry in this district now. I've bin lyin' low in this inn for nearly a week, an'

before long—as soon as my moustache has got a bit bigger—it'll be safe for me to go out. Ordinarily, I would 'ave done my best to get away; but as soon as I recognised that kid, I made up my mind to stop. And stop I will, Jim—until I've got 'im where I want 'im!"

"So as to git your own back on his father, eh?"

"Yes—on his father!" panted Sam Wilkes, his eyes gleaming wickedly. "It was Waldo who got me convicted. Two year ago that was—two years I've bin in that blamed prison! An' Waldo was the man who put me away—Waldo, the bloke who used to be a crook 'imself! I've always sworn that I'd git even, an' I ain't the kind o' man to say things I don't mean! Well, 'ere's my chance—an' I ain't goin' to lose it. My game is to git at Waldo through 'is son—see? I'll git even, too!"

"You're enough to scare a feller, Sam," protested the other. "You ain't goin' to croak the kid, are you? You must be mad. You'll swing for it—"

"I won't swing!" interrupted Wilkes savagely. "No, I'm not such a fool as to 'out' the kid. There's a better way than that. You wait, Jim. I know wot I'm goin' to do—an' when my chance comes, I'll git level with Waldo. I'm a patient bloke, an' I won't be in no 'urry. I'll just 'ang round this district, waitin' an' watchin'. See?"

"No, I'm blowed if I can see!" said Jim Newton. "What can you do by 'angin' round an' waitin' an' watchin'? Catch the kid on his own one night, perhaps, an' give 'im a crack on the 'ead! That's a fat lot o' good!"

Wilkes' eyes were burning.

"Givin' 'im a crack on the 'ead won't satisfy me," he replied. "It's goin' to be somethin' bigger than that, Jim—somethin' that'll ruin 'im—somethin' that'll ruin 'is father, too! Before Waldo put the cops on to me—before I was arrested an' convicted—I was gettin' along nicely. Everythin' was smooth."

"Five years you got, didn't you—for robbery with violence?"

"Yes, an' it was on'y by accident that Waldo spotted me!" snapped Wilkes. "It was over in Kennington, an' I was on a big job with some pals o' mine at a leather ware-house. The night watchman gave us a bit o' trouble, an' I had to 'attend' to 'im—an' Waldo 'eard the fool groanin'. That's what's did me, Jim. Just when I was gettin' on so well, too! This feller, Waldo, steps in an' grabs me an' 'ands me over—Just like his blamed son!" he added fiercely. "Strong? They ain't 'uman!"

"You'd best go easy, Sam," said the other dubiously.

"I'm goin' easy all right," retorted Sam Wilkes. "I know who I'm up against now—an' I ain't takin' no chances. But I'll git that kid before I've done. Just you wait!"



"Instead of messing about in the Common-room we ought to be having footer practice," said Handforth, accusingly. Nipper smiled coolly as he replied: "To-morrow is a half holiday—and it's the first day of term for the River House School. I suggest we start the term really well for them by having a smack at Hal Brewster. In other words, my lads, we're going to jape the River House chaps as they've never been japed before!"

CHAPTER 3.

Waldo on the Job!

"HALLO! Who's this?"

Hal Brewster, the cheery leader of the Fourth Form at the River House School, asked that question as he strode into the quad, with Dave Ascott and Georgie Glynn, his two chums of Study No. 1.

These three Fourth-Formers were the leaders of the Commoners, and they were healthy, clean-limbed young fellows. Driscoll and Buller and Pringle, of Study No. 5, were with them. Crowds of others, including such stalwarts as Lang and Mason and Kingswood were coming along. Most of the Commoners had arrived at Bellton by the mid-afternoon train, and now they were entering the school.

"Funny-looking object!" said Ascott, staring. "Must be a new kid."

"Lots of new kids this term, I understand," remarked Glynn. "I hear that there are six or seven for the Fourth—and quite a number for the other Forms, too. The old River House is looking up, my sons!"

They gave their attention to the peculiar-looking specimen which was on view in the quad. He was a normal-sized schoolboy, pale-faced, anæmic-looking, and remarkably meek in expression. He wore glasses, and—

worst of all—he was attired in a modified edition of a child's sailor suit. True, the suit had ordinary-looking trousers, but it was impossible to get away from the fact that the other part of the costume was composed of a sort of blouse, with a fancy collar. On this youngster's head there was a brand-new River House cap.

"We'd better go and have a word with that poor chap," said Hal Brewster grimly. "The sooner we can smuggle him indoors, the better. He mustn't display himself in public in that ghastly suit!"

"Just what I was thinking," said Kingswood of Study No. 2. "The chap looks awful. Why do parents send their sons to school in this sort of get-up? I vote we take that chap behind some trees, pull his suit off, and burn it!"

"Hear, hear!"

"No; let's give him a chance," said Brewster good-naturedly. "He looks a harmless sort of chump, anyhow, and we don't want to scare him too much."

They advanced upon the offender. They had come to the conclusion, without a second's hesitation, that Waldo was a new boy for the River House School. And Waldo himself was extremely gratified by the early success of his game.

Nobody had questioned him; nobody had taken the slightest notice of him until now.

Some of the juniors had stared at him, some had laughed, but he had been left severely alone. Even the seniors had ignored him, and best of all, a master had passed within a few yards and had not even paused to give him a word of greeting.

The fact was, there were so many new boys at the River House School this term that they were dotted about all over the place. The masters had their own work to get on with, and the prefects were not likely to round up the new kids unless they received strict orders to do so.

Thus it was that Waldo had, so far, escaped any kind of interrogation. He had casually strolled into the quad about ten minutes earlier. At that time he had worn a sailor cap to match his suit. But venturing indoors—into Marshall's House—he had coolly appropriated a brand-new cap from one of the hooks in the lobby.

LOST something, kid?" asked Hal Brewster in a friendly way, as he halted in front of Waldo.

"Eh? Oh, I beg your pardon, were you speaking to me?" asked Waldo nervously. "Please, I don't think I've lost anything, thank you."

"My hat!" said Ascott blankly.

He couldn't help gazing at the new boy in pity. There was something so nervous, so scared-looking about him. When Brewster had addressed him he had jumped about a foot into the air, and his eyes, behind their spectacles, were alight with apprehension.

"No need to be nervous, my son," said Brewster. "You're a new kid, I suppose?"

"I—I think so, please," said Waldo. "I only arrived a little while ago."

"Which House do you belong to?"

"That one, I think, if you don't mind," said Waldo, indicating Marshall's House.

"Ye gods and little fishes!" said Kingswood. "This—this dummy is in our House, you chaps! Fancy him being in Marshall's! What are we coming to?"

"If you please, I didn't ask to be put into any House," said Waldo tremulously. "I don't think I even want to be at this school."

"That's nothing new," said Brewster. "New kids generally hate their school when they first arrive. You'll shake down in time, old man. What's your name?"

"Stanley, please."

"Stanley what?"

"My name is Stanley, if you don't mind."

"Oh, I see—your surname is Stanley?" said Brewster, nodding. "Well, Stanley, I'm the captain of the Junior School. My name's Brewster."

"Yes, Bruiser, thank you," said Waldo gratefully.

"Not Bruiser, you fathead!" said Hal, turning red. "Brewster!"

"Oh, I see!" panted the new boy. "Thank you, Bruiser—I mean, Brewster. I'm afraid I'm not very good at names."

"What Form are you in, my child?" asked Glynn kindly.

"The Fourth Form, please, I think, thank you."

"My hat! He's in the Fourth, too!" ejaculated Ascott. "What have we done to deserve this? And how about this suit of his? What shall we do?"

"Never mind his suit now," said Brewster with a chuckle. "We don't want to rag him as soon as we get here. But if he puts that suit on to-morrow morning we'll tear it in shreds and then burn it. Give the chap a chance."

"He looks too helpless to live," said Glynn pityingly. "I've seen a few new kids in my time, but he takes the biscuit. He won't shake down until he's been here about a couple of years!"

"Don't you believe it," said Brewster. "It's amazing how quickly they come out of their shell. Do you like it here, Stanley?"

"No," said Waldo.

"Oh! You don't like it?"

"I think it's awful," said Waldo. "It isn't a nice school at all."

This, to say the least, was a tactless thing for a new boy to say. Waldo found himself being glared at by the whole knot of Fourth-Formers.

"Oh!" said Glynn ominously. "It's not a nice school?"

"Please, I don't want to offend you, but I think it's an awful hole of a place," said Waldo meekly.

"Great Scott!"

"I suppose you're used to it and you don't notice much," continued Waldo, turning his innocent gaze from junior to junior; "but, you see, I'm fresh."

"You're too beastly fresh!" said Ascott warmly.

"I mean, I'm new here, and so I can see the place as it really is," continued Waldo, with such engaging mildness that it was rather difficult to get angry with him. "But isn't it a bit of a joke to call it a school?"

"A joke?" said Brewster.

"I mean, please, that it's more like a factory than a school," said Waldo, vaguely indicating the buildings with a wave of his hand. "Everything is so drab and dingy. When I first came here—I mean, when I arrived a little while ago—I rather wondered if they had sent me to Borstal by mistake."

"Borstal!" yelled the Fourth-Formers. "But Borstal is a school for—"

"Yes, I know," said Waldo, blinking.

"And now that I've seen so many of you boys I'm still wondering if this isn't Borstal."

"Grab him!" said Kingswood hotly. "By Jove! What are we going to do, you chaps? Let's bump him—"

"Easy—easy!" interrupted Brewster. "The poor kid doesn't know any better. Look at him. Shaking like a jelly. He's scared."

"Please, I think it must be your faces," said Waldo.

"Our faces?" roared Glynn.

"I—I mean, strange faces always make me nervous," said the new boy confusedly. "I

don't mean to be personal about your faces, of course, but they're such unusual faces."

"Oh, are they?" said Norton. "What's wrong with my face, anyhow?"

"I don't know, I'm sure," said Waldo, looking at it intently. "But couldn't you see a doctor about it?"

There were many chuckles, and Norton went red.

"Why should I go to a doctor about my face?" he yelled.

"Perhaps it would be better if you saw a plumber," faltered the meek-looking new boy.

"A plumber!" howled Norton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I mean, it seems to need some repairs," said Waldo. "Oh, dear! I hope I haven't hurt your feelings! But I've always been taught to be truthful, and when I see a face like yours

"Dry up about my face!" hooted Norton. "And what the dickens do you other chaps mean by standing there and cackling? Are we going to stand this from a new kid? He's deliberately insulting me!"

"Rats!" said Brewster. "He's a bit nervous, that's all. You can't help your face, Norton—"

"Can't you leave my face alone?" babbled Norton, red with indignation. "As for this new kid, I'll—I'll—"

"Hallo! St. Frank's chaps!" sang out somebody suddenly. "Look out for squalls, you fellows!"

Attention was immediately diverted from Waldo. A crowd of St. Frank's juniors had appeared in the gateway, and they were waving cheerily. Brewster & Co. automatically assumed fighting attitudes, but after the first moment or so they felt reassured. These visitors did not look at all aggressive.

"EVERYTHING'S all serene, my sons," murmured Nipper, as he and the other Removites entered the quad. "Waldo's on the job."

"And, dear old fellow, judging by the excitement, he seems to be doing well," murmured Vivian Travers. "I rather think we shall be in plenty of time to see the real fun."

"Rather!" said Handforth enthusiastically. "Just you wait until he starts some of his stunts—"

"Cheese it, Handy!" murmured Church in alarm. "Not so loud!"

"Eh? If you say I'm loud, Walter Church, I'll biff you on the nose!" roared Handforth. "You needn't think that I shall give the game away—"

"Gag him, for goodness' sake!" said Nipper urgently.

Fortunately, the River House fellows were making so much noise on their own account that Edward Oswald Handforth's voice was not heard; at least, his words were not distinguishable.

And then, a moment later, Brewster & Co. were crowding round and everybody was shouting at once, so the situation was saved.



Madly the bike hurtled down the steep hill—completely out of control. Desperately Betty Barlowe hung on, but the Moor View girl realised that disaster was inevitable—unless something really remarkable happened.

And, had she but known it, something really remarkable *was* to happen.

This is only one of the many thrilling incidents in next week's stunning yarn entitled:

"WALDO'S FOE!"

HEADING FOR DISASTER!

CHAPTER 4.

The Fun Commences!

"PAX, you fellows!" said Hal Brewster good-naturedly.

"Pax be blown!" grinned Nipper. "You're not afraid of us, are you? You don't think we'll start any funny business in the enemy's camp, surely?"

"You'd better not try!" replied Hal, as he shook hands. "Any rot from you Saints, and you'll get biffed out on your giddy necks!"

"We're safe enough," said Nipper. "You can't start a

scrap in the middle of your own quad. And why talk about scrapping, anyhow? We've just come along to give you a welcome. Glad to see you back again."

"Thanks!" said Brewster. "You St. Frank's chaps had better look out for squalls this term. We're going to be on the warpath in earnest!"

"Who cares?" asked Handforth, indifferently. "You don't think that we're scared of you silly River House asses, do you?"

"Cheese it!" grinned Kingswood. "I suppose you St. Frank's fellows are pretty well shaken down now, aren't you?"

"Oh, we're nicely settled, thanks!" said Nipper. "And as it was a half-holiday to-day, and there was no football fixture arranged, we thought we'd come over to give you fellows a treat."

"We're most awfully obliged!" said Ascott sarcastically.

"We knew you would be, dear old fellow," nodded Travers, in a kindly voice. "Nothing pleases us better than to distribute our favours."

"Ass!" said five or six River House chaps, in one voice.

"Pardon the good old interruption, ladies!" said Archie Glenthorpe. "I'm frightfully sorry to butt in and all that, but I'm dashed intrigued. I mean to say, do you mind telling me what this dashed thing is?"

He jammed his monocle into his eye and gazed searchingly at Stanley Waldo—who was hovering nearby, looking mild and innocent and harmless.

"That?" said Brewster. "Oh, that's Stanley!"

"Stanley?" repeated Archie. "Oh, I see what you mean! His name is Stanley? Is that all?"

"He may be Dick Stanley, or Tom Stanley, or Harry Stanley," replied Brewster. "Personally, I'm not particularly interested. It doesn't do to show an interest in a new kid."

"A new kid, eh?" said Handforth, looking at Waldo as though he were some quaint zoological specimen. "I wondered what was the matter with him."

It was evident that Waldo had only given his Christian name to these River House fellows, and they had mistaken it for his surname. Well, perhaps it was just as well.

"Be good enough to take it away!" said Archie, with a shiver. "Good gad! You can't absolutely mean to assure me that you are willing to let this—this mistake remain on public view?"

"He's a River House chap!" said Brewster coldly.

"And you Saints had better not run him down!" added Kingswood, in a warlike manner.

They thought little enough of "the new kid," but they accepted him as one of themselves, and it was therefore necessary for them to rally round him.

"Oh, rather!" said Archie. "I mean, of course! At the same time, old tomatoes, this chappie rather worries me. I've seen a few weird sights in my time, but I'm dashed if I've ever seen anything quite so weird as this! Odds horrors and sights! That suit of his——"

"He hasn't had time to change into Etons yet," growled Brewster. "Leave the kid alone!"

"Oh, well, he's yours—and you're welcome to him," said Nipper indifferently. "We're not going to touch him, so you can be perfectly content. As a matter of fact, we're rather particular about who we have at St. Frank's."

"You silly ass——"

"St. Frank's!" interrupted Waldo, walking meekly forward. "Pardon the interruption, please, but do I understand that you boys come from St. Frank's College?"

"We do," said Handforth, staring. "What about it?"

"Ah, how I wish my dear father and mother had sent me to St. Frank's instead of to this dreadful school," said Waldo sadly. "I am afraid I shall never be happy here!"

"You'll never be free from pain—if you say things like that!" declared Hal Brewster, with a glare. "What do you mean—'this dreadful school'?"

"Please don't think that I intend anything offensive," said Waldo nervously, "but you will all be ready to admit that St. Frank's is a much better school than this——"

"Rats!"

"Not likely!"

"We don't admit it!"

"Oh, but how can you say this?" asked Waldo, gazing round at the circle of indignant River House juniors. "I have heard so much about St. Frank's; I know it to be a school of wonderful renown. This—this collection of crude bricks and mortar cannot be mentioned in the same breath."

"Hear, hear!" said Handforth heartily. "By George! This new kid of yours, Brewster, knows what he's talking about!"

"A dashed sensible chappie, what?" beamed Archie.

"He's a babbling idiot!" roared Littlewood, of Study No. 8. "I say, you chaps, are we going to let this new kid ramble on like this? He ought to be bumped!"

"Good egg!" said Palmer. "Let's bump him!"

"Hold on!" said Brewster. "I don't think he quite realises what he's saying. He's so harmless——"

"Harmless or not, he ought to be slaughtered!" argued Littlewood.

"Slaughtering a lamb is not my idea of fair play," said Brewster; "and if ever I saw a lamb, I'm seeing one now. Stanley, my child, you'd better run away while you're still safe. Go into a corner somewhere, and play with your rattle!"

