

ST. FRANK'S REBELS FIGHT FOR PLAYING FIELDS!

THE NELSON LEE

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The BATTLE OF ST. FRANK'S!

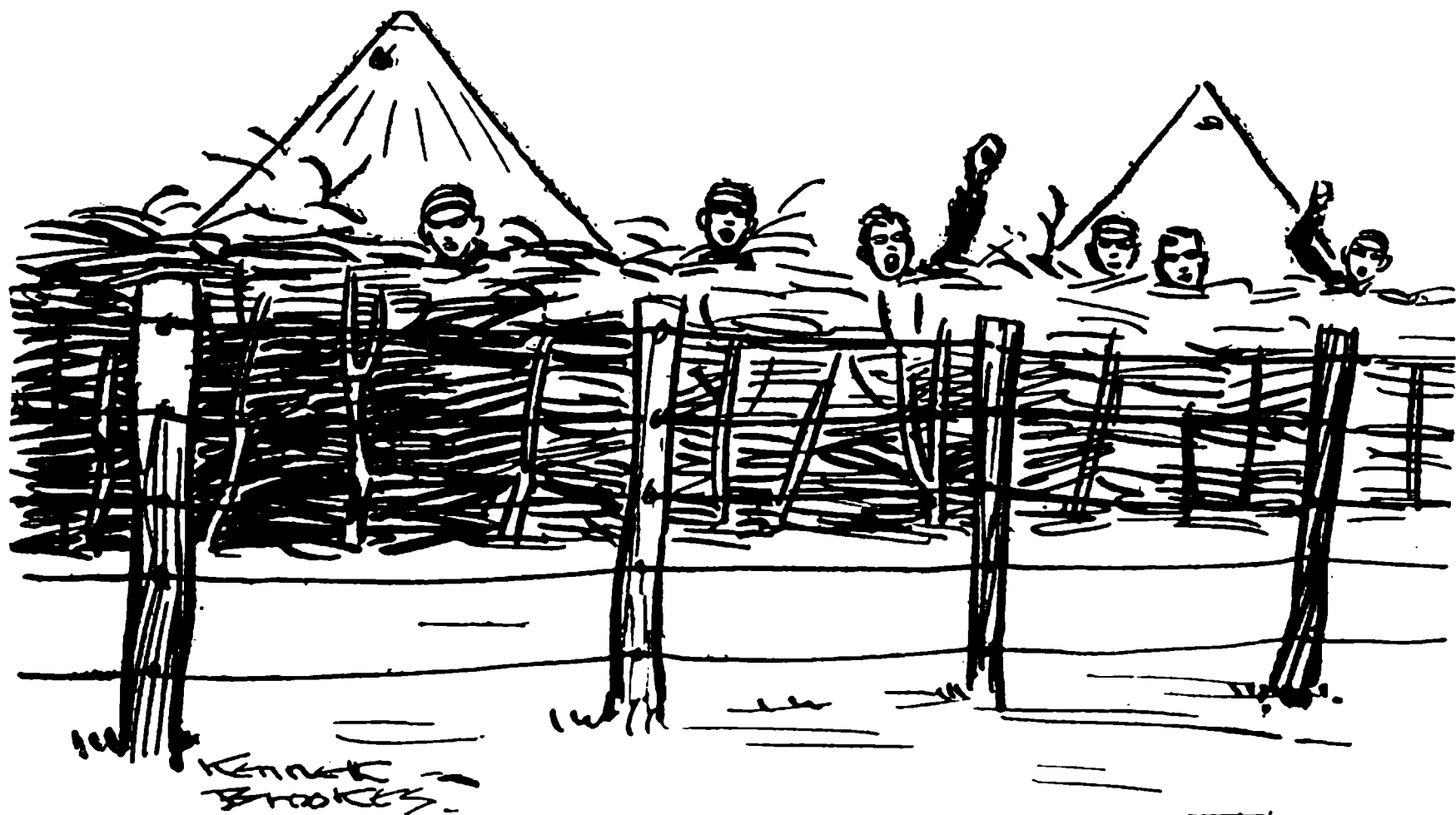
St. Frank's football rebels stormed by schoolboy army! Read this week's smashing long school yarn, featuring Nipper and his cheery chums, complete inside.

New Series No. 87.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY.

September 19th, 1931.

The BATTLE of



CHAPTER 1.

Some of His Own Medicine!

MONDAY, at St. Frank's, was usually a quiet, uneventful day. In the class-rooms the work was more or less easy; the boys felt that Monday did not matter much, and the masters suffered from "that Monday feeling." On the playing fields there was seldom an important match; just a little routine practice. And as for japes, Monday was proverbially a black day for ideas.

But for once Monday had been hectic.

Things were not normal at the famous old school. In fact, they were sensational. The entire Junior School was on strike. The Remove, the Fourth, and the Third had planted themselves firmly on the playing fields, and had delivered a defiant ultimatum to the headmaster to the effect that they wouldn't shift until he—the Head—promised that the playing fields would not be destroyed.

It was the most novel barring-out which St. Frank's had ever experienced.

The trouble had started when Professor Thorpe Ogleby, the noted archaeologist, had descended upon the school with the

avowed intention of searching for Roman remains. He had discovered that such remains existed beneath Big Side and Little Side, and it was his ruthless plan to deprive the school of its age-old playing fields. And as Professor Ogleby happened to be the new chairman of the board of governors, he had a certain amount of say in the matter. But so had the boys.

What they said, they said with fists. "Hands off the playing fields!" was the war cry.

The professor received no sympathy from the masters, who were also opposed to his plan. Mr. Nelson Lee, the headmaster, had resigned in consequence of Professor Ogleby's high-handed attitude. And very

promptly the professor had appointed himself headmaster, under the mistaken impression that he could quickly bring these rebellious boys to their senses.

Since then he had had a veritable nightmare of worry and excitement. For the boys, feeling that right was on their side, had put up a magnificent resistance.

The seniors were not taking any actual part in the barring-out, but they were frankly sympathetic. And the masters felt that as Dr. Ogleby had started this thing, it was up to him to finish it.

Starts as a
"RAG"
—And ends in
RAGS!

Most Sensational School Yarn Ever Written—Complete In This Issue.

St. FRANK'S!

By EDWY
SEARLES BROOKS



The exasperated archæologist, who was bubbling with impatience to proceed with the excavation work, had tried all sorts of ruses to defeat the boys. He had employed ploughs by dead of night, he had hired traction-engines. But all his schemes had been defeated.

On the Saturday, right in the middle of an important football match, he had even gone to the extent of blowing a great hole in Little Side, using dynamite for the purpose. He had had workmen burrowing underneath for days. But although the explosion had taken place the boys had not been scared, and, if anything, their determination to resist the professor was doubled.

And now, on the Monday, all hands had been hard at work from morning till

evening. Juniors, in relays, had been working like Trojans; they had cleared every scrap of debris from Little Side; they had filled up the great jagged hole until no sign of the catastrophe remained—except the unturfed patch on the site of the actual explosion.

And Professor Thorpe Ogleby, seeing all this, gritted his teeth with fury and vexation.

Those who knew him intimately—such as Mr. James Drummond, a fellow archæologist, who was in charge of the operations—or would have been in charge of them if the juniors had allowed them to proceed—were shocked at the change. Nowadays he was a totally different man.

The professor had come to St. Frank's a genial, kindly soul. The boys had

rather liked him; he was a harmless old buffer, and he was amusing. At least, the juniors had thought so until the professor had started his tricks.

But now his soul was hardened. This long-drawn-out battle against the juniors had converted him into a dangerous man. He was becoming ruthless. Obstinate by nature, he refused to admit defeat. Never would he allow these impudent schoolboys to triumph over him! He was the chairman of the board of governors—he was the headmaster—and he would have his way! No matter what it cost him, he would win!

For there was something more than the mere excavation of the Roman remains to think of now. There was his self-respect. Unless he defeated these boys—unless he had his own way—he would never be able to hold up his head again. Thus the great man brooded, and, brooding, he thought of fresh plans for achieving his purpose.

"IT'S all right!" said Handforth, of the Remove. "But what are we going to do about fresh turf?"

"That's the problem," admitted Nipper.

But there was a twinkle in the eyes of the mischievous junior skipper. Nipper was the recognised leader of the rebels, and he was in his element. His coolness and his unfailing good humour had carried the rebels on from victory to victory.

Tea was being prepared in camp. The headquarters were situated in the big pavilion, but there were dozens of tents dotted round and about. There was no shortage of food, for the boys had more than once raided the school stores—which they felt thoroughly justified in doing.

Nipper, Handforth, Travers, Corcoran, Pitt, and a few others were now standing round the ugly patch of Little Side which had just been filled in.

"It might have been a lot worse, you know," remarked Lionel Corcoran, the Fourth Form skipper. "The damage looked awful at first. But there's really only this one spot."

"Yes, but where are we going to get the turf from to make it right?" asked Edward Oswald Handforth. "We could take some out of the paddock, of course, but that's awfully rough stuff."

"We need good turf—as old and as perfect as the rest," said Nipper. "I know where we can find it, too."

"What!"

"You know where to find it?"

"Where?"

"Not far away," said Nipper, grinning.

"I rather think that a dose of his own medicine wouldn't do Professor Ogleby any harm. He's not interested in sports, so what does he care about our playing fields? Nothing! So why should we hesitate to grab the turf we need from the Head's garden?"

"For the love of Samson!" murmured Vivian Travers, opening his eyes wider.

"The Head's garden!" gasped Handforth excitedly.

"Why not?"

"Yes, but dash it—I mean—Two wrongs don't make a right, you know!" protested the burly leader of Study D. "And pinching turf from the Head's lawn would be too thick for words!"

"But it would serve old Ogleby right!" remarked Bob Christine.

"My dear asses, I'm not talking about the Head's lawn," said Nipper coolly. "We should shove ourselves in the wrong at once if we did a thing like that. But what about that little patch of grass at the back of the potting shed in the Head's garden? It's centuries old—glorious grass—mossy and springy and as good as any on Little Side. But it's never used for anything, and it's practically out of sight in a little backwater. There's just about enough there, too."

"My son, it's a brain-wave," said Reggie Pitt promptly. "We shan't do any real damage, and yet we shall repair Little Side from the Head's own garden."

They all approved now—even Handforth.

"Of course, we can't do anything until after dark," continued Nipper. "In fact, we'd better leave it until the middle of the night—so as to be on the safe side. Meanwhile, there are other things to think of. Our defences mainly."

"What's wrong with them?" asked Handforth. "We've got wire all round the playing fields, and we can electrify it, too——"

"You mean we could," interrupted Nipper. "We can't now."

"Eh?"

"The juice is cut off," continued Nipper. "I found it out this afternoon. Didn't you see some men working out in the road? The professor is more determined than ever, my lads, and it's my opinion that he means to make another attack on us. As a first step, he has cut off the electric current—so that we can't use it for electrifying the defences."

"But what can he do?" asked Handforth, staring. "He's tried everything! If he hires a lot of men to attack us, we'll beat them off. We're not scared of him!"

"Not likely!" chorused the others.

"Let him jolly well do his worst!"

"Hear, hear!"

"He'll do it, too," said Nipper, his manner becoming serious. "That affair on Saturday ought to have crumpled him up—but it didn't. And we can look out for squalls, my sons. When Professor Ogleby strikes again, he'll strike hard. Tremendously hard. And unless we're fully prepared we shall get wiped out."

"But what else can we do?" asked Corcoran, with a helpless little shrug. "How can we strengthen our defences?"

"Well, to begin with, we shall need some tin," said Nipper thoughtfully. "Quite a lot of tin, in fact."

"What's the good of tin?" asked Handforth blankly. "How can we strengthen the defences with tin?"

"Cash, old man," explained Nipper.

"Cash!"

"Money," said the rebel leader, with rare patience. "I thought everybody knew that cash meant money."

"But what's the good of money to us?"

"Not much; but it'll be a lot of good to Farmer Holt," said Nipper. "In fact, the old bounder won't let us take those faggots unless we pay him cash on the nail."

The other juniors were bewildered.

"What faggots?" went up a general inquiry.

"You'll see," grinned Nipper. "As soon as we've had our evening meal—after it's dark—we'll pop down to the village. There are a few things we need from the grocer's and baker's. And while we're there we'll run along and interview old Holt. Leave it to me, my sons."

The others were still more or less bewildered. But they understood later. Half a dozen of them went on the trip—Nipper, Tregellis-West, Handforth, Reggie Pitt, Travers, and Bob Christine. There wasn't any danger of capture, for this was no ordinary barring-out. If they were seen by seniors, or even by masters, they would not be interfered with.

It was a chill, blustery evening, and heavy clouds had caused a premature darkness. When Nipper & Co. arrived at Holt's Farm they found the owner sitting down to his evening meal. He came out into the quaint, old, stone-flagged hall of the farmhouse to inquire their purpose. There was only the dim light from a smelly oil-lamp.

Mr. Jeremiah Holt was not a pleasant man, and he greatly disliked being inter-

rupted in the middle of his meals. He regarded his visitors suspiciously, even antagonistically.

"Aren't you some o' them boys what are defyin' Mr. Ogleby?" he asked bluntly.

"You know us, Mr. Holt," said Nipper.

"Ay, more's the pity!"

"It was you who let Mr. Ogleby have those ploughs the other day," continued Nipper reproachfully. "We're not quarrelling with you for that——"

"You'd best say what you want, and say it quickly," broke in the farmer. "I ain't takin' sides in this quarrel. Understand? It's naught to do with me. Them ploughs was hired special, and you needn't think you can come here threatening——"

"Who's threatening?" asked Nipper, in surprise. "We want to do a deal with you, Mr. Holt."

"A deal?"

"We're glad to hear that you're not taking sides in the quarrel," continued Nipper. "That makes it quite easy. Well, you've got some big stacks of faggots in one of your meadows—that one near Bellton Lane. You can see them from the road. Well, how much do you want for those faggots?"

The farmer laughed.

"More'n you can pay, young gents," he replied promptly. "Besides which, I want them faggots for myself."

"Well, you can have them," replied Nipper, undisturbed. "We don't really want to buy them, but to hire them. When we've done with them, you can have them back. You see, we want to use them for building a sort of stockade all round our playing fields."

"A stockade?" repeated the farmer, a greedy light coming into his eyes. "And ye say that ye don't want to keep the faggots altogether? Well, mebbe I'll think it over. I don't need 'em for some weeks. Rare goin's on, ain't it?"

He did not think very long. He mentioned a price which represented about half the value of the faggots. As a hiring fee it was exorbitant, but the juniors had expected nothing else. They paid up, cash on the nail—for there had been a general whip round to meet this expense.

It was arranged that the boys should be permitted to take those faggots at any hour during the night. They would not be interfered with, and Farmer Holt would answer no questions from Dr. Ogleby or anybody else.

The rebels went off in good spirits.

CHAPTER 2.

The River House Raiders!

"BY George!" exclaimed Handforth gloatingly. "What a wheeze!"

They were half-way to the village, and they all understood—now—the full meaning of Nipper's idea. It was a master-stroke to secure those faggots. They would, indeed, be invaluable for the making of an effective stockade.

Nipper, as leader of the rebels, knew only too well that their defences were inadequate—particularly so now that the electric power had been cut off. The wire fences were but a poor protection.

In an ordinary barring-out the boys would have seized the school—or, at least, one of the Houses, and this they could have converted into a fortress. But they were out in the open, their sole idea being to retain possession of the playing fields whilst the latter were in danger. And from the start Nipper had appreciated the difficulties of defence. They couldn't make trenches, neither could they build walls or adequate fences. But a stockade of faggots would be very serviceable.

Highly pleased with their bargain with Farmer Holt, they visited the grocer's and the confectioner's—which was also the baker's—and when they started their homeward journey they were heavily laden.

Nipper was impatient. He had a very pronounced "hunch" that Dr. Ogleby would soon strike another blow. It might not come this evening—it might not come for a day or two—but it was as well to be on the safe side.

"Hallo! What's this?" asked Reggie Pitt suddenly. "Look out, you chaps! Cave!"

Dark forms materialised from the gloom, and the rebels bunched themselves together instinctively. In a moment they were surrounded, and chuckles sounded.

"A fair cop!" said a cheery and familiar voice.

"Brewster!" ejaculated Nipper, with relief.

Hal Brewster, of the River House School, was an old friend—and an old rival. He and his cheery chums were hardened japers. There were about a dozen of the River House boys with Brewster, and the Saints were hopelessly outnumbered.

"You silly asses!" said Handforth gruffly. "You gave us a scare! We thought you were some of Ogleby's men!"

"You're unlucky," replied Brewster coolly. "We're far more dangerous than Ogleby's men, my sons! Hand over!"

"Eh?"

"Hand over quietly, or we shall be reluctantly compelled to wipe you up!"

"You silly River House asses——"

"We spotted you coming out of the village tuck-shop," went on Hal sweetly. "All nicely loaded up with the materials for a feed—eh? As I said before, it's a fair cop."

Nipper laughed.

"Nothing doing, Brewster," he said gently. "Japes are off. So are raids. Pax, old man."

"You can go and boil yourself!" said Hal Brewster politely. "Pax be blowed! We're going to unload this cargo——"

"Rats!" said Nipper. "I know you better than that, Brewster——"

"Don't you let him get round you, Hal," put in Dave Ascott. "This stuff is ours, and if these St. Frank's fatheads don't hand it over——"

"But, my dear, hopeless, misguided chumps!" said Nipper. "This isn't an ordinary feed. It's grub for the rebels!"

"What!"

"Flour, sugar, tea, cocoa, condensed milk, and things of that sort," explained Nipper. "Have you forgotten that we're in the middle of a giddy rebellion? You wouldn't deprive the garrison of its grub, would you?"

"My only sainted aunt! I'd almost forgotten that," said Hal. "It's a frost, you chaps! We can't take this stuff. It wouldn't be playing the game."

"I suppose you're right," growled Kingswood. "But it's a beastly sell, all the same."

"Rotten!" commented some of the other River House boys.

"Pax it is, then!" said Brewster. "Pass, friends!"

"Good man!" grinned Nipper. "I knew you'd be a sport, Brewster."

"How are things going?" asked Hal. "You're having plenty of excitement up at your school, aren't you?"

"And more to come," said Handforth, with relish. "Old Ogleby is just getting himself waxed up for a mighty onslaught."

"You chaps get all the luck!" sighed Brewster. "We haven't had any real excitement at the River House for terms and terms!"

The incident appeared to be over, with both parties on the friendliest possible terms. Unfortunately, a misunderstanding arose.

For it so happened that one of the St. Frank's party—Travers—had slipped away in the darkness, immediately after the first alarm. Owing to the confusing

"Hear, hear!"

And the River House crowd, partially recovering from the first shock, set to work.

"Oh, well!" said Handforth, rolling up his sleeves.

Crash!

Edward Oswald only needed the flimsiest of excuses to start scrapping. He understood the position perfectly; but this chance was too good to be missed. His clenched fists lashed out to right and to left. River House fellows fell like ninepins. Black eyes, thick ears, and swollen noses were distributed liberally.

In less than thirty seconds a free fight was in progress.

Brewster & Co. were battling gamely, and it was their resistance, in fact, which led to all the trouble. If they had refused to fight—if they had explained the situation—there would have been no hard hitting or hard feelings.

But when Handforth saw all the fighting, and when Nipper received a mighty swipe in the left eye, there was only one thing to be done. The rivals just let themselves go.

The result was inevitable.

With the reinforcements to strengthen them, Nipper & Co. were the stronger force. Before long the River House boys were littered and strewn all over the road in a very battered condition.

"Well, that's that!" said Travers happily. "Glad we came along in time, Nipper."

"You made a bloomer!" said Nipper gruffly. "These River House chaps weren't attacking us, as you thought. It was pax!"

"Pax, was it?" panted Hal Brewster, hauling himself painfully to his feet. "You—you rotters! We'll get our own back for this!"

"Now, look here, Hal——" began Nipper.

"Rot! You dotted me in the eye, didn't you?" roared Brewster, glaring.

"Perhaps I did," admitted Nipper. "But you thumped me on the chest first, then somebody else landed his knuckles in my face. If you hadn't started fighting we could easily have explained to Travers——"

"It's too late now!" fumed Hal Brewster, who was sore and angry. "You said it was pax, and then you start fighting us! All right, you St. Frank's bounders! We'll get our own back for this!"

