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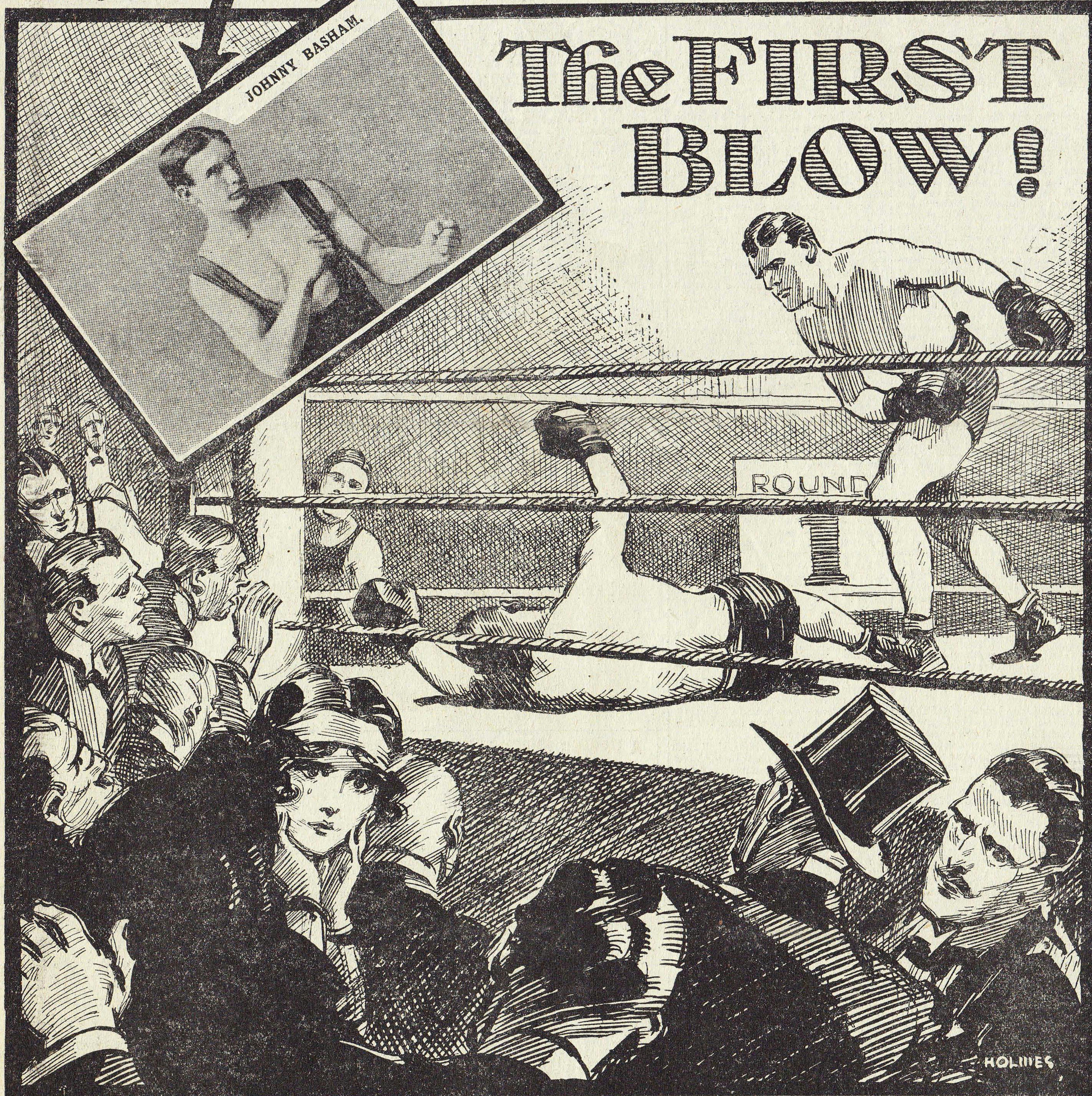
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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD.

[Week Ending May 20th, 1922.