"But I haven't a rattle," said Waldo, looking mildly astonished. "Dear me, how remarkable! I knew, of course, that you River House boys were fond of simple games, but I did not know that you played with rattles!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the St. Frank's juniors.

"We don't play with rattles!" yelled Ascott. "Brewster was telling you to play with yours!"

"You are a strange lot of boys, and I greatly fear that I shall be unhappy in this school!" said Waldo plaintively. "Everything is so crude—including the inhabitants of this place. I am so dreadfully sorry that my people did not send me to St. Frank's. It is so much better there."

"Why, you—you——"

"You have only to look at these boys to see what I mean," continued Waldo, indicating Nipper and Handforth and the others. "What splendid examples of sturdy boyhood!"

(Continued on page 14.)



JAPES THAT DIDN'T!

*An amusing article specially written
for the Old Paper by*

NIPPER

EVEN the most carefully-planned japes are liable to become unstuck. Take that affairs of two days ago, for example.

We—that is to say, Handforth & Co., Fullwood, Tregellis-West, Watson and a few others, including myself—had planned to jape Gore-Pearce. Or, rather, we intended it to be more than a jape; we wanted it to be a lesson to him, for Claude had been acting like a real bad lad.

We did take action—by fixing up a pail of whitewash over the door of his study. The whitewash, let me add, was of the thick variety, and also contained a special mixture that I had concocted for the occasion in the lab. This mixture was of a very pungent nature, guaranteed to turn anybody green who got his nose within a yard of it.

I myself had worn a gas-mask when preparing the stuff!

Collaring a fag, we sent him to Gore-Pearce—who was out in the Triangle—with a message that he was wanted in his study urgently.

Straight into the Ancient House went the unsuspecting Claude. Standing nonchalantly on the steps, we watched in high glee. And then came the catastrophe. The Head appeared in sight—and to our horror we saw he was walking directly towards Study A—the fateful study.

Consternation! I gasped out a hasty, almost strangled warning, but it was too late. Dr. Nicholls heeded not. He walked right into the study and—swoosh!

The booby trap had worked only too effectively. Dr. Nicholls was a mass of sticky whitewash. The corridor was filled with an appalling odour—

I shall not go into subsequent details. Needless to say, they are painful ones.

LIONEL CORCORAN, of the Fourth, recently told me of an amusing incident. During breakfast in Big Hall, Merrell poured some salt into Armstrong's tea while the latter was not looking

Corcoran himself happened to spot the dodge, however, and he promptly exchanged Armstrong's specially-treated cup of tea with that of Mr. Pycraft! Corcoran is a rather reckless individual, and he has a rooted objection to Mr. Pycraft.

Of course, there was a terrific hullabaloo when the sour-faced, bad-tempered master of the Fourth came to drink his tea. Merrell hadn't spotted Corcoran's audacious move, and he nearly had a fit when he realised that Mr. Pycraft had got hold of Armstrong's "special" tea. The Form-master also nearly had a fit. Merrell well and truly got it "in the neck." And since then he has been very careful when carrying out his ill-natured jokes.

I WELL remember an instance last summer when a japer himself was japed.

Hal Brewster, of the River House School, had had prepared a huge hamper which was sent to Bellton Station, addressed to Archie Glenthorne. Actually this hamper contained nothing but straw and bricks. By the same train a real, genuine hamper arrived for Hal Brewster himself. It was only a small affair, and paled into insignificance, so to speak, when compared with the huge basket of "food" for Archie.

One of the River House fellows happened to be on the station when these two hampers arrived, and, knowing nothing of the intended jape, he changed the labels! For here, he thought, was an excellent opportunity to kill two birds with one stone, as it were. Hal Brewster would now get a hamper over twice the size of his own, and at the same time it would be a great joke against St. Frank's.

Thus, when we St. Frank's fellows arrived to collect Archie's hamper we took the small one, leaving the big one for Hal Brewster, who arrived soon afterwards. Great was his dismay when he discovered that his jape had sprung a leak. We St. Frank's fellows had got away with a basket of perfectly good tuck, while Hal himself was left with his own choice selection of bricks! Poor old Hal!

SPOOFING THE RIVER HOUSE!

(Continued from page 12.)

And here, on the other hand, we have these uncouth, misshapen, untidy wretches!"

And he gazed at Kingswood and Robinson and Ascott and some of the others.

"By Jove!" said Kingswood thickly. "Are you going to stand any more of this, Brewster? This new kid is deliberately insulting us!"

"He doesn't know any better!" protested Brewster. "The poor innocent——"

"Oh, but I am not so simple as all that!" interrupted Waldo, shaking his head. "Am I doing anything wrong in stating my opinion? Is it not obvious that St. Frank's is a much better school than the River House?"

He was deliberately attempting to goad the River House fellows into action, and he had expected definite results long before this. However, he was quite content to carry on until the breaking point arrived. Waldo was thoroughly enjoying himself—and, incidentally, so were the other Removites. This scene was most entertaining.

"I've heard so much about St. Frank's," continued Waldo mildly. "Is it not a well-known fact that the St. Frank's boys are enterprising and energetic and brainy? It is sad for me to say this—especially when I remember the kind of cap that I am wearing."

They all looked at his River House cap, and there was an ominous hush.

"But truth is truth," said Waldo, sadly shaking his head. "We all know that these St. Frank's boys have eclipsed us. We, of the River House, are a poor collection by comparison. We cannot hope to equal our rivals. And so you can judge of my mental anguish when I realise what I am missing by belonging to this awful place instead of St. Frank's."

HAL BREWSTER held up his hand as the big crowd of River House Fourth-Formers pressed round.

"Hold on!" he said grimly. "I've heard enough! This new kid is going to get it in the neck!"

"I should think so!" said Kingswood excitedly. "The cheeky young idiot! Running us down like this—in front of these St. Frank's chaps, too!"

"He ought to be slaughtered on the spot!" said Pringle.

"Oh, cheese it!" put in Nipper, in a shocked voice. "Be fair, you know! This new kid is only telling the truth."

"What!" thundered a dozen voices.

"Of course, you don't like to admit it—but it's the truest thing I've heard," continued Nipper. "Good luck to Stanley, or whatever his name is! He knows! To any impartial judge it's as clear as daylight that you River House chaps are a collection of mouldy fat-heads!"

"I did not like to use that term, but I must admit that it is singularly apt," said Waldo gently.

"He's calling us mouldy fatheads now!" howled Kingswood.

They were in a fever of indignation. At first they had been inclined to "go easy" with this meek-looking new boy, but his frank expressions of opinion had robbed them of all their kindness. The looks they now bestowed upon him were positively dangerous. His offence was tremendously exaggerated by the fact that he was giving utterance to his views in the hearing of a crowd of St. Frank's chaps. It was this circumstance, in fact, which caused Hal Brewster to make up his mind.

"Let's bump the lunatic!" said Ascott wrathfully.

"Hear, hear!"

"No!" said Brewster. "Bumping is too good for him! Look here, there's a tarpaulin lying in the courtyard, just behind Wragg's House. Go and fetch it, somebody, and bring it here. We'll toss this merchant, and after that he'll probably change his opinions."

"Indeed, I shall not!" said Waldo. "If you dare to—to toss me, I shall have all my worst fears confirmed. Help! Oh dear! I am afraid that these rough boys are going to hurt me!"

"These rough boys are going to do something worse than that," said Kingswood darkly. "You hopeless young idiot! You babbling ass! We'll show you what we do with new kids who get too nervy!"

Handforth turned aside with a snort.

"I'm ashamed of you all!" he said sternly. "By George! And I always thought that you River House chaps were sportsmen!"

"What do you mean?" demanded Glynn.

"Why, this new kid of yours has simply been telling the truth—and you know it!" retorted Handforth. "And because he has the courage—or the innocence—to say what he thinks, you're going to slaughter him! You know jolly well that St. Frank's is miles ahead of the River House—and you know jolly well, too, that you fellows are the under-dogs. St. Frank's has always led the way, and it always will!"

"Yah! Rats!"

"You Saints keep out of this!"

"Go back to your own silly school—before we chuck you out!"

The River House fellows were thoroughly indignant, and they were excited, too. And Waldo, with every indication of distress, ran up to Nipper & Co.

"Save me!" he pleaded. "These—these rough boys mean to hurt me! Oh, please save me!"

"Sorry, old chap—can't be done," said Nipper, shaking his head. "If we butted in we should only make things worse. We're only visitors here, you know, and we couldn't dream of interfering. If you didn't mean what you've just said you shouldn't have——"

"Oh, but I did mean it!" said Young Waldo stoutly. "Indeed, I am more than ever convinced that these River House boys are uncouth and rough."

"That's done it!" said Hal grimly. "I was going to give the kid a chance to apologise—but he's a hopeless case. I hate treating him roughly—he looks so helpless—but he's got to have these foolish ideas knocked out of his head. Where's that tarpaulin?"

The tarpaulin had arrived, triumphantly rushed up by Kingswood and Buller and Pringle, of Study No. 5. It was immediately grabbed by the whole crowd of River House boys, and it was spread out on the ground.

"Oh dear!" babbled Waldo. "What ever are they going to do with me?"

"You'll soon find out, old man," said Nipper gently. "And, somehow, I don't think it will be particularly pleasant."

He and the other St. Frank's fellows stood back to watch the fun. So far, Stanley Waldo had only been egging on the River House chaps. He had given Brewster & Co. the impression that he was a harmless, helpless simpleton.

The time was rapidly approaching when they would be disillusioned!

CHAPTER 5.

Surprising the Natives!

"**N**OW then—all together!" sang out Hal Brewster.

With one accord his supporters hoisted the tarpaulin. There were about two dozen of the River House fellows round that great sheet, and they operated it with ease.

Waldo had been pitched into the centre, and now, as the tarpaulin was hoisted up and stretched taut, he bounced about on it like a hot pea in a frying-pan.

"Oh, I say! Oh dear!" he wailed. "I shall be quite sore after this. I was afraid that you boys would be dreadful—and now I know it."

"One—two—three—up with him!" roared Brewster.

The tarpaulin was lowered, and then it was sent heaving upwards with terrific effect. Waldo shot into the air, his arms and legs flying wildly. He descended into the tarpaulin with a thud, only to be sent shooting skywards again. This time he went up about fifteen feet.

Any ordinary fellow might have been a bit scared; but Waldo was thoroughly enjoying himself. This sort of treatment didn't hurt him in the least. He was so curiously constituted that even if he sustained a bruise he was unaware of it. He was just like a piece of india-rubber. In exactly the same way as his famous father, he had never known the meaning of pain. There was something constitutionally different about him—something which the greatest medical

specialists had never been able to explain.

"Disgraceful!" said Handforth loudly. "So this is what we came here for, is it? To witness this exhibition of brutality! We don't treat our new kids in this way!"

"There's no telling what these River House chaps will do," said Nipper, shaking his head. "They're a funny lot!"

Brewster, who heard the words, gritted his teeth.

"Hold on a minute!" he growled. "Now then, Stanley. Are you sorry for what you've said? Do you acknowledge that the River House School is the best school in the world?"

Waldo, sitting in the middle of the tarpaulin, blinked defiantly.

"How can I acknowledge such an obvious falsehood?" he asked breathlessly. "You have proved to me that this school is far worse than I had ever imagined it to be—and, goodness knows, I thought it was bad enough!"

"Give him another toss!" said Brewster relentlessly.

Up went Waldo again—soaring high—tossed with tremendous effect.

"Let's give him an extra high one this time!" panted Kingswood. "Let's send him up to the giddy sky! Come on, you fellows! One—two—three—"

"Stop!" commanded an unpleasant, high-pitched voice.

"Cave!" gasped Driscoll. "It's old Wragg!"

UNFORTUNATELY, the bulk of the fellows had just got to the critical moment when Mr. Wragg's voice interrupted. They were, in fact, giving the final heave which would send Waldo shooting up into the air.

Most of the juniors performed that final effort; but a few didn't. And the consequences were startlingly disastrous.

Mr. Bernard Wragg, the master of the Fourth Form—and, incidentally, the House-master of Wragg's House—had come perilously near to the scene of action. He arrived just as Waldo was sent shooting into the air.

But as some of the fellows had failed to give that final heave, Waldo went up at a tangent. Thus, instead of falling back into the tarpaulin, he was shot out sideways, very much like a stone from a catapult.

"Look out!" yelled somebody.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Wragg. "How dare you—"

Crash!



He got no further, for at that moment Stanley Waldo came hurtling down from the air. Having failed to fall into the tarpaulin, he had landed fairly and squarely upon Mr. Bernard Wragg!

If he had rehearsed the thing a dozen times he could not have done it more neatly. His legs shot over Mr. Wragg's shoulders, and he sat on Mr. Wragg's chest. And the unfortunate master, being totally unprepared for any such happening, sat down on the hard ground with a jar which shook every bone in his body. Waldo, too, went sprawling, and any other fellow in similar circumstances would have been considerably hurt.

"Oh, my hat!" breathed Hal Brewster.

There was a hush amongst the others—a tense, horrified hush. But it was only for a moment. Some of the fellows bolted; others ran to Mr. Wragg and tried to help him to his feet. Brewster gave all his attention to Waldo.

"I say, old man, that was an accident, you know!" he said earnestly. "We didn't mean to toss you——"

"I am prepared to accept your word," said Waldo coldly. "But I still think that you and your schoolfellows are uncouth and rough."

"Aren't you hurt?"

"Fortunately, no."

"You hit the ground an awful smash——"

"Brewster!" groaned Mr. Wragg. "Come here at once! How dare you attend to that boy while I am here, half-killed?"

"He hit the ground harder than you did, sir——"

"I tell you I am half-killed!" groaned Mr. Wragg. "Help me to my feet. You—you unmitigated young rascal! You shall pay dearly for this—this outrage!"

"It was an accident, sir——"

"How dare you tell me it was an accident when I saw you deliberately tossing this boy!" roared Mr. Wragg, who seemed to be recovering with remarkable speed. "Oh, my back! My legs! My arms! My chest! I am dreadfully hurt!"

He wailed and moaned, and no doubt he was really considerably bruised. The St. Frank's fellows were standing some little distance off, watching with interest and keen enjoyment.

They had never hoped for anything quite so delicious as this. Mr. Bernard Wragg was a most unpopular master. He was a thin-faced, scraggy-looking man, with a hatchet-like face. He was ill-tempered, under-sized, and acid-tongued. His favourites were Wellborne & Co., the snobs who were known as the Honourables. For Brewster & Co. he had always shown a marked antipathy.

"Well, I'm jolly glad to see Wragg getting it in the neck," said Handforth. "But what about our chap? He came an awful cropper——"

"Easy, old man!" urged Church. "Not so loud, you know!"

"But Waldo——"

"He's not hurt; he doesn't know the meaning of pain," put in McClure. "Have you forgotten that he's just like his father?"

"By George!" said Handforth. "He's been acting his part so well that I'd almost forgotten. Good man. I hope he keeps it up!"

Mr. Wragg was still shouting and wailing, and at this moment a new figure arrived on the scene. He was a comparative stranger to the St. Frank's fellows. He was a big, burly youth, with a mop of untidy hair. In fact, he was one of Mr. Wragg's prefects—and he looked it.

"Ah, Wilmore, I am glad you have come!" greeted Mr. Wragg. "Seize this boy! Take him to my study. I desire to question him. When I came out here he was being tossed by these other boys. I must get to the bottom of this disgraceful affair. As for these others, I will deal with them later, when I have obtained the full details."

And Mr. Wragg hobbled indoors, realising perhaps that he was not cutting a very dignified figure. He needed a little time in which to recover.

"SO you're a new kid, are you?" asked Wilmore unpleasantly.

"Yes, please, sir."

"And you've been assaulting Mr. Wragg?" went on the prefect. "That's a fine thing to do, on your first day in the school!"

"But I didn't—really, I didn't!" protested Waldo. "I fell upon the gentleman quite by accident——"

"That's true, Wilmore," said Brewster. "It wasn't the kid's fault. We were tossing him, and some of the fellows heaved too hard, or not hard enough. Anyhow, he shot off at a tangent and landed on old Wragg's shoulders. You needn't grab the kid like that."

"I'll grab him in any way I please!" retorted Wilmore. "You youngsters are going to get into hot water over this, I can tell you. Wragg is in a pretty vile temper. As for this new kid, he'll probably be swished."

"Have I not had enough rough treatment?" complained Waldo. "Dear me! I feared this would happen to me if I came to this dreadful school. It seems that the prefects are just as bad as the other boys. They are brutal and uncouth——"

"Are you calling me brutal and uncouth?" interrupted Wilmore, with a start.

"Indeed, I am!" retorted Waldo, with spirit. "Release me at once, you—you bully!"

"Bravo, kid!" said Brewster. "That's the way. You let him go, Wilmore——"

"Oh, yes! I'll let him go!" snapped Wilmore curtly. "The silly young fool. Before he moves a yard from this spot he's going to apologise. I'm a bully, am I?"