"You bet we will!" backed up Georgie Glynn.

And the River House boys, refusing to be pacified, went on their way.

"It's a pity," said Nipper, with regret. "There was no need for that fight at all."

"I like that!" protested Travers. "We rescued you, didn't we?"

"No, you jolly well didn't!" replied Nipper. "Who told you that we were in any danger? Those River House chaps agreed to make it 'pax' as soon as we explained the situation to them. Then you come along and start a scrap! And I'm jiggered if Handforth doesn't help!"

"Well, you helped, too," argued Handforth defensively.

"It's no good arguing," growled Nipper. "I shall have to explain to Brewster when I see him next time. Dash it, I hate misunderstandings!"

"Well, anyway, we licked 'em!" said Handforth, with satisfaction.

And that, as far as he was concerned, was all that mattered.

CHAPTER 3.

The Bargain!

PROFESSOR THORPE OGLEBY, the self-appointed headmaster of St. Frank's, walked moodily down Bellton High Street.

The famous archæologist was a striking-looking man. Bony, lean, he possessed a big head which was perched on the top of a long and narrow neck. And he had a habit of projecting his head forward until he resembled a human hawk. His nose, long and thin, was not unlike a beak; his eyes were deeply sunken into hollow sockets. Normally a kindly man, at the moment Professor Ogleby was filled with bitterness and animosity against humanity in general. The outrageous obstinacy of the St. Frank's boys had hardened his soul. Their failure to appreciate the importance of the great work of excavating for Roman remains shocked him. These young scamps thought more of their games. And, after all, what were games compared with the discovery of a great Roman camp?

The professor was worried.

He had just been talking with Mr. James Drummond, his right-hand man. Mr. Drummond was also a noted archæologist, and he was in charge of the men who were ready to commence the excavation work. But those men were idle—and looked like remaining idle. For they could do nothing whilst the boys remained in "possession."

The professor had thought of employing the men to make a determined attack

upon the rebel camp. If they only went into it with a will, the task would be simple. But Mr. Drummond had been all against the scheme. It would mean a great deal of harmful publicity, especially if the London newspapers got hold of the story. The famous Professor Ogleby paying men to attack schoolboys! St. Frank's would find itself in the lime-light—with Professor Ogleby figuring, more or less, as the villain of the piece.

No, it wouldn't do. Mr. Drummond had succeeded in convincing his superior that any such move would be fatal. Parents all over the country would be up in arms; the famous old school would be in disrepute.

So there was a deadlock.

Walking out of the village into the gloomy lane, Professor Ogleby was rather startled to hear schoolboy voices just ahead. He saw a number of dim figures. They were not seniors.

"Upon my word!" murmured the professor nervously.

It occurred to him that these boys were some of the rebels. And if they encountered him like this they would probably duck him in the River Stowe! He knew perfectly well that they had not forgiven him for his dramatic and sensational attack of Saturday—when he had blown a hole in Little Side.

He was not a cowardly man, but he had no desire to be ducked. He retreated cautiously into the hedge, hoping that he would not be seen. He would allow the boys to pass.

"We'll get our own back!" were the first words he overheard, uttered in an unfamiliar voice. "The rotters! Jumping on us like that!"

"Down with St. Frank's!" chorused a number of other indignant voices.

"Worse luck, we shall have to wait until this silly rebellion is over," said the first voice. "We can't do anything against Nipper & Co. until they've settled their trouble with old Ogleby."

"We can wait," said one of the others. "We won't forget this giddy business! Not likely!"

"They can't treat the River House in such a way and get away with it!" growled one of the others. "By Jove! My left eye is all puffy, and my right ear is double its normal size!"

"What about my nose?" grumbled somebody else. "Oh, if we could only think of some way of paying out the rotters! Jumping on us like that—smashing us up—and leaving us strewn all over the road!"

"We mustn't be too bitter," said the first voice. "Calm down, you chaps. After all, it was a misunderstanding——"

"That doesn't make any difference!" snorted one of the others. "They wiped us up, and we want vengeance!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Down with St. Frank's!"

The figures passed on, out of earshot. And Professor Thorpe Ogleby was quivering from head to foot with sudden excitement.

He had soon jumped to the truth. These boys were not rebels at all, but juniors from the River House School! And even Professor Ogleby knew that a keen rivalry existed between St. Frank's and the River House. It was not necessary for him to be quick-witted to realise that there had just been a bitter scrap between the rival factions.

And Brewster & Co. were vowing vengeance, and they did not know how to obtain it!

What an opportunity! A dazzling idea had occurred to Professor Ogleby. Here was a rival school—a great potential attacking force! If these schoolboys were to attack the rebel camp, who would care, who would notice?

If men were set against the rebels it would mean a lot of unsavoury publicity. But boys! Pouf! Just a mere rag! Nobody would take the slightest notice. It was not merely an idea, it was a super brain-wave.

"Boys! Boys! One moment!" shouted the professor, running after Brewster & Co. with frantic eagerness. "A word with you, young men!"

The River House boys, hearing the voice, halted. Even in the gloom they recognised the loose-limbed figure, and some of them were momentarily alarmed.

"Cave!" went up a shout.

"Hold on!" said Brewster coolly. "We've nothing to fear from Dr. Ogleby. Let's see what he wants."

The professor came up.

"Which of you is the—er—leader of this little band?" he asked. "You are River House boys, are you not?"

"That's right, sir," said Hal. "I'm the leader. Brewster's my name, sir."

"Brewster?" repeated the professor. "Splendid! I understand, Brewster, that you and your companions have just had a little—er—disagreement with some of my own junior boys? Some of those wretched rebels—eh? Dear me! You appear to be badly knocked about!"

"They jumped on us, sir," growled Norton.

"I am not at all surprised to hear it," said the Head of St. Frank's. "Those boys would jump on anybody. The unmitigated young rascals! They have got completely out of hand. My sympathies are entirely with you, and if you would care to—er—get your own back, I think I can suggest an admirable method."

The River House juniors were silent; they were also intrigued.

"Yes," said Dr. Ogleby. "If you like, I can help you."

"How, sir?" asked Brewster bluntly.

"Lest there should be a misunderstanding, I will make it clear, at once, that I also want you to help me," said the professor, who was, above all else, an honest and straightforward man. "You can help me, but you can help yourselves, too. Thus the arrangement will be mutually advantageous."

"It'll be what, sir?" asked two or three of the River House boys.

"In a nutshell, here is the position," said the professor. "I want to get those rebels off the St. Frank's playing fields; you want to obtain your revenge for the manner in which you have been recently—ahem!—wiped up. You understand? Now, there is quite a number of you boys, and a great deal more of you at the River House School—eh? With a sufficiently strong force——"

"Hold on, sir," interrupted Kingswood. "Are you suggesting that we River House chaps should help you to get Nipper and his chums off their playing fields?"

"Well, yes——"

"Nothing doing!" chorused the crowd.

"But, good gracious!" protested Professor Ogleby. "You do not seem to understand——"

"We understand all right, sir," said Kingswood. "We couldn't think of it!"

"But, my dear boys——"

"All right, sir; I'll do the talking," interrupted Hal Brewster. "You chaps had better keep quiet. Now, sir. Let's have it straight from the shoulder. Are we to understand that you want us to attack the St. Frank's rebels?"

"'Attack' is hardly the correct term," said the professor. "It won't be anything more than a mere—er—rag. There should be no difficulties. The defences are next to nothing—just a few wires round the grounds."

"Barbed wires, sir?"

"Oh, no; the wire is quite plain," said the professor quickly. "All I want you to do is to indulge in one of your usual high-

spirited scraps. I think you call them scraps, do you not? Of course, I shan't expect you to render me this service for nothing. I am willing to—pay."

"Oh, you're willing to pay, sir?" asked Brewster, a grim note creeping into his voice. "And how much are you willing to pay?"

"A pound to each boy," replied Dr. Ogleby, after a moment's hesitation.

"Phew! A quid each—eh?" murmured Dave Ascott. "Well, look here, sir, you can keep——"

"Just a minute!" interrupted Brewster. "This is interesting, you chaps. We want our own back against those St. Frank's bounders, don't we? And it isn't so easy to get a quid each nowadays." He turned to the professor. "I suppose you realise, sir, that it'll require a pretty hefty force to get those St. Frank's chaps off the playing fields?"

"There are plenty of you River House boys, are there not?"

"Oh, rather, sir; but it'll require plenty of pounds," said Brewster gently. "If you are prepared to pay——"

"I am prepared to pay anything," broke in the professor fiercely. "Do you hear me? Anything! I am sick and tired of all this delay. I am a man of means—and a man of my word. I don't care how much it costs me! There will be a pound note for every boy who helps me in this enterprise. Now," he went on eagerly, "that has made a difference—eh?"

"You bet it has, sir," said Brewster coolly. "A quid each, you chaps—and the more the merrier!"

"But hang it!" protested Glynn, surprised. "You're not suggesting that we should accept money, are you? You're not hinting that we should play such a dirty trick on Nipper and his pals?"

"Really!" said the professor, with some heat. "What do you mean—'dirty trick'? Those boys are defying the authority of the school. I am justified in employing any means——"

"Quite right, sir!" interrupted Brewster heartily. "Don't take any notice of these chaps. I'm the leader, and if you arrange this thing with me, I'll guarantee that the job will be done. And it will be done thoroughly, too."

"I say!" ejaculated Kingswood feebly.

"You're mad—all of you!" said Brewster. "Blow St. Frank's! Have you forgotten the way those rotters smashed into us ten minutes ago? Of course we want our revenge. And here's a chance of getting paid, too. A pound each, my sons."



Handforth, entangled in the coils of barbed wire, tried to free himself. There came the ominous sound of tearing cloth.

'Think of the spree we can have afterwards. Why should we care twopence about Nipper's crowd? What did they care about us?'

"That's true," admitted Norton uneasily. "Still——"

"We can't afford to be squeamish," growled Hal Brewster. "All I want to be certain of is that the money will be paid over. Do you guarantee, sir, that you'll whack out a pound each to every boy as soon as the rebels are cleared off the playing fields?"

"Yes," said the professor promptly.

"And when do you want us to bring off the attack?"

"Let me see," said the professor, thinking deeply. "To-morrow is Tuesday, and—— Let us say Wednesday afternoon. Yes, that will do splendidly. Wednesday afternoon. It is a half-holiday, and you boys will be free."

"You couldn't have chosen a better time, sir," said Brewster heartily. "Wednesday afternoon it is, then! And I'll turn up with an overwhelmingly large force—such a force that the rebels won't stand an earthly chance."

"My boy. I admire you for your splendid spirit," said Professor Ogleby breathlessly. "I don't care what this costs me. You can bring fifty of your companions—even a hundred! As long

as you defeat those rebellious juniors, and get them off the playing fields, I shall be satisfied."

"Even if it costs you a hundred quid, sir?"

"Even if it costs me a hundred—ahem!—quid," said Professor Ogleby. "My patience is exhausted. I am, in fact, desperate. Do this for me, and you will not regret it. And let it be purely—er—unofficial. You understand? Let it be an ordinary schoolboy rag. Your masters need know nothing, and if there is any unpleasantness later, I will smooth it out for you."

"Then we're safe all along the line, you chaps," grinned Hal Brewster. "Good egg! A quid each all round—no danger in attacking the rebel stronghold, and all we've got to do is to clear those chaps off. They say that revenge is sweet, don't they? By Jove! We'll have the time of our lives on Wednesday afternoon!"

The other River House boys began to get excited now. They hadn't liked the idea much at first; but they accepted Hal Brewster as their leader, and if he agreed to Professor Ogleby's startling proposition, then it was all right. Hal's features were considerably swollen, and he was very sore. Professor Ogleby could not have approached him at a better time!

CHAPTER 4.

Getting Ready for the Fray!

WHEN Professor Ogleby arrived at St. Frank's he was a changed man.

Gone was his depression; gone was his ill-humour. He walked with a springy step, his eyes gleamed, and he even chuckled aloud.

Mr. Horace Pycraft, the master of the Fourth Form, gazed at the Head in astonishment when they happened to meet near Big Arch.

"Good-evening, sir," said Mr. Pycraft deferentially.

He was always deferential to the Head. He was the only master at St. Frank's, perhaps, who wholeheartedly agreed with Professor Ogleby's scheme for digging up the playing fields. Mr. Pycraft was having an easy time of it just now, but he regarded the rebels as a mob of unruly, unprincipled young rascals. The sooner they were brought to their senses, the better.

"Oh, hallo! Is that you, Mr. Pycraft?" asked the Head breezily. "Splendid! How are you, my dear Mr. Pycraft? Rather a blustery evening; looks as though it might turn to rain."

Mr. Pycraft was not interested in the weather.

"You appear to be in high spirits, sir?" he suggested, as he fell into step with Dr. Ogleby across Inner Court.

"I am, indeed, Mr. Pycraft," agreed the professor. "Yes, my spirits are excellent."

"I trust, sir, that it means you have come to some definite decision regarding the unruly boys of the Lower School," said the Form-master. "It is high time those scamps were brought to their senses. I cannot tell you, sir, how deeply I sympathise with you in your unhappy predicament."

The professor laughed.

"It is no longer a predicament, Mr. Pycraft," he replied lightly. "Oh, no! I think I can safely say that I shall soon score an overwhelming triumph over these misguided boys."

There was such a gloating note in his voice that Mr. Pycraft was burning with curiosity. Mr. Horace Pycraft was a busybody of the pronounced type. His favourite recreation was getting his nose into matters which did not really concern him. But this particular matter did concern him, so perhaps he was to be excused.

"You have thought of some plan, sir?" he hinted.

"I have not only thought of it, Mr. Pycraft, but all my arrangements are

made," replied the Head. "It will not be long, now, before the rebels are brought to their senses."

Mr. Pycraft did his best during the remainder of that short walk to the Head's house; and he was something of an expert at pumping, too. However, his efforts bore no fruit. Dr. Thorpe Ogleby was not to be drawn; he did not say anything further to satisfy the Form-master's curiosity.

In due course the conversation was reported to the rebel chief.

Nipper's scouting organisation was very thorough. After dark there were generally two scouts lurking about within Inner Court; for Nipper believed in getting to know all he possibly could about the enemy's movements. One of these scouts made his report as soon as he was relieved.

"I'm not surprised," said Nipper gruffly. "So the Ogleby bird is preparing something big, is he?"

"He was gloating like one o'clock!" said the scout, who was Jack Grey, of the West House. "He sounded like a man who is certain of victory. It doesn't sound any too good to me. The old boy has got something hefty up his sleeve."

"You didn't hear anything that might give us a clue?"

"Worse luck, no," replied Grey. "We only heard Ogleby saying that he would soon have us whacked. Pieface kept on asking him, but he wouldn't be drawn."

"H'm! All the more reason for us to hurry on with our defences," said Nipper. "I wonder what the old boy is planning? An attack by his men, perhaps. Who cares? We're ready for him any time he likes!"

THE first task, that evening, was to dig up the turf from that neglected little patch of lawn in the Head's garden.

The raid was successfully accomplished. As soon as supper was over, Nipper led a dozen fellows on the job. They took cutting tools with them, and sufficient turf was soon obtained.

"We'll see how he likes this," grinned Nipper. "He blew our turf to smithereens, so we've borrowed some of his!"

"And it would have served him right if we had taken it from his big lawn!" growled Handforth. "By George! This is good stuff, you know! It'll make Little Side as good as new."

He was right. When that turf was laid down over the barren patch, it was difficult to detect the spot. Within a week

or two the wound, as it were, would be completely healed.

Later on, towards eleven o'clock, the rebel camp appeared to be fast asleep. But it wasn't. The scouts reported that all was quiet; there was no sign of any impending attack.

So Nipper organised the first faggot party.

"There'll be precious little sleep for any of us until the small hours of the morning," he said briskly. "There are two or three stacks of those faggots, and they'll take some shifting. But with dozens of us working on the job, in relays, we ought to do the trick easily by about three or four."

"I say!" protested Griffith, of the Fourth. "We shan't get much sleep!"

"Rats! You can make up your sleep later," put in Handforth. "If we don't build that stockade we shall find ourselves in the soup."

When the first party arrived on Farmer Holt's meadow, they found the farmer himself.

"Hallo! We thought you'd be in bed, Mr. Holt," said Nipper.

"I'm usually abed by this time," admitted Farmer Holt. "But I heard you boys a-comin', so I thought I'd take a look at ye. You'll have a rare job, carrying all them faggots up to the school, won't ye?"

"We can do it," replied Nipper confidently.

"Well, all I can say is, ye'd best keep to the medders," said the farmer. "I don't want you young rips tramplin' over my big field."

"We won't interfere with your big field, Mr. Holt," said Nipper. "It's too muddy, for one thing, and it's not such a short cut. We'll keep to the meadows."

"Well, see that ye do," said the farmer gruffly. "Be careful when you get to the end stack of faggots. There's three big rolls of barbed wire lyin' about there, and ye might get hurt if ye don't look out for yourselves. I thought I'd best warn ye."

"Barbed wire?" said Nipper quickly. "Three rolls? Let's have a look."

The farmer led the way, and Nipper's eyes were gleaming when he inspected three great rolls of new barbed wire.

"I'm puttin' up a lot o' new fencing," explained Holt.

"How much for the barbed wire, Mr. Holt?" asked Nipper crisply.

"Eh?"

"We need it," continued the rebel leader. "We didn't know you had so much of the stuff handy. I am doubtful if there'll be enough faggots to go round."

"Ay, I was thinkin' the same," nodded Holt. "But that's your trouble—not mine."

"If we have this wire, we can erect a stockade that will defeat any attack," said Nipper. "We'll have the wire on the same terms, Mr. Holt. We only want to hire it."

"Oh, no, ye don't!" said the farmer promptly. "Hire it, hey? What's the good o' that wire to me after you're unrolled it? It'll be naught but a tangle. I ain't sure that I'll let ye buy it outright, neither."

But he agreed in the end—naming a price which allowed him a fair amount of profit. Mr. Jeremiah Holt was a business man.

"Barbed wire—eh?" said Reggie Pitt, grinning. "Well, there's nothing like doing the thing thoroughly!"

The enthusiasm of the rebels was something to marvel at. Very few of them jibbed at the hard work. The only three juniors who might have kicked up a fuss were not present. Forrest and Gulliver and Bell, of Study A, had been kicked out of the rebel camp—for treachery. It was they, in fact, who had put Professor Ogleby up to the dodge of burrowing under the playing fields and exploding a charge of dynamite. In return for their services, the professor had given them a week's holiday.

The rebel camp was better off without the three young rascals.

Working hard, and far into the night, the boys carried the faggots and the barbed wire into their stronghold. They were tireless. They were doing all this to save their playing fields from destruction. At any other time they would have groaned at the severity of the labour; but now they took it all as a matter of course. And Nipper's leadership was inspiring.

It wasn't until the first streaks of dawn were appearing in the eastern sky that the great task was finished. Most of the rebels were sleeping soundly; and the last party came in weary and happy. They sought their own beds.

As the daylight increased, so the rebel camp slept. It had been a good night's work, and sleep was necessary, for the morrow's work would be just as hard.

CHAPTER 5.

Handforth Shows the Way!

"DEAR me!" said Professor Ogleby mildly.

He was looking out of his bedroom window; and from this point of vantage he could see right across

the playing fields. He beheld, to his astonishment, great piles of faggots. They were distributed all round Little Side and Big Side—untidy heaps of them. The professor wondered where they had come from, since they had not been there the previous evening.

"Upon my word! These boys are tireless, and their determination is something beyond belief," he murmured. "Poor youngsters! Do they imagine that a few faggots will stave off the inevitable defeat?"

He could see that the boys were already getting to work. Breakfast in the rebel camp had been over for some time; and parties of juniors were busily breaking open the bundles of faggots, and the long sticks were being converted into a sort of temporary fence.

Later, the professor took a stroll. He

watched the preparations calmly and placidly. There was, indeed, an almost pitiful smile on his face. His very manner filled some of the rebels with vague alarm.