A Sensation of the Ring—Knocked Out by the First Blow!

(Read of the remarkable ending to the Poirret-Gordon Contest in the grand, long, complete story of the Clean-Sport Crusaders in this issue.)

ANOTHER ADVENTURE OF PETER GUNNER AT ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



The Rookwood Treasure!

By Owen Conquest

(Author of the famous Rookwood Stories appearing in our splendid companion paper, the "Popular.")

The 1st Chapter. A Startling Secret!

"Better whisper."
"We're safe here."
"Can't be too careful," said Tommy Dodd cautiously. "If these Classical bounders should get on to it—"

"Sure they'd think nothing of bagging the treasure and leaving us out in the cold."
"Exactly."
Peter Cuthbert Gunner of the Classical Fourth at Rookwood sat up and took no notice, so to speak.

The whispering voices came to his ears, low but clear, round the huge trunk of the beech in a quiet corner of the Rookwood quadrangle.

Gunner was seated on a bench under the big beech, with Virgil on his knees, and a frown upon his brow. Gunner was studying Virgil—not willingly. Mr. Dalton had found serious fault with Gunner's construe that morning—not an unusual experience for Gunner. It was a half-holiday that afternoon, and Gunner had to spend part of it with P. Virgilius Maro, who was about the last companion he would have chosen on a half-holiday if he had had his own way.

Gunner was trying manfully to make head or tail of the celebrated shipwreck scene, when the whispering voices came to his ears.

He grinned.
He knew the voices—those of Dodd, and Cook, and Doyle, of the Modern Fourth—the Three Tommies.

Evidently, the Modern chums had retired to that sequestered spot to discuss some matter that was to be kept from the knowledge of their old foes and rivals, the Classicals.

Gunner could not help grinning.
It struck him as funny that the three Moderns should halt under the very tree where he sat, only the thick trunk separating him from them, and concealing him from their sight. He was out of view, but he was well within hearing.

Gunner of the Fourth had his faults. He was popularly supposed to be the biggest duffer that ever duffed, as Lovell described it. He had a fixed belief that he could do anything and everything, and everybody else had a fixed belief that he could do nothing at all. He had received several lickings since his arrival at Rookwood; yet his belief in his pugilistic powers remained undiminished, and he was ready to "take on" anybody from the Third to the Fifth. But he prided himself chiefly on his brain powers. This was really mysterious to the other Fourth-Formers, who had never discerned in Gunner any sign of brains at all. But although Gunner had his faults—and their name was legion—he was no eavesdropper. In ordinary circumstances he would never have listened to talk not intended for his ears. But in the present case the talkers were Modern juniors, and Gunner regarded himself as learning the plans of the enemy. So he made no sound, and only sat up and took notice.

Besides, he was rather curious. The mention of the treasure interested him, for of course Gunner had heard of the Rookwood treasure. Every new boy heard of that as a matter of course—in fact, new boys often went rooting round the old Abbey ruins in the hope of finding it. They never succeeded. If there was any treasure left buried about Rookwood by the ancient monks, they had done their work remarkably well.

"Pieces of eight!" Tommy Dodd's

voice ran on in a whisper, which reached Gunner quite clearly. "That's some sort of old coin, you know—worth a lot of money. That shows it's ancient."

"May be enough to make us all rich for life!" said Tommy Cook eagerly.

"More than that! Those old monks were no end rich, you know, and when Henry VIII. came down like a wolf on the fold, they shoved it all out of sight. Might be a million pounds."

"Phew!"
"Sure, oughtn't we to take this paper to the Head?" asked Tommy Doyle. "Will the treasure belong to us if we find it?"

"I think half goes to the Government, and the rest to the finder," said Tommy Dodd thoughtfully. "Something like that. Nothing to do with the Head. He hadn't a hand in finding this old document. We found it. Pieces of eight. It doesn't say how many, but it mentions the oaken chest. Must be a good bit if it needed an oaken chest—what?"