He proceeded to twist Waldo's arm, and the arm responded in quite a normal way.



Without any effort Waldo lifted the struggling River House prefect above his head. "Stop!" shrieked Wilmore. "If you drop me into this ditch—" But his protests were in vain and he found himself hovering over the muddiest part of the very muddy ditch!

So far, Waldo was not exerting any of his stupendous strength. He was leading Wilmore on.

"Oh, please!" he wailed, in pretended pain.

"Am I a bully?" demanded the prefect threateningly.

"You are not only a bully, but you are a hooligan!" said Waldo. "And if you don't release me at once I'll pick you up and drop you into that ditch on the other side of the quad."

"Oh, my hat!" said Brewster in alarm. "The young idiot has done for himself now!"

Nipper and Handforth and the other St. Frank's chaps inwardly chuckled with glee. They had heard Waldo's words, and they knew that Waldo was about to put that threat of his into practice. He could do it, too. The real joy of this scene was at hand.

Wilmore stared at his captive in fury.

"By gad!" he ejaculated. "So I'm a hooligan, am I? And you'll chuck me in the ditch? Why, you silly young infant, I'll tan the hide off you for that!"

He was furious. This new kid was a mere weakling, a hopeless-looking duffer, pale-faced, and as meek as a rabbit. For a junior of this sort to cheek him in front of a crowd of others was a crime of the very worst description. Wilmore decided that he would teach this youngster a lesson that he would remember for the whole term.

"Come on!" he said harshly. "Indoors!"

"I don't want to go indoors, thank you," said Waldo.

"You don't want to!" roared Wilmore. "Do you think I care what you want? You're coming. Now then—march!"

He proceeded to twist Waldo's arm more, but somehow it refused to twist. It had ceased to be an ordinary human arm, and had become a sort of steel rod, which grew rigid and tense in Wilmore's grip.

"Why, what the deuce—" began the prefect.

"Leave him alone, Wilmore, you bully!" said Brewster hotly. "You may be a prefect, and I shall probably get it in the neck for speaking like this, but I don't care. Leave that kid alone!"

"You don't like this prefect, do you?" asked Waldo, glancing at Brewster.

"Like him?" said the Junior skipper. "If he was in our House we'd smother him!"

"Oh, well, in that case I shall feel quite happy in dropping him into the ditch!" said Waldo coolly. "He's a most unpleasant fellow, and I really think he ought to be taught a lesson."

And Waldo exerted that uncanny strength of his. With one heave he lifted Wilmore clean off his feet and held him in a grip which was like that of a steel vice!

CHAPTER 6.

A Few Fireworks!

"GOOD gad!"

"My only sainted aunt!"

"Well I'm jiggered!"

Even the St. Frank's juniors were surprised, for Waldo had heaved Wilmore off his feet with such supreme ease and non-chalance.

But if they were surprised, Brewster & Co. were dumbfounded. They felt that this thing was impossible. That meek-looking new kid, that hopeless duffer—lifting the hulking Wilmore as though he were a mere featherweight!

"Look!" gasped Kingswood, rubbing his eyes. "He's lifted Wilmore clean off the ground. Am I dreaming, or what?"

"It's impossible!" ejaculated Driscoll, aghast.

"We'd better stand by," said Hal Brewster. "The kid's got pluck, but he'll be slaughtered for this. When Wilmore gets started—Good gracious! Look at that. The kid's uncanny!"

Waldo, without a falter, was walking across the quad. He did not stagger, as a fellow of his size might under such a load. He walked quite normally, with active strides. And Wilmore, the prefect, was struggling in his grip without the slightest effect.

"Hi! Let me go!" howled Wilmore. "Good heavens! What the thunder—Help! Let me go, confound you!"

"Certainly not!" said Waldo, in that same meek voice of his. "Why should I let you go? You're a bully and a hooligan, and you deserve to be ducked in the ditch. I really think you need cooling off, Wilmore. I don't like you in the least."

Wilmore kicked and struggled and shouted and gasped. He was more amazed than any of the onlookers. For he was in the grip of this astounding new boy, and he could feel the abnormal strength that was secreted in those ordinary-looking muscles.

"Hi! Brewster—Driscoll—Kingswood!" hooted Wilmore. "Help! Drag this young demon away!"

"My only Sunday topper!" said Brewster faintly. "It's a fact, you chaps! Wilmore can't get away. He's helpless. This new kid is holding him as though he were a giddy earwig. I've never seen anything so marvellous in all my life!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A ripple of laughter went round the quad. The amazed juniors were getting over the first shock, and they were beginning to appreciate the delightful humour of the situation. This mild-looking new boy was carrying the bully of Wragg's House across the quad like a child! It was not only gratifying, but stupefying. Brewster & Co. did not dream of lending a hand. Wilmore wasn't one of their jolly fellows, anyhow, and it was refreshing

enough to see him in trouble. He was, probably, the most unpopular senior in the River House School.

"Let me go!" screamed Wilmore desperately. "You—you young fool! If you don't let me go, I'll—I'll——"

"What will you do?" asked Waldo calmly. "Ah, here's the ditch! A splendid-looking ditch, too! Now, I wonder which is the muddiest spot?"

Again the River House juniors rubbed their eyes in amazement. The more Wilmore struggled, the cooler Waldo became. He did not seem to be in the least troubled by the writhings of his victim.

He had reached the other side of the quad by now, and here, where the playing-fields were divided by a hedge, there was a deep ditch. The ditch, owing to a recent spell of bad weather, was half-filled with muddy-looking water.

"Stop!" babbled Wilmore. "If you drop me here, you young hound——"

"Not here," interrupted Stanley Waldo. "Just a little farther along, I think—it's muddier."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good for you, kid!"

"By jingo, this new chap is a wonder!"

"Yes, this will do nicely," said Waldo, as he inspected the ditch. "Now, Wilmore, I'm not going to say I hate doing this, because I like doing it. Any prefect who twists a junior's arm, thinking that the junior is helpless, is a cad. This time you've made a little mistake, though. Would you like to go in head first, or feet first?"

"You—you—you——"

"Head first?" said Waldo coolly. "Just as you like!"

"Hi! Stop!" shrieked Wilmore. "If you drop me into this ditch——"

Wilmore was unable to get any further, for at that moment Waldo dropped him into the ditch. He dropped him very neatly, heaving him outwards with a sudden thrusting movement. And, sure enough, the prefect plunged into that muddy water head first. He floundered for a moment, there was a great splashing of water, and then Wilmore vanished under the murky surface.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Grab him, you chaps!" said Brewster. "We've made a mistake about this new kid! He's a marvel! We can forgive him for running the school down!"

"Yes, rather!" said Kingswood. "How the dickens did he do it?"

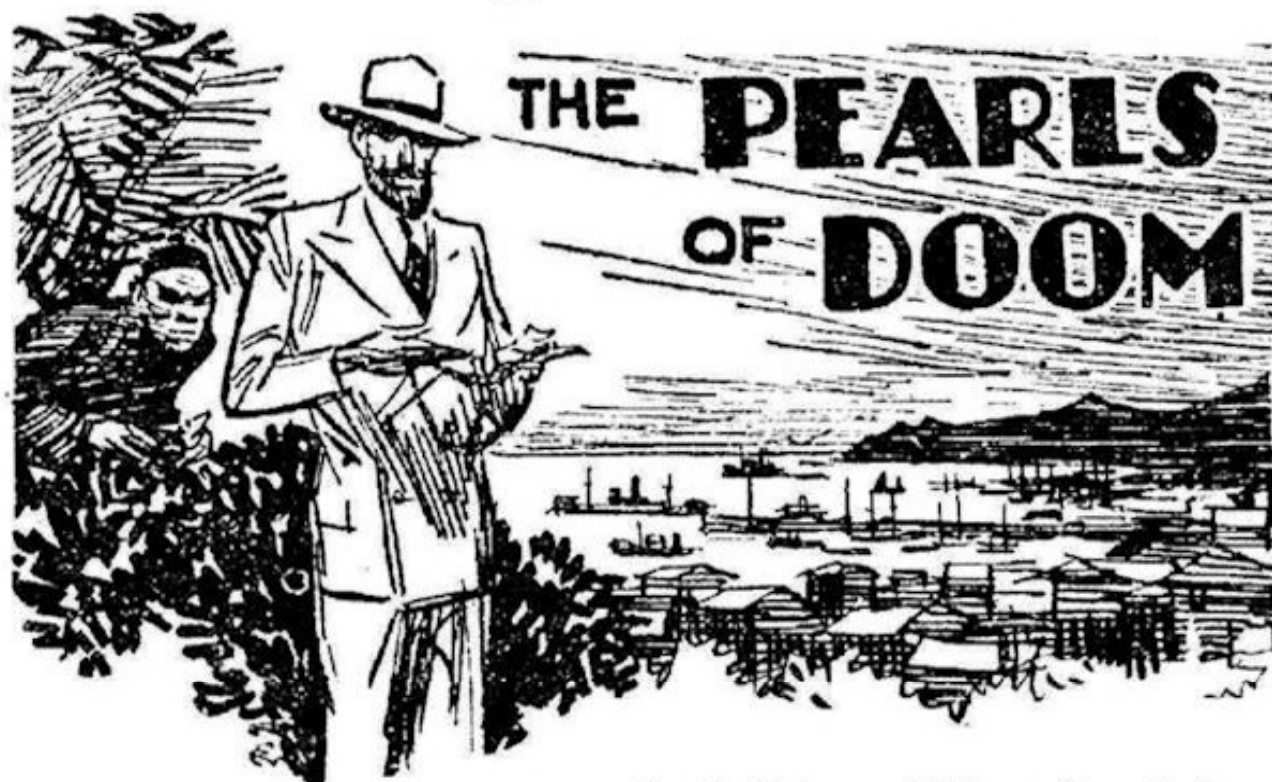
And they made a rush for Waldo.

"WELL, I don't think much of it!" commented Handforth, frowning.

"There's no pleasing you, Handy," said Church. "What are you grumbling at? He's doing fine!"

"I'll admit that it was a good stunt to chuck that beastly prefect into the ditch," said Handforth, "but why didn't he chuck Brewster into the ditch, too? And Driscoll and Kingswood and one or two of those

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others? This is a St. Frank's jape, and we ought to show these River House fellows——"

"Give him time, Handy," interrupted Nipper. "He's only just started—and it was a good wheeze to start with Wilmore."

"He couldn't have started with anybody better," remarked Reggie Pitt. "These asses are nearly dotty with excitement and amazement already—— Hallo! Who's this? Looks like trouble!"

"Cave!"

Pitt was evidently right, for the cry of "Cave" went up almost at once. Two other prefects had come into sight, running up with unexpected speed. They had seen the disaster to Wilmore, and now they were hot on Waldo's track.

"Oh, my hat!" said Brewster, glancing round. "Parsons and Bishop! It's a pity they couldn't keep out of it!"

The two prefects—Parsons and Bishop—arrived just as Wilmore was struggling out of the pond. He presented an appalling spectacle, for he had practically disappeared under a liberal coating of black mud. He was

making horrible grunting and wheezing noises as he tried to scramble up the bank and regain the level ground of the quad.

"Is anything the matter?" asked Waldo, as the two prefects grasped him.

"You dangerous young idiot!" said Parsons hotly. "I don't know how on earth you pitched Wilmore into that ditch, but Bishop and I saw you doing it. You'd better come with us!"

"But I don't want to come with you, thanks," said Waldo.

"You don't want to!" snorted Bishop. "Of all the nerve! Who is this kid, anyhow?"

"Please, my name is Stanley, and I'm quite new," said Waldo. "Never came here until to-day——"

"Well, you seem to have started badly," said Parsons. "It's a serious offence to assault a prefect. You'll be lucky if you're not sacked on your very first day. Come along. We're going to take you indoors."

"Must I really go indoors?" asked the St. Frank's spoofer.

"Yes, you must!"

"Then I'd rather go indoors first—without you fellows," said Waldo. "I don't quite like the look of you. You're not so bad as Wilmore, but somehow you don't seem friendly."

The two prefects seized him, grasping him firmly by the arms.

"Hold him tight!" advised Parsons. "He's dangerous."

"Call yourselves prefects?" jeered Kingswood. "My hat! It takes two of you to hold a mere new kid! Aren't you brave?"

"That's enough!" snapped Parsons. "I don't want any cheek from you, Kingswood!"

"Why can't you let the chap go?" asked Kingswood. "He hasn't done you any harm."

"It's all right," said Waldo. "I don't like these prefects, and I'm not going indoors with them. I don't approve of them at all."

Slowly and deliberately he disengaged himself. He exerted his strength, and Parsons and Bishop were amazed to find that all their efforts were useless. This startling new boy freed himself within a space of five seconds. Their grips were forced aside, and Waldo nipped lightly out of their reach.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Parsons. "I can't understand——"

"Here, we'd better grab him!" said Bishop anxiously. "We can't allow him to defy us like this!"

"If it's all the same to you, I think I'll go indoors," said Waldo coolly.

He started walking off, and the two prefects dashed at him. In the same moment he broke into a run.

"Hi!" roared Bishop. "Hold still, confound you!"

Then he stared in bewilderment—and all the other fellows in the quad stared, too. For Waldo streaked into Marshall's House like a human hare. His speed was bewildering. He seemed to skim over the ground; he took the steps in one stride and was gone from view!

CHAPTER 7.

Positively Amazing!

"GREAT Scott!"

"He's gone!"

"Never saw anything so quick in my life!"



The quad was filled with shouts, and Parsons and Bishop, after their first spasm of bewilderment, went dashing into Marshall's House in full pursuit. They had forgotten all about the unfortunate Wilmore. This new kid had defied them openly, and it was up to them to bring him to book. If they failed, their prestige would be for ever destroyed.

When Waldo got indoors he hesitated a moment, and then dashed upstairs. He was thoroughly enjoying himself. And he was glad that Nipper and Handforth and Travers and the other St. Frank's fellows were on the spot to share the fun with him.

Half-way up the stairs, he paused, and now he walked sedately. Footsteps had sounded along the upper corridor, and a moment later a group of seniors appeared. At the same moment Parsons and Bishop came hurtling in from the quad.

"There he is!" panted Parsons.

"I say, you fellows—stop that kid!" urged Bishop. "Don't let him get past you! We want him!"

"Does it take two of you to grab a mere junior?" asked one of the seniors, staring. "He's a new kid, isn't he? What's he done?"

"Never mind what he's done!" snapped Parsons. "Grab him—and be pretty careful, because he's as slippery as an eel! And he's got the strength of a giant!"

"Oh, draw it mild!" protested one of the seniors.

Waldo was caught between two fires. The two prefects were speeding up the stairs towards him, and the group of seniors completely barred the way farther up. Not that this remarkable youngster was in any way ruffled.

"Excuse me," he said mildly.

He grasped one of the seniors by the arm, and the senior stared.

"Keep your paws off me, kid!" he said coldly. "If you think I'm going to move——"

"But I want to get by," interrupted Waldo.

"Oh, do you?" roared the senior. "Well, you're not going to get by!"

"No?" murmured Waldo sweetly. "Somehow I think I am!"

He exerted that strength of his, and the senior was not only filled with amazement, but consternation, too. He suddenly felt himself yanked forward and he completely lost his balance. He went hurtling down the stairs, howling with alarm. And as Parsons and Bishop were practically on the spot at the same moment the senior collided with them with terrific force.

They all three went down the stairs in a wild, yelling heap. They went bumping down, falling head over heels. The other seniors, further up the staircase, watched in stupefied amazement.

"You don't mind if I get by, do you?" asked Waldo smoothly.

The seniors looked at him dazedly.

"We'd better grab him!" said one. "I don't know how he pitched Evans downstairs like that, but it must have been a fluke. Evans wasn't ready."

"But we are!" said one of the others.

Waldo didn't think it necessary to try conclusions with these seniors. He lightly swung himself over the banisters, got a foothold on the outer edge of the stairs, and then

THE ST. FRANK'S QUESTIONNAIRE!

Here are twelve testers for you, chums—questions which refer to St. Frank's and its members. Give them the "once-over," jot down the answers to those which you know, and then compare them with the correct list which will be given, together with another set of questions, next week.

- | | |
|---|--|
| <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What are Archie Glenthorne's full Christian names? 2. What is the name of the South African boy in the Fourth? 3. What is the name of the little island in the middle of the River Stowe, near St. Frank's, and what is there on this island which is particularly interesting? 4. Who are the occupants of Study E in the Ancient House? 5. What is the West House Junior Common-room telephone number? 6. What is the name of the restaurant in Bannington generally patronised by the St. Frank's juniors? 7. Where is the Blue Crusaders' ground situated, and what is it called? 8. Who is the Housemaster of the Modern House? 9. Which Moor View School girl is Nipper's particular chum? | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 10. What is the profession of William Napoleon Browne's father? 11. What is the name of the big town about twenty miles from St. Frank's? 12. What is the name of the bargeowner who is friendly with the St. Frank's boys, and who is often seen up and down the Stowe? |
|---|--|

ANSWERS TO LAST WEEK'S QUESTIONS

1. Bertie Onions and Johnny Onions. 2. Tessa Love. 3. Just about a mile across the meadows, but a good deal farther by road. 4. Shingle Head. 5. Simon Kenmore. 6. Edward Oswald Handforth, Walter Church, and Arnold McClure. 7. Bannington 75. 8. The White Harp Inn. 9. Jonas Porlock. 10. James. 11. Charlie (Boomerang) Bangs and Jerrold Dodd. 12. Marjorie Temple.

heaved himself upwards and outwards. He soared as though he had concealed springs in his shoe soles. Without any apparent effort he grasped the balustrade at the top of the landing, then leisurely pulled himself over. It had all happened within the space of about two seconds—before the group of seniors could even guess at his intention. Now he was beyond them.