"He doesn't seem to care a bit," said Lionel Corcoran of the Fourth. "Look at him, you chaps!"

"It's funny," growled Buster Boots. "You'd think he would try to prevent our building this stockade. But what does he care?"

"I'd give a quid to know what his wheeze is," said Bob Christine. "It's his dashed confidence which worries me! I'm jiggered if he isn't laughing now!"

It was a fact. Professor Thorpe Ogleby was moving away, and many of the rebels could see that he was laughing outright.

"Don't take any notice," advised Nipper. "He's probably doing it just to make us windy. I don't care what plans he is



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making—we'll beat them. Don't forget our war cry—Hands off the playing fields! Let's be thankful that we've got a breathing space. The professor can grin all he likes, but we'll soon have a stockade erected which will be strong enough to give us all the protection we need."

The "wall" was being built rapidly. The faggots were not just ordinary sticks of the kind known as "kindling." They were long, the average length being between six and seven feet. They were like extra big pea-sticks.

By using them fairly liberally, the "wall" was assuming quite a solid appearance. Yet there were plenty of loopholes, through which the defenders would be able to thrust their pea-shooters. For a certain section of the rebels had been hard at work manufacturing pea-shooters by the dozen.

In order to bind the faggots securely together, so that they formed a really formidable defence work, the barbed wire was brought into use.

"You'd better go easy with that stuff, you chaps," said Nipper, as he saw Handforth & Co. and one or two others preparing to tackle one of the big rolls. "Barbed wire is tricky stuff."

"Are you telling me?" asked Handforth, with scorn. "Do you think I don't know what barbed wire is? I'm handling this job, my son! Leave the barbed wire to me."

"Go ahead, then," said Nipper, grinning. "You know what you've got to do with it, don't you? There's plenty of the wire, and we can shove festoons of it in front of the faggots, making a sort of barbed wire entanglement."

"If there's any entangling to be done, you can rely on old Handy to do it," said Church cheerfully. "He's torn his bags in two places already."

"Eh?" ejaculated Handforth. "Where? They aren't tears, you ass—they're only plucks. Who's got some pliers? How can we do anything without tools?"

He wrestled with the wire, and Church and McClure stood well clear. Archie Glenthorne, Brent, Russell, and Fullwood were engaged in a similar task with another drum of wire.

"Here we are!" said Handforth briskly. "Now we're getting to something! Once we've got the end free—Whoa! What the—Hi!"

Instead of finding the proper end of the wire, he had been pulling at one or two loose coils near the edge of the roll. Suddenly a dozen coils or so came free, and they whipped round, spreading out in a

confusing and bewildering festoon. Before Handforth knew it, the loosened wire had coiled round his body.

"Here, lend a hand, you asses!" he gasped. "I'm getting mixed up!"

He tried to free himself, and there came the sound of ominous tearing.

"Oh, crumbs!" yelled Handforth. "I'm getting all chewed up! I'm wounded!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Good old Handy!"

"You got yourself into that mess—now get out of it," said Church callously.

"We warned you," added McClure.

"What's the good of warning me?" howled Handforth, struggling wildly, and sending the festoon of wire flying in all directions. "Oh, great corks! Look at my bags! They're torn in a dozen places!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Archie Glenthorne had met with a similar disaster. Caught by a coil or two of the tricky wire, he gurgled with horror as he heard his clothes tearing, and yelped with pain as he felt his skin being grazed.

"Odds catastrophes and disasters!" he bleated. "Good gad! I mean to say, this is a bit thick, isn't it?"

"Go easy, Archie!" grinned Fullwood. "It's no good being in a hurry with barbed wire. You've got to treat it with respect."

"The blighting stuff is whizzing through the atmosphere like a bally artillery barrage!" yelped Archie. "Help! I mean to say, S O S!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Somehow, Handforth managed to get himself free from the entangling wire; and numbers of the other rebels stood round yelling with laughter. For Edward Oswald was a comical sight. His clothing was a mass of jagged tears.

"The best thing you can do, Handy, is to get indoors—quick!" said Church sternly. "You're not fit to be seen!"

"He'd be more completely clothed in a bathing costume," said Travers, shaking his head. "Dear, dear! This is shocking! And in broad daylight, too!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Handforth did not see anything funny in the situation. He felt cold. There were draughts whizzing into every section of his person—north, south, east, and west. He looked more like a scarecrow than a scarecrow itself. And Archie was in not much better condition.

Somehow, they managed to escape, and after they had completely changed—and after they had stuck numerous sections of plaster on numerous sections of their

anatomies—they appeared in public again. Handforth was not half so enthusiastic now about tackling the barbed wire.

Not that there was any reason why skin or clothing should be torn. Barbed wire can be handled safely enough if one only takes care. But Edward Oswald Handforth, of course, was noted for his ram-headedness. The others, profiting by his experience, went to work gingerly.

As the day progressed, so the defences grew more and more formidable. The stockade was being built round the "inner circle" of the playing fields, so to speak. Only the precious playing pitches were actually guarded. The outer turf was not of very great importance. By reducing the circle in this way the faggots were eked out.

The rest of the school watched interestedly—admiringly. The seniors, in fact, felt that they were rather mean about it. They were leaving all the work to the juniors—and the juniors were protecting Big Side just as much as they were protecting Little Side.

William Napoleon Browne, the skipper of the Fifth, even offered to help. But Nipper smilingly told him that the rebels were quite O.K. It was far better for the seniors to carry on in the school—to keep the flag flying.

By the evening the stockade was complete—and it certainly looked formidable.

First of all, there was the original wire fence—which could no longer be electrified. Beyond that was a short space of turf, and then the stockade—a long, continuous wall of faggots, cunningly and stoutly held together by the barbed wire. It really looked a lot stronger than it actually was. An ordinary motor-car, charging it, would have sliced clean through. But it was hardly likely that Professor Ogleby would employ motor-cars to charge the defences. Nipper and the other boys could not help thinking that the professor would rely upon the human factor; the workmen probably.

"When the attack comes, we shall be ready," said Nipper confidently. "We've got sacks of peas and scores of pea-shooters."

"And what about our bombs?" grinned Handforth. "By George, we're ready! Thank goodness the professor didn't attack while we were building the stockade. That's what I can't understand, you know. He's been watching all day. He knows what we're up to, and yet he remains as cool as the dickens."

It was certainly disturbing. Throughout the day Professor Thorpe Ogleby had conducted the school normally; he had

been absolutely indifferent to the activities of the rebels. It was this indifference which caused uneasiness in the camp. Once or twice the professor had strolled about, watching the feverish work. And he had only smiled.

Most of the boys felt certain that the clash would come that night. So none of them troubled to undress. They slept fully clothed—and many guards were kept on duty. But although the night was as black as pitch, nothing happened.

The guards were changed frequently, and a strict and careful watch was kept. Nipper's scouts reported that the professor had gone up to bed in the usual way; his shadow had been seen on the blind. He had put his light out at eleven o'clock, and his bed-room had remained in darkness ever since.

This suspense was getting unpleasant.

Another day dawned, and still Dr. Ogleby held his hand. It was Wednesday to-day—normally a half-holiday. The rebels, in spite of their new protection, felt on edge. Rain fell during the morning, and this did not raise their spirits. They kept in their tents and in the pavilion, watching the rain, and wondering when the blow would fall.

CHAPTER 6.

Enter the Enemy!

THE rain ceased at about midday—much to the satisfaction of the juniors. For they had planned to play a House match that afternoon—just as though everything was normal. The sky was still overcast, and there was a chill autumn wind.

Two visitors arrived, in the persons of Edgar Fenton, the captain of the school, and William Napoleon Browne. One section of the stockade had been built as a door, and this was opened to admit the two seniors.

"You seem to have fenced yourselves in pretty thoroughly," smiled Fenton. "Well done, kids! Carry on with the good work! You've got the whole school behind you."

"Thanks, Fenton," said Nipper gladly.

"Not only behind you, Brother Nipper, but in front of you, to right of you, and to left of you," added Browne generously. "Whilst heartily approving of your valiant stand, the seniors nevertheless feel that a little help, in a concrete form, would not be misunderstood."

"Help?" grinned Nipper. "Of course, concrete has its uses, and I am glad



With triumphant shouts the attackers swept down the stockade and got to grips with the St. Frank's rebels.

that you two seniors have been putting your heads together——”

“A remark, brother, which is capable of more than one interpretation,” interrupted Browne suspiciously. “The help we are suggesting takes the form of money. As treasurer of the senior branch of the rebel contingent, I have pleasure in handing you the necessary sinews of war.”

And Browne gracefully handed over an envelope which contained a remarkable number of pound notes and ten-shilling notes.

“But what’s all this?” asked Nipper, in astonishment.

“It was Browne’s idea,” said Fenton, smiling. “He thought it rather unfair that you juniors should whack out all the exes. We’re not blind. We’ve seen what you’ve been doing lately. All these faggots and barbed wire and grub and all the rest of it—you can’t get that stuff for nothing. Although we seniors aren’t taking any active part in the rebellion, we’re in full sympathy with you, and the least we can do is to pay our whack.”

“Good old Fenton!”

“Hurrah!”

“Good luck to the seniors!”

“Hear, hear!”

There was a good deal of cheering and excitement. This demonstration of the seniors’ support was heartening.

“We will leave the money with you, Brother Nipper,” said Browne. “Various stalwarts have been opening their purse-strings so frequently that they must be getting threadbare. It is for you to distribute the largesse as you think fit. My own idea is that the exes should be shared as equally as possible.”

“Thanks awfully, you fellows!” said Nipper gratefully. “To tell you the truth, we’re practically spun out. This money will come in jolly useful if any other war materials are needed. We’re feeling uncertain. Ogleby doesn’t seem to do anything, but we’ve got to be ready.”

“I venture to suggest, brothers, that the Ogleby bird is flapping its wings and cleaning its beak at the present moment,” said Browne. “Precisely how it will strike, I cannot suggest. But all the morning Brother Ogleby has been passing this way and that way with an expression of serene happiness on that part of his anatomy which, in any ordinary person, would stand for a face. I confess I am dubious.”

“That’s just the point,” said Fenton. “That’s what we came to see you about, Nipper. You see, the First XI has a very

important fixture this afternoon—and it's away from home. The Redcliffe match. You know what the Redcliffe match is."

"Rather!" said Nipper. "One of your toughest fixtures."

"Yes; and as a rule three-parts of the Sixth and Fifth go along, with the eleven," continued Fenton. "We were wondering if we ought to keep to the same practice. Supposing something happens while we're away? Will you youngsters be able to carry on all right?"

"Why, of course!" replied Nipper promptly. "You go, Fenton—the other seniors, too. Don't worry about us. We'll keep the flag flying."

"Rather!" said Handforth. "What an idea! Why, you seniors wouldn't be any good, anyhow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'd only get in our way and bother us," continued Handforth. "That's the best thing you can do—clear out."

"Thanks," said Fenton, with a chuckle.

"No offence, of course," went on Handforth hastily. "But we don't care if old Ogleby brings the giddy Army—and the Navy, too!"

The two seniors departed, and the rebels were heartened. There was a good deal in

what Handforth had said—although, as some of the others pointed out, it wasn't necessary for him to trot it out so bluntly. The seniors were perhaps better out of the way.

But if the seniors had known what was coming, they might have postponed the Redcliffe match. And the juniors might have felt differently about the whole situation.

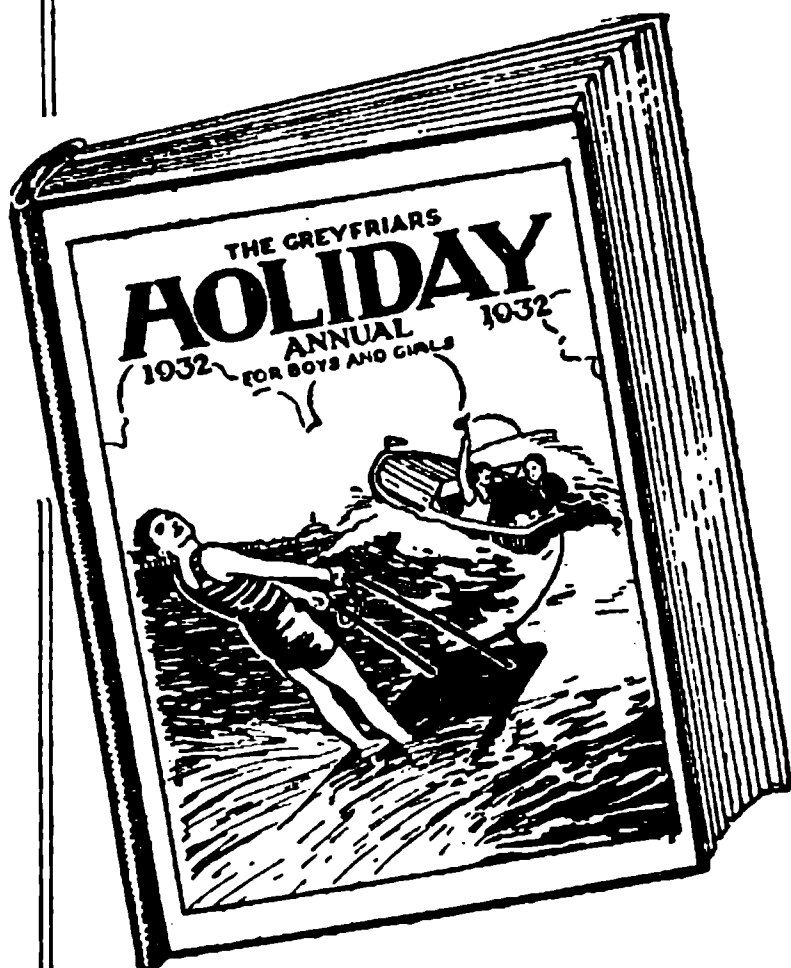
Nobody at St. Frank's had the faintest idea of Professor Thorpe Ogleby's latest stunt. It was so daring that even the professor himself was due for a shock.

The seniors went off, and an unnatural quietness descended over St. Frank's. It was like the calm before the storm. There was something almost ominous in that peacefulness.

The rebels prepared for their own game—Ancient House versus West House. It was a Remove game, pure and simple, and the Fourth-Formers prepared to watch and to criticise. The teams took the field, and Lionel Corcoran, who was acting as referee, blew his whistle.

"I don't like the look of things much," he admitted to Nipper and Handforth and Reggie Pitt and one or two of the others.

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"It's too quiet—too restful. Something's going to happen!"

"Why worry?" asked Nipper confidently. "We're ready, aren't we? Let's get on with the game. Line up, you chaps!"

"Just a minute!" said Corky.

One of the scouts was hurrying up, and he was looking flushed.

"I don't know whether you chaps ought to start this game," he said breathlessly.

"Why, what's the matter, Burton?" asked Nipper.

The scout—Tom Burton of the West House—was looking worried as well as excited.

"Sink me, shipmates, but things look funny," he said. "The skipper—that is, old Ogleby—is like a cat on a hot deck. Can't keep still a minute. First he walks into the Triangle, then he strides back across Inner Court. And he's looking cager and expectant."

"You've seen nothing else suspicious?" asked Nipper.

"Isn't that enough?" retorted Burton. "Seems to me you'd best postpone this game, and clear the decks for action."

"Rats!" said Handforth. "Blow Ogleby! Let's begin the game. We're going to give the West House chaps the licking of their lives!"

So the game started. But it wasn't long before Professor Thorpe Ogleby showed his hand. He had deliberately waited until this afternoon—until the Fifth and Sixth were away from St. Frank's. The juniors were confident enough that they could protect the playing fields; but nothing could alter the fact that they were alone, with no hope of reinforcements.

The first sign of the enemy came from that side of the playing fields which faced the River Stowe. There were some pleasant meadows between the "stockade" and the river, and the open country was gently sloping. So the look-outs within the enemy camp could see for a considerable distance. And what they saw caused them to rub their eyes.

Round a belt of trees came crowds of junior schoolboys. They came marching onwards in a determined manner, and before they had progressed far, Professor Ogleby appeared, and walked quickly towards them.

The look-outs, at first, failed to understand what was in the wind; but when they saw the strength of the force that was approaching, they became suspicious. It was an undeniable fact that the boys in the distance were heading for the stockade.

"Hi!" yelled one of the look-outs. "Stop the game, you chaps! Something's happenings!"

"The enemy!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Corky blew the whistle, the game came to an abrupt end, and there was a rush for the "walls." The rebels stood staring blankly.

"Why, these chaps in front are Brewster & Co., of the River House!" sang out Nipper, in relief. "You silly asses! There's no danger! Brewster and his pals wouldn't attack us!"

"Well, it looks funny," said Travers. "Who are those other chaps? For the love of Samson! Aren't they the Helmford College fellows?"

"So they are!" said Nipper. "There must be a couple of dozen chaps from Helmford College among that crowd. Yes, and a lot more from Bannington Grammar School."

"And heaps from Caistowe High School, too!" yelled somebody else. "My only topper! What the dickens does this mean?"

The excitement was spreading rapidly. The situation was bewildering.

Hal Brewster & Co. were present in full strength; there were dozens and dozens of them, forming a very formidable force.

Professor Ogleby felt slightly dizzy when he saw the boys pouring up in a continuous stream. Yet, at the same time, he was throbbing with triumph. That boy—what has his name—Brewster?—was keeping his word. He had promised to bring a large force, and here it was!

"Good gracious me!" exclaimed the professor, as he reached the foremost arrivals. "I have been expecting you, my boys, but I must confess that I hardly anticipated such a great number."

Hal Brewster grinned

"Well, sir, you said that you wanted us to do the job thoroughly," he replied coolly. "So here we are!"

"So I see—so I see!"

"Over a hundred of us, sir," said Hal proudly. "How's that? These Helmford chaps really came over to play football, but we've postponed the game—for your sake, sir."

"That was very good of you—very generous," said the professor, nodding. "Splendid! It is a spirit I like to see."

"There are lots of other chaps from the Grammar School, sir, and more from the High School," continued Brewster. "You see, I thought that we River House fellows might need some help."

Dave Ascott was looking rather blankly at the enemy camp.

"I say, I thought there wasn't much for us to do?" he asked. "Look at that! How are we going to break through that defence?"

"It is just as well, my boys, that you came in such force," said the professor hastily. "I do not think you will have any real trouble in smashing a way through. All you have to do is to drive these rebellious boys off the playing fields."

"And take possession of them ourselves—eh, sir?" asked Brewster.

"Yes, yes—exactly."

"All right; we'll do it," said Hal. "Leave it all to us, sir! Come on, you chaps! Down with the rebels! It won't take us long to wipe them up!"

"Hurrah!"

"Down with the rebels!"

And the attacking force, with Hal Brewster at its head, swept to the scene of battle!

CHAPTER 7.

The Battle Begins!

NIPPER almost swayed, for he felt dizzy.

"Did—did you hear that, you chaps?" he asked blankly. "Brewster! And Brewster was yelling—'Down with the rebels!' He's leading all these chaps against us!"

"The traitor!" said Handforth hoarsely. "It's—it's unbelievable!"

"The River House—the Grammar School—and all these other chaps!" gurgled Reggio Pitt. "Turning on us like this! They've always been our rivals, we know, but they've always been friendly, too."

"The rotters—the cads!" bellowed Handforth, red in the face with wrath.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Nipper abruptly.

"Thought of something?" asked Corky.

"Yes," said Nipper. "That scrap we had with Brewster & Co. on Monday evening!"

"What!"

"Don't you remember?" asked Nipper quickly. "Brewster went off vowing vengeance. His pals said that they would get their own back on us!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"But—but this is too thick for words!"

"I never thought it of Brewster," said Nipper sadly. "He was wild with us, of course, but who would have dreamed that he would get all these fellows together like this? He must have done it deliberately."

"Yes, and he arranged it with the professor, too," said Reggio Pitt shrewdly. "Don't you remember how confident the old boy was on Monday evening? By Jove! Brewster must have fixed it up with him then."

"Well, we expected an attack, but we never imagined that it would be anything like this," said Nipper, his voice becoming grim. "All right! If these fatheads think they can drive us out, they'll find that they are mistaken! To your places, you chaps! Let 'em have it hot and strong! Hands off the playing-fields!"

"Hurrah!"

"Hands off the playing-fields!"