"Yes, rather!" murmured Cook. "All we've got to do," continued Tommy Dodd, "is to follow the directions in this paper. Then we get hold of the famous Rookwood treasure. It's been searched for for hundreds of years, and nobody's had any luck. Fancy the looks of the Classical duffers when we turn it up! Jimmy Silver will be ready to kick himself!"

"Take care of the paper, Tommy," said Doyle anxiously. "You couldn't remember what's on it if you lost it."

"That's all right. I'm not running any risks with it. It won't be safe to make the search till the dead of night—"

"The which?"

"The dead of night. We'll take a spade and a lantern, and seek the hidden treasure at the dead of night. But I'm not going to carry this precious paper about with me. Might lose it any minute. I'm going to put it in a safe place."

Peter Cuthbert listened with breathless interest now. His heart was thumping with excitement.

The discovery of a document containing a clue to the lost Rookwood treasure was a great event. The Moderns had had that luck, but they were not going to have the treasure if Gunner could help it. All was fair in war, Gunner considered, and he was already planning to get hold of that valuable document. He was prepared to give the Modern juniors a series of hefty punches in exchange—which was all that Moderns were entitled to, anyhow.

Gunner did not worry about the undoubted fact that any one of the three Tommies could have made rings round him at fisticuffs. It was not a fact to Gunner.

He had half risen, but he sat down again as he heard Tommy Dodd's next words:

"I'm shoving it in the hole in this tree. It will be safe there till we want it."

"Good!"

Gunner smiled at the sunny spring sky. He abandoned his half-formed plan of seizing upon the document by force of arms. There was a bare possibility, even in Gunner's mind, that he might have got the worse of the tussle, considering the odds. Tommy Dodd was fairly playing into his hands, and Gunner was content to let it go at that.

He could hear Dodd fumbling on the other side of the big beech. Then there was a sound of retreating footsteps, and of voices dying away in the distance.

Gunner ventured to peer cautiously round the trunk.

The three Tommies were disappearing afar, without even looking back. Gunner indulged in a gentle chuckle.

He stepped round the beech and

scanned the old trunk. He was not long in discovering the hole in the bark, and he fumbled in it, and drew out a folded paper.

Gunner did not stop to read it there. He put it hastily into his pocket, and walked away with his prize.

Ten minutes later, for reasons best known to themselves, Tommy Dodd & Co. came sauntering back to the spot. This time they passed the bench on the other side of the beech. On the bench lay a forgotten Virgil, but there was no sign of Gunner. Tommy Dodd, with a grinning face, circumnavigated the beech, and groped in the hole in the bark. It was empty.

"Dear me!" said Tommy Dodd. "And the three Tommies sauntered away again, with amazing equanimity considering the immense value of the document they had lost."

Cricketer—in his own personal estimation. But he always found it difficult to secure listeners, when the spirit moved him to draw upon his stores of knowledge.

"Look here!" hooted Gunner. "It's not cricket! I want to speak to you about something else, Silver!"

"Oh!" said Jimmy, more amiably. "You're not going to ask me for a place in the junior team, nor tell me what a born idiot Bulkeley is not to play you in the First Eleven?"

"No!" snorted Gunner. "Then you can run on!" said Jimmy kindly. "I'll give you a minute or two. Back-pedal, you chaps!"

"Rot!" said Lovell tersely. "I'm going to play cricket. You can listen to Gunner's chinwag if you want to."

And Arthur Edward Lovell marched on, having no politeness to waste on Gunner. Raby and Newcome hesitated; but they finally walked on after Lovell, leaving Jimmy Silver to his fate.

"Well, what is it, Gunner?" asked Uncle James of Rookwood. "Give it a name, and cut it short!"

"It's about the Rookwood treasure—"

"Oh dear!" sighed Jimmy. "Somebody been pulling your leg about that?"

Gunner sniffed. "I hope I'm not the kind of fellow to have my leg pulled!" he said disdainfully.

"You're a hopeful sort of chap," said Jimmy cordially. "Sanguine temperament, and all that. Well, what about the treasure? Found it?"

"I hope to find it shortly!"