"Great guns!" ejaculated one of the seniors. "Did—did you see that?"

"He can't be human; he must be a monkey!" gasped one of the others.

Waldo gave one glance down; he saw Parsons and Bishop and Evans extricating themselves at the bottom of the stairs. He saw the other seniors preparing to rush at him. With a chuckle he dodged along a wide corridor.

As he knew, this corridor was a blind one. There was no outlet, except by a window at the end. He had already strolled over Marshall's House, in order to get the lie of the land.

"We've got him!" shouted one of his pursuers. "He can't get out of here!"

The window at the end was wide open, Waldo having opened it himself in readiness for this very situation. He reached the window and turned his back to it, as though at bay.

THAT window overlooked the quad, and as soon as Waldo appeared a big shout went up. Everybody could see him there. His back was towards them, and he was obviously hard pressed.

"They've got him, poor kid!" said Brewster. "Why on earth did he go into that corridor? He's trapped now!"

"Hard lines!" said Kingswood.

Considering that they had been the leaders in the recent tossing business, they had certainly changed their tone. The new boy's method of dealing with Wilmore had completely won him the support of the Fourth-Formers.

"What's the chump going to do now?" muttered Handforth, as he watched. "He's dished himself! He can't do anything at that window!"

"There's no telling what Waldo can do!" replied Nipper in a low voice. "But we can be certain of one thing."

"What's that?"

"That he'll give us another surprise," said Nipper confidently.

By this time Parsons and Bishop and Evans had sorted themselves out, and they had joined in the chase. Waldo found himself faced by a regular battalion of angry seniors.

"We mustn't take any chances with this kid!" snorted Parsons, as he advanced. "By gad! He's a regular young demon! He's clucked Wilmore into the ditch, and he's thrown us downstairs."

"It's all piffle!" said Evans ho'lly. "He's only a kid, and a weak-looking kid at that. Come on, let's grab him!"

Waldo took in the situation.

Strong as he was, he knew that he could not withstand the combined onrush of all these seniors. But there was a perfectly



"Poof!" said Mr. Wragg contemptuously as he took hold of Waldo's hand. "There's nothing abnormal about this boy!" And then he broke off suddenly. An expression of pain distorted his face, and at the same moment he gave vent to a wild shriek of agony.

simple move for him to make. He glanced out of the open window and grinned.

"Well, so-long!" he said cheerily.

"Hi! Stop!" gasped Parsons. "You'll break your neck if you jump out of that window, you young fool! It's a long way to the ground——"

"Of two evils, choose the lesser," said Waldo coolly.

The seniors made a rush at him, but before they could get anywhere near him he spun round, leapt upon the window-sill, and jumped into space!

"O H!"

"He's mad; he'll kill himself!"

A number of startled yells went up from the quad as Waldo's move was seen. Everybody stood stock-still, dumb-founded.

A dignified figure appeared round an angle of the building at that moment. Mr. Austin Marshall had arrived on the scene, just in time to see Waldo's leap.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated the Housemaster, aghast.

He and everybody else expected to see this new boy crash over and lie groaning. But they saw something quite different. Waldo hit the ground cleanly with both feet, and as he landed he seemed to roll himself into a ball. Then he shot forward, rolling along the ground with incredible agility. The force of his fall had been completely broken, and he was for all the world like a piece of indiarubber.

He suddenly came out of his ball-like condition, and as he ceased rolling he rose leisurely to his feet and proceeded to dust himself down.

"Well, I'm jiggered!"

"Ye gods and little fishes!"

"He hasn't hurt himself!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Waldo looked up and yawned.

"Don't we have any tea in this place?" he asked mildly.

It was the last kind of remark that anybody could have expected. The seniors at the upper window wondered if they were dreaming. All the juniors in the quad shook themselves and found it impossible to get over their bewilderment. Only Nipper & Co. were supremely calm.

"My boy—my unfortunate boy!" shouted Mr. Marshall, running forward. "You must have hurt yourself very severely!"

Stanley Waldo smiled and shook his head.

"It's all right, sir," he said. "No need to worry——"

"You are hurt!" insisted Mr. Marshall. "You *must* be hurt! No boy could fall from

that window as you did without being severely bruised. Very possibly you are internally injured. Good heavens! I am amazed that you should be standing there, talking so calmly——"

"Really, sir, I'm not hurt at all!" protested Waldo. "I may have a bruise or two, but they don't matter."

Parsons and Bishop and the other seniors came running out of Marshall's House just then, and they would have seized Waldo, only Mr. Marshall held them back.



"Poof!" said Mr. Wragg contemptuously as he took his hat. Then he broke off suddenly. An expression of pain distorted his face.

"Stop this at once, Parsons!" said the Housemaster. "What do you mean? This boy has probably injured himself——"

"Don't you believe it, sir!" said Parsons, breathing hard. "He's a young terror. He threw Evans downstairs, and he chucked Wilmore into the ditch——"

"Preposterous!" broke in Mr. Marshall. "How dare you exaggerate so grossly, Parsons!"

"I'm not exaggerating, sir!" roared the senior.

"Silence! If you dare to address me again

in that impertinent manner, I will report you to Dr. Hogge!" said Mr. Marshall coldly. "Fortunately, I witnessed this boy's fall, and I know that he cannot have escaped injury. He must go into the sanatorium at once!"

"Oh, my hat!" muttered Waldo.

He had not bargained for this, neither had any of the other St. Frank's fellows.

"That's done it!" murmured Nipper. "Poor chap! This will probably mean trouble!"

"You're wrong, sir," urged Bishop. "I

must go into the sanatorium so that you can be examined."

"If you insist, sir——"

"I do insist!" said the Housemaster.

"Very well, sir, perhaps you're right," admitted Stanley Waldo. "After all, I did hit the ground pretty hard, didn't I?"

And when he walked off with Mr. Marshall a moment later he was limping. Parsons, Bishop, Evans and the other seniors formed a kind of escort; and Brewster & Co. were left in sole possession of the quad, except for the St. Frank's fellows.

"That's finished him!" said Handforth, with a grunt. "He's in the hands of the giddy masters now. It's up to us to rescue him, you chaps."

"Rather!" said Fullwood. "Perhaps we'd better tell Brewster——"

"Rats!" interrupted Nipper. "I'll bet Waldo has got some sort of wheeze in his mind."

"It's a cert, dear old fellow!" said Travers, nodding. "I wouldn't risk a shirt-button on a bet like that!"

"By George!" breathed Handforth, his eyes gleaming. "You mean that he's going to keep it up?"

"That's it," said Nipper, with a chuckle. "We're out of it, though—and I think we'd better be making tracks for St. Frank's. We don't want these River House chaps to get suspicious—— 'Ssh! Go easy! They're coming this way!"

HAL BREWSTER and his chums had no inkling of the truth. Nipper & Co. bade them good-bye, and went on their way. And the River House juniors naturally took it for granted that Waldo was a new boy in their own school. Nothing whatever had transpired to make them suspicious.

"A bit tame for us," remarked Handforth, as the Removites walked across the meadows towards St. Frank's. "In fact, I think the whole thing has been a fizzle."

"Any jape that doesn't incorporate half a dozen black eyes, a dozen thick ears, and endless numbers of swollen noses, is always a fizzle—in your opinion, Handy, dear old fellow," said Travers. "For the love of Samson! I can't understand what you're grumbling about. Hasn't Waldo spoofed Brewster & Co. up to the eyes? And isn't it practically certain that he'll tickle up those River House fellows a bit more before he blows the gaff?"

"Yes, but where do we come in?"



nd. "There's nothing abnormal about this boy!" And the same moment he gave vent to a wild shriek of agony.

don't believe anything could hurt this kid. He's not human. If you'd seen what we've seen——"

"I have seen enough!" broke in Mr. Marshall. "Who is this boy? What is his name?"

"Stanley, sir," put in Brewster. "He's a new fellow in your House, sir. He's given us a few surprises——"

"Stanley, you will come with me to the sanatorium," said Mr. Marshall, turning to Waldo. "You may not think that you are hurt, but I know better. In any case, you

"Later—when Waldo tells us all about it," replied Travers. "We shall get our laugh then."

"A second-hand laugh!" grumbled Handforth. "That doesn't suit me at all! I vote we go back."

"And mess up the whole thing?" said Nipper calmly. "No fear, Handy! We can trust this new kid to do his job thoroughly."

"I'm willing to bet a level quid that Waldo spoofs Brewster & Co. even better now that we have left the place," said Vivian Travers, fishing in his pocket and producing a pound-note. "Here you are, dear old fellows. Any takers?"

"Thanks all the same, Travers, but we don't bet," replied Nipper.

"Well, well," sighed Travers. "How about you, Handy?"

"Put your silly money away!" retorted Handforth, glaring. "A chap who bets is a chump, a fathead, an idiot, and a rotter!"

"Such good little boys!" said Travers, sadly shaking his head. "And here am I offering a sporting quid—practically giving it away! You don't realise what you're missing!"

THE evening passed uneventfully. Right until bed-time the Removites expected Waldo to return. But he failed to do so—and there was no word, either, from the River House School.

"It's pretty certain that he's spoofed the masters as well as the chaps," said Nipper. "They haven't discovered yet that he isn't really a new boy there. I suppose he's still in the sanny."

"What's the good of his being there?" asked Handforth. "A fat lot of good he can do in the sanny! I thought he'd gone to the River House as a spoofer!"

"Give him a chance," said Fullwood. "He'll probably turn up soon—and then we shall hear all about it."

Handforth sniffed.

"You would stick up for him, seeing that you're one of his study mates," he said tartly. "But in my opinion Waldo has made a mess of this jape. Now, if you had allowed me to go there—"

"Whoa! We don't want to enter into any arguments, old man!" interrupted Nipper gently. "There goes the bell! Bed-time, children!"

"And that fathead hasn't come back!" said Russell anxiously. "What are we going to do now?"

"Nothing—except wait," replied Nipper. "He may not turn up until the morning. The very fact that he has remained at the River House all the evening seems to prove that he has been pretty busy."

They went upstairs, and Fullwood and Russell, at least, were slightly uneasy. They shared Study 1 with Stanley Waldo, and although he was only a new fellow, they had grown to like him very much. They were rather concerned about their new chum.

"We're in a dilemma," said Fullwood, as they approached their dormitory. "We can't ring up the River House—because we're not supposed to know anything about that new chap. It would only create suspicion if we made inquiries—Hullo! What the—Here, quick!"

His voice became charged with excitement. He had just opened the dormitory door, and Clive Russell was at his heels. Fullwood had caught sight of a dim, shadowy figure between him and the window, on the other side of the room.

"What is it?" gasped Russell, startled by his chum's tone.

"There's somebody in here!" yelled Fullwood. "Can't you see him? He's just going for the window! Shove that light on, Russell!"

The Canadian junior pressed down the switch, but there was no result. In the meantime Fullwood had dashed across the room, and he arrived at the window just in time to see a vague shape clawing its way down the ivy-covered wall. In the gloom of the night it was difficult to see whether the intruder was a man or a boy, or any other details.

"The light won't come on!" ejaculated Russell breathlessly.

"Too late now, anyhow!" said Fullwood. "He's gone! He dodged across the square, and I think he went out through West Arch."

"Can't we chase him?"

"Hopeless!" replied Ralph Leslie shaking his head. "He'll be a mile away by the time we get down. By gad! I wonder who he was? And I wonder what he was doing here?"

"Probably a tramp, pilfering our belongings," said Russell.

"Hullo! What's the matter here?" came a voice from the doorway. "Why don't you fatheads put your light on?"

"There's something wrong with it, Handy," replied Fullwood. "When we came in here there was somebody monkeying about—an intruder of some kind. He bolted, and slithered down the ivy."

"By George!" said Handforth excitedly. "A burglar, do you mean? We'd better sound the alarm—"

"No sense in doing that!" replied Fullwood. "We'll never capture him now. Besides, let's see what the fellow has been up to. Anybody got a match?"

(Continued on page 26.)

THE POPULAR
Every Tuesday 2d



Handforth undertakes to answer, in his own unique fashion, any question "N.L." readers care to submit to him. But, although of a certainty the results will be amusing and entertaining, the Editor takes no responsibility for their veracity.

Write to Handforth, c/o the NELSON LEE LIBRARY, to-day.

P. A. T. (Chelmsford) wants me to tell him the meaning of that old proverb, "A rolling stone gathers no moss." Most certainly I will; I'm always delighted to give anybody the benefit of my superior knowledge. Now let me see. A rolling stone is the expression used when something is a—a—well, a rolling stone. Ha, ha! What I mean is—er—it means—er, well you see, it's like this. A rolling stone— Oh, why must you ask these obvious questions, P. A. T.? I'm afraid I can't waste the space here to answer it. I'm ashamed of you. I didn't think you were such a dunce.

S. B. (Epping) points out that there's one and only one Trackett Grim in the world. Go hon! You don't say so! He then goes on to tell me that the other day he was reading about a fellow who was supposed to be a world-famous detective, but who was actually an impossible idiot, a fat-headed frump, a muddle-headed mugwump and various other things. The name of this detective was Ttekart Mirg. With a name like that I'm quite willing to believe that he was all those things you called him, S. B., and perhaps a few more. I might add that I'm rather surprised at your being able to stand reading other detective yarns after mine. I mean, they're sheer tripe—the other yarns, of course. (Poor old Handy! He's failed to spot that Ttekart Mirg is Trackett Grim reversed!—ED.)

"PUZZLED" (Manchester) asks why did the pillar-box? Because the pianoforte!

J. E. B. (Carnarvon).—You've made a mistake! You say that you think the greatest idiot at St. Frank's is a fellow whose initials are E. O. H. That can't be because there's only one fellow in the school with those initials and that's myself. Your remarks about my face are not to your credit.

H. E. M. (Clapton) wonders why a go-ahead sort of chap like myself hasn't thought of forming a dance band. I have thought about it, old man, and having thought, I thought I'd better not think any more thoughts about this thought because I thought the thought no good. I always like to play a lone hand in any venture, and I very much doubt if I could play drums, piano, banjo, saxophone, trumpet, trombone and violin all at once. There's a limit even to my capabilities, you know.

"BILL" (Cromer).—Lack of space prevents me answering your 31 $\frac{3}{4}$ questions. Also I would like to point out that one of my Christian names isn't "Encyclopedia."

F. W. DUNGARN (Dublin).—Glad to hear that you've got an Austin Seven like myself. Topping little buses, aren't they? I suggest that you take out the magneto, take it to pieces, and then reassemble it. You're sure to find the defect in this way. As a matter of fact, I did it myself not long ago, and when I'd finished there was only one fault—the car wouldn't go. However, don't let that detail stop you following my good advice, which, by the way, is quite free.

RUBY DRAKE (Toronto, Canada) wants to know who won those six bicycles which were offered by the Three Spires Cycle Co., when St. Frank's visited their factory recently. I don't know, and I don't care. For some inexplicable reason I wasn't one of the winners, and so I'm not interested in the least. Sorry.

E. A. B. (Plymouth).—I'll tell you the name of the largest continent in the world when you've told me what a continent is.

"INQUIRER" (Douglas, I.O.M.) inquires who wrote "Westward Ho!" I didn't—so what's it got to do with me?

EDWARD OSWALD

SPOOFING THE RIVER HOUSE!

(Continued from page 24.)

Nipper came in with a crowd of other juniors. Matches were struck, and it was soon discovered that the electric lamp had been removed from the holder—by the intruder, apparently, as a precautionary measure in case of a sudden disturbance.

With the return of the electric light, a quick search was made. But, curiously enough, nothing was missing. It seemed fairly obvious that the drawers and the wardrobe had been ransacked, but nothing of any value had been taken.

"Well, it's a rummy go!" said Handforth, scratching his head. "Who could the chap have been and why did he get in here?"

"It beats me," said Fullwood. "Perhaps Waldo will be able to suggest something when he gets back? Anyhow, there's no need for us to tell the prefects or masters."

Handforth was rather disappointed. He wanted to get on the track immediately, but the others ridiculed this suggestion. And the little mystery was allowed to drop.

But Fullwood and Russell could not help feeling vaguely uneasy.

CHAPTER 8.

A Shocking Affair!

"BED-TIME!" said Hal Brewster, with a yawn.