"Up, the rebels!"

The excitement spread like lightning as the rebels raced for their positions. Their peashooters were of special design, and their pockets were full of ammunition.

The knowledge that the attacking force consisted of Hal Brewster & Co. of the River House, and boys of other rival schools, goaded the rebels to a terrific pitch of resistance. It was almost unbelievable. Brewster, merely for the sake of revenge, had organised this act of treachery; had ranged himself alongside Professor Ogleby!

The attackers were drawing nearer; they were spreading out and getting ready for a big rush.

"Don't forget, you chaps!" sounded Brewster's voice above the din. "If we smash through and grab the playing-fields, it'll mean a quid each!"

"We'll do it!"

"Rather!"

"We're after the professor's money!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The attackers were in a light-hearted mood; they apparently regarded the whole affair as a sort of jape. They did not seem to appreciate the truth—that the St. Frank's juniors were defying their headmaster because they were determined to save their playing-fields from destruction.

"A quid each!" exclaimed Handforth. "Did you hear, you chaps? The professor has promised to pay these chaps a quid each if they defeat us!"

"It's beyond belief!" said Church. "They're doing it for money! For the sake of getting hold of some cash they're turning against us!"

Nipper was inwardly alarmed, although he remained quite calm. He could see that the attacking force was enormous. In Nipper's most pessimistic moments he had never feared anything like this. An attack by two or three dozen men, perhaps. But this—five or six score of excited, determined schoolboys!

And Nipper was far more afraid of schoolboys than he was of men. For these boys were reckless, and they regarded the whole adventure as a big rag. A huge jape against a rival school. That was the way they figured it, to judge by their shouts. It was a half-holiday, and here was the chance of a glorious scrap without the slightest danger of being called upon to face the music afterwards. For it was being done with the sanction and approval of the headmaster of St. Frank's. Never in all their lives had the

(Continued on page 24.)

Laugh and Keep Healthy by Reading This Week's Mirthquaking Issue of—



HANDFORTH'S Weekly

No. 22. Vol. 1.

WEEKLY SCIENCE TALK.

By Professor Napoleon
Browne.

No.2: WALKING.

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September 19th, 1931.

RAISING THE WIND.

By
JOHNNY ONIONS.

WALKING, my brothers, is a very ancient science, for we read that even Adam walked, which shows that in some respects the civilisation of those days was equal to the present time.

Now let us consider for a moment the various branches of this science—for to be proficient in one type of walking is not enough. The fellow who walks or hikes into the countryside knows little about the real art of walking. He is acquainted with only one branch of the science.

There are three others, viz: Sleep-walking, rope-walking and plank-walking. In order to try the first of these it is necessary to partake of a good supper before going to bed. Lobster is highly recommended.

Rope-walking, of course, is ridiculously easy. All that is necessary is to walk along a rope. And yet some of these circus proprietors pay enormous fees to men who do this.

Plank-walking, as a science, is almost dying out, which is a pity. In the good old days walking the plank was considered a highly enjoyable entertainment—for the spectators—and I venture to prophesy that even in these times a really good show of plank-walking would draw a large crowd. Unfortunately, of course, a sea is necessary for this; but doubtless one of the large stores in London would supply a sea. They stock everything else.

There are many things I could say about walking; but perhaps I'd better not. I could give you the history of the celebrated Mr. Shanks who owned the equally celebrated mare. I could tell remarkable stories of great lovers of walking, including Felix, who "kept on."

But the Editor would only blue-pencil it all, so what's the use? I may remark, in closing, that only two things prevent me from being a champion walker. My feet!

Next week: *LEARNING.*

I HAVE a half-warmed fish in my mind—(Sorry! I mean a half-formed wish)—to write about the difficult job of caking mash—that is, making cash.

When you are on the rocks and have no cotton rash—rotten cash—it's a beastly feeling, as nobody knows better than I. You gave no hub and the buddy's stare—at least, it should be "have no grub and the study's bare." I sometimes mix things up a bit—and you have to get your heels in maul-meals in hall. (Sorry!)

In these circumstances, money can be obtained by begging, borrowing or stealing. The second method is best if you can find any sore pimple chap—beg your pardon!—poor simple chap, to lend it you. Usually, however, the chaps who have it hang on to it.

It might be farther run—rather fun—to steal it if you are built that way—but most fellows aren't. And if you were to try begging, the odds are that you would get more ticks than kin—at least, you know what I mean.

The best way to get hold of a brittle lass—little brass—is to find things before they are lost. Observe! Suppose Handforth were to lose his best cricket-bat. You would persuade him to offer a reward for it, and you would rout it out from the whole coal-coal-hole—and blame the crass—bother! I mean, claim the brass—which was offered as a reward. (You try it on, my lad. I fancy the reward may be different from what you expect.—E. O. H.)

Another wood gay—good way—to feign good—gain food—is to stand a fellow a treat at the tuckshop, and then find you've forgotten your purse. If the chap refuses to pay, Hisses Make—Mrs. Hake—will probably let you have credit until your next remittance.

But be that as it may, I am now on the rocks. Can any fellow lend me picks sense—sixpence—until the end of the week? Thanks!

Last howling spasm—three cheers!

The EDITOR'S LIFE STORY

Written by HIMSELF

SINCE my young brother Willy has been going about St. Frank's publicly denying all the adventures I have related in previous instalments of my life story, it doesn't seem worth while continuing with it. The cheek of the youngster! Considering that all this happened before he was born, I'm blessed if I can see how he knows much about it either way.

I have already told how I escaped from my pater and mater at Southsea and went over to the Isle of Wight on my own—not a bad performance for a kid of eighteen months.

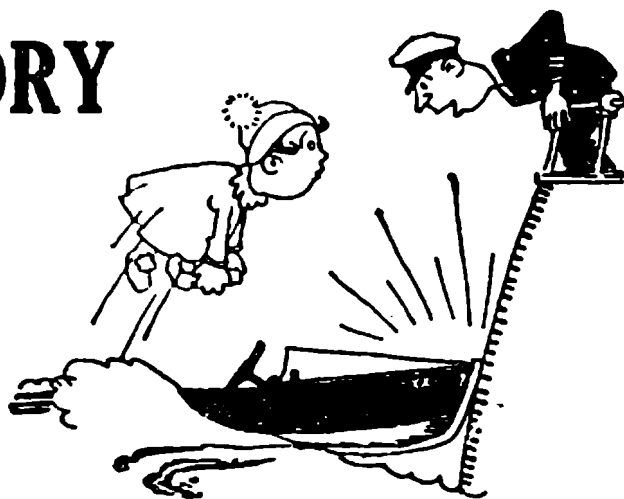
Well, I didn't like the island so much as I thought I should, for I began to get hungry and nobody would give me any grub. However, using strategy and brains—of which I have always had an abundance, as you know—I did manage to get twopence to buy a cake. There was a man with a row of pictures drawn on the pavement in Union Street, and he had a cap down on the pavement with the words, "All My Own Work" written by it.

This merchant had just put on his cap and toddled off to get some refreshment, so I sat down beside the pictures and put my cap on the pavement like he had done. And sure enough a minute later an old lady put twopence in it and said it was a crying scandal that a baby of my age should be forced to beg his bread in the gutter, and she would write to the Lord Mayor about it.

Before I had a chance to get any more oof the artist returned and turfed me out of it. So I went to a cake shop and bought a cake, and then I tried to get the boat back to Southsea.

But they wouldn't let me on the boat because I hadn't a ticket, or any money to buy one. I was arguing about it when I saw the sailor who dived overboard after the deck-chair—as I explained last week—and so I had to beat a hasty retreat.

I went down on to the sands and spotted a nice motor-boat standing hooked up to the jetty. Here was a chance to get back to Southsea. All I had to do was to push over the lever and hang on to the wheel while we chugged across the water, and when I reached Southsea I could shut my eyes and wait for the bump, not knowing how to stop the boat. I felt that I could leave my pater to make good any damage.



I therefore hopped in the boat, unhooked the rope, and was just going to start when a man called out "Stop, you little imp! Get out! You'll kill yourself!"

"Rats!" I yelled back politely, and grabbing the lever, pulled it.

My hat! Words fail me!

It was a speed-boat, and it turned out that the owner had had it specially built to bust the world's speed record.

I shot towards the pier head like a rocket, with a roar which frightened me out of my wits (if any.) Just as we were going to hit the pier at a speed of about fifty miles an hour, I wrenched over the wheel, missed a rowing-boat by an inch—the owner had dived overboard—and skidded away towards distant Portsmouth at a speed which made me quite dizzy.

I hung on to the boat, yelling to it to stop, but the silly contraption didn't take the slightest notice.

We seemed to bump over the water like a mad aeroplane. Boats were galloping in all directions to get out of my way.

Suddenly a huge siren boomed out almost in my ear. The next moment there was a terrific bump. I hurtled into the air like a Jack-in-the-box and then explored the bottom of the sea.

Just what happened after that I couldn't say. The next thing I knew was that I was lying on the deck of the Isle of Wight packet boat, and that my pater was bending over me.

It seems that as soon as he missed me at Southsea my pater made inquiries, and learned that I had been seen to board the boat for the Isle of Wight. He immediately caught the next boat, and when he was half-way across the water he was scared out of his life at seeing me charging towards the boat in my bumping motor-whizzer. Apparently I smacked into the steamer broadside, and I was chucked into the sea. A sailor dived in and saved me.

It cost the pater something. Beside the damage to the speed-boat—which was pretty well smashed up on its port

(Continued in next col.)

Poet's Con

AFTER

Leave me
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Water

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The Editor's

side—the pater
rescued me
compensated the
the damage
line.

He took it all
his money's worth
me with such
that I was almost
the time arrived
Frank's.

As for the rest
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Get rid of 'em
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WILLY'S WANGLE!

Described by NIPPER.

FLOGGING

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(C. de V. Remove.)

le Story—(cont.)

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a model child until
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INTEREST to
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and that SINK-
FEELING.

IS ADVICE :

because they are
painful.

YOUNG Willy Handforth is the limit. He's a rattling good kid, but he has no respect for his elders, and he is never happy unless he's pulling somebody's leg. Take his latest escapade.

Josh Cuttle, the porter, had reared a ladder against the fountain in the Triangle, and was doing something to its works. The fountain had suddenly ceased founting, and Josh was trying to mend it. A number of fellows were looking on, as also was Mr. Suncliffe, the Third Form master.

Suddenly there was a yell, and Willy Handforth dashed frantically into the Triangle and cannoned against the ladder on which Josh was perched.

Then there was a louder yell and a tremendous splash as Josh Cuttle hurtled into the dampness.

Presently his features rose from the water, rather like Neptune ascending from the deep, and his voice spoke.

"Was there weepin' and wailin' and gnashin' of teeth?" asked Josh. "There was. And why was there weepin' and wailin' and gnashin' of teeth? It was 'cos Joshua Cuttle Hesquire 'ad been knocked 'eadfirst into a fountain. Dratted awkward young imp."

Young Willy pulled up upon seeing this catastrophe and good-naturedly helped Josh out on to dry land again. Meanwhile Mr. Suncliffe was frowning.

"What does this behaviour mean, Handforth minor?" he asked sternly. "Why are you rushing about in this manner?"

"I'm awfully sorry, sir," answered Willy. "The fact is, Ferdinand got out, and I was chasing him."

"Ferdinand?"

"Yes, sir—my ferret."

Mr. Suncliffe frowned more heavily.

"I am not at all sure that I ought not to look into the matter of your pets, Handforth," he said sternly. "You have a number of assorted animals here, and if this mania isn't checked it is possible that we shall have a complete zoo before long."

Willy sighed.

"How prime!" he said regretfully.

"Look at it for yourself," urged Mr. Suncliffe. "You have a monkey and a

squirrel and a ferret and—and a greyhound. In fact, there seems to be few animals that you do not possess. I suppose you haven't a tiger or a panther or a snow-leopard by any chance?"

Willy brightened up.

"I have one of the latter, sir," he said brightly. "A beauty."

Mr. Suncliffe jumped. So did we. "You—you actually have a snow-leopard, Handforth?"

"Yes, rather, sir. Would you like to see him?"

"It is not a case of like, Handforth. I insist upon seeing this—this dangerous wild animal—at once."

"Right-ho, sir! I'll take you to him."

Willy turned and led the way to the pet's house. Mr. Suncliffe followed, together with a whole crowd of juniors, who were thrilled at the thought of seeing Willy's snow-leopard.

Into the pet's house

went the crowd, and Willy brought out Lightning, his greyhound.

"Here it is, sir," he said cheerfully.

Mr. Suncliffe gasped.

"Don't be absurd, Handforth!" he snorted. "That is not a snow-leopard. That animal is a dog—a greyhound."

Willy looked indignant.

"My hat! Can't you see for yourself, sir, that it 's'no' leopard? It's a greyhound, sir, and a greyhound isn't a leopard. 'Therefore it 's'no' leopard."

Followed a painful time—for Willy!

GROOOOOOH!

We don't like the subject of next week's Special Number.

BUT STILL—

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Arithmetical progressions

Fractions—vulgar ones, at that?

Have you never chortled meekly

At old Virgil's Latin text?

If not—purchase HANDFORTH'S
WEEKLY,

2d. net—on Wednesday next.

There's roars and roars of laughter in lessons, when the H.W. stars get on the job.

SPECIAL LESSONS NUMBER

Next Week.



Josh did a header into the dampness

THE BATTLE OF ST. FRANK'S!

(Continued from page 20.)

boys of the rival schools had such a chance.

"Don't be too hard on 'em!" growled Nipper. "They don't realise what they're doing. They think it's just a rag."

"Rats!" roared Handforth. "They know we're defending our playing-fields. But what do they care? Their footer grounds aren't in any danger. By George! We'll fight to the last ditch rather than have these rotters whack us!"

"Hear, hear!"

There was a sudden rush by the enemy. Dozens of them came charging at full tilt. The peashooter brigade commenced operations.

Whizz! Whizz! Ping! Ping!

A terrific fusillade of pellets shot out like machine-gun fire from the stockade. The foremost attackers hesitated, wavered and broke. Most of them were holding their hands to their faces, and they were yelling with surprise and pain.

"Hoy! Chuck it!" gurgled Georgie Glynn. "I say, they've got peashooters, you chaps!"

"Help! I'm half-blinded!"

Whizz! Whizz!

Another volley of peas came, devastating in its effect. But after the first shock the attackers put down their heads and charged blindly.

"Don't forget the quids!" yelled Hal Brewster.

Professor Ogleby stood watching, breathless. He did not doubt that the defences would be smashed through in that first onslaught. He gloated. The whole thing would be over within five minutes. Splendid! He had anticipated a quick victory, but—

By now the foremost boys had dashed clean through to the stockade. In one or two places that flimsy faggot wall was swaying ominously. But the boys who came in contact with it soon backed away, yelling wildly.

"Hi! I'm torn!" shouted somebody. "There's barbed-wire here!"

A dozen of them were suffering from rents and jagged tears. They hastily backed away from the faggots, and at that moment another phase of the battle started.

Bombs came hurtling over the top of the stockade. They were not ordinary bombs; they were paper-bags, some filled with soot, others with flour. They burst with great effect.

Pandemonium reigned within a minute.

The air was thick with a sort of fog—whitish fog in some places, and inky black in others. The attacking force, so valiant at first, wavered and broke away. It retreated. Professor Ogleby watched with deep concern.

"Upon my soul!" he gasped. "These wretched boys were putting up a much firmer resistance than I expected!"

Half-blinded, and bewildered by the fog of soot and flour, stung by the peas, the enemy forces were in full retreat.

Cheers rang out from the rebels.

"Yah! Try it again!" bawled Handforth. "You rotters! We'll show you!"

Driscoll, of the River House, ran up excitedly.

"Hi, you St. Frank's asses!" he gasped. "You're ruining our clothes——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll ruin 'em a bit more soon!"

"Rather!"

"You rotters! We'll show you!"

Edgar Stanmore, the skipper of the Bannington Grammar School juniors, was facing Brewster indignantly. Stanmore was a sight; he was smothered in soot from head to foot.

"What's the idea, Brewster?" he demanded thickly. "I thought you told us that this was going to be an easy job?"

"Sorry!" gurgled Hal. "I thought it was, too."

"You must have been mad!" put in Barlowe, of Helmford. "These St. Frank's chaps are mustard!"

"Well, mustard or not, we've got to finish our job!" said Brewster grimly. "Dash it, we outnumber them about two to one. We shall never hear the last of it if we fail. We've got to smash through."

"Yes, I suppose we have," admitted Stanmore.

The rebels were jubilant over their initial victory. They had given their attackers a surprise. Now that the period of inactivity was over, they were intensely eager for the fray; and it heartened them to find that they were opposed not by men but by rival schoolboys.

The next attack developed rapidly. Brewster, surprised and dismayed at the strength of the rebel force, saw the futility of a general attack on the whole "front."

"We've got to smash a way through in one place," he said, as the others crowded round him. "It's not going to be easy, but I think we'll do it. We'll use a bit of strategy. How about twenty of us dashing for the fence at one spot, and the others spreading out—pretending to attack in other spots. That'll draw the defenders off."

"And what then?" asked Ascott breathlessly.

"We'll try to force our way through, and then, suddenly, the rest of you will dash up and help us in the same spot," said Brewster. "We ought to smash through by sheer weight of numbers. Let's try it, anyway."

They tried it.

Brewster & Co., yelling and cheering, hurled themselves at one section of the faggot-wall. They were met by a devastating hail of peas, but they had their heads well down, and they did not come to much harm. They braved the soot-bags and the flour-bags. They reached the wall, and they hurled their weight against it valiantly. It swayed, it rocked, but it held, and the festoons of barbed wire made it difficult for the attackers to tear down the faggots.

Then came the first of the reinforcements. They obeyed Hal Brewster literally, and such

was the force of their charge that the original attackers were jammed so hard against the stockade that it bulged and broke. Clothes were torn to ribbons by the barbed wire—and a good deal of skin was torn, too. But nobody took any particular notice in the excitement. A breach had been made. For twenty or thirty feet the stockade was laid flat, and the ground was strewn with a motley crowd of boys. The air was thick with soot and flour dust. Further reinforcements, rushing up, poured through the breach.

"Splendid!" exclaimed Professor Ogleby, who was watching from a safe distance. "Wonderful! They are through! Victory at last!"

But he was too premature.

Suddenly four solid jets of water—icily cold—met the invaders fairly and squarely in the faces and chests. They were bowled over like ninepins, drenched to the skin, startled half out of their wits.

Those hose-pipes came from the pavilion, and the rebels were thankful that Professor Ogleby had not thought of having the water turned off at the main. Or perhaps it wasn't possible to turn it off—since the pavilion had a separate supply of its own. Nothing short of digging up the road, and severing the main, would have served.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Let 'em have some more, you chaps!"

Sizzzz! Splash! Sizzzzz!

It was too much, even for the determined attackers. Those at the rear broke madly and dashed away. They had no desire to be soaked like their fellows in the forefront. Within ten seconds the entire enemy force was dashing for safety. The last of them, dripping with water, their clothing tattered and torn, looked pitiful wrecks. But the rebels only yelled with laughter at their discomfort. They deserved it!

And as the enemy retreated, so a strong force of rebels dashed up and the defences were quickly restored—until the stockade was strong and intact once more.

The first onslaught had failed, and the rebels cheered themselves hoarse. Hal Brewster and his "army" felt very battered and fed up. As for Professor Thorpe Ogleby, he was filled with dismay.

CHAPTER 8.

A Fateful Meeting!

SIR JAMES HENSON, BART., grunted disgustedly.

"Atrocious luck!" he said, flinging his half-smoked cigar to the ground and stamping on it. "It just shows you, Milton, how much you can rely upon these tips. The horse wasn't even in the first three!"

General Milton looked at his companion with twinkling eyes.

"Lose much?" he asked dryly.

"Only a trifle—ten pounds," replied Sir James gruffly. "But that's not the point. I

was told that the horse was an absolute certainty."

They were in the ring at the Helmford Racecourse. There was nothing much to distinguish these two well-dressed gentlemen from the other fashionable people who thronged the enclosure. But it so happened that Sir James Henson and General Milton were two of the St. Frank's Governors. Both were ardent racegoers, and the Helmford meeting was an important one.