"Good!" said Jimmy. "If it makes you a millionaire, we shall expect you to stand a spread to the whole Fourth. We'll all miss our tea

how, as it will never happen; but if—"

"I might have known I shouldn't get any sense out of you!" said Gunner. "Why the fellows made you captain of the Form beats me!" "Anything else to say?" inquired Jimmy politely.

"Only that you're a born idiot!"

"Thanks!" said Jimmy. He went on his way, and, in passing, took Gunner by the collar, tripped him, and sat him down heavily on the ground. Gunner sat and gasped, hardly knowing how he came to be in a sitting posture. His mighty brain never worked quickly.

By the time he scrambled to his feet, Jimmy Silver was trotting on the cricket-field, Gunner made a stride or two in pursuit; but he stopped.

"No time to thrash that cheeky idiot now!" he reflected. "I'll give him a lesson another time. I'm jolly well going to lift that giddy treasure before the Moderns miss this paper!"

Gunner entered the School House, and proceeded to his Study, No. 7, in the Fourth. There he found his study-mate, Dickinson minor. The latter was labouring through an imposition, with a gloomy countenance. Dickinson minor wanted to be at the cricket; but a cruel destiny chained him to the study and Virgil.

"Not finished yet?" asked Gunner. "Forty-six out of a hundred!" said Dickinson minor dismally. "Don't interrupt, old chap. I want to get through somehow!"

"Put it away now."

"I've got to take it to Mr. Dalton before tea!"

"Can't be helped!" said Gunner, in his autocratic way. "I want you." Dickinson minor generally gave Gunner his head, for the sake of a



TREASURE SEEKING!

"You may dig here, Gunner," said Dr. Chisholm. "If the Rookwood treasure really lies below I will excuse you. Otherwise, Gunner, I shall punish you severely. I am waiting." Gunner, nothing daunted, plied the spade.

The 2nd Chapter. Glorious Prospects!

"Silver!"
Jimmy Silver waved his hand at Gunner.

It was an emphatic gesture of dismissal; but Gunner did not heed it.

"Hook it!" said Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Don't begin on cricket, old man!" implored Raby. "We know you can teach us all about the game. But don't do it!"

"Don't!" urged Newcome.

"Leave us in our ignorance. Do!"
Jimmy Silver & Co. were on their way to Little Side for cricket. They really did not want Gunner's conversation. Gunner was the Complete

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specially to do it justice. I sha'n't miss my tea to day!" added the captain of the Fourth reflectively.

"What do you know about this old treasure of the Abbey?"

"Nothing!" said Jimmy. "The yarn is that the monks buried it when Henry VIII. came looting after their goods, ever so long ago. It's said that an old document exists giving the clue; but nobody's ever seen the giddy document."

"It's known about the document?"

asked Gunner thoughtfully.

"So they say. Hidden about Rookwood somewhere," smiled Jimmy. "Might turn up any day—perhaps."

"Now, suppose some Modern kids found the document—"

"Suppose anything you like, old bean!"

"Suppose they did, a Classical chap would be justified in bagging it off them, considering that we're up against the Moderns all along the line," argued Gunner.

"I don't know about that," said Jimmy, staring at him. "But as they're not likely to find anything of the sort—"

"You agree with me that I should be justified—"

"Well, not quite," said Jimmy Silver. "It doesn't scatter any-

quiet life. But he showed signs of rebellion now.

"Look here, I can't leave my impot!" he said. "Mr. Dalton—"

"Shove it away," said Gunner unheeding. "I've got something on a bit more important than lines for Dalton. Besides, you can get round Dalton, if you like, by making him a present of a new motor-bike, or a Rolls-Royce car!"

Dickinson minor felt as if he would faint.

He backed his chair away from Gunner, looking at him in great alarm. The only explanation of Gunner's remark was that Gunner was not quite right in his head—and Dickinson realised now that there had been many signs of it. Gunner's belief that he could play cricket, for instance.

"What are you blinking at?" demanded Gunner irritably.