"I'm not sorry to hear the bell," remarked Dave Ascott. "The first day is always jolly tiring, what with travelling and all the rest of it."

"Wonder how that new kid is getting on?" asked Glynn. "Still in the sanny, isn't he?"

"I think so," replied Brewster. "I asked one of the prefects about him an hour ago. He said that the new chap has been put to bed, and that he mustn't be disturbed."

"He must have been hurt by that fall, then."

"Seems like it," said Brewster. "There's a mystery about that chap. He's such a meek-looking specimen—and yet he performed those wonders! I shall never forget the way he chucked Wilmore into that ditch!"

"We shall cherish it as a joyous memory," grinned Kingswood.

The Commoners went upstairs to their dormitory. They all boarded in Marshall's House. The Honourables, on the other hand, resided in Wragg's House.

There had been a lot of discussion during the evening over "Stanley," the new boy. But nobody seemed to know much about him, and it was difficult to gain any information.



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No doubt Waldo would not have been able to remain so long in the River House School in ordinary circumstances. But this was the first day of term, and everything was in a state of confusion. This was mainly accounted for by the fact that Dr. Molyneux Hogge, the headmaster, had failed to arrive. He had been delayed in London at the last minute by a trifling, but annoying, accident. It was just one of those little things which might happen to anybody.

Dr. Hogge had been actually on his way to Victoria Station, in order to catch his train, when he had chanced to pass some road-repairers, busy with their pneumatic drills. And a small fragment of stone had shot into Dr. Hogge's left eye.

A visit to a neighbouring chemist's had been barren of result, and Dr. Hogge had been obliged to visit an eye hospital, in order to have the fragment of stone removed. Happily, the injury was trifling, but the delay was considerable. He had sent telegrams to the River House School, and now he was expected by a late train which would reach Bannington at about eleven p.m.

So, until he arrived, the River House was in a bit of a muddle. The Housemasters knew nothing about the new boys, and there were a hundred and one other matters, too, which needed attention. Dr. Hogge's non-arrival in the early afternoon had almost resulted in chaos.

THUS it was that Waldo was left in the sanatorium—this being, in fact, a small wing of Marshall's House. Mr. Marshall himself had forgotten all about the supposedly-injured new boy, having had a host of other things to attend to. And Waldo, left to himself, had not been exactly idle. Knowing nothing of the circumstances, he had rather wondered that he should be neglected like this. Not that he minded in the least. Nothing could have suited him better.

He thought it quite unnecessary to remain in the sanatorium. In fact, when Hal Brewster and the other Fourth-Formers entered their dormitory, they found Waldo comfortably in bed. They were not to know that he had been hovering about on the watch, and that he had nipped into that particular bed a mere minute before the Fourth-Formers started coming upstairs.

"Hallo! What the dickens are you doing in here?" asked Brewster, staring. "We thought you were in the sanny."

"Please, this is the Fourth Form dormitory, isn't it?" asked Waldo in his meekest tone.

"Yes."

"Well, I'm in the Fourth, aren't I?" said Waldo. "I hope you don't mind."

"Why should we mind, you ass?" laughed Brewster. "Glad to see that you're in your proper bed."

"Proper bed be blowed!" said Littlewood wrathfully. "That's my bed!"

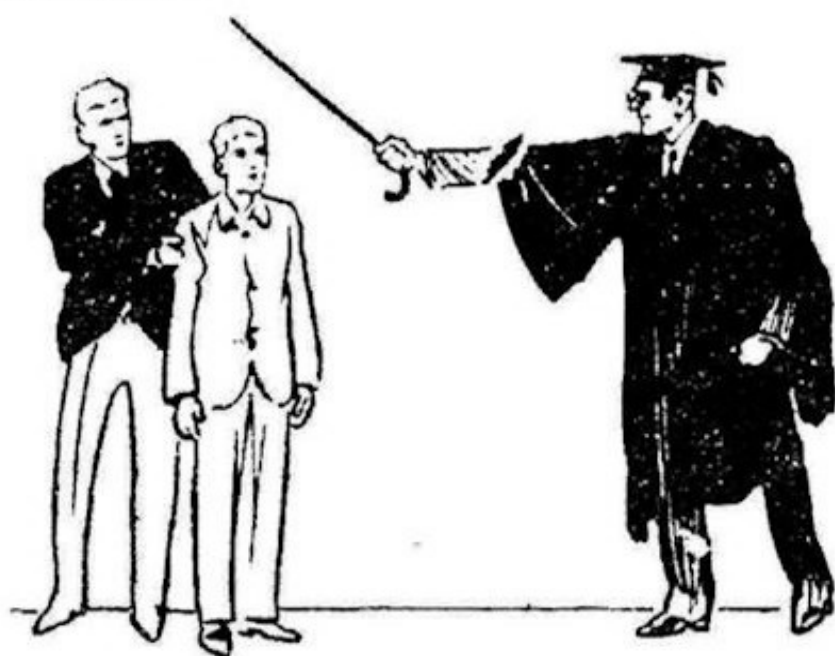
"Oh, really?" said Waldo. "I'm awfully sorry. I thought I was entitled to get into any bed—"

"Then you'd better think again!" said Littlewood grimly. "I've always had that bed, and I'm going to have it this term, too! You can jolly well get out and find another!"

"I'll see about it to-morrow," promised Waldo.

"To-morrow?" yelled Littlewood. "You'll get out of that bed now, you cheeky chump! To-morrow, indeed! Are you going to get out quietly, or shall I pull you out by your hair?"

"Oh, really, is it necessary to be violent?" asked Waldo protestingly. "Surely to-morrow will do just as well as to-night? I am nicely settled now. This bed is very comfortable."



"Leave him alone, Littlewood," said Brewster, grinning. "One bed's as good as another, isn't it? Don't make a fuss over a trifle."

"A trifle be dashed!" retorted Littlewood. "Mann and Palmer have these other two beds, and I've always slept near them. This cheeky new kid is going to get out—or I'll know the reason why!"

Littlewood and Mann and Palmer shared Study No. 8, and they were great chums. It was natural that they should be keen on sleeping in adjoining beds in the dormitory.

At the River House School the Fourth dormitory in Marshall's house was a long, open room, with beds on either side, in rows, leaving a long alleyway down the centre of the apartment. At St. Frank's, of course, the juniors had small dormitories—two or three in each—like private bed-rooms. It was quite a different arrangement here.

"You can't chuck this chap out," said Brewster, holding Littlewood back. "He's only just come out of the sanny—"

"Blow the sanny!" said Littlewood excitedly. "He wasn't hurt, was he? If so, he wouldn't be here now. I'll give him ten seconds to get out."

"Hear, hear!" said Mann and Palmer.

The trio advanced upon Waldo's bed and gathered round it. The St. Frank's spoofer, in the meantime, reclined back on his pillow, and he was quite at his ease. He regarded the trio with a calm, friendly eye.

"Are you going to get out?" demanded Littlewood threateningly.

"But I'm really comfortable——"

"You won't be comfortable in two shakes, unless you show a leg!" roared Mann.

"I'm sure I don't see why I should show you a leg," said Waldo. "There is nothing particularly interesting about my legs. They are very much the same as other legs."

"We don't want to see your silly legs!" roared Littlewood. "But you're going to get out of this bed! It's my bed! Understand?"

"They say that possession is nine points of the law," murmured Waldo.

The Fourth-Formers crowded round, interested and amused. Some of them were inclined to be indignant.

"You're not going to stand that, Littlewood, are you?" asked Norton. "This cheeky new kid ought to be squashed. I'll admit he's a surprise-package, but we mustn't allow him to ride roughshod over us. If that's your bed, you bag it."

"Come on—out of it!" said Littlewood grimly.

He bent over Waldo, and seized him by the shoulder. At least, he touched Waldo on the shoulder. At the same second a kind of blue spark seemed to shoot out from the tips of Littlewood's fingers, and he gave such a fiendish yell that everybody else in the dormitory was startled.

"What the dickens——" began Brewster.

"I'm half-killed!" howled Littlewood, wringing his hand. "This chap has got spikes under his pyjamas!"

"Spikes!" repeated Mann, staring. "You mean sparks, don't you? I'll swear I saw an electric spark shoot out of his shoulder just now!"

"My only sainted aunt!" gasped Littlewood. "That's it! It was an electric shock!"

"Really, you must be dreaming," said Waldo mildly. "How could an electric spark come out of my shoulder?"

"You're mad, Littlewood!" said Hal Brewster, as he took hold of Waldo's shoulder. "There's nothing—— Oh! What the—— Hi! Help!"

He gave a roar that not only equalled Littlewood's, but excelled it.

"Here, shut up!" ejaculated Glynn in alarm. "You'll have old Marshall down on us!"

"The chap's electrified!" panted Brewster in amazement. "When I touched his shoulder I got a shock like the kick of a mule!"

He gazed at his fingertips, and he stared at Waldo. Everybody else crowded round, some sceptical, some dumbfounded. And Waldo continued to lie there, looking as meek and as mild as an innocent child.

"Is there something wrong?" he asked wonderingly. "Surely if this electricity was here, as you say, I should feel it? I really think you must be mistaken about it."

"Of course they're mistaken," said Kingswood. "Don't be an ass, Brewster! How could the chap be electrified?"

Brewster gazed darkly at the new boy.

"It's a jape, is it?" he said in an ominous voice.

"A jape?" asked Waldo, as though he had never heard the word in his life before.

"I'll bet you've got an electric wire under your pyjamas—with the live end exposed," said Brewster. "You can't fool us like this, my son! Of all the dangerous tricks!"

"But there's no electric wire here," said Waldo mildly.

He unbuttoned his pyjama jacket, and slipped it from his shoulder, revealing nothing but his bare skin.

"My hat! That's funny!" said Brewster, reaching out. "I touched your shoulder here——"

He broke off with another violent howl—and this time a number of the juniors distinctly saw a bluish spark playing between Brewster's fingertips and Waldo's bare shoulder.

Hal Brewster breathed hard. The shock he had experienced had not been very severe—but quite startling enough to make him yell. It was the surprise of the thing, more than the actual pain, that was so disturbing.

"He's electrified!" he gasped. "There's no wire there—he's electrified, you chaps! The whole of him! He's a human battery!"

They all stared, bewildered. The thing was becoming fantastic.

"Now then, you kids!" said a sharp, impatient voice. "What's all this infernal din? Hang it, can't you be a bit quieter?"

Parsons, the prefect, came into the dormitory, his face frowning and severe.

"Just because the Head isn't here, you think you can do as you like!" he went on tartly. "You're allowed to be a bit noisy on the first night, I know, but there's no need for you to kick up all this rumpus! Who was that yelling just now? You'd better get your things off—— Hallo! So this bright specimen is here, is he? I thought they'd got him in the sanny!"

He pushed his way through the juniors and stared at Waldo without any great show of friendliness.

"I didn't like the sanny," explained Waldo. "This is the Fourth Form dormitory, isn't it? I thought I'd better come to bed."

"Here, hold on!" ejaculated Brewster, as Parsons approached the bed. "Don't touch that chap!"

Parsons stared.

"Don't touch him?" he repeated. "What's the matter with him? Has he got the measles?"

"He's electrified!"

"He's what?"

"Electrified!"

"Trying to be funny?" said Parsons unpleasantly. "What do you mean—electrified?"



"I swore I'd be revenged against your father for getting me put in quod," snarled the convict, "and now's me chance—through you!" And brandishing the large stick which he held, he advanced threateningly upon Stanley Waldo!

"If you touch him you'll get a terrific shock!" said Littlewood excitedly. "You'll see sparks coming out of your fingers——"

"And you'll see stars if you talk any more of this rot!" said the prefect impatiently. "Do you think I was born yesterday?"

"All right, if you don't believe me, touch him!" said Littlewood.

"I'm not going to touch him!" retorted Parsons. "I wouldn't touch him with a barge-pole. I've had enough of this kid for one day!"

"He's as full of electricity as a thunder-storm," said Brewster. "We're not trying to kid you, Parsons. Honour bright! It's—it's uncanny!"

"The rummy thing is, the kid doesn't seem to feel the juice at all!" said Littlewood, breathing hard. "Look at him. He's as comfortable as you like!"

"I'm very comfortable, thanks," nodded Waldo. "And you will let me stay in this bed, won't you, please?"

Parsons shrugged his shoulders.

"You can have the bed, for all I care!" he replied. "And if there's any more noise in this dormitory——"

"Aren't you going to touch him?" interrupted Littlewood.

"Confound you, I'm not!"

"But he's charged with 'fluence—I mean electricity——"

"It seems to me that you're charged with nonsense!" broke in the prefect, losing all patience. "Do you take me for a fool?"

He reached forward to give Waldo's ear a tweak, merely as a parting gift. He got hold of the ear all right, and the juniors, fascinatedly watching, distinctly saw a series of tiny blue sparks.

As for Parsons, he emitted a roar like a wounded bull and leapt about three feet into the air.

"Do you believe us now?" asked Brewster, grinning.

"You—you confounded young idiot!" howled Parsons. "I'm crippled! My arm's gone all numb! Why didn't you warn me?"

"My hat! I like that!" said Littlewood. "We distinctly told you——"

"There must be some trickery about it!" broke in Parsons, rapidly recovering. "Good heavens! How can there be, though? I only touched his ear!"

"That's just it," said Hal. "He's electrified all over. It would be just the

same if you touched one of his little toes. If you connected him up with my wireless set he'd tune in Madrid!"

"Less noise there, please!" said a stern voice in the doorway.

Everybody turned, and everybody was by no means displeased to see Mr. Marshall, the Housemaster. Better still, Mr. Bernard Wragg was with him—Mr. Wragg having come over from his own House in order to consult with his colleague over some little problem which needed attention.

"I always understood, Mr. Marshall, that your boys were orderly and well-behaved," said Mr. Wragg, not without relish. "I can assure you that I do not allow this sort of thing in my House!"

Mr. Marshall frowned.

"Neither do I allow it here, Mr. Wragg," he returned coldly. "Parsons! What is the matter with you? If you cannot keep order better than this I shall seriously think of depriving you of your privileges——"

"It's not my fault, sir!" broke in the prefect. "It's this new kid! He's electrified!"

"He's what?" asked both masters in one voice.

"Electrified, sir," said Parsons. "When you touch him you get an electric shock."

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Marshall sharply.

And he advanced towards Waldo's bed, much to the ill-concealed joy of the juniors.

CHAPTER 9.

Poor Old Brewster!

THERE was a hush as Mr. Austin Marshall stood beside Stanley Waldo's bed. He looked down at the St. Frank's spoofer with some concern.

"Upon my word!" he said. "Did I not leave you in the sanatorium, my boy?"

"Yes, sir."

"How is it, then, that you are in this dormitory?"

"I didn't think it necessary to remain in the sanny, sir, and as this is the Fourth Form dormitory I came here," replied Waldo innocently.

"I see," said the Housemaster. "Well, I am not sure that I approve. You ought not to have left the sanatorium in that way, young man. I had intended informing the doctor, but I have been so harassed and worried over other matters that I must confess I forgot you."

"That didn't matter, sir," said Waldo. "There's no need for the doctor to see me."

"Don't touch him, sir!" said Parsons in alarm. "If you do you'll get an awful shock. He's as full of electricity as a live wire!"

"How can you be so absurd, Parsons?" said Mr. Marshall in amazement.

"But it's true, sir!"

"Rubbish!"

"They all seem to think I've got electricity in me, sir," said Waldo, with an amused smile. "As soon as they touch me they yell like anything. Funny, isn't it? As you can see, sir, I'm not holding anything in my hands, and there's nothing up my sleeve."

"This boy is a public nuisance!" said Mr. Wragg sourly. "It is a wonder he did not kill me when he came hurtling out of the air on the top of me. As for this absurd story about electricity——"

"You can call it absurd if you like, sir," interrupted Parsons. "but perhaps you'll touch him and find out for yourself!"

COMING NEXT WEEK! ~~~~~



The Fourth-Formers waited hopefully.

"Touch him?" repeated Mr. Wragg. "Do you think I believe this preposterous story?"

"Well, you can soon prove it or disprove it, sir," retorted Parsons. "Touch him anywhere—on the arm, on the face, on the hand. It doesn't matter where. You'll get an awful shock, sir; but don't say that I didn't warn you!"

Parsons was as amazed as ever, and he was anxious to justify himself in the eyes of these masters. He had been accused of failing to keep order, and he wanted them to know why.

"Go on, sir!" he urged, as Mr. Wragg hesitated.

"But it is so ridiculous!" protested Mr. Wragg. "How can the boy have electricity in him? You must have been tricked, Parsons!"

"Undoubtedly!" put in Mr. Marshall, as he bent forward and took Waldo's arm in his hand. "What do you mean? There is nothing the matter with this boy. At least, there is no suggestion of an electric shock."

"Wha-a-at!" gasped Parsons blankly.

"Don't make that absurd noise, Parsons!" said Mr. Marshall sharply. "How dare you tell me that this boy is charged with electricity? What arrant nonsense!"