"Just a minute, Sir James," said General Milton, with a sudden sharp note in his voice.

"Eh? What on earth's the matter?" asked Sir James.

"Those three boys," said the general, with a nod of his head. "You see them? Here, in this enclosure."

"Why, yes," replied the other, glancing round. "Of course I can see them!"

"Those boys belong to St. Frank's!"

"Nonsense!"

"I tell you they do!" insisted the general. "I recognise two of them distinctly. I was at the school only two or three weeks ago, and I passed them on the steps of the Ancient House. I don't know their names, and they are not wearing the school colours. But they're St. Frank's boys!"

"I cannot believe it," said Sir James. "Good gracious! St. Frank's boys wouldn't be here—in this enclosure, Milton! Such a thing is out of the question!"

"Well, we can soon find out for certain," replied the general in his most ferocious army manner.

BERNARD FORREST, Albert Gulliver and George Bell were thoroughly enjoying themselves—so far. They had come to the Helmford races in the highest of spirits. This was proving to be an interesting week.

When Professor Thorpe Ogleby had granted them a week's holiday, the great man had naturally assumed that the three boys would go home. But Forrest & Co. saw no reason why they should spoil the week in that way.

Their parents knew nothing of the special holiday, and there was really no reason why they should be told. So the chums of Study A, having plenty of cash, went merely to Bannington and put up at the Wheatsheaf Hotel. They had been having a high old time ever since.

"Well, we clicked on the first race all right," Forrest was saying. "Didn't I tell you that Marshmallow was a cert? Four to one, my sons!"

"Jolly good!" agreed Gulliver. "Bell and I have collected a couple of quid each."

"And I'm four quid to the good, too," said Forrest. "Now, for the next race we'd better go easy. I'm not so certain of the runners. Of course, there's Paper Mask, but he's the favourite, and the price isn't worth—"

He broke off, for a large, elderly man had suddenly planted himself immediately in front of him.

"I thought so!" said the large, elderly man in a hard, triumphant voice.

"Speaking to me, sir?" asked Forrest, staring.

"Your name, young man?" said General Milton, in a tone that he might have used in addressing a raw recruit.

"Peter Robinson, sir!" said Forrest promptly.

"Boy, you are insolent!" snapped the general. "I don't believe that your name is Peter Robinson."

"All right, sir—Carter Paterson," said Forrest obligingly.

"You insolent young rascal!" fumed General Milton. "You are a St. Frank's boy, are you not? And you others?" he added, spinning round upon the startled Gulliver and Bell. "Come along! Out with it! Don't you boys belong to St. Frank's College?"

"Ye-es, sir," faltered Gulliver feebly.

Forrest gave them a pitying look.

"I might have known they'd give me away," he said sourly. "All right, sir. My name is Forrest, if you want to know. But what's the trouble?"

"What are you boys doing in this enclosure?" demanded Sir James Henson sharply.

"Oh, there are two of you, then?" asked Forrest, glancing round. "We're doing nothing, sir—only minding our own business!"

"This boy is deliberately insolent!" snapped the general. "It may interest you to know, young man, that this gentleman is Sir James Henson, and I am General Milton. We are both Governors of St. Frank's!"

As he expected Bernard Forrest to crumple up, he was disappointed. Forrest merely smiled and nodded.

"Why, yes, sir," he replied coolly. "I seem to remember your face now. Glad to know you, sir. I hope you're having a good time with the winners?"

"Upon my soul!" ejaculated the soldier. "Don't you realise, boy, that you can be flogged for attending a race meeting? I am not sure that I shall not recommend you for expulsion."

"But—but we were only having a look round, sir!" panted Bell feverishly. "We weren't doing any betting——"

"Hold on!" interrupted Forrest. "There's no need for you fellows to get the wind up." He turned back to the general. "You see, sir, we're not under school regulations this week. We're on holiday, and there aren't any restrictions. If we were wearing the school colours you would have some excuse, perhaps, for jumping on us. But we're not—so we're safe."

The general was startled by Forrest's coolness.

"On holiday!" he echoed. "Rubbish! There is no holiday at St. Frank's. The term has not long started."

"There's no general holiday, of course, sir," admitted Forrest. "But we three fellows were granted a week's special holiday by the headmaster."

"Oh! And why should Mr. Nelson Lee grant you three boys a week's special holiday?"

"You seem to be rather behind the times, sir," said Forrest smoothly. "Not Mr. Nelson Lee. Professor Ogleby. He's the Head now, sir."

"Professor Ogleby is the Head!" ejaculated Sir James, startled. "What nonsense!"

"All right, sir, if you don't believe me you've only to go to St. Frank's and you'll soon find out," said Forrest. "Dr. Ogleby went there, kicked up a row with the Head, and Mr. Lee resigned. And the professor has been in charge ever since. Do you mean to say that you haven't heard of the barring-out?"

"The—the which?" gasped General Milton.

"Rather, sir!" said Forrest, thoroughly enjoying himself. "Professor Ogleby has been having a fine old time. On Saturday he tried to force the rebels to surrender. He dug a whacking great tunnel under the playing fields, and let off a charge of dynamite."

"Good heavens!"

"And we've heard a few rumours of some fresh activities to-day," continued Forrest. "Some of the Helmford chaps have gone over, and they're joining forces with the Bannington Grammar School and the River House. I believe there's going to be a free fight there. The professor has arranged it all."

"The boy is romancing," said Sir James angrily.

"Honest Injun, sir, I'm not," said Forrest. "It's absolutely true. Professor Ogleby has been turning the school upside down. It's a funny thing that you gentlemen, as Governors, didn't know anything about it."

And Forrest strolled off, with Gulliver and Bell hastening beside him.

"Somehow, I believe that boy was right," said General Milton grimly. "You know what Ogleby is, Sir James. What had we better do?"

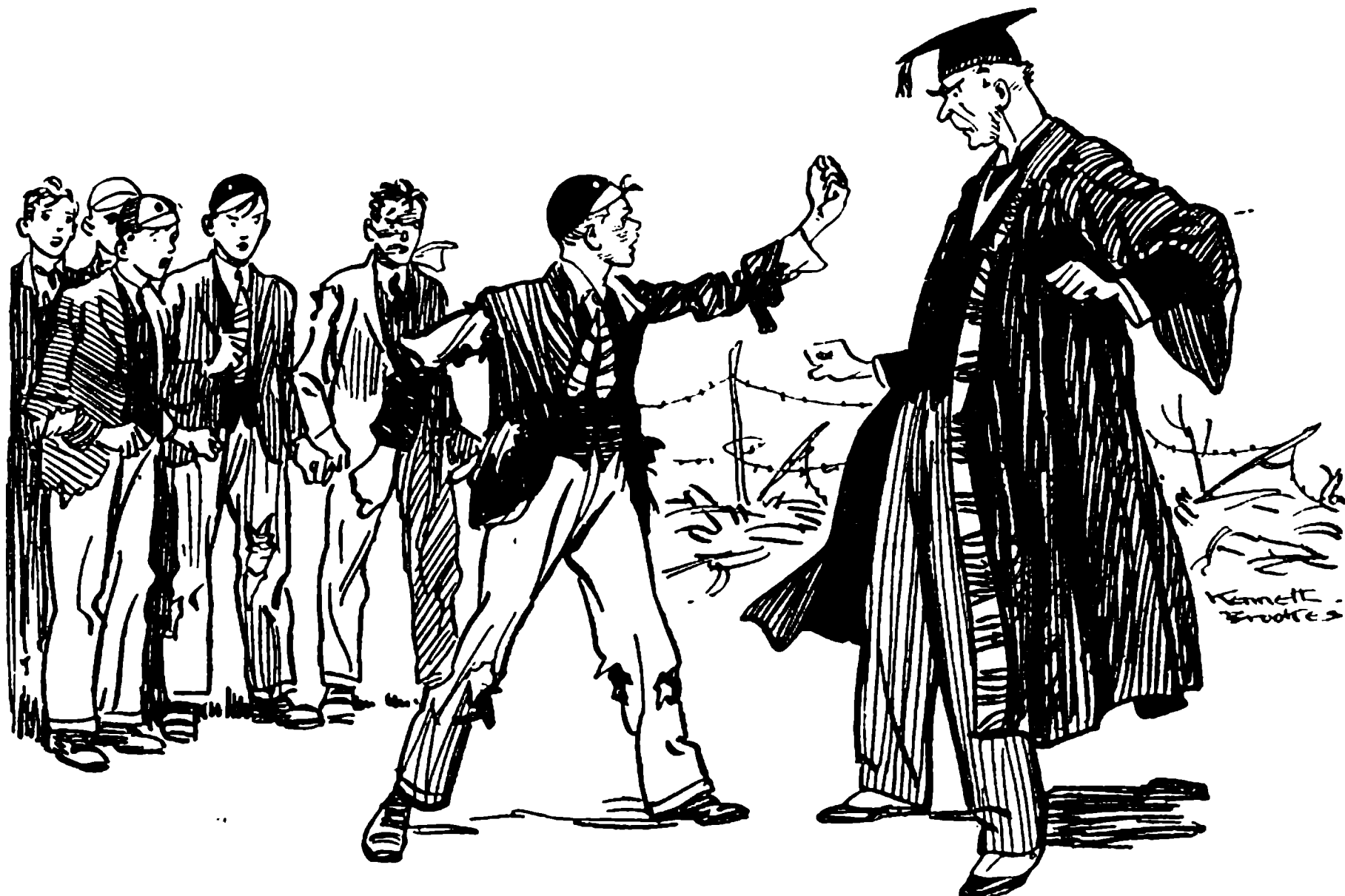
"How on earth should I know?" asked the other helplessly. "I really cannot credit that Ogleby would take such steps without informing us——"

"Ogleby is absolutely crazy about those Roman remains," interrupted the general. "A sound man—a brilliant man—but when it comes to archæology he is ruthless. When I was in the club on Monday somebody told me that he had seen Mr. Lee in London, and I thought he must have been mistaken. But this boy's story seems to corroborate it. I rather think we ought to go to St. Frank's."

"Now?"

"Well, we'll wait until the meeting is over," replied General Milton. "Then we'll have tea, and motor down. I've had my doubts about Ogleby for some little time. I don't think we should have given him the authority to dig for those Roman relics. You may remember that I was against it from the first."

"But surely there can be no harm——"



One of the boys brandished a fist under Professor Ogleby's beak-like nose. "Now then, professor—what about that money you owe us!" he said threateningly.

"And we'd better get in touch with Lord Walberry and Stevens," continued the general. "There's a telephone here, and I'll use it."

He hurried off. Lord Walberry and Mr. Stevens were two other Governors, and they were considerably startled when they received the message from General Milton. They both promised to travel down to Helmford by the first available train—which would land them in the town at about tea-time.

CHAPTER 9.

Sparks Fizzled!

NIPPER, although undismayed, knew that the situation was desperate.

The rebels had won the first battle; but another was on the point of developing. Hal Brewster and his army had retired, but it was plain enough to the rebels that the boys from the rival schools were gathering their strength. It wasn't a matter of mere money now. The enemy had been peppered with peas, smothered with soot and flour, and drenched with water, and their blood was up. When they attacked next time they would attack with redoubled vigour.

"My sons, we're up against it!" said Nipper.

"The rotters!" exclaimed Handforth. "The miserable, treacherous bounders! Think of it! Brewster—Glynn—Kingswood—Stanmore—Barlowe! All those chaps we thought

were our pals! Turning on us like this; taking money from that old fossil to drive us out! It's Brewster's doing," went on Handforth, clenching his fists. "Brewster fixed it up with Ogleby, and he's the ring-leader—"

"It's no good going on like this, you chaps," interrupted Nipper. "We've got to think of something. We're outnumbered. These chaps, once they force a way through, will wipe us up. What are we going to do?"

"Goodness knows!" said Buster Boots. "The seniors have gone away, so we can't get any help from them. My hat! Can't you see the cunning of it? Old Ogleby knew the seniors would be going away this afternoon."

"There's somebody who might help," said Nipper thoughtfully.

"Eh? Who?"

"Ted Sparks!"

"Ted Sparks!" echoed the others, staring.

"You remember Ted—he's the skipper of the Bannington Council School Eleven," went on Nipper. "Didn't he promise us that he would rally round with his men if ever we needed help?"

"By George! So he did!" said Handforth breathlessly.

"They've got a match on this afternoon, too," continued Nipper, his eyes gleaming. "That means that they'll be on their footer ground. There's a little grocer's shop on the corner, opposite the ground—Mr. Gibbon's place. I remember the number—Bannington 304. If we can get through a telephone mes-

sage, we can be in touch with Ted Sparks in five minutes."

"My only sainted aunt!" breathed Reggie Pitt. "It's an idea! It's a brain-wave! But how can we get through? Ted Sparks would come along like a shot if he knew of our trouble—and he'd help, too. He'd bring his giddy team and scores of other chaps."

"That's just what I'm thinking," nodded Nipper. "Well, I'll chance it. I'll try to get through—"

"Not likely!" interrupted Reggie. "You're too valuable, old son! You've got to stay here, in command. I'll get through."

It was a desperate hope. There was just a chance that the rebels could keep the attackers at bay until the reinforcements arrived. There was no doubt that the genial Ted Sparks and his men would do everything in their power to help; and an attack from outside would spread consternation throughout the ranks of Brewster's army.

Reggie Pitt reached a telephone without trouble. Breaking through the faggot wall at the lower end—at the point nearest to the paddock—he slipped across the intervening turf, nipped over the wall, and a minute later he was streaking across West Square. He dodged indoors without being spotted, raced down the passage and reached the Junior Common-room. A moment later he was in the telephone-box.

He got through to Mr. Gibbons almost immediately, and that obliging gentleman sent across the road at once. Reggie Pitt waited feverishly.

"Hallo!" came a voice at last.

"That you, Ted?" asked Pitt.

"Yes!" came the voice of Ted Sparks. "What's the idea? I suppose you know you've interrupted an important match—"

"Sorry, Ted—but we need your help badly!" said Reggie. "I'm Pitt, of St. Frank's."

"Why, of course!" came Ted's voice. "Crumbs! Things aren't going badly with you, are they?"

Quickly Reggie Pitt told of the situation.

"Crikey and crumbs!" ejaculated the skipper of the Bannington Council School Eleven. "You're in a nasty mess, all right. So all those other schools are fighting against you? A pretty mouldy lot, aren't they?"

"Mouldy isn't the word!" said Pitt bitterly. "We had a bit of a dust up with Brewster on Monday evening—and I believe he's doing this to get his own back. But we'll pay him out, the rotter! And if you fellows turn up—"

"Trust us!" said Ted eagerly. "We'll postpone our match. We'll come over right away. Most of us have got bikes."

"Good man! How long do you think you'll be?"

"Not more than a quarter of an hour," replied Ted. "We might do it in ten minutes. You fellows hold on. We'll soon be with you."

"Good old Ted!" shouted Reggie Pitt.

"We'll hold the fort, by hook or by crook, until you and your pals arrive."

"Attaboy!" came Ted's chuckling voice.

Pitt dodged back. He was sighted by a crowd of Caistowe High School boys, and they gave chase. But he easily outran them, and as he was nearing the stockade the rebels sent out a fusillade of peas which caused the enemy to retire.

"It's all serene!" panted Pitt as he ran up through the defenders. "Ted Sparks and his men are coming straight away."

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Ted!"

"Reinforcements, by George!"

The news heartened the rebels tremendously. They were ready to fight with redoubled vigour, which was just as well, for Hal Brewster and his crowd were making ready for a mighty attack.

Hal had divided his men up into two strong forces. One force, under Hal himself, was getting ready to attack at one end. The second force had hurried off to the other side. The rebels, seeing these manœuvres, divided themselves up. Thus they were weakened.

The attackers were impatient to get into battle, and many of the boys had armed themselves with big sticks, which they could use in forcing down the faggots.

"The more they delay, the better!" said Nipper tensely. "Sparks and his men are on their way by now."

"They won't delay for long," said Tommy Watson gruffly. "Look! They're preparing to come at us already. Brewster's moving forward—Hallo! He's waving a handkerchief!"

"The white giddy flag!" ejaculated Handforth.

Hal Brewster came nearer.

"Just a minute, you chaps!" he sang out. "I'd like a word—"

"Yah! Traitor!"

"Rotter!"

"We don't want to hear anything from you, Brewster!"

"You silly asses!" roared Hal. "If you'll only listen to me—"

"We won't!"

"I want you to understand—"

"We understand well enough!" bellowed Handforth. "You've turned against us!"

"Yah! Clear off!"

"What we think of you, you rotter, would fill a library!"

"Traitor!"

"Cad!"

"Rotter!"

A perfect storm arose, and Hal Brewster, although he shouted at the top of his voice, was unable to make himself heard. He paused at last, breathless, and his jaw was set squarely and his eyes were flashing.

"All right!" he bellowed. "We were going to give you a chance—but now we won't! We'll jolly well drive you out and half-slaughter you while we're doing it!"

He retreated, seething with anger, and he gave the signal for the double attack. After that pandemonium was let loose.

Dr. Thorpe Ogleby, anxious and worried, stood in the distance. He was torn by doubts. The failure of the first onslaught had given him a shock, and the condition of the boys, too, made him fearful lest any visitors should come to the school on this fateful afternoon. What would they think? Those boys—smothered with soot and flour—and many of them drenched to the skin! And he was standing by watching it all, allowing it to happen!

He felt guilty. He had thought that there would be just one rush, a lot of schoolboy shouts, and then everything would be over. But how different was the reality!

The rebels were resisting as obstinately as ever, and they had already caused a great deal of damage to their schoolboy foes. If people came now and saw this situation, they would be shocked beyond words.

However, Professor Ogleby was gratified to see that the defences were falling. One of the attacking forces, driving through with spectacular effect, battered down the faggot wall. The boys braved the hail of "bombs." Their idea was to dash in from the rear, and to get hold of the rebels who were in charge of the water hoses.

Meanwhile, Brewster, with the other force, was attacking from a different quarter. And in the middle of it a series of terrific yells sounded. The reinforcements were arriving. Ted Sparks and about thirty of his Council school pals dashed up to give battle.

"Hurrah!"

"Here's Ted!"

"Good old Sparks!"

"Come on, the Council school!"

"Hurrah!"

On they came, and Brewster & Co., turning, were dismayed. This new force, appearing so unexpectedly, was apparently going to make all the difference. The rebels were wild with excitement and enthusiasm. Their friends had arrived at the critical moment.

"Hi, hold on, you chaps!" bawled Brewster, running madly towards Ted Sparks & Co. "There's a quid each for you if you help us!"

"What!" shouted Ted wrathfully.

"Yes, don't you understand?" roared Brewster. "You don't want to join hands with Nipper and his crowd. Professor Ogleby is giving a quid each to every fellow who helps in smashing the rebellion. All we've got to do is to drive out Nipper's crowd."

Nipper was aghast—as were the other rebels.

"Great Scott!" yelled Handforth. "He's trying to bribe Ted's lot now!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"Good old Ted—he won't take any notice!"

"Not likely!"

"He promised to help us—and he will!"

"Rather!"

But Brewster, dashing up, was talking earnestly and excitedly to Ted Sparks, and the other Council school boys had gathered round.

"Good enough!" came a sudden bellow from Ted Sparks. "Understand, you chaps? Come on! Down with these fences!"

"That's the spirit!" grinned Brewster. "A quid each all round, don't forget, if we succeed!"

"We'll succeed!" shouted Ted Sparks.

To the consternation and dismay of the rebels, the reinforcements, instead of helping them, threw in their lot with the enemy!

When the attack was resumed a minute later, Ted Sparks & Co. were in the thick of it—fighting side by side with Brewster's army!

CHAPTER 10.

Rebels Routed!

WITH Ted Sparks and his Council school pals ranging alongside the enemy, the plight of the rebels was acute.

"We'll do our best, you chaps—but there's not much hope," said Nipper huskily. "Even Ted Sparks has turned against us!"

"And why?" asked Handforth fiercely. "That's what I'm asking—why? I'll tell you! Brewster got at Ted! Didn't you see him?"

"Leave that till afterwards, old man," urged Travers. "There's no time for talking now. For the love of Samson! They're sweeping in like a flood! Well, well! It looks as if it'll come to bare fists at last!"