"I—I say, you keep off!" gasped Dickinson.

"What?"

"D-d-don't you come near me!" gasped Dickinson. "I—I say, you ought to see a doctor at once!" "See a doctor!" repeated Gunner, in astonishment. "What would a doctor know about the Rookwood treasure?"

"The—the—the what?"
"That's what I was going to tell you," said Gunner. "The Rookwood treasure, you know—pieces of eight—a whole oaken chest full. As you're my pal, I'm going to give you a share."

Dickinson jumped up. He realised that it was not insanity; but he was very much astonished.

"You've found the Rookwood treasure?" he yelled.

"Practically!"
"Oh, only practically!" said Dickinson, much more soberly.

"It's simply a question of getting hold of it," explained Gunner. "I've found the document giving the clue."

"My hat!"
"I needn't go into details," said Gunner. "The document's in my hands, and that's enough. I understand that half a hidden treasure goes to the Government—trust them to get their fingers on anything they can. But half a million pounds is a lot of money. I shall give you ten thousand, Dickinson."

"W-w-will you?" stammered the astonished Dickinson.

"Yes. Nothing mean about me!" said Gunner. "I shall also let the Head have a whack. I may give him about fifty thousand. Dash it all, he's a deserving case!"

"B-b-but—" stammered Dickinson.

"Then he may see too, that I ought to be in the Fifth Form, and may give me my remove," said Gunner. "Of course, I wouldn't bribe him. But he may see the facts then. Besides, he ought to have something for his trouble. I shall require him to be present when the hidden treasure is unearthed, to bear witness that it's mine. Those Modern cads might put in a claim to it. People are so jolly unscrupulous."

"But where's the document?" gasped Dickinson.

"Bit more interesting than lines for Dalton—what?" smiled Gunner. "Here it is, old chap! I trust you, you see."

And Gunner laid the precious paper on the study table, and Dickinson minor devoured it with his eyes.

The 3rd Chapter. Gunner's Luck!

It was quite an interesting document. It ran:

"Wrytten by ye monk Ambrose by ye order of ye Abbot of Rookwood. Ye Abbot's treasure, of golden candlesticks and chalices and pieces of eight, lies buried in ye oaken chest in ye vaults of ye Abbey. Twelve goodly paces from ye lowest step. Search, and ye shall fynde."

"My only hat!" ejaculated Dickinson.

"Easy as falling off a form—what?" smiled Gunner. "I've been in the Abbey vaults already—know the place like a book. We've only got to get a lantern and a spade—"

"But, I say—"

"Well, what?"

"This paper doesn't look so jolly old—"

"Well-preserved, of course," said Gunner. "Kept inside a book, I dare say—shut up for hundreds of years, you know."

"The ink doesn't seem so faded as—"

"Ink keeps its colour if it's shut up away from the light, you know."

"D-d-does it?"

"Oh, yes. You see, the document's quite genuine."

"How do you know?"

Dickinson minor was not a very bright youth, but he was smitten with doubt.

"Well, I do know!" said Gunner loftily. "Leave it to me. You're a bit of a fool, Dickinson. I've often told you so. Don't waste time jawing, but come along."

"But—but my lines—"

"Lines—when I'm going to give you ten thousand pounds for helping me dig up a treasure!" howled Gunner.

"Yes, but—but Mr. Dalton—"

"You can give him a thousand pounds out of it if you like, and get on his right side for ever. Come on!"

"I—I say, we shall get into a row if we're caught digging up the vaults—"

"Are you coming?" roared Gunner.

Gunner was already pushing back his cuffs, and Dickinson minor decided to come. With an extraordinary expression on his face, he followed his burly study-mate down the Fourth Form passage and down the stairs.

"Now," said Gunner, "I'll get my bike lamp, and you sneak a spade from the gardener's shed. See?"

"I see."

"Bring it to the Abbey, and keep it dark."

"Ye-e-es"

Five minutes later, Peter Cuthbert Gunner was in the Abbey ruins, at a little distance from the school buildings, with a bicycle lamp in his hand. On the steps that led down to the vaults he halted and lighted the lantern. Then he waited for Dickinson.