"My only Aunt Jane!" breathed Hal Brewster. "There's something squiffy about this, you chaps!"

"Rats!" murmured Robinson. "It must

"WALDO'S FOE!"

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~~~~~ ORDER IN ADVANCE! ~~~~~

have been your imagination, Brewster!"

Parsons tried to recover himself.

"I can't understand it, sir!" he panted. "When I touched him he gave me an awful shock. He must have switched himself off——"

"If you continue to act in this absurd way, Parsons, I shall be very angry with you!" said the Housemaster. "Is this a practical joke? Are you daring to play a trick on me?"

He released Waldo's hand, and Mr. Wragg, just to satisfy himself, took hold of it.

"Poof!" he said contemptuously. "There is nothing abnormal about this boy. We might have known——"

He broke off abruptly. An expression of pain distorted his face, and at the same second he gave vent to a wild shriek of startled agony. Parsons' leap was nothing

compared with the bound that Mr. Wragg gave.

"Good heavens!" gasped Mr. Marshall. "Really, Mr. Wragg——"

"It is true!" yelled the other master. "This—this boy is filled with electricity. Help! We must fetch a doctor! He's stricken!"

"Didn't I tell you so, sir?" asked Parsons triumphantly.

"I cannot understand it!" said Mr. Marshall, bewildered. "I felt nothing!"

"We must go for help!" said Mr. Wragg excitedly. "None of these other boys must touch him while we are gone. What an extraordinary case!"

He went rushing from the dormitory. Apparently that one shock had been sufficient for him, and now he was thoroughly alarmed. Mr. Marshall, after a moment's hesitation, followed. Parsons went dashing out, too.

"Oh, well, that's that!" said Waldo coolly.

He had decided, in fact, that the time had come for him to "blow the gaff," and slip away while he had the chance. Once those masters came back, after what had happened, it would be too late.

Brewster & Co. crowded round the bed, although they took good care to keep their distance.

"How did you do it?" demanded Brewster breathlessly. "How did you give old Wragg a shock and protect Marshall?"

"Oh, that was easy!" replied Waldo, throwing the bedclothes back.

A chorus of gasps went up. It was seen that a length of electric light flex was attached to one of Waldo's legs, and he now proceeded to disconnect himself.

"Better go easy with these wires," he advised. "They're alive, you know. I borrowed the juice from the junction-box in the corner of the room. The flex goes under the bed."

"But—but you don't mean to say that you connected yourself up with the light current?" asked Kingswood faintly.

"Yes."

"And you've been lying in bed all this time with all those volts going through you?" yelled Driscoll.

"Of course."

"But how could you stand it?"

"Oh, it's nothing!" replied Waldo. "As a matter of fact, I couldn't feel any electricity at all. I'm built that way, you know. I only knew the juice was on because you yelled so much when you touched me."

This was more staggering than ever.

"Look here, Stanley, there's something rummy about you!" said Brewster, breathing hard.

"Just a moment," said the spoofer.

"You've only got half my name there."

"Only half your name? Isn't your name Stanley?"

"Yes, but Stanley is my first name."

"What's your other name, then?"

"Waldo."

"Stanley Waldo?" said Brewster. "Well, I don't see—Waldo!" he added with a start. "I seem to remember—By Jove! Are you anything to do with that Wonder Man chap, Rupert Waldo?"

"Well, he happens to be my father, that's all."

There was another startled chorus, and Hal Brewster opened his eyes wide.

"So now we know!" he said, with a whistle. "Now we can understand everything! I've always been as keen as mustard on Waldo, the Wonder; he's one of my giddy heroes. He's got the strength of a dozen men; he can't feel pain; he's as active as a monkey; he's got the nerve of a giant—"

"I rather think I inherit some of my father's qualities," said Waldo coolly.

"Ye gods and little fishes!" said Kingswood. "So that's why you didn't hurt yourself when you jumped out of that window? That's why you carried Wilmore so easily and chucked him into the ditch?"

"Exactly," said Young Waldo.

"And do you mean to say that you didn't feel any shock when you connected yourself up with those live wires?"

"Funnily enough, I felt nothing," replied the St. Frank's spoofer. "You see, I'm built like that. If you were to punch me in the middle of the face, my nose might bleed, but I shouldn't feel any pain. Even if I cut myself with a knife, I don't know it until I find myself bleeding."

"My only hat!"

"Draw it mild!"

"It's a fact," smiled Waldo. "My father is just the same. There's something constitutionally different about us."

"You're not a human being—you're a freak!" said Kingswood frankly.

Waldo sighed.

"I was expecting that," he said sadly. "For goodness' sake don't call me a freak. I know I'm different from you chaps, but only in this physical way. In all other respects I'm just the same. And I enjoy a jape as much as any of you."

"A jape?" repeated Brewster. "By jingo! He's only a new kid, and he starts japing us!"

"But I'm not a new kid—not brand-new, anyhow," said Waldo. "I've been at St. Frank's for practically a week."

"St. Frank's!" went up a general yell.

"Of course," chuckled Waldo. "If you will mistake me for a new River House fellow, how can I help it?"

They stared at him dizzily as he broke into a shout of laughter.

"Spoofed!" he grinned. "Dished and diddled, my sons. I'm a St. Frank's chap—an emissary of the Remove, sent here especially to spoof you chaps up to the eyes."

Hal Brewster gulped, fought for his breath, and pulled himself together.

"Is this true?" he asked huskily.

"Of course it's true."

"Honour bright?"

"Honour bright," said Waldo coolly. "I'm in the Remove at St. Frank's, and Nipper entrusted me with this job. Don't you remember? He and Handforth and Pitt and Travers and a lot of others were over here during the afternoon to see me commence my duties. None of us expected that I should be kept here until now, but I'm not a bit sorry."

The River House juniors recovered from their stupefaction. They had been amazed enough to learn that this new kid was the son of Rupert Waldo, the Wonder Man, and much of their bewilderment was thereby dissipated. But to learn, on the top of all this, that they had been spoofed up to the eyes by a St. Frank's fellow was just the limit. They gathered round in a hostile, ominous crowd.

"This is one up for St. Frank's, you chaps," said Hal Brewster grimly. "There's no getting away from it—they've dished us!"

"But we've got this chap!" roared Kingswood.

"That's our only consolation," nodded Brewster. "We admire him tremendously—we think he's a great sport—but I'm dashed if we're going to let him go until we've slaughtered him!"

"But what's the good of slaughtering him?" yelled Littlewood. "He says that he can't feel any pain!"

"Oh crumbs!" said Brewster with a start. "I'd forgotten that! All the same, we can frog's-march him, and bump him—"

"Can you?" interrupted Waldo serenely. "Try it, my sons! Yah! Silly River House fatheads! St. Frank's for ever!"

"Grab him!" went up a general roar.

"Down with the River House!" sang out Waldo.

AND then the trouble started.

About a dozen fellows fell upon him at once. Not that they met with much success. For Waldo, cool and collected, put up a magnificent resistance.

He sent the River House juniors spinning in all directions. As they came at him, he seized them in that tremendous grip of his and sent them flying. They went down like ninepins in all directions.

Ultimately, of course, he would have been overpowered—for there was a limit to his strength and agility. But just then, when things were getting interesting, Mr. Marshall and Mr. Wragg returned, accompanied by about a dozen seniors.

"Good heavens!" panted Mr. Wragg. "The boy has gone mad now! I feared it! I believed from the first that he was demented!"

Brewster & Co. picked themselves up and stood back, breathing hard.

"He's not demented, sir," said Hal. "There's nothing wrong with the chap."

"We were just having a little argument, sir," explained Waldo respectfully. "You see, I'm not really a River House boy at all!"

"Not a River House boy?" said Mr. Marshall. "What do you mean? I understood that you were one of the new boys——"

"I'm sorry, sir, but I spoofed you—I mean, I failed to enlighten you as to the truth," said Waldo politely. "I really belong to St. Frank's, sir—and I came here to play a jape on these Fourth Form chaps."

"Oh, you did?" said Mr. Marshall angrily. "Upon my soul! What effrontery! I can hardly credit——"

"All in fun, of course, sir," said Stanley Waldo. "And now I think I'll be going, if you don't mind. Good-night, sir! Good-night, you fellows!"

The St. Frank's junior, dodging rapidly round the battalion of seniors, reached the door before anybody could realise his intentions. There was a scuffle out in the corridor, the sound of feet on the stairs, and Waldo had gone.

MR. MARSHALL, having satisfied himself that the whole remarkable story was true, dashed down to his study. He seized the telephone. He was boiling with indignation. It was bad enough for Dr. Hogge to meet with a mishap in London and so cause all this chaos; but this St. Frank's boy had to come here and make things worse!

"Hallo! Hallo!" shouted Mr. Marshall into the telephone. "Good gracious! What is the matter with this service? I have never known anything so disgraceful—— Ah! Who is that?"

"Is there something the matter?" came a calm, dignified voice over the wires.

"I want to speak to Dr. Nicholls!" said Mr. Marshall sharply.

"You are speaking to him now, sir," came the dignified voice.

"Oh! I beg your pardon, Dr. Nicholls!" said Mr. Marshall. "This is the River House School—Mr. Marshall speaking. I want to tell you that one of your boys has been over to this school perpetrating a most outrageous practical joke!"

"Indeed!" said Dr. Morrison Nicholls. "I am sorry to hear this, Mr. Marshall. I shall be glad if you will give me all particulars on the matter. Do you know the boy's name?"

"His name is Waldo, sir, and I understand that he belongs to the Remove Form," said Mr. Marshall. "The impertinence of this boy is astounding. He has been here since this afternoon, and he has——"

And the outraged Housemaster proceeded to give Dr. Nicholls all the details.

CHAPTER 10.

An Unexpected Encounter!

STANLEY WALDO chuckled repeatedly as he made his way through the darkness towards St. Frank's.

On the whole, he felt that it had been entirely successful. He considered that

he had been true to his trust. He had not failed the Remove. As for any possible punishment that might be awaiting him at St. Frank's, he regarded the prospect with complete equanimity. It did not worry him in the slightest.

It wasn't very late—not yet ten o'clock—but, of course, it was dark. The September night, in fact, was chilly and bleak. There was more than a touch of autumn in the air. A chill wind was whistling through the trees of Bellton Wood, and there was a promise of rain in the scudding clouds overhead.

Waldo was not very familiar with the local geography, but he had a general idea of the district, and instead of making his way by road, he took to the meadows, feeling that it would be better for him to reach St. Frank's by the footpaths.

And in this way he rather went off the track. For when he got to the River Stowe, he found that he had taken the wrong footpath, and there was no bridge. It would now be necessary for him to make a little detour.

Then suddenly, unexpectedly, a figure loomed up from behind a neighbouring bush and barred his progress.

"Hallo!" Waldo said. "What's the game?"

"I've got you, kid—that's the game!" snarled the voice of Sam Wilkes, the escaped convict!

WILKES had only recently come from St. Frank's—for it was he, of course, who had been pilfering in the Remove dormitory that was shared by Fullwood and Russell and Waldo. And while at St. Frank's he had listened outside more than one window—and he had heard that Waldo was at the River House School playing a joke on the juniors. Wilkes had gone there—and had waited. He had followed Stanley, and now, having taken a short cut, he confronted him.

"What's the game, anyway?" asked Waldo. "I thought I heard a few sounds as I came along, but I put it down to the wind. You're the convict who escaped the other day—and who I handed over to the police."

"Yes—that's me!" replied Wilkes savagely. "And I've got you now, kid! Your strength won't help you this time! You may be the son of Waldo, the Wonder Man—but I'm ready for you!"

"You don't seem very friendly," said Stanley, with that serene coolness which was so characteristic of his father. "And I can't quite understand it, either. I handed you over to the police, but you escaped. You've done a very rash thing in showing yourself to me like this. I shall be compelled to capture you again, and I don't think the police will let you go a second time."

"Very clever, ain't you?" jeered Sam Wilkes. "I swore I'd be revenged against your father for getting me put in quod, and now's my chance—through you!"

He suddenly advanced, brandishing a huge wooden club—a chunk of a tree branch that he had picked up earlier. Waldo saw it distinctly in the gloom, and his heart gave a tiny leap.

If Sam Wilkes got one swing of that club home, it would be the end. The schoolboy, notwithstanding his remarkable qualities, would be brained. After all, he was only flesh and blood, and his bones were the same as any normal bones. His skull would be crushed if that bludgeon struck him.

"You dangerous fool!" he said contemptuously.

Sam Wilkes made no reply. He suddenly charged, and the great club fairly hissed through the air as it was directed at Waldo's head. The schoolboy dodged, side-stepped neatly, and the bludgeon whistled harmlessly past him.

"I think we can do without this!" said Waldo coolly.

He grasped the chunk of wood; with one wrench he twisted it out of the man's hands, and sent it flying far across the bushes.

"Gosh!" gasped Wilkes, startled and sobered.

He had been so certain of success that he was now frightened. He backed away, crashing through the bushes. Then he suddenly uttered a startled yell and went sprawling, clutching at the bushes as he did so.

"I think the police will be glad to see you again!" said Waldo smoothly.

He leapt over the bushes, intending to fall upon Wilkes and hold him. But there was an unexpected development.

Instead of landing upon the solid ground, Waldo went sprawling down a steep gully. He slithered and slid and rolled, the loose earth and stones accompanying him. He went down fifteen or twenty feet before he ceased rolling.

"My only hat!" he ejaculated blankly.

In the darkness he had not known that there was this steep gully lurking behind those bushes. Sam Wilkes hadn't known it, either, but he had had the luck to grasp at the bushes and save himself from going down. Now he pulled himself up and fled.

Waldo wasn't hurt. A mere scratch or two, perhaps, but he took no notice. He scrambled up the side of that gully at full speed, only to find Wilkes gone.

He stood there, listening intently. Above the whistling of the wind, he heard some faint thuds.

He set off, crouching low, his abnormally keen eyes noting every little tell-tale mark which Sam Wilkes had left in his flight.

In all probability, he would have overtaken the convict and captured him—but for the fact that he ran right into Fenton and Wilson and Biggleswade, of the St. Frank's Sixth. The three Ancient House prefects met Waldo as he was moving along a footpath.

"Here he is!" said Fenton grimly.

"Better come quietly, young 'un!" growled Biggleswade. "None of your tricks, mind!"

"Did you see a man coming along this footpath?" asked Waldo. "He's an escaped convict—the one who broke out of gaol the other day—and if you'll let me go on his track——"

"That yarn's a bit too thin, my lad!" said Edgar Fenton, shaking his head. "We've heard that you've been at the River House, spoofing the juniors there. The Head has sent us to fetch you, and if you don't come quietly——"

Waldo considered for a moment, and he gave it up. After all, this delay would make all the difference, and it was hardly likely that he would be able to track Wilkes now.

"All right," he said resignedly. "If the Head has sent you to fetch me, I'll go along with you. Be good enough to lead me to the slaughter."

THE slaughter consisted of a six-hander, delivered with Dr. Nicholls' celebrated right. He read Waldo a lecture, and then instructed Fenton to take him back to the Ancient House and see him safely into his dormitory. Stanley Waldo, of course, was perfectly philosophical about this swishing. As he was incapable of feeling pain, that swishing had "cut no ice." His hands were a bit puffy, but he bore this slight disfigurement with good cheer.

And later, after he had got into his dormitory and after Fenton had gone, Nipper and Handforth and a crowd of other Removites, getting wind of Waldo's return, came in to see him. There were many chuckles in all the Remove dormitories. It was considered that Stanley Waldo had done famously. In fact, the next day the whole school chuckled when it got to hear of the "shocking" of the River House prefects and Mr. Bernard Wragg.

Waldo heard of that intruder who had been in the dormitory, and he guessed at once that Sam Wilkes was the man. But it was very puzzling. There were only one or two trivial articles missing—articles belonging to Waldo. They were of practically no value—a pocket-knife, a little notebook, and one or two similar trifles. Why had Sam Wilkes taken these things? What was his game?

The whole thing was puzzling, and although young Waldo tried to dismiss the matter, he could not help feeling that he had not yet seen the last of this convict who had sworn to be revenged on Waldo, the Wonder Man, and who was attempting to get at him through his son.

(Stanley Waldo is not wrong, either; but even he little realises to what lengths Sam Wilkes is prepared to go to get his revenge; does not realise his impending peril! Don't fail to read next week's stunning yarn, which is entitled: "Waldo's Foe!")

GOSSIP ABOUT ST. FRANK'S



Things Heard and Seen By EDWY SEARLES BROOKS

THERE'S been a good deal of discussion amongst readers, concerning that ripe young rascal, Bernard Forrest.