"Let me have a go at 'em!" shouted Handforth, pushing up his sleeves.

At least, he made an automatic movement to do so; but his sleeves had been pushed up long since. Utterly reckless and bitter, he hurled himself into the thick of the fray.

Not that it made much difference. He got in several terrific punches against a group of Bannington Grammar School boys; but his success was short-lived. Others swarmed round him, bowled him over, and held him down.

It was the same all over the field of battle. In that great rush the stockade had been demolished. It had crashed down in every direction, and the attackers had swept in like a human flood. Now the playing-fields were strewn with scattered groups of fighting boys.

All the organisation had gone to pot. The whole affair had degenerated into a series of fights. And even these did not last long. The St. Frank's rebels had shot their bolt. With the startling treachery of Ted Sparks & Co., Nipper's battalions had lost hope. Nearly all the fight had gone out of them.

The rival schoolboys, on the other hand, were tremendously heartened, and they went into the fray with a will and a determination which spelt victory. And, once the rebels were fairly on the run, they were beaten.

Those scraps did not last long. In fact, the attacking force did not seem at all anxious to fight. Their only object was to grab the defenders and throw them off the ground. And thrown off they were.

The positions became entirely reversed. Brewster's victorious army obtained full possession of the playing fields, and the original garrison was chucked out—beyond the battered defences.

There was a good deal of cheering—but not from the rebels. They were collecting round the field of battle in disconsolate groups.

"Awfully sorry, Nipper," said Lionel Corcoran, of the Fourth. "We did our best, you know. We Fourth-Formers——"

"That's all right, Corky!" interrupted Nipper dully. "We went under fighting. We couldn't have done more."

"There's something funny about it," remarked Willy Handforth, the torn and battered leader of the Third. "I can't get the hang of it, you chaps."

"Can't you?" demanded his major. "Then you're a silly young ass! Isn't the whole affair as clear as daylight? These rotters have turned against us because they're being paid by Ogleby!"

"I didn't think they were capable of it, Ted," said Willy, shaking his head. "I don't believe they are, either. There must be some misunderstanding——"

"Oh, cheese it!" growled Handforth. "We've got eyes, haven't we? And ears?"

We're whacked at last—and by chaps we always believed to be our own friends! Ogleby's won! The playing fields are his!"

"That's right—rub it in!" said Church bitterly.

They were standing about in groups, all round the outskirts of the playing fields. There was not an atom of fight left in any of them. What was the use? If they attacked, they would only be beaten back. The playing fields were overrun by their victorious rivals.

PROFESSOR THORPE OGLEBY, a changed man, was dashing into the middle of the playing fields.

All his doubts were set at rest. The rebels were beaten, and his worries were over. For now that he had full possession of the playing fields he would make certain that those wretched boys did not get back again. In fact, he would have the playing fields dug up immediately, so that the issue would be settled once and for all!

"Splendid—splendid!" shouted the archaeologist, as he ran amongst Hal Brewster & Co. "Good boys! A fine piece of work! I am indeed grateful to you!"

"I'm not so sure that we're grateful to you, sir," said Brewster pointedly. "Look at us!"

"Ahem! I fear that you have suffered a certain amount of—er—damage!"

"I should think we have, sir!" growled



Jokes from readers wanted for this feature! If you know a good rib-tickler, send it along now. A handsome watch will be awarded each week to the sender of the best joke; pocket wallets and penknives are also offered as prizes. Address your jokes to "Smilers," Nelson Lee Library, 5, Carmelite Street, London, E.C.4.

CLEVER BOY.

"How are you getting on at school, Johnny?"

"First rate, uncle. I can wiggle my ears now and stand on my hands without leaning against the wall."

(W. Yaxley, 24, Shardlow Road, Alvaston, Derby, has been awarded a handsome watch.)

HIGH FIGURES.

Golfer: "Is that the fourteenth or fifteenth stroke I've played to this hole?"

Caddie: "I dinna ken."

Golfer: "You're no good as a caddie."

Caddie: "Ye dinna want a caddie; ye want a clerk."

(S. Harris, 47, Tenison Road, Cambridge, has been awarded a pocket wallet.)

LET DOWN.

Prison visitor (sympathetically): "Now, my good man, what brought you here?"

Convict: "Mistaken confidence."

Prison visitor: "Really? In whom were you deceived?"

Convict: "Myself. I thought I could run faster."

(H. Booth, Gladstone Terrace, Lutterworth, Rugby, has been awarded a penknife.)

THIS WEATHER.

First farmer: "This is a bad season—my corn is only a few inches high."

Second farmer: "That's nothing—the sparrows have to kneel to eat mine."

(J. Fernley, 1, Chinchilla Road, Southend, has been awarded a pocket wallet.)

A CASE FOR CAUTION.

Lady: "Don't you know that a barking dog never bites?"

Tramp: "Yes, mum, but how am I to know that your dog won't suddenly stop barking?"

(G. Finch, 127, Chorley Road, Bamber Bridge, has been awarded a penknife.)

IMPOSSIBLE.

Small son: "Father, there's a blue-bottle on the ceiling."

Father (deeply interested in a book): "Well, step on it, and don't bother me again."

Stanmore. "We were given to understand that there wasn't any barbed wire—and we've been tearing our togs on barbed wire ever since we arrived. And what about the flour and the soot—and the water? There's hardly a decent suit left amongst the lot of us!"

"I am extremely sorry!" said Dr. Ogleby, rather startled by the tone of the boys. "But you must have realised, before you entered upon this enterprise, that it would involve a certain amount of—er—horse-play. I am sorry. When I made my arrangements with Brewster, I knew nothing of the barbed wire—or, indeed, of the flour and the soot."

"All right, sir; as long as you whack out the cash we'll say no more about it," growled Brewster. "That'll help to compensate us for the damage. We wouldn't have taken the money otherwise."

"Money?" repeated the professor, with a start. "Why, yes, to be sure." He cast a startled, anxious eye over the victorious force. "Yes, of course," he went on. "Money! There was some arrangement, was there not?"

"A pound each, all round," replied Hal Brewster, nodding. "That was the bargain, sir. But there's no need for you to whack out quid notes to us individually. I'm the leader, and these chaps trust me. Hand me the money, and I'll distribute it later."

"Yes, that'll do!"

"Give it to Brewster, sir!"

"Hear, hear!"

The rebels, standing about, were too disgusted for words. What a sickening sight this was! Professor Ogleby, the headmaster of St. Frank's, standing in the middle of that money-grabbing mob, discussing the terms! Even now Nipper found himself rubbing his eyes; it all seemed unbelievable.

"Yes, yes, that will do," the professor was saying. "I will hand the money to you, Brewster, and you will distribute it. Yes! Splendid!"

He was fumbling in his pocket, and he produced a large sheaf of one-pound banknotes.

"Here is sixty pounds," he said. "A large sum of money; but I think, on the whole, that you have earned it. I will leave it to you, Brewster, to distribute——"

"Just a minute, sir!" interrupted Hal Brewster, a hard note coming into his voice. "How much did you say? Sixty pounds?"

"Yes."

"This is the first instalment, I suppose?"

"What do you mean—the first instalment?" demanded the professor, with a start. "I am not prepared to pay more——"

"Whether you're prepared or not, sir, I'd like to remind you of the bargain," said Brewster coldly. "A pound each, all round."

"Yes, I seem to remember——"

"And there are exactly one hundred and seventy-nine of us, counting those Council school chaps," said Brewster.

"Wha-a-at!"

(K. Marson, St. Wonat's, Ramsbury Road, St. Alban's, has been awarded a pocket wallet.)

A COSTLY BUSINESS.

Sandy: "Ye promised me saxpence if I was top boy at school, and I've been top boy for two weeks running."

Sandy's father (reluctantly): "Well, here's a shilling, but ye must gie up studying so hard—it's not guid for ye."

(Marjorie Chadwick, 37, Victoria Road, Tamworth, has been awarded a penknife.)

SURE.

Bald gent: "Do you give a guarantee with this hair restorer?"

Chemist: "Guarantee, sir? Why, we give a comb."

(V. Amos, 21, Park Place, Greenwich, S.E.10, has been awarded a pocket wallet.)

TACTLESS.

A young barrister was cross-examining the railway company for the offence of killing twenty-four pigs. It was his first case, and he wished to impress the jury with the magnitude of the offence.

"Twenty-four pigs, gentlemen. Twenty-four; twice the number in the jury box."



(A. Staines, Chapel House, School Street, Rochdale, has been awarded a penknife.)

A FAMILY AFFAIR.

The teacher was giving a lesson on creation. Johnny interrupted with the remark:

"My father says we are descended from apes."

"Your private affairs have no interest for the class," remarked the teacher.

(S. Kane, 1, Walworth Terrace, S. C. Road, Dublin, has been awarded a pocket wallet.)

A DIFFICULT MATTER.

Mother (entering bed-room and finding Tommy in tears): "What's the matter, Tommy?"

Tommy: "Jimmy wants half the bed."

Mother: "Of course he does. Don't be selfish."

Tommy: "Yes, ma, but he wants the middle half, and me to sleep on both sides of him."

(W. Teasdale, 9, Westbourne Place, Marningham, has been awarded a penknife.)

WATCHED.

1st pickpocket (watching approach of prosperous gent): "Here he comes, now."

2nd pickpocket: "Righto. You keep a watch on him while I take a watch off him."

(E. Bailey, 12, Adam Street, Stoke-on-Trent, has been awarded a pocket wallet.)

"So we'll need another hundred and nineteen pounds, sir."

"Ridiculous!" snapped Professor Ogleby. "Absurd! I refuse to pay any such fantastic sum!"

Brewster was looking at him in astonishment.

"But aren't you a man of your word, Professor Ogleby?" he asked. "Didn't you definitely promise?"

"I did not imagine that you would bring more than sixty boys," retorted the professor angrily. "Sixty of you should have been sufficient. There was no earthly need——"

"Oh, wasn't there?" broke in Kingswood. "It was as much as we could do to get hold of these playing fields."

"Rather!" sang out somebody else. "If Ted Sparks and his chaps hadn't come, we should never have done it!"

"So pay up, sir—and look pleasant!"

"Yes, rather!"

"Pay up!"

The boys were pressing round angrily, and Professor Ogleby felt himself getting nervous. The rebels, standing round, listened to this altercation with fresh disgust.

"Boys—boys!" shouted the professor hoarsely. "You have done well, and I am pleased with you. But the demands you make are exorbitant——"

"I don't see that, sir," interrupted Brewster. "You offered us a pound each—and you told me to bring as many boys as I could find. Well, that's what I did. And we've won. What more do you want? It's only fair that we should have the money to compensate us for the damage done to our clothes!"

"But I haven't the money!" protested the professor.

"What!"

"You haven't the money!"

Another roar went up.

"Not—not at the moment!" gasped the Head. "But, of course, I will pay——"

"You'd better, sir!" roared one of the Helmford boys. "Come on, you chaps! Either Professor Ogleby pays up, or we clear off these playing-fields and let the St. Frank's chaps come back!"

"Hear, hear!"

"That's a good wheeze!"

"Now then, professor—what about it?" yelled another boy, brandishing his fist under Professor Ogleby's beak-like nose.

The professor was alarmed and startled.

"No, no!" he panted. "Wait! You mustn't let those rebellious boys come back!"

"Or, if you like, sir, we'll duck you in the ditch instead," said Brewster. "Which is it to be? Will you pay up, shall we let the St. Frank's chaps come back, or shall we give you a ducking?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Choose, professor!"

"Wait! Wait!" shrieked Ogleby. "Don't be so hasty! I—I have money in the safe in my study. If you will come with me, I will give it to you at once. Yes, I think I have

sufficient. If not, I will give you a cheque covering the remainder."

"That's good enough, you chaps!" sang out Brewster. "You stay here until we get back. Half a dozen of us will escort Professor Ogleby to his study, and we'll collect the cash."

"Really, is this quite necessary?" asked the professor angrily. "Cannot you trust me? I will give you the money later——"

"Sorry, sir—we need it now!"

"Oh, indeed!" snapped the great man. "Very well, then! Since you are in a position to dictate, I can do nothing but submit. Come! I will pay you!"

He stalked off, and a strong bodyguard of boys formed themselves round him. There was a chance that some of the rebels would attack, but the rebels didn't. Nipper and his stalwarts were too thoroughly fed-up with the whole business. They knew they were beaten, and not one of them had any further heart for fighting.

So Professor Thorpe Ogleby was escorted to his study, and the money was paid over—one pound for every member of Brewster's force.

The professor was dismayed at the cost, but he gave a little sigh of relief when the business was finished. At least, he had the satisfaction of knowing that he had won. The whole affair was over—or so he thought. But it wasn't!

CHAPTER 11.

Hal Brewster's Bombshell!

PROFESSOR OGLEBY, having paid up, felt better. That part of the wretched business was settled. Now he could throw himself wholeheartedly into the more important matter of dealing with the rebels and settling the fate of the playing-fields.

In fact, he took the first step at once—before leaving his study. He telephoned through to Mr. Drummond, and instructed Mr. Drummond to bring the workmen to St. Frank's straight away. Digging operations were to commence as soon as they arrived.

"Now," he said, rubbing his bony hands together, "we might as well go outside, yes?"

"Just what we were thinking, sir," said Hal Brewster, a curious note in his voice.

He and his companions had exchanged glances whilst Dr. Ogleby was telephoning. Some of the boys had looked alarmed, but Hal merely grinned.

They all went out to the playing-fields, and a cheer went up when Hal waved a big handful of money.

"All serene, you chaps!" he sang out. "I've got the lot!"

"Good egg!"

"It'll just about cover the exes. of new clobber," said one of the Grammar School boys. "There'll be precious little left over for a feed, or anything like that."



General Milton was so anxious to reach the centre of the disturbance that he hurried forward and tripped over the barbed wire.

"I've thought of that," nodded Hal Brewster. "There won't be a penny left over for a feed. This money, in fact, won't cover the cost of the damage. But it'll help—so we shall have to be satisfied. And you chaps can't deny that we've had a ripping afternoon!"

"Hear, hear!"

"Good old St. Frank's!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hal Brewster turned to the professor, whose face was flushed with triumph.

"Well, sir, we've kept our bargain," said Brewster, and now there was a gentle, caressing note in his voice. "You arranged with us to grab the playing-fields, didn't you? Well, we've grabbed them. You can't say that we haven't kept our bargain."

"No, of course not," agreed the professor.

"We've seized them, and we'll continue to hold them," said Brewster coolly.

"It will not be necessary for you to hold them for long," returned the Head, smiling. "My men will soon be here——"

"Never mind your men, sir," said Brewster blandly. "If they start any interference, we'll soon settle their hash! What you don't seem to understand, sir, is that we chaps are going to hold these playing-fields until you give us your definite promise that you won't dig them up."

The professor jumped about a foot into the air.

"What!" he gasped. "What did you say?"

"You've got to promise us, sir, that you won't damage these playing-fields in any way."

"But—but this is preposterous!" gurgled Professor Ogleby. "How dare you?"

"We dare, sir, by strength of numbers," replied Brewster sweetly. "Somehow I had an idea that you were rather foggy about the real position."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Poor old professor!"

"I—I don't know what you mean!" gasped Professor Ogleby dazedly. "Am—I to understand that you are not willing to surrender these playing-fields? I suppose you realise that you have accepted money——"

"We accepted money for driving the rebels out, sir, and we've driven them out," replied Brewster. "You didn't make any stipulations about what was to happen after we'd grabbed the playing-fields, did you?"

"This is incredible!" shouted the Head. "Have you boys deliberately fooled me? What is your object? What do you want with these meadows?"

"As regards the money, sir, although I agreed to do the job for a quid each all round, I didn't really mean to take it," said Brewster. "But seeing that we've damaged our clothes so much, it's only right that you should pay up. The fact remains that you're not going to dig up these playing-fields. Not while we're here, anyhow!"

"Not likely!"

"These St. Frank's chaps are a lot of faithless bounders!" Brewster was saying in a loud voice. "I tried to explain to them, but they wouldn't listen. I wanted them to give way pretty easily so that we could grab the playing-fields without much trouble, but they forced us to make a big scrap of it. Well, perhaps it was the best thing, because we feel now that we've earned our money."

"Earned your money, indeed!" snapped the professor angrily. "I consider that you have played a disgraceful trick——"

"What you don't understand, sir, is that all our sympathies are with the rebels," interrupted Hal. "We have playing-fields of our own, and if somebody threatened to dig them up, the St. Frank's chaps would rally round and help us. Well, that's what we've done. We've rallied round them. They didn't understand it at the time, but that's what has really happened."

The rebels, listening interestedly at first, were pricking up their ears. Faces were becoming flushed. Eyes were gleaming with a new understanding.

"Did—did you hear that, you chaps?" asked Handforth excitedly.

"I knew it!" said Willy, with a grin. "I felt certain all along that Hal Brewster had something up his sleeve. Good old Brewster!"

"What chumps we were!" said Nipper breathlessly.

"Good old River House!" yelled Willy suddenly. "Good old Grammar School! Good old Helmford! Good old Ted Sparks!"

Hal Brewster, hearing those yells, walked towards the excited rebels.

"Oh," he sang out sarcastically, "so you've come to your senses, have you?"

Nipper ran up, his face glowing.

"What does it mean, Brewster—exactly?" he asked.

"It means, my son, that we chaps have been doing our best to help you," replied the River House leader coolly. "My only sainted aunt! Did you really think that we should be such rotters as to turn against you?"

"We—we thought that you were wild about that affair on Monday evening——" began Handforth.

"Rats!" grinned Brewster. "That was nothing! Just a little misunderstanding."

"But—— Great Scott! I can't understand even now!" said Edward Oswald.

"It's simple enough," replied Hal. "Listen, all you fellows! We were hoping to sweep you out without much trouble; and when you offered such a stout resistance we tried to explain to you. But you wouldn't listen—so we had to use force, after all. As I've just told the professor, perhaps it was just as well. But you needn't worry about your playing fields. They're just as safe as ever."

"Hurrah!"

"Good old Brewster!"

Hal Brewster grinned.

"Not many minutes ago it was 'Rotter' and 'Traitor,'" he said. "It's a pity you

couldn't have more faith in me! You're a lot of howling idiots to think that I was capable of such a filthy trick!"

"Well, we found it hard to believe, Hal," said Nipper. "All along I felt that there was something queer about the whole business."

"Not many of the other chaps were as sensible as you!" growled Hal Brewster. "Can't you see that we chaps from your rival schools have rallied round in your hour of need? We didn't come here to defeat you, but to help you!"

"Oh, my hat!" said Handforth feebly.

"And we thought it would be a good wheeze, too, to make the professor pay up,"

COMING NEXT WEDNESDAY!



continued Brewster. "Yes, and pay up big! That's why I roped in every available chap. I got them from the Grammar School and from Helmford and from Caistowe. It serves the old beggar right!"

"Rather!"

"We never gave him any guarantees that we would hand over the playing fields once we had seized them," continued Hal, grinning. "Some people may think that we've played an unfair trick—but I don't. The professor deserves it. It's about time he was brought to his senses. We've even gone further—we've done something else."

"What?" went up a chorus.

"You'll find out pretty soon," grinned Brewster.

"Tell us now!"

"All right—I might as well, I suppose," said the River House leader. "Even before the scrap started, we telephoned to a big newspaper agency in London and gave them a full account of the battle."

"Before the battle happened?" grinned Nipper.

"Well, it didn't make any difference—we knew it was going to happen," said Hal. "Our wheeze is to get the news into the London evening papers—so that the whole thing is made public. Don't you see? Publicity is the one thing which will cause Professor Ogleby to shiver in his shoes."

"By Jove, yes!"

"The WRONG Mr. WRIGHT!"

By E. S. BROOKS.

Blundering E. O. Handforth thought Mr. Wright [was a wrong 'un—and put him in clink!

But it was the right Mr. Wright, and he was all right!

The cheery Chums of St. Frank's find themselves involved in all sorts of complications. Here's a corking complete yarn with many amusing twists and surprises. A riot of laughter from the first chapter. Don't miss it, chums.

"Outlawed!"

By DAVID GOODWIN.