He waited a considerable time. This was accounted for by the fact that Dickinson minor as soon as Gunner's back was turned, had scudded off to the study for his unfinished imposition, and had taken it away to a deserted Form-room, there to finish it in peace.

For some reason or other, Dickinson minor was not tempted to risk Mr. Dalton's wrath even by the dazzling prospect of handling ten thousand pounds in pieces of eight.

Gunner waited. He occupied his leisure in saying things about dawdling asses and fat-headed duffers—doubtless alluding to Dickinson minor.

He promised Dickinson half a dozen licks when he came. But he did not come! Like the Lady of the Moated Grange, Peter Cuthbert Gunner waited for him that came not.

And at last, with feelings that could not be expressed in words, Gunner put down his bike lamp on the steps and went in search of a spade himself, inwardly resolving not to hand Dickinson minor a single threepenny-bit out of the vast treasure he was about to unearth.

The treasure-seeker succeeded in annexing a spade from the gardener's shed, but getting it to the Abbey ruins unseen was a different matter.

Two or three fellows asked him on his way whether he was going to bury himself, adding that it was time he did. Quite near the Abbey ruins he fell in with three Modern juniors. Tommy Dodd & Co. were taking a stroll in that direction.

"Hallo! What's on, Gunner?" asked Tommy Dodd affably.

"Mind your own business, you

was not afraid of the ghost of Rookwood, though that spectral gentleman probably had as much a real existence as the Rookwood treasure.

"Twelve goodly paces from the lowest step!" murmured Gunner consulting his document. "Search and ye shall find. Good!"

Carefully, very carefully, he paced off from the lowest step twelve goodly paces. Gunner's paces could not help being goodly ones; the size of Gunner's feet was not diminutive.

He stopped after the twelfth pace and bent down lantern in hand, eagerly examining the ground. There was a flagstone at his feet—similar to the flags that covered the whole floor of the vault.

But it was dissimilar in one respect. The surface of the stone was chipped, as if with a chisel and hammer.

Gunner's heart beat faster as he discerned it. He knelt down on the flag, and turned the light of the lantern on the stone.

In the light, he felt along the chipping with his finger. There was no doubt about it—it was the letter "T" that was chipped there in the stone.

"T!" murmured Gunner. "If that doesn't stand for 'Treasure,' I'll eat my hat!"

He set the lantern down and took the spade. There was room to insert the edge between that flag and the next, and Gunner inserted it to prize up the heavy stone.

It came up with surprising ease, almost as if it had been raised before in recent times.

There was a terrific crash as it rolled backwards and fell on the adjoining flags.

The noise rolled like thunder through the echoing vaults.

Gunner did not heed it. He was on his knees at the aperture, lantern in hand. He half expected to see a spiral stair leading downwards. He had read of such things, and a spiral stair certainly would have been in the picture, so to

Modern bounder!" answered Gunner truculently.

"Is it a saycret intirely?" asked Tommy Doyle.

"Find out!"

"Bump him for his cheek!" suggested Tommy Cook.

"Good egg!"

"Here, keep off! Yaroooooop!"

The three Tommies strolled on, smiling, leaving Gunner sitting on the hard, unsympathetic ground, with his cap stuffed down the back of his neck.

"You cheeky Modern rotters!" spluttered Gunner. "I'll—I'll—Groogh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

By the time Gunner recovered his breath, however, he was glad that the three Moderns had strolled away. Vengeance could wait, and he did not want Modern eyes upon him while he was searching for "ye treasure of ye Abbot."

With an angry grunt, Gunner tramped on to the ruins, spade in hand. He descended the steps to the vault to the door at the bottom, which was always kept padlocked to bar enterprising juniors out of the dangerous precincts.

It was rather a serious matter to burst that padlock, but Peter Cuthbert Gunner was not likely to allow such a consideration to stand between him and an oaken chest crammed with golden candlesticks, chalices, and pieces of eight.