Arthur Turck, of Clapham Junction, for instance, is very keen on seeing Forrest back at St. Frank's. He's only one amongst many. Lots of readers seem to think that Claude Gore-Pearce is a weak substitute for the redoubtable Bernard. I certainly agree that Gore-Pearce is less of a rascal, although he's more of a snob. Curiously enough, I happened to run across Bernard Forrest's father the other day. It was quite by accident, and we met in one of the big London clubs. He tells me that he is doing

everything in his power to influence the St. Frank's Governors. He wants to get Bernard back in the old school, and if I'm any judge of a man, he won't be satisfied until he has done it. Bernard is now at a big school in the Midlands, and his father tells me that he's dropped all his old bad ways. Without any disrespect to Forrest senior, I don't believe it. If ever a fellow was incorrigible, that fellow was Bernard Forrest, and if he does come back to St. Frank's—which now seems likely—I'm certain that he'll be the same smooth-tongued rascal as before. He could easily have hoodwinked his father, and perhaps he'll hoodwink the St. Frank's Governors, too.

* * *

HERE'S a line from a letter which I have recently received from Frank Mulcahn, of Vancouver, B.C.: "I seem to recollect, many years ago, that Nipper & Co. came to America. I might suggest that they come to a country they have never come to before, and by a way of travel that is new to them—that is, come to Canada by airship." Lots of old readers will

know that Frank is wrong in both instances. Canada is not new to the St. Frank's fellows, and neither is airship travelling. They went in a great airship to the South Polar regions, and had some very exciting adventures there. And on another trip they went to Canada. Up in the North-West, too—the very region that this Canadian reader would like them to visit. A big party of St. Frank's chaps had some very high old times in Athabasca. They may visit Canada again, of course—but certainly not this year. They're booked to remain at St. Frank's for quite a time.

* * *

OUR READERS' PORTRAIT GALLERY



Wallace Lawler

OUR photograph this week is of Wallace Lawler, of Worcester. He has asked me to nickname one of the St. Frank's fellows "Pongo," but when I went round suggesting this idea to the chaps they nearly slaughtered me. I can't possibly call one of the chaps by this nickname unless they consent. And who's going to consent to be called by a name that sounds like a pet dog? I'm afraid there's nothing doing, Wallace.

SOME time ago, Mick Sullivan, of Highgate, informed me that he was fed-up with waiting for the map of St. Frank's and District, and that he was doing one for himself. I believe other readers are equally fed-up—although, perhaps, they're not making their own. Now, whatever you do, don't blame the Editor about this. He looks after the conduct of the Old Paper, but I'm the fellow who knows all the geographical facts about the St. Frank's district. The Editor is such a busy man in London that he hardly ever has time to go near the old school, whereas I am always there, more or less. If you knew how many

times the Editor has asked me to get busy on that map, you'd be surprised. Short of holding a revolver at my head, he's done all he can; and when I tell him that I'm working on the map all the time, he gives me one of those looks which say as plainly as possible: "Can you see any green in my eye?"

* * *

BUT, honestly, I am getting on with that map. And I'm going to tell everybody without any further delay that it won't appear for some considerable time. I had just got to the point where I thought we might publish it, when the Questionnaire started. And it seems that if we gave you the map at once it would rather ruin the Questionnaire. We're asking you all sorts of queries about the geography of St. Frank's and district in the Questionnaire, and these would be quite pointless if you had the map in front of you. The scheme, then, is to go ahead with the Questionnaire, so that you can get all your details and have them nicely sorted out by the time this feature finishes. Then the map will come along, and you'll be able to verify the Questionnaire information by comparing it with the map. Meanwhile, lots of readers can follow Mick Sullivan's example and amuse themselves by making a provisional map of their own.

* * *

"J. W. A.," of Chiswick, suggests that if the St. Frank's fellows went on a visit to the moon or the planets, the stories would be very unreal. I agree with him. We have all sorts of marvels in these modern days, but we're not yet able to fly off into outer space just as we like. The St. Frank's chaps haven't been to the planets, and there's no likelihood of them going. So how on earth can I relate their adventures there? When I was talking to Handforth the other day, he thought it was a brilliant idea, and he promptly asked me where the airship was. He's reckless enough for any sort of adventure, and he'd cheerfully step into a rocket-driven apparatus, sublimely and blithely confident that he would get to the moon. He wouldn't trouble about the problem of how he was to get back. No; the only way I could send the fellows on such a trip would be to relate a dream which I had the other day. An extraordinarily vivid dream it was. I must have had something indigestible for supper. Anyhow, the St. Frank's boys spent weeks and weeks among the planets, and the Moor View girls, too. And all this must have happened, in my mind, within a few minutes—or it may have been seconds. But what's the good of this? I should have to say, at the outset, that the whole thing was imaginary, and that would ruin it.

HERE'S a bit of a letter from Ernie Carter, of Sydney. My Australian cobbler says that he has been reading the Old Paper for nine years, and that he has over five hundred copies. He finishes his letter with these words: "Before I close I must say this. I sincerely hope you will continue to write your stories in the same excellent way as you have in the past for many years to come; for I will always look forward to the Old Paper, even when I grow older and reach manhood, at the stage when one decides to make new resolutions, and cast away the fancies of youth; one of which will be always to keep to the Old Paper, regardless of any who condemn your stories. Those who scorn our paper do not know what the story between the cover contains—nothing but healthy and pure enjoyment. You have my permission to publish these lines if you like. My age is seventeen and a half, being nine years old when I first began to read your stories." Well, that's very nice of this Aussie chum, and I am sure he means all he says. I'm not trying to get any cheap advertisement by repeating his words, but I merely wish to impress readers of Ernie's age that these yarns are not really "kiddish." So many readers get the idea that there is something undignified and childish in reading school stories after they reach the age of sixteen or seventeen. Well, Ernie Carter is one of those with a plentiful supply of common-sense. And his words might be useful also to many readers whose parents or elder brothers condemn the Old Paper unread.

* * *

THE shadow of the past—particularly if it's a disreputable past—is always liable to fall across one's track. Everybody will agree with me that Reggie Pitt is one of the most upright fellows in the Remove at St. Frank's. Yet, when a party of Yexford fellows came over there the other day for a football match, one of them expressed amazement that Pitt should be included in the St. Frank's Junior Eleven. He wanted to know why Nipper included such an out-and-out rotter. This Yexford chap hadn't heard that Reggie had long since forsaken his bad ways. And here's K. Storey, of Scunthorpe, asking me if Reggie wasn't worse than Gore-Pearce at one time. He certainly was. But human nature is a queer mixture, and it often happens that when a chap has been out-and-out bad, he becomes out-and-out decent—going from one extreme to the other. There's nothing really unusual in this. And that is what has happened to Reggie Pitt. He has completely shed his bad ways and is now one of the most popular and straightforward boys at St. Frank's; respected as a fellow of honour by masters and seniors and juniors alike; a cheery sportsman to the core. Good old Reggie!

This Gripping Story of Adventure in Southern Seas Has Only Just Begun!

The ISLAND CASTAWAYS!

by ARTHUR S. HARDY



The Apparition!

NIGHT fell without warning, and the rock and the names carved upon it faded before the eyes of Tom and Eva.

Taking the girl by the hand, Tom began to feel his way cautiously along the path, hoping to find some more sheltered spot.

But he was climbing still, and he knew not whither. The stars above served as a guide. Soon he knew by the vast expanse of bejewelled sky that they were clear of the trees, and by the wind on his cheek he realised that they were looking down over the sea.

Somewhere upon the heaving bosom of the Pacific, somewhere near, the Esmeralda yacht was steaming in search for them.

Come another day she might well sight the island and they would signal somehow.

As the boy and girl looked the distant horizon was warmed by a ruddy glow that came and went, broadened and narrowed; a wonderful spectacle that the boy believed was some heavenly phenomenon. He watched the growing glow in silence, fascinated by it.

Then the girl spoke.

"Isn't it strange, Tom?" she said. "It looks to me just like a fire."

And the boy mocked her.

"A fire? Rubbish, Eva! Whatever is there to burn upon the open sea?"

But the girl was right. The light they watched so eagerly was the reflection of a ship on fire—and the ship was that splendid sea-going yacht, the Esmeralda!

For minutes the glow increased in intensity, lighting up a great stretch of sky. Then suddenly the ruddy glow seemed to expand upward—outward—and a moment later was gone as quickly as a firework explodes and goes out.

The moment the light vanished Tom drew the girl on. The wind was rising. It howled piteously about them. He had lost the way. A strange voice seemed to moan and mock them.

And as he hastened on, seeking now for

any refuge, the figure of a giant towered above them. It seemed to fling wide its arms and threaten them.

With a scream Eva turned and, breaking away from the boy, fled!

The night was almost as black as pitch as Tom blundered against the trunk of a tree and came to a standstill. Setting his hands to his mouth he called to the girl, but the echo of his own voice answered in

*Strange noises and moanings!
A giant apparition, ghostly and
terrifying, appearing from out the
night! What is the mystery of
this island upon which plucky
Tom Perry and Eva Hanway
have been cast?*

hollow mockery—"Eva! Eva!" And then from somewhere up the slope came again the deep, long, sustained moaning which had frightened her.

Tom's pulse raced as he listened to it. No wonder she had run! The moaning was like the cry of an animal in pain. He had never heard anything like it. The impenetrable darkness added to the eeriness of the situation.

He raised his head and peered upward. Not a star was visible, and the foliage above him rustled uneasily to a breath of wind.

Stumbling to the narrow path, Tom walked cautiously on until he saw the stars again—myriads of them—and knew the way had broadened.

Still the strange moaning haunted him, and he hurried. He must find the girl. He called her again and again, and presently heard her sobbing somewhere close at hand. The sound guided him, and a few seconds later he had found her.

"Don't leave me, Tom! Please, please! I am very frightened!"

He was astonished at the comfort her presence gave him. Why had she bolted in that stupid way?

"That—that awful figure!" she choked, as her sobbing eased. "It was so gigantic. Was it a ghost, Tom?"

"I don't know," he answered. "I think you must have imagined it."

He said that to pacify her, but he knew the awesome shape had been no trick of the imagination. He himself had seen it appear suddenly out of the darkness and tower frighteningly above them. And from the ghostly apparition, whatever it was, the moaning noise had come.

Tom would have given anything at that moment to have had with him the torch he kept in his cabin aboard the *Esmeralda*. He would have boldly ascended the path again and flashed it at the ghastly thing. Maybe there was nothing to be scared about after all.

"Feeling better?" he asked, as the girl ceased her sobbing.

Tom knew that she was staring back along the path and he did not want her to bolt again. He was mighty glad to be with her, and so he could gauge her feelings by his own.

"I say," he murmured, "if you're all right, Eva, supposing we find some place to shelter in, and stay there? It's no use trying to make that hut in the dark. We might fall down a hole and break our necks."

The moaning, which had ceased, began again—an insistent cry of agony that scared the girl once more.

"Take me anywhere—anywhere," she murmured, "as long as we get away from that sound, Tom. It terrifies me!"

Gripping her hand, he led the way cautiously, feeling every other step. At last they came to a sheltered spot where the rock face broke away in a sort of cave. Here the sound which had scared them was deadened, and throwing themselves down on the ground they rested.

Tom grew sleepy. His head nodded. His eyelids closed. Presently he heard the girl breathing evenly and deeply. He spoke to her and shook her; she neither answered nor moved; she was asleep.

Turning over upon his side and laying his head on the bend of his arm he slid away into restful oblivion.

He was awakened by the birds and the warming rays of the rising sun. He blinked about him at the glorious scene, smiling as he thought of the previous night's scare. Eva was stirring. She looked up at him and beamed.

"I say," he cried, toying with the dead leaves that were spread around them, "there doesn't seem much to be frightened of here, does there? You were a chump getting scared like that."

"I'm not frightened now," she answered. "And I believe you were scared, too, Tom. What are we going to have for breakfast?"

"We shall have to go hungry, I reckon,"

THE OPENING CHAPTERS IN BRIEF.

THORNTON HANWAY, American millionaire and business magnate, is the owner of the yacht *Esmeralda*, which is touring among a number of unknown islands in the Southern Pacific. He is accompanied by

EVA HANWAY, his pretty daughter, and her chum,

TOM PERRY, a plucky, adventure-loving English boy. Tom's father,

GEORGE PERRY, a lifelong friend of Hanway's, is also on board. At the moment there is great anxiety on the yacht owing to the pilot,

DANIEL KEMISH, having developed a sudden illness. In years past Dan and his partner, David Sellwood, had owned a small vessel, which traded in these parts. Dan had been the cause of Sellwood losing his life—or so he thought—and since then the former has never forgiven himself. Sailing these seas once more has brought back old memories, and this fact, combined with the heat, has turned his head. Tom and Eva decide to visit a nearby island, and they set off in a small motor-boat named the *Rosita*. Without warning a sea-fog suddenly descends over the sea, and the boy and girl are unable to find the yacht. Then comes a terrible storm. The motor-boat is swamped; Tom and Eva are plunged into the mountainous seas, and finally are cast upon an unknown island. Later, unknown to the two chums, Hanway's yacht is set on fire by Kemish. Meanwhile, Tom and Eva explore the island and find a hut, which has recently been occupied. They decide to look for the owner. Suddenly they come across a big rock, engraved on which is the name—David Sellwood!

(Now read on.)

he told her, "until I can find a banana tree or something. But there's plenty of water if we can locate that fall."

She rose with a glad cry.

"It's through there, and not very far," she assured him, pointing to where the rising path wound out of sight among the trees.

"Stay here, Tom. I'm going to bathe."

"Well, don't fall in and hurt yourself or drown," he said. "I noticed one pool yester-

Lying at the base of the stone idol was the figure of a man, clothed in rags and a weird garb of dried grass, whose hair hung down over his shoulders.



day that was very deep. Better let me come and help you find it and make sure that it's all right."

He went with her. Presently they heard the gurgle of the running water—a miracle of nature in such a place—and he himself wondered how and where the water was stored that ran unceasingly down the face of the coral cliff.

Eva left him, while Tom wandered around, appreciating the glorious scenery. Later she returned, radiant, with her short hair all tumbled and looking marvellously pretty in spite of her bedraggled frock, her dirty shoes, and her torn stockings.

He in turn stripped and bathed and drank, and afterwards felt amazingly vigorous and fit, but conscious of a ravenous hunger.

"Eva," he said, "let's get back to that hut. We'll find something to eat there, and afterwards we'll go up and find out what that figure was that startled us."

She did not want to go up the hill again; but he was insistent. They found the hut, still with difficulty, and satisfied their hunger with some coconut taken from a store in the back of the little shelter and some hard bread baked, Tom supposed, in the oven he had discovered. Then they set out on their journey.

The occupant of the hut had not returned. The fire in the roasting and baking place had died. As they trudged on side by side, the boy began to wonder what had become of the castaway. Why was he keeping away from them? A man so ingenious and capable as to be able to build a shelter on a lonely coral island, and to overcome the problem of living in such a place, had no need to fear a boy and a girl.

"Perhaps," said Eva, "he may be dead." Tom frowned.

"I don't think he can be," he growled,

"for wasn't the fire burning? Weren't there signs he'd only just left the hut? We'll find him."

The wish was father to the thought. As they came again to the rock face on which the name of David Sellwood was cut, they paused. Was the man they were seeking David Sellwood? And if so, when they found him, what strange tale would he have to tell?

On they went, climbing until they were near the place where the ghostly and terrifying apparition had startled them. Here tall trees grew which shut them in, the narrow path threading a winding way onward.

"It was near here, Eva," said Tom.

Her face changed. Her eyes widened, and her lips trembled.

"Hadn't we better g-go back?" she faltered.

"Of course not," Tom answered, moving onward.

He had scarcely covered another ten yards when suddenly he came to a standstill, startled by a low, awful moaning. It was the same cry that they had heard last night, only now weakened so as to be barely audible.

Instinctively Tom drew the girl close to him while they listened.

With daylight round them the noise had lost much of its terror, but it was still disturbing.

"It must be the wind blowing through some hole in the rock," said the boy. "Stay where you are, Eva. I'm going to find out what it is."

But as before she would not leave him. Though her face was pale and she was obviously frightened, she strode out pluckily beside him.

The trees fell away on either side, enabling them to view a strange, wide open space almost circular in shape, like some great weed-strewn arena. And at the back of this, facing them, standing boldly out against a background of trees, stood a gigantic idol or figure of stone which seemed even in daylight to be toppling forward on its base of chipped and age-eaten blocks.

It was a huge and hideous idol, with grinning face. Its very presence in such a spot was miraculous, unexplainable.

The two chums stood for a moment or two staring at it, and then Tom laughed in deep relief.

"We needn't be scared any more, Eva," he cried. "Here's the ghost that frightened us. And I expect we'll soon discover where the noise comes from. My hat! What's that?"

From out the trees came the sound of fluttering wings. Something flew down towards Tom, making a strange outcry as it moved.

It lit upon his shoulder, and Eva laughed, for it was a gaudily-plumaged bird which caw-cawed and clacked in amazingly friendly fashion. It flew to the ground a moment later, and strutted comically before them.

The girl laughed, and Tom, stooping, picked up the friendly creature. It did not mind in the least.

"This polly must belong to the man of the hut, Eva," said he. "Soon we'll find him."