Dick Forrester has made many enemies—but side by side with Turpin he's ready to meet them all—and beat them!

"Handforth's Weekly!"

"Our Round Table Talk!"

ORDER IN ADVANCE!

"That's the very reason he got us to help him," put in Georgie Glynn. "He didn't like to set his men on you, because it would mean publicity. If we schoolboys attacked you, however, it would be just a rag. But that's where the professor was wrong. He'll have a tremendous amount of publicity soon."

"And it ought to put an end to the whole rotten business," continued Hal. "That's what we thought, after having a good old chinwag about it. We planned the whole affair so that we should bring matters to a head. You blithering fatheads, we've been your pals all along—we've been helping you!"

Nipper thrust out his hand.

"Good old Hal!" he said heartily. "Thanks!"

They gripped, and Hal Brewster was chuckling.

"Well, I'm glad that we understand one another at last," he said. "Oh, and there's another point. It's another reason why we accepted the professor's proposal."

The rebels pressed round, eager.

"Just this," said the River House leader shrewdly. "We saw that if we had refused the professor's offer, he would have roped in other people to attack you. His workmen, in all probability. He was desperate, and he meant to drive you out."

"By Jove, that's true!" said Nipper, nodding.

"And those men might have beaten you," continued Brewster. "In that case, you would have been completely lost. So we thought we'd do the attacking, and it wouldn't matter a toss either way. The playing fields would be safe whether we failed or whether we won. A sort of safeguard, you see."

"Brewster, you've got brains," said Nipper admiringly. "That was clever of you!"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"But it was!" insisted Nipper. "You not only stopped the professor from taking any other steps, but you brought the whole giddy issue to a head. And to think that we doubted you—when all the time you and the chaps from these other schools have been rallying round to help us!"

"Hurrah!"

"Good old River House!"

Professor Ogleby listened like a man in a dream. Not only were the boys of the rival school cheering, but the rebels were cheering, too. They were all friendly—they were all swarming over the playing fields now. The professor himself was practically ignored. And the realisation came to him that he was in a far worse position than ever before. Not only had he paid out the better part of two hundred pounds, but he now had a rebel force which was more than double its original strength. His careful scheming had led to disaster! And, although he didn't know it, the crowning disaster was yet to come!

He suddenly lost control of himself.

"Get off these grounds!" he stormed, rushing up and down wildly. "Do you hear me? You wretched young scamps! All of you—all you boys who do not belong to St. Frank's! Leave this property at once!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll go, sir, after you've given us your word of honour that the playing fields won't be damaged!"

"Never!" raved the professor. "Never! Do you think that I am to be beaten by a parcel of wretched schoolboys?"

"You didn't call us a parcel of wretched schoolboys when you asked us to help you, sir," said Brewster gruffly. "Oh, no! Still, we won't argue. We'll just wait until you give us that promise."

As it happened, the St. Frank's rebels and Hal Brewster & Co. were not destined to wait for long.

CHAPTER 12.

Victory for the Rebels.

THINGS had been happening in Helmsford.

Lord Walberry and Mr. Stevens, the two other Governors, had arrived in the town by an earlier train. Thus, when they went to the Imperial Hotel, as arranged with General Milton, they found the general and Sir James Henson at once. The pair had only just arrived back from the race-course, and had not even had tea.

"I hope, gentlemen, that we have not brought you down here on a fool's errand," said Sir James, as they all shook hands in the big hotel lobby. "General Milton is convinced that there is a great deal of trouble at St. Frank's, but I must confess that I am sceptical. We have only the word of some boys——"

"You need be sceptical no longer, Sir James!" interrupted Lord Walberry fiercely. "Haven't you seen the evening paper?"

"Why, no," said Sir James, in surprise.

He now noted that Lord Walberry and Mr. Stevens were both looking very agitated.

"It is terrible that St. Frank's should figure in the newspapers so—so discreditably," Mr. Stevens was saying. "We bought the newspaper at the station, and——"

"Good heavens!" shouted General Milton, aghast.

He had just opened the newspaper, and he and Sir James stared in horror. Right across the page, in heavy type, were the words: "Desperate Battle at Great Public School!"

"Listen to this!" panted the general. "'Owing to the activities of Professor Thorpe Ogleby, the noted archæologist, the boys of St. Frank's are up in arms. The professor wishes to dig up the St. Frank's playing fields, and the boys are determined that he shall do no such thing. This afternoon a fierce battle is being fought, and the boys of several other surrounding schools are taking part in it. The whole situation is unprecedented in its amazing——'"

"Stop!" broke in Sir James Henson. "We cannot waste time here, gentlemen! We must hurry to St. Frank's without a second's delay! We can read that newspaper as we go!"

"Yes, yes!" said Lord Walberry. "That's what I thought. But how can we get there? We need a car——"

"There is mine," interrupted the general. "Come!"

They dashed out, a very agitated quartette. The general's car was waiting, and the general gave his chauffeur instructions to drive at full speed. As the distance to St. Frank's was only about twenty miles, the journey was accomplished in under thirty-five minutes.

During the journey the four horrified Governors read the full account. Even Brewster & Co. would have been astonished at that account. For the journalists had embellished it considerably. There was very

little news that day, and so the "story" had been made into a big feature. Everything was there, including the tale of the dynamite explosion, and the use of traction engines and ploughs.

The Governors did not quite see it, but the whole report was written in a more or less humorous vein. However, this did not alter the fact that it was publicity—dreadful, damaging publicity.

"We must have this denied in the very next edition, gentlemen!" said Lord Walberry, with agitation. "Good heavens! Parents will be clamouring if we don't! They will take their boys away from the school—St. Frank's will not only be the laughing-stock of the country, but its prestige will drop to nothing!"

"We cannot have the report denied unless the whole unhappy business is settled," said Sir James. "We must settle it at once, gentlemen. We must let these boys go back to their Houses unpunished."

"And why not?" growled the general. "Personally, they have my sympathy. Good luck to them! I like to see such spirit! Why should their playing fields be taken away from them? I said, from the very first——"

"Yes, yes," interrupted Sir James hastily. "So you did, general. Well, we will make Professor Ogleby understand that the whole unfortunate matter must be settled."

When they arrived at the school they found everything quiet. In fact, St. Frank's looked so peaceful and placid that the Governors believed, for a moment, that the newspaper report was entirely false. There wasn't a soul to be seen in the Triangle. An air of brooding peace hung over the famous old school.

And then a figure popped out of one of the buildings; it came running across to the car, and resolved itself into the shape of Mr. Horace Pycraft.

"Thank Heaven, gentlemen!" panted Mr. Pycraft. "You have not come a moment too soon! Appalling things are happening on the playing fields! There has been a battle—a free fight! Hundreds of boys from the surrounding schools have been here! They are here now!"

"And Professor Ogleby?" asked the general sharply. "Where is he?"

"He is there, too," said Mr. Pycraft. "It seems that these boys who promised to help him have turned against him at the last moment!"

"Thank you, sir," said General Milton. "We will go along and see for ourselves!"

They went along. They arrived at a crucial moment. The playing fields were thronged with cheering, yelling boys. Professor Ogleby was there, dashing about, shouting, threatening, and, in his excitement, making a lamentable exhibition of himself. The four Governors watched him more in sorrow than in anger.

"Poor Ogleby!" muttered Sir James. "This sort of thing was never meant for him! He cannot control a public school. It

was madness on his part to allow Mr. Lee to resign."

"I'm not blaming Mr. Lee," grunted the general. "Ten to one the professor drove him out."

They hurried towards the centre of the disturbance, and the general, in his haste, overlooked the barbed wire. There was a sudden rending tear, and one leg of the general's trousers, from the knee downwards, was in ribbons.

"Good heavens!" gasped the unfortunate man. "What—what was that?"

"Barbed wire!" said Lord Walberry angrily. "Good gracious! I nearly got caught on it myself!"

"Just look at these boys!" exclaimed Mr. Stevens, horrified. "Upon my soul! Just look at them! Scarecrows!"

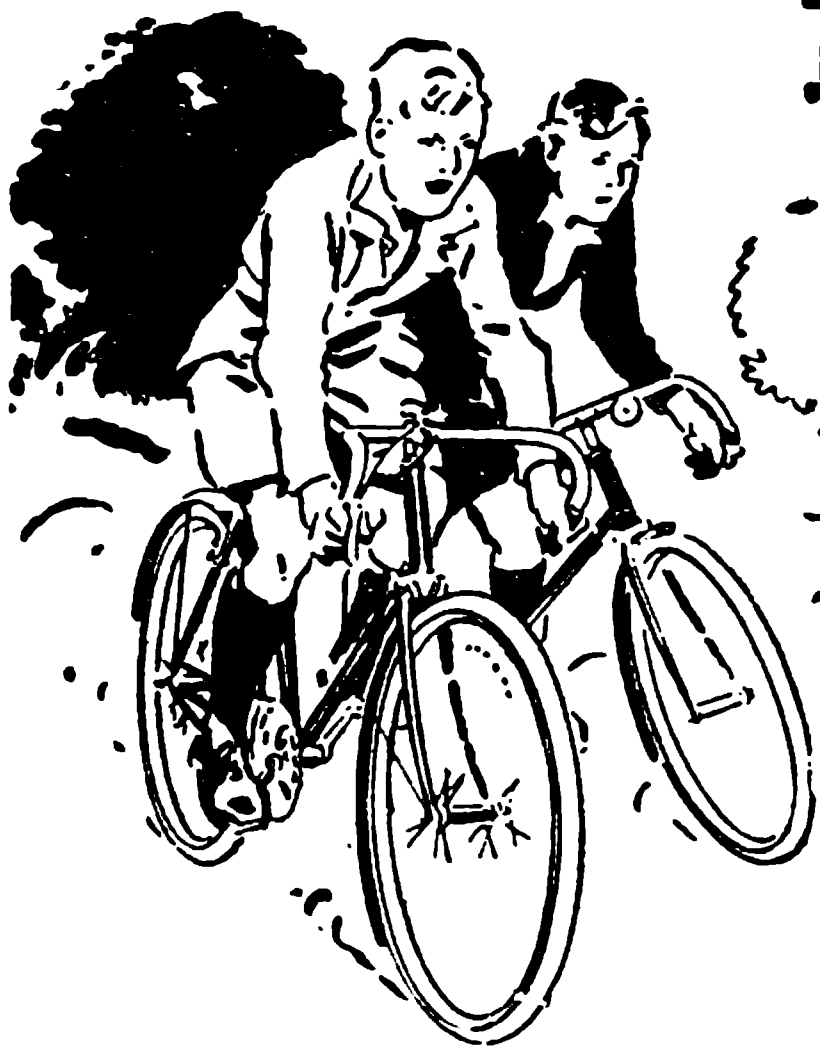
The boys were, indeed, startling to gaze upon. None of them had cleaned up; and the majority were not only in rags and tatters, but their faces and clothing were liberally bespattered with a mixture of soot and flour. Quite a number had been soaked to the skin, too, and their appearance can well be imagined. Not that they had come to any harm; the afternoon had turned mild, and, in any case, the boys were moving about so actively that there was little danger of their catching a chill.

A silence had fallen; for the boys had quickly recognised the newcomers, and they felt that a crisis was at hand. Professor Ogleby, gulping, ran up to the four governors.

"Gentlemen—gentlemen!" he panted. "I

(Continued on next page).

A few more miles to go



A FEW more weary miles to go before there is a halt for tea. Now is the time for Wrigley's. The delightful flavour of Wrigley's Chewing Gum will buck you up—will refresh the mouth and take away the parched feeling.

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The flavour lasts—British made



WRIGLEY'S

1^D PER PACKET



am indeed glad that you have come! Something drastic must be done with the boys. Their defiance is absolutely appalling. I can do nothing with them!"

The professor, wild and bedraggled, was an undignified sight.

"Will you be good enough to explain, Professor Ogleby, what has been happening this afternoon?" asked General Milton brusquely.

"These boys have defied me——"

"Yes, we know that," interrupted the general. "Is it a fact that you hired—yes, hired—a number of other boys from surrounding schools to attack the St. Frank's boys?"

"Well, in a way, yes," admitted the professor, startled. "But I cannot see how you knew this, General Milton."

"Considering that it is reported prominently in all the London newspapers, there is not much mystery about it," grunted the general. "The whole of England is ringing with the disgraceful story, sir!"

"Good heavens!"

"You may well look shocked," put in Sir James coldly. "I think, Professor Ogleby, that you had better come indoors at once. We cannot very well talk here in front of all the boys."

They went in, and the boys refrained from cheering. They felt, in fact, rather sorry for Professor Thorpe Ogleby, for all his fire had gone, and he looked a drooping, pitiful figure. After all, he wasn't a bad sort. He only had that bee in his bonnet about digging up the playing-fields for Roman remains. In every other respect he was a kindly, genial enough man.

The Governors vanished indoors, and the rebels and their "victors" remained in possession of the playing-fields. They weren't moving yet.

"Something will happen soon," said Nipper confidently. "We shan't have to wait long."

He was right.

General Milton and Sir James Henson soon emerged. Nobody knew exactly what had taken place in the Head's study, but everybody could guess. The two Governors were looking very grave as they marched towards the centre of the excited throng.

"We have had a consultation with Professor Ogleby," said General Milton, without any beating about the bush, "and your headmaster has kindly given his word to waive all punishments if you will return at once to your Houses and resume your normal conditions of living."

"What about our playing-fields, sir?" went up a shout.

"Dr. Ogleby has also promised that the playing-fields will not be interfered with in any way," said General Milton. "In all the circumstances, Professor Ogleby has decided to abandon his quest for Roman remains——"

"Hurrah!"

"We've won, you chaps!"

"Hands off the playing-fields!"

It was impossible for General Milton to get in another word. The boys had heard enough. They knew, of course, that it was the other Governors who had brought Professor Ogleby to this way of thinking. Only for the professor's sake General Milton had put it very nicely.

SO the great barring-out came to a sudden and dramatic end.

Within half an hour all the boys had raced back to their Houses; and Hal Brewster and his "army," cheerful and happy, went back to their own schools. They felt that they had done well. The St. Frank's juniors cheered them to the echo as they went off. They had played a noble part in this great victory.

Thus, when the seniors returned, they were astonished to find the school normal. The boys were washed and changed, and they were strolling about the Triangle and the Houses as though there had never been a rebellion at all. Many of the seniors, in fact, were inclined to feel fed-up when they heard what they had missed.

In the Head's study Dr. Thorpe Ogleby was sitting like a broken man. He had listened dully to the condemnation of his fellow Governors; he had been forced to make an unconditional surrender. For the good name of the school it was highly necessary that the rebellion should end. And so it had ended.

Quite by chance the professor happened to see a paragraph in one of the newspapers which the Governors had brought, and which was lying on the desk. Immediately the professor's manner changed; an eager light leapt into his eyes, and he grabbed feverishly at the newspaper.

"Good gracious me! Have you seen this, gentlemen?" he said excitedly. "Look! In Somersetshire! An astonishing discovery of Roman relics! The remains of a once-famous camp! And it is situated on common land!"

"You had better go to Somersetshire, I think, professor," said General Milton bluntly.

"That is exactly where I am going," replied the professor triumphantly. "Upon my word! And to think that I have been wasting my time here with these wretched boys!"

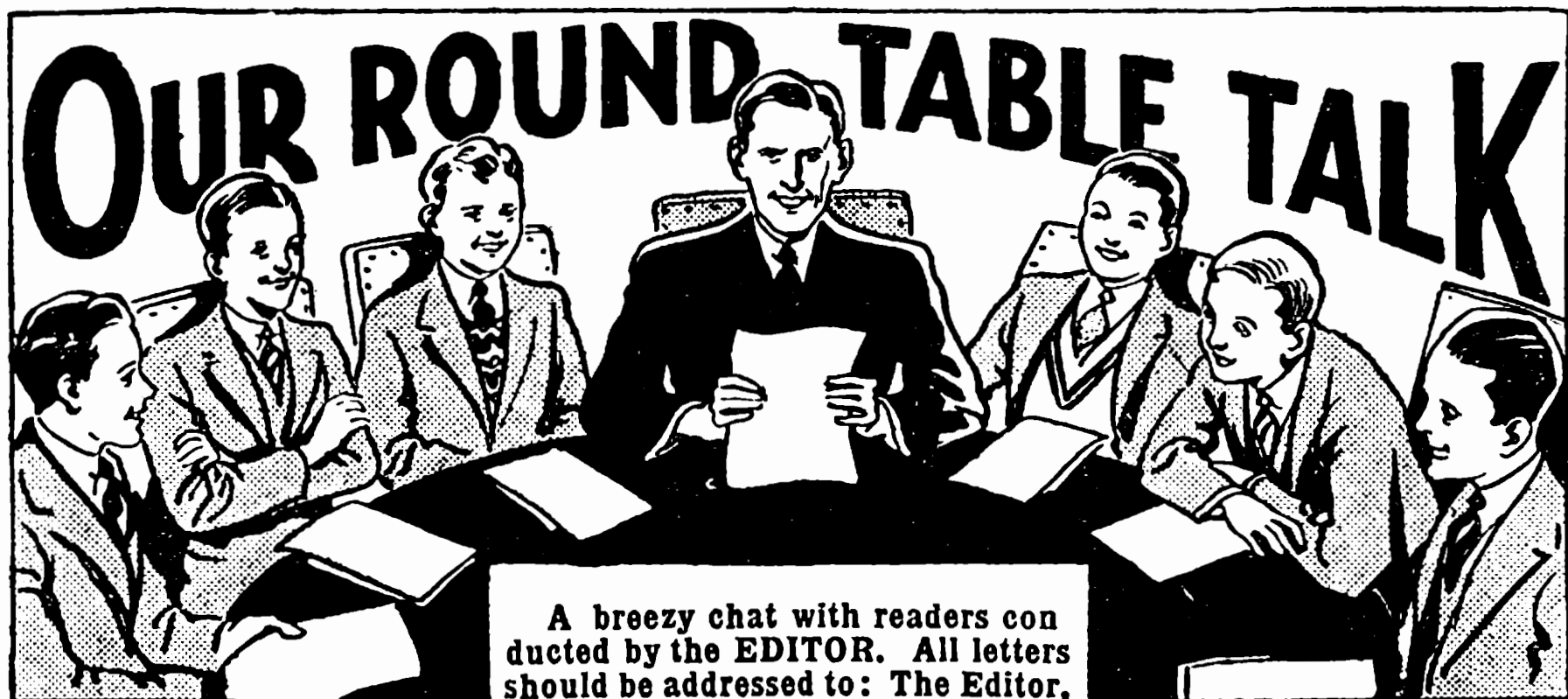
Needless to say, Mr. Nelson Lee returned to the old school, thanks to the good offices of the Governors, and within a few days St. Frank's was precisely "as you were." The great fight for the playing-fields was ancient history.

And Professor Thorpe Ogleby, somewhere in Somersetshire, was having the time of his life.

THE END.

(Next week's rollicking long complete yarn, featuring the Chums of St. Frank's, is entitled, "The Wrong Mr. Wright!" Make sure you order your copy in advance.)

All Letters Welcome—Write To The Editor To-day.



A breezy chat with readers conducted by the EDITOR. All letters should be addressed to: The Editor,

NELSON LEE LIBRARY, Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

YOU need not be troubled—as you say you are—about Nelson Lee's position at St. Frank's in the future, "Lucius" (London, S.W.1). It is true that Nelson Lee has a special arrangement with the school Governors regarding his appointment; but it is only an understanding in case a special investigation calls him away. It is quite easy for the great detective to leave the school in Mr. Wilkes' charge for a few days, or, if he is compelled to be away for some weeks, for a temporary headmaster to take the reins.

Archie Glenthorne's monocle, J. W. Richardson (Eastbourne), is a pure affectation. His eyesight is as keen as Nipper's, and that is saying a lot. The last story in which Umlosi appeared was "Through the Enemy's Lines."

Lord Pippinton's full family name, Henry Perkins (St. Helier), is Clarence Augustus Jerome Marchant. With regard to Jack Grey, he was known as "Jack Mason" before his father found him, and it turned out that he was really the son of Sir Crawford Grey, and that his name was Norman Grey. He had been known for so many years as "Jack" that he still answers to that name. Strictly speaking, his given name is Norman.

Handforth's father, Sir Edward Handforth, Bart., is quite a rich man, and he has two homos, Charles F. Wiley (Birmingham). The ancestral home is Travis Dene, near Bury St. Edmund's, Suffolk, and the London house is in Grosvenor Avenue, W.

A good tip for you, Madge Hutchinson (Westgate-on-Sea), if you don't know what to do with your old copies of the N.L.L., is to give them to the local hospital or infirmary, where they will be gratefully

received. Other readers in a similar fix can follow Miss Hutchinson's good example, and give a little pleasure to inmates not able to help themselves.

Vera Wilkes is not particularly interested in any of the St. Frank's fellows, Albert Francis (Portsmouth). She is chummy with lots of them, and does not seem to be pining very much over the departure of Kirby Keeble Parkington.

Thanks for your suggestion for republishing the early St. Frank's stories, Cyril R. F. Ainery (Beckom, Australia). The matter is being considered, and you can be quite sure that it will receive earnest attention. As you are so pleased with the present yarns, you are probably telling all your pals about them. If not, here's the hint.

The only way to make sure of securing your copy of the NELSON LEE LIBRARY every week is to place a regular order with your newsagent. All readers are well advised to carry out this suggestion if they wish to avoid missing an issue of their favourite paper.

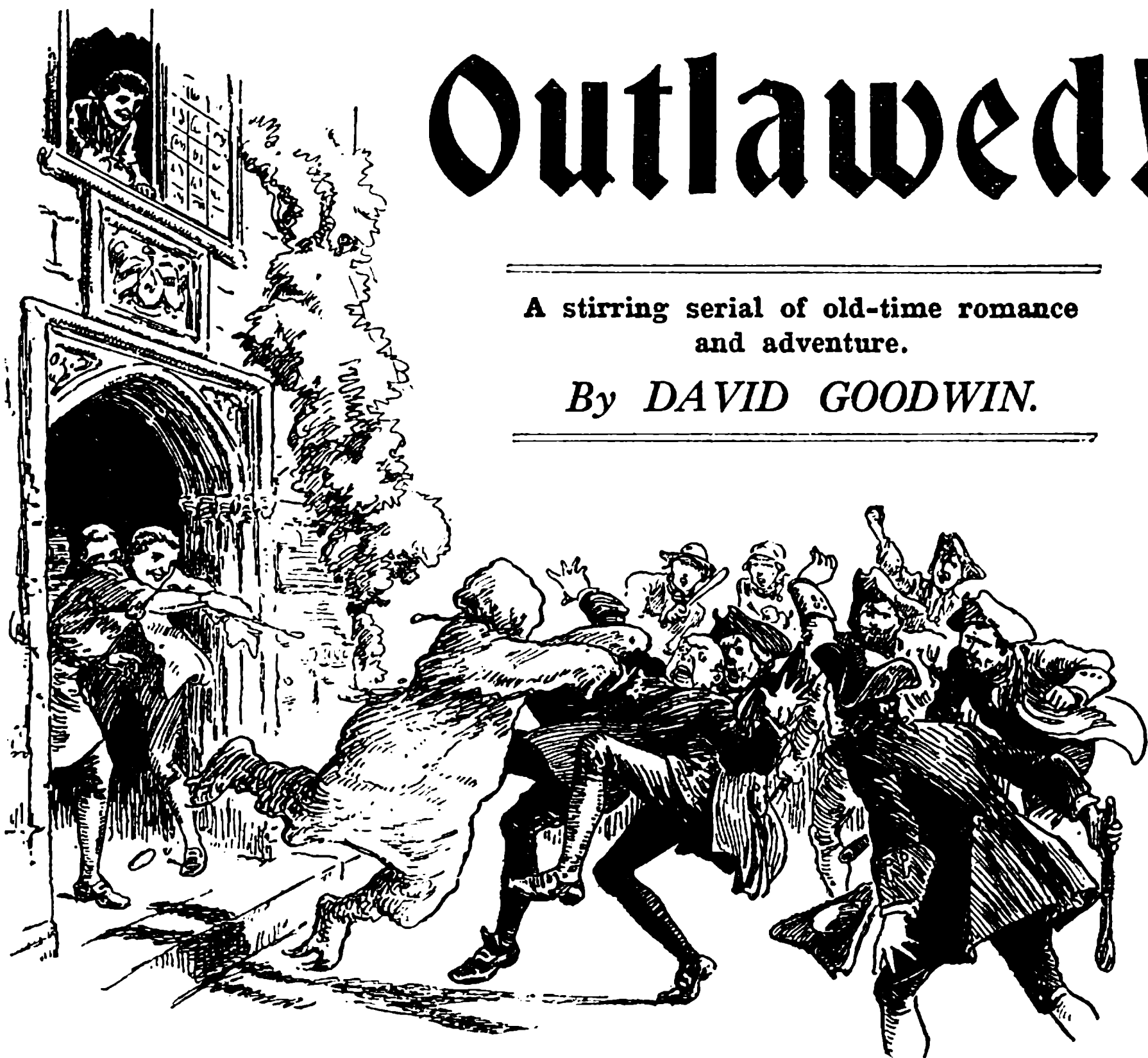
Here is a list of the Third Form boys at St. Frank's who have appeared in the stories: Ancient House—Willy Handforth (Form captain), Chubby Heath, Juicy Lemon, Owen minor, Bobby Dexter, Eric Gates, Jack Blythe. West House—Dickie Jones, Tommy Hobbs, Edgar Button, Freddy Mason, Victor Hoskins, Jimmy Hope, Stanley Kerrigan. Modern House—Tommy Tripp, Harry Dawson, Arthur Deakin, Roderick Foote, Cyril Harper, Charley Thompson. East House—Conroy minimus, Percy Ryder, Jimmy Hook, Billy Dale, George Fullerton, Parry minor, Simms minor, Wally Sullivan.

Dick Forrester Fights For Right With Might!

Outlawed!

A stirring serial of old-time romance
and adventure.

By *DAVID GOODWIN.*



Dick Defiant!

"SO I am first deprived of what I own, and then deprived of it again as a punishment!"

Dick Forrester spoke with bitterness as he faced the London attorney.

"The writ, indeed, settles the matter entirely," said Staines. "Even were you legal owner of Fernhall you would thus be stripped of it. You would be unable to fight my client in the courts of law."

"And where is your client?" asked Dick, his hand unconsciously stealing to the hilt of his sword, a slight smile on his lips.

"He is coming with the servants and the court bailiffs to take possession, and will be here shortly."

"Ay!" said Smear, sticking his bald head forward with a sneering grin. "He is coming to turn the rascally usurper out; neck and crop, and claim his own!"

"My dear Smear!" protested Staines, coughing. "Really——"

"Let me alone, Staines! Mr. Richard Forrester does not understand yet. I will

explain to him. Do you mark me, Forrester? The successful heir is coming to turn you out as you deserve—— Oh, help, help!"

With one step forward Dick caught the snuffy lawyer by the neck-cloth, shook him contemptuously, and, pulling him down the stairs like a sack, shot him out through the tower gateway in a heap.

"My dear sir—my dear sir!" puffed Mr. Staines, in shocked anger. "I beg of you! This violence!"

"There is the door, sir," said Dick, turning on him sternly. "Go, unless you wish to be handled in the same way. In spite of all the juggling lawyers in London, I am Forrester of Fernhall still, and the next black-coated rascal who insults me in my own house will be horsewhipped and flung out by the neck. Now go!"

Mr. Staines went.

"Villain! Ruffian!" screamed Smear, picking himself up from the gravel. "You shall pay for this! Ah, here comes the rightful owner and his men. On—on, and turn this scoundrel out of his lair!"

Dick looked up quickly and saw Hector Forrester, a smile of triumph on his dark face, striding towards the tower with a crowd of followers.

"Shut the gates!" cried Dick to his men. "Shoot the great bolts, and let every man stand by! See yonder crew of riff-raff? They come to take Fernhall! Shall they have it?"

"Never!" shouted Dick's men, with a rousing cheer. "Forrester for ever!"

"Bar every entry!" ordered Dick. "Strike down any rascal who gets a footing within. One of you slip out at the back and ride to Huntercombe to warn my brother Ralph what's afoot. Barricade the gate after him. Let every man arm himself with stout cudgels from the gun-room. Come on, you knaves there, and see what Forrester of Fernhall has ready for you!"

Hector Forrester, who had marshalled his men triumphantly round him, no sooner found the great tower doors shut in his face than he strode hastily forward with an arrogant air and smote the gates with the hilt of his sword.

"Open!" he cried.

"What, so valiant with the sword?" laughed Dick contemptuously. He was sitting in the window high above the gates and looking down. "Have you then more stomach for the use of it than you had last week?"

"Ah, 'tis you!" said Hector fiercely, looking up at Dick. "Come down and open the gates, or 'twill be the worse for you. I am master here now, and I claim my own!"

"Do you hear, lads?" cried Dick to his men, who were on guard at the other windows. "Yonder is your master. Wouldst open the gates to such a knave?"

A chorus of jeers went up from the sturdy serving-men, and one of them flung a large half-cooked cabbage at Hector's head, crying:

"Here's meat for you, master!"

A roar of laughter arose, for the cabbage burst like a squib on Hector's face, so disconcerting him that he staggered and sat down heavily on the gravel. He sprang up again, wiping the vegetable from his eyes and hair, frenzied with rage.

"On and seize the house!" he cried to his men. "Force your way in and sweep down all resistance!"

"Guard well the windows, lads," cried Dick, still shaking with laughter. "Place a strong guard of cudgel-men to each gate, lest they break them down. They are six to one, yet we shall hold such rabble with ease. Ecod! I wish this ivy had not grown up the walls thus; it serves as a ladder for these knaves to get in by."

Barring Out the Bailiffs!

THE bailiffs and hangers-on, who, with Hector's servants, made up quite a small army, did not try the ivy as yet, however—they had little gusto for such escalading. They scattered and swarmed round the house, trying the doors and putting their shoulders to them lustily.

"Strike not to kill, lads, when you come to close quarters," ordered Dick. "Use your cudgels well and heartily, but I want no bloodshed."

"I charge you to surrender!" cried the head bailiff. He was a very fat, very pompous man. He strutted up to the gates, while his men sought an entrance, and when he looked up at Dick he shook his fist. "'Tis you, is it, riotous knave? If a single one of my bailiffs is obstructed in his duty I shall have you taken before the magistrate and whipped. Do you hear, scoundrel? Let me in!"

"The rascals talks too freely," said Dick to his men with a laugh. "'Tis because he is on the right side of the wall. See, he puts his fat shoulder to the door of the kitchen. Do you unbolt it, Jack and Ned, and let him in with some suddenness since he so desires it. By himself only!"

The men, chuckling as they saluted, slipped down to the kitchens, where they heard the fat bailiff wheezing as he tried to push down the door.

"A fine piece of oak to bear his weight," said Dick with a grin. "If 'twill stand that, we need not fear for it. Now, men, draw the bolts without noise, and let him enter."

Softly the bolts were drawn back. The door was creaking as the man outside tried his shoulder against it. Suddenly the two serving-men flung it open, and the fat bailiff tumbled head over heels into the kitchen.

The men slammed and bolted the door again before any others could enter, and then seized the bailiff. Seeing himself

HOW THE STORY BEGAN

DICK FORRESTER, once a notorious highwayman with a price on his head, thanks to the villainy of his uncle, Vane Forrester, now dead, has settled down to a life of ease and luxury on his estate of Fernhall. He sadly miss the company of his former cheery comrade of the road,

RICHARD TURPIN, the famous outlaw. But Turpin once again comes into Dick's life, when he seeks refuge in the young squire's house. He is being pursued by

CAPTAIN SWEENEY, the villainous leader of a gang of robbers. Sweeney and his men attack, but they flee when the King's Riders arrive. The footpad leader, in escaping, kills two of the Riders. Dick assists Turpin to elude the King's men, thereby breaking the law. More trouble comes to Dick when he receives a visit from Hector Forrester who, as Vane's heir, claims the estates. The boy throws him out, but later an attorney from London informs Dick that Hector has proved his claim; that he is now the legal owner of Fernhall. He also tells Dick that, owing to his assisting Turpin to escape, he has been deprived of all his estates and fortune.

trapped, he fell on his knees and howled for mercy.

"Spare my life!" he bellowed to Dick. "Oh, spare my life!"

"Fat Rickaby has got in!" yelled the voices outside. "We have possession. He has entered!"

"Ay, but the rogue will not stay here!" said Dick. "If the bailiff be in, Fernhall is Hector's by all law, and I like not that. Dip him in the dough-trough, boys, and send him back to his knavish companions."

The dough for the morrow's bread was lying in a great trough. With shouts of laughter the men dragged the fat bailiff to it, despite his cries, and rolled him bodily in the dough. They pulled him out again, covered from crown to soles with the sticky stuff, his face plastered with it, and his arms and legs looking like woollen bolsters. Rapidly Dick's serving-men unbarred one of the side doors and opened it cautiously.

Instantly the enemy made a rush to storm it, but Dick's men propelled the fat bailiff out into the arms of the attackers, a bounding, bellowing mountain of dough. Dick sat in his window above the gateway and laughed till he cried.

"Laugh, you dog—laugh!" shouted Hector Forrester furiously. "You've little time left to make merry in. You don't know what's in store for you. No more fiddling, men; we'll smash their defences down. Bring up that pine trunk from the loghead and batter down the gates!"

They dragged up the stripped trunk of a young fir-tree, four or five of them carrying it together, and charged the gates with it, end on. After five or six such shocks the great iron-bound doors, stout as they were, began to quiver and groan.

Crash! Crash! The pine-log thudded against the wood continuously, each time with a cheer from the besiegers.

"Is there no way to stop it?" cried Dick. "I am loth to fire on a crew of bailiffs and hangers-on, though they deserve it for being in such shady service. Nay. I can hold Fernhall without bloodshed; there must be a way. Yet they will have the door down in a few more blows. 'Od's wounds, who comes there on the great grey horse? Ralph, as I live."

"Well met, brother!" cried Ralph Forrester, thundering over the lawns and clearing the laurel fence at a bound, waving his hat to Dick. He was just the same cheery, dare-devil youngster whom Dick had stood by through thick and thin when the younger boy was at school at St. Anstell's, and he sat the big grey hunter he rode like a centaur.

"What, are these the bailiffs?" cried Ralph, as he spied the crowd round the doors. "On, Rupert—on! We'll soon clear this rabble from the gates of Fernhall!"

And clapping the spurs to his horse Ralph charged into the midst of the besiegers. Over went nine or ten of them like ninepins, knocked flying by the big grey horse, while Ralph laid about him lustily with his riding-whip. The pine-log was dropped on the toes of its bearers, and the crowd broke and fled, yelling frantically.

They rallied with angry cries, and shouted to each other to surround him and pull him down.

But Ralph had no mind to be caught. Twice more he charged through them, then rode swiftly to the gateway. He grasped the tough trunks of the ivy above the great porch, drew himself out of the saddle, and began to climb nimbly up to Dick's window.

The horse, finding itself free, swerved and galloped away, while the crowd, infuriated as they saw that Ralph was escaping, swarmed forward and pelted him with clods of earth as he climbed. The ivy provided many foot and hand-holds, and to an active youngster like Ralph it was child's play to negotiate. A few moments later he was clambering in through Dick's window.

"Up at last!" he cried exultingly, slapping his brother on the back. "Wasn't it neatly done, Dick? Didn't I make 'em scatter?"

"You did it like a true Forrester, Ralph," said Dick heartily. "But I believe there's ugly work coming."

"Which is this Hector Forrester you tell me of?" asked Ralph.

"Yonder dark-faced youth, who is raving at the men," said Dick.

"A slippery-looking knave, too. And he wouldn't fight? He's a chip of the old block then, and takes after his father. But I don't believe it. I don't believe Uncle Vane ever had a son!"

"He has proved his claim in Chancery, at least," returned Dick, "and comes here with his papers and his attorneys and his bailiffs all in order, to turn me from our heritage, Ralph. Last time, as I told you, I threw him in the lily-pond. But there's sharper work to do now. Have a care, the knaves are flinging flints at us. 'Twill be more than flints ere long."

A large stone crashed against the mullion of the window within an ace of Ralph's head.

"I am loth to fire at them with the muskets," said Dick, "but if the tide turns against us it will have to come to that."

"I know a better way!" cried Ralph. "What is it that I smell—cooking? The steam of it comes up from the kitchens."

"'Tis the stirabout for all the servants of the house—two great cauldrons of it. 'Tis close on their dinner-hour, and we must feed them well for the fight."

"I've a better use for it than that," exclaimed Ralph. "Stirabout? The very thing. Gather the men together, Dick. Here,

my lusty fellows, make shift with a cold dinner for the day, and we'll give your hot gruel to the besiegers to keep 'em warm. Bring the stirabout up here!"

"Ecod, the very thing!" cried Dick in delight. "Why did I not think of it? Hurry, men, before they break down the doors!"

Taking Their Gruel!

THE servants hastened off, to return bearing between them an enormous iron pot in which simmered gallons of warm stirabout, a steaming gruel consisting of lumps of fat pork, beans, herbs and potatoes floating in it.

"There go the hinges!" shouted the furious mob below, as one of the gates began to buckle slightly. "Six more blows, and we are inside. Wait but a minute, you knaves up there, and we'll take the hides off you!"

"Hoist the cauldron on to the sill of the window," said Dick to his men. "Tilt it up—so! Stand back; we have it safe. Now, Ralph, we'll give it 'em together!"

Holding the sides of the balanced cauldron, the two boys leaned the huge pot slowly forwards.

"One, two, three and down go the gates!" shouted the crowd, as the batterers poised themselves for one final charge.

"One, two, three and here's your supper!" shouted Ralph, and with a mighty hiss a deluge of warm stirabout cascaded down upon the heads of the yelling enemy.

Swish! The steaming stirabout came down like an avalanche upon the besiegers just as they were making their final rush upon the gates.

A roar of rage and fright arose. The battering-ram was dropped, and in a moment the space before the gates was covered with dancing, rolling, yelling forms, smothered in steaming gruel. Dick and Ralph shot out the last dregs from the big cauldron.

"Take your dinner, you knaves!" shouted Ralph. "Eat it while it's warm!"

So lustily did he laugh that he could not hold the tilted cauldron, and, though Dick tried to save it, it fell over the window-sill and plunged downwards.

Falling hollow side under, it landed upon a short, fat bailiff, doing him no great hurt, but imprisoning him like a teacup placed over a bumble-bee, and from its iron interior came his smothered lamentations.

"'Od's mercy! We're killed! We're slain! We're boiled!" shrieked the besiegers. "Master, we can batter the gates no more!"

"Nay, keep to it, you rascals!" shouted Hector furiously. He had been standing on the outskirts of the attackers, thus escaping the deluge of stirabout. "Never let them beat you. Ah, you accursed knaves up there, you shall pay for this when we get in!"

"Ay, at 'em again!" yelled those who had not suffered. "Come, lads, 'tis only stir-

about. They have no more of it. One more rush an' down go the gates!"

"Ho, there, men!" said Dick to his servants. "Is there more of the stuff in the coppers?"

"Ay, sir; here's another cauldron of it!" said the house-steward, grinning hugely.

"Keep it out of sight, man. Bring it round under cover of the wall. Don't be in a hurry, Ralph; wait till they rush again. They're mad with rage, and will take no heed."

"Wasn't it grand, Dick?" laughed Ralph. "Od's fish, 'tis better than a siege-gun, to see the fat knaves rolling on the gravel. I would ride all day rather than miss it!"

"'Tis a pity yonder rogue Hector got none of it," said Dick. "The coward takes care to keep out of range, and lets his men do the work. He must have promised them a pretty bribe apiece to make them stand to it thus. See, they have snatched away the battering-ram again. They mean to make another attack!"

(Will Hector Forrester succeed in throwing Dick out of Fernhall? Look out for another rousing instalment of this magnificent serial next Wednesday. Full of exciting action and thrills—don't miss reading it.)



32

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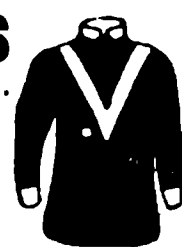
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