A hefty swipe with a spade abolished the padlock, and Gunner threw the door open, picked up his bicycle lantern, and entered the vault.

He did not even notice before he swiped the padlock to fragments that it had already been opened and set carefully together to give it an appearance of being locked.

Gunner's powerful intellect did not descend to the observation of trifles. Dark and gloomy looked the old vaults as Gunner flashed the light of his lamp round him. But darkness and gloom did not deter Gunner. He

speaking. But there was no spiral stair.

Solid earth met his view. But embedded in the earth was a flat stone, and on that stone the word was cut—or, rather, roughly chipped:

DIG!

Gunner rose to his feet, breathing deep.

He had found it!

There was no doubt about that now. There was the spot, at twelve goodly paces from the stair—there was the direction "Dig." Nothing more than that was required.

Probably any fellow, excepting Gunner, would have set to work with the spade with frantic activity.

But Gunner was not an ordinary fellow.

There was going to be no doubt about the ownership of that treasure when it was unearthed. Gunner was determined on that. It was possible—indeed, probable—that some Modern cads might put in a claim in the circumstances. Gunner burned with indignation at the thought, but he had to admit the possibility.

There had to be official recognition of the fact that Gunner was the finder—that the treasure-trove was Gunner's. On a matter of such tremendous importance nothing short of the Head's authority was adequate.

Gunner only needed absolute proof—and now he had it. He blew out the lantern, laid down the spade, and quitted the vault, carefully shutting the door after him.

Then, with a smiling face, and looking like a fellow walking on air, he headed for the School House and Dr. Chisholm's study.

The 4th Chapter. Treasure-Trove!

"Gunner!"

Bulkeley of the Sixth called to Peter Cuthbert as he came into the School House.

Gunner glanced round carelessly.

"Can't stop!" he answered.

"What?"

"In a hurry," explained Gunner. "I've got to see the Head."

"What do you mean by going about with muddy trousers, and your hands covered with mud?" snapped the prefect.

Gunner glanced down—he had signs of his treasure-hunting all over him. That was a trifle, however. He could not resist the temptation to astonish Bulkeley.

"Oh, that!" he said casually. "Can't grumble at a little mud, Bulkeley, in laying hold of a million pounds?"

"Eh?"

"You see, I've discovered the Rookwood treasure," said Gunner, with studied carelessness.

"Wha-a-at?"

Six or seven fellows heard Gunner's amazing statement, and they all stared at him.

Gunner smiled. He enjoyed the limelight.

"You've discovered what?" yelled Hanson of the Fifth.

"The Rookwood treasure," yawned Gunner.

"You young ass!" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily.

"Well, I'm going to report to the Head, anyhow," said Gunner, and he walked on to the Head's study, leaving a buzz behind him.

"Off his rocker, begad!" remarked Smythe of the Shell.

"Fairly off it!" said Peel of the Fourth. "He can't be goin' to spin a yarn like that to the Head! He's gone to the beak's study, though."

Gunner tapped at the Head's door and entered. Dr. Chisholm glanced at him, looking up from the entrancing pages of Euripides. He did not seem pleased.

"What is it, Gunner?"

"I thought I'd better mention to you, sir—" began Gunner.

"What—what?"

"That I've discovered the Rookwood treasure, sir."

"Here, sir!" Gunner picked up the stone, sir? "Dig."

"Is that all?"

"Isn't that enough, sir?" demanded Gunner warmly. "I'll jolly soon turn it out, sir! I want you to be a witness that it is mine."

The Head gave him a glance that a basilisk might have envied.

"You may dig here, Gunner. If the Rookwood treasure really lies below—as I do not for one moment credit—I will excuse you. Otherwise, Gunner, I shall punish you severely. I am waiting."

The Head waited grimly; the Rookwood crowd waited breathlessly.

Gunner, nothing daunted, plied the spade.

Evidently Gunner's announcement of the discovery of the treasure had been a little premature. It was not actually discovered yet—it was only a moral certainty. That moral certainty was good enough for Gunner