Then again they heard the mysterious moaning, this time quite close at hand. It came from the base of the great idol. And, looking there, Tom saw a figure that lay, bent up almost double, against the weed-grown stone. He ran towards it.

The figure was that of a man clothed in rags, and a weird, wild garb of dried grass matted and woven clumsily. His face and body were tanned a deep brown from exposure to the sun and weather. The face was seamed and lined, and the grey-blue eyes that peered up through half-shut lids were filmed with fever. His hair hung down over his shoulders, and his beard was a bushy, brownish mass streaked with white, kept within reasonable bounds by burning, Tom noticed, the hair being singed at the ends.

He dropped down on his knees beside the man and shook him.

"I say, who are you?" he asked. "Are you ill? What's your name? What can we do to help?"

The man answered them with a deep-drawn moaning sigh, and turned in agony. The gaudy bird, as if proud of itself, flew on to his shoulder and chattered there.

"Stay beside him, Eva," said Tom, as he turned. "I'll fetch some water."

He filled the half shell, which he had picked up from the ground beside the man, with water at the fall, and bore it back. The man drank greedily.

But he was very ill, so ill that even the presence of strangers could not rouse or interest him.

"I say, let me help you up," said Tom. "We'll get you back to the hut somehow."

Taking the man beneath the armpits he raised him, but had to let him go again since his burden made no effort to help himself. With arms set akimbo, Tom stared down at the stranger.

"Now we know why he didn't return to the hut, Eva," he said. "But we can't leave him here. We've got to get him down there somehow."

"Is he dying?" asked the girl.

"I don't know. He's pretty bad."

The castaway weighed over fourteen stone, as near as Tom could judge. The boy did not see how Eva would be able to help bear him down the narrow footway to the clearing where the hut stood. It was plain the stranger had neither the strength nor the inclination to help himself.

Kneeling beside him, Tom lifted him up, got the girl to help lever him well on to his shoulder and then, rising, began the long walk back.

It seemed an endless walk, marked with many stoppings to rest. There were times when the man seemed lifeless. He moaned no longer, but just lay quietly submissive on

the boy's shoulder, his arms and legs dangling oddly. And as a grotesque accompaniment of the walk, the bird flew with them, sometimes alighting among the trees, sometimes flying down upon the path ahead of them, most of the time screaming comically.

Tom marvelled at the strength that enabled him to bear the heavy burden so easily. Then at long last they crossed the clearing that led to the hut, and he laid the man down upon the bed of dried grass.

Water they gave him at frequent intervals, and during the long days which followed he was never left unattended.

It took some days for the fever to abate, and afterwards the man slept interminably. The way Eva had tended the sick man had astonished Tom; she had been tireless, resourceful. She had saved the man's life, Tom reckoned.

A Grim Discovery!

CAME a lovely morning following a night of unceasing tropical rain, accompanied by a violent wind that threatened to tear the hut up bodily. Tom had been down to the shore to bring in some of the coco-nuts which had been blown down by the storm, and as he swung into view of the hut the stranger turned over on his bed of grass and opened his eyes.

Then he spoke:

"Who are you? What are you doing here?"

Apart from certain incoherent mutterings, they were the only words he had spoken. The gaudily-coloured bird, which Tom called "Polly," opened its red beak at the sound and shrilled a scream of joy.

"We were wrecked and thrown ashore," answered Tom. "I say, are you David Sellwood?"

"That's what my mates used to call me—once," answered the bearded man, "but it seems a long, long time ago. I carved my name in the face of the rock because I was afraid I might forget it."

His eyes were full of critical wonder as he swung them from the boy to the girl, then back again. He spoke with an effort, as if his tongue had forgotten the habit of speech. He rolled over lazily on his elbow.

"I was up in the sacred grove beside the big stone figure when the fever struck me down," he murmured thickly. "I suppose you found me there? Well, I have to thank you for saving my life."

He nodded, his eyelids drooped sleepily, and, plunging down upon his bed, he slept again. From that moment his progress towards complete recovery was magically rapid.

As soon as he began to eat of the nuts and bananas Tom sought and brought back to the hut, his strength returned. One day he walked with difficulty through the clearing. The next he wandered down to the sea and watched the breakers thunder upon the reef.

A day later he took Tom and Eva to the lagoon and showed them how easy it was to catch fish with a rod he had made, a line of tough, thin grass and a hook like a bent pin. Upon this hook Sellwood stuck a wriggling worm dug up in the glade, and Tom marvelled at the deftness with which the man yanked the fish out of the pool the moment they swallowed the bait. A quick turn of wrist and forearm, a jerk of the crazy-looking rod, and the fish would come flying to the sand to wriggle and gasp there.

Sellwood soon had the fire going in his baking oven, lighting dried grass and twigs by means of a piece of glass held up to the sun.

Wrapping the fish in leaves, he set them in the oven to roast, and a very succulent and appetising dish they proved.

He showed the boy and girl how to cook breadfruit by baking, and where to find certain edible shellfish that were palatable enough when cooked.

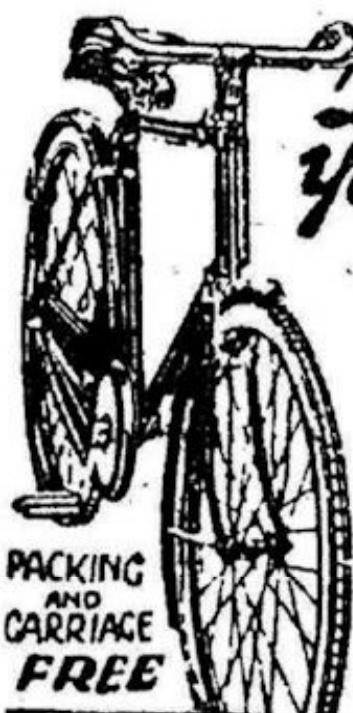
He helped them to lay by a store of coco-nuts and bananas, and showed them how to make the hard, coarse bread. In a hundred ways he tried to show his gratitude, and gradually his taciturn mood melted to something warmer, more human.

"I had to talk to myself, lady," he told Eva, "or I'd have forgotten my own language and how to speak it. A little while longer, if I had not died, I think I should have forgotten who I was and how I came here. Now I'm beginning to remember; it's all coming back. And to think that you and the young gentleman here know all about Dave Sellwood and Daniel Kemish, my old pal and partner. It makes the world seem small."

He turned eagerly to Tom.

"All the years and years I've been cast away on this lonely spot I've never seen as much as a sail. Now you've come, and you know me. It's a miracle."

"Sellwood," said Tom eagerly, "Daniel Kemish is pilot aboard the yacht Esmeralda. He took on the job, I think, because she



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was going to cruise in the southern seas where you were lost. He'd been funny in his mind for days before we were wrecked in our frail boat. It was thinking about you, you know. How did you happen to go overboard in that storm?"

Sellwood frowned and shook his head.

"It's so long ago, I'm hazy about things," he muttered. "I can remember the storm breaking and the violence of the lightning. Dan Kemish had not been doing his fair share of duty, and we'd quarrelled. I knew there was an island near, and the whaler was rolling badly. We flew just enough canvas to help keep the ship in the wind, and the waves were rolling as high as a house. I left a fine old sailor named Tarbutt in charge o' the wheel and went down below to bring Kemish up. He struck me, but I dragged him bodily on deck.

"Then a wave swept me clean over the side, and how I found the coop they flung to me and kept afloat till I was thrown up on this island, I never knew. I'm alive, and Dan Kemish is alive. Dan couldn't swim, and I've always calculated he drowned in that heavy sea. And now Dan's near, you say, aboard a yacht? It's queer, it's queer!"

To Tom it was wonderful to see how the man had recovered. The boy told him their own story; of his assurance that the yacht would come one day soon and pick them up. But Sellwood was unmoved. He seemed unable to grasp the significance of it. He merely shook his head and frowned.

"I don't think I should know what to do if I was to go back to a big town," he said. "And you say they show pictures that move and talk on a screen, and thousands flock to see and hear them? I've seen moving pictures in a small way, and I don't think much of them. And the air is filled with machines that fly? What's the use of it? I'd be out of place among all that."

But, all the same, he would go down to the beach and scan the ocean for signs of a ship, and he helped Tom and Eva to begin to build a huge stack of wood up on a flat rock near the great idol which was to serve as a beacon should any far-away ship appear. They piled the wood up and up until it towered high above their heads.

"Eva," said Tom excitedly, as he pointed to it, "when we light it it will give off a trail of smoke which will show for miles and miles. When the yacht comes we'll set fire to it."

Turning, he glanced down at the sea. Never had the air been so clear, and far away on the horizon Tom could just make out a low, dark smudge.

"There's another island there," said Sellwood, following Tom's eyes. "Often I've seen it and wondered whether I should ever get over there."

With another island nearby, there was a double chance of the Esmeralda coming; and yet days had come and gone, and the yacht ought to have arrived long ago.

Sometimes Tom wondered whether, realising what a poor chance the Rosita had of surviving in that turbulent sea, Thornton Hanway had given up the search; but he quickly set the idea aside. Whilst a single island or reef remained unvisited in the tropic seas, the millionaire would never turn back. However, the continued absence of the yacht puzzled Tom.

He remembered that night when, with Eva, he had seen that ruddy glow on the distant horizon. Eva had suggested it was a fire, and he had scoffed at the idea. Yet he had thought about the incident often since then, and now he was not quite so scornful. It might have been a fire; a ship on fire. And the Esmeralda had possibly been in that vicinity—

Yes. Tom was puzzled—and worried.

Then one morning David Sellwood proposed that they should pay a visit to a spot he called the point. Here, he explained, the sea was for ever casting up strange ocean fruit.

"Many a thing I've picked up there," said Sellwood. "Boxes, wood, lengths of rope, crates, and bottles. Once I came upon a shattered canoe. It's a long time since I've been there, and the storm ought to have heaped a lot of things up by now. We may be lucky."

Dave led them away from the glade, and by a detour they reached another part of the island. Suddenly they came upon the shore, and Sellwood pointed out the place to them. Here the coral reef formed a distinct breakwater. Tom could see the debris lying piled high above the water-line where the angry seas had thrown it.

They found much tropical vegetation and rotting fruit among the litter. Some rusted tins and two or three bottles, too.

And then, as he looked ahead, Tom began to run, shouting to the others at the same time.

"I've found a boat! I've found a boat —"

It was a boat all right, they saw, as they raced after him, the girl easily outspeeding the bearded man. It lay keel uppermost, and there was a hole driven through her stout timbered bottom. She was painted a bright green below the water-line, and her sides were snow-white. As he looked down at her, Tom's heart gave a jump.

Only one craft he had ever seen had carried such a boat as that.

She was partly buried in light, silvery sand, and, as Tom stooped and scraped the sand away, doubt became certainty. He saw painted upon her bows what he had expected to see—the name Esmeralda!

(This is a grim discovery, if you like! Will Tom and Eva jump to the truth—the truth that the Esmeralda has foundered? Don't miss reading next week's exciting chapters of this fine serial, chums!)

The ST. FRANK'S LEAGUE CORNER!



*The Chief Officer Chats
with his Chums.*

*Here's his address if you want to
write to him: The Chief Officer, The
Nelson Lee Library, Fleetway House,
Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.*

Better Late Than Never!

EVIDENTLY Albert Phipps, of Birmingham, is a great believer in this saying. He tells me that "some time ago" he was enrolled as a member of the St. Frank's League (it must have been some *considerable* time ago, for his League number is 2,592), and that subsequently he became eligible for a bronze medal. But he didn't apply for one at the time.

Can he have his medal now?

If he is entitled to it—most certainly. I am looking up my records, and if all is O.K., then Albert will have received the medal by now.

But about this "better late than never" business. My chum tells me that he makes a habit of doing this sort of thing. Well, it's all right in some cases. I suppose, but I really do think that to make a habit of it is not too good—is asking for trouble, in fact. There may come a time when something vital crops up. "Oh, I'll leave it for a little while; better late than never," says my chum—but by then it is *too* late, and he comes a nasty cropper.

I really think that my Birmingham correspondent ought "to pull up his socks." To do so will be to his advantage in life.

She Cannot Join the League!

I HAVE before me a letter from Miss Lena Douthwaite, who hails from Sunderland. At the moment she is a very sad reader of the NELSON LEE LIBRARY. For this reason. Lena does not belong to the League, although she is keenly enthusiastic to join. She cannot, however, owing to the fact that she does not know another reader of the Old Paper in her district, and cannot persuade her friend to become one.

What's she to do?

Come, Lena! Surely you don't mean to tell me that your chum will not fill in the St. Frank's League Entry Form for you. But perhaps you've given her the impression that by doing this she is undertaking to buy the NELSON LEE LIBRARY every week in future, and that's what's stopping her. Point out to her emphatically that this is not the case. The Editor merely hopes that your friend will be-

come a regular reader of her own free will when she has read the contents of that particular issue.

And if your own chum won't buy a copy herself, then I can only suggest that you yourself should get an extra one and give it

(Continued on next page.)

THIS WEEK'S WINNING LETTER

DEAR CHIEF,

Rejoicing League-ites repeatedly write expressing effusive esteem at the effectiveness of an advert appearing in the "Correspondents Wanted" column—all acquiring at least a score of replies through this medium.

If these, then, rejoice at a score—how, I ask, should I act, having acquired nearly eighty clamouring correspondents? Being, brother, two short—78. Yes, 78 letters, look you!

And how profusely they poured in. Frae Scotland, Surrey, Somerset and Sussex! From Ireland and India, Australia and Accra of Africa! From New Zealand, Newmarket and Newcastle! From everywhere they came—78 of them!

Did I flinch? Did I jump for joy? Neither! Though confused, confounded and concerned by such a consternating swarm, I swiftly subdued my surprise and set to work. Each and every epistle was alike accorded adequate attention, and at the moment, at any rate, I can boast, brag and bleat of 78 pen-friends.

Most readers realise the thanks they owe to you.

Them's my sentiments, too. Cheerily,

(Signed) Reg. T. Staples (S.F.L. No. 9070.)

(For this interesting letter, Reg. T. Staples, of London, has been awarded a handsome pocket wallet).

All members of the St. Frank's League are invited to send to the Chief Officer letters of interest concerning the League. The most interesting will be published week by week, and the senders will receive pocket wallets or penknives. If you don't belong to the League, look for the entry form which will appear next week—and then join immediately.

The St. Frank's League Corner!

(Continued from previous page.)

to her. After all, you may be doing the Old Paper a bit of good. There's no knowing, but your friend may become a staunch reader as a result!

I shall hope to receive a Form, and to make you a member of the St. Frank's League, in the very near future, my chum!

THE CHIEF OFFICER.

CORRESPONDENTS WANTED.

Maurice Bond, 79, Hyverne Road, Cardiff, wants N.L.L., new series, 1-126.

John Hillaby, 1, Holly Bank, Headingley, Leeds, wants natural history correspondents in South and Central Africa, and South America.

William Penny, 632, Old Ford Road, Bow, London, E.3, offers N.L.L. old series back to 1919 in exchange for new series Nos. 1-76.

W. Warner, 56, East Grove Road, St. Leonards, Exeter, Devon, wants N.L.L. 1-108, new series; 1d. a copy.

J. L. Houghton, 18, Guywood Lane, Romiley, Stockport, wants to buy back numbers of the N.L.L. to complete his set.

S. A. Goodman, c/o Mr. T. G. Stringer, High Street, Motucka, New Zealand, wants correspondents interested in sport and reading, in New Zealand and England.

Leslie C. Edens, 10, Paradise Street, Oxford, wants to correspond with readers in Germany, U.S.A., South Africa, China, India, Canada.

Harold Ransom, Lower Ford, Stoodleigh, Tiverton, Devon, offers N.L.L., new series, 94-99, and 101 to date.

Alec Singleton, 18, Nelson Square, Castle Croft, Egremont, Cumberland, wants correspondents interested in photographs, autographs and football.

Cyril W. Pryke, 10, New Road, Thetford, Norfolk, wants back numbers of the N.L.L., from No. 1, new series; would exchange model steam-engine.

Albert Barram, 31, Upper Park Street, Barnsbury, London, N.1, wants to hear from readers interested in classical music.

G. F. Bramley (aged 16), 5, Bestwood Road, Hucknall, Notts., wants to hear from readers, especially those interested in rabbit keeping.

R. W. Grimmett, 25, Silver Street, Coventry, offers back numbers of the N.L.L.

George L. Matthews, 5, Wingfield Road, Trowbridge, Wilts. (aged 18), wants to hear from stamp collectors, especially in Jamaica and Newfoundland.

Teddie Colley, 16, Masters Road, West Bridgford, Notts., wants to correspond with stamp collectors.

Miss Minnie Fulton, 259a, Market Street, Fairview, Johannesburg, South Africa, wants girl correspondents; ages 17-20.

George J. Singh, 57, May Street, Durban, Natal, South Africa, wishes to correspond with readers; he is keen on stamp collecting.

Peter Coppenhall, 6, New Street, Congleton, Cheshire, has N.L.L., new series, to sell; various numbers from 90 to 163.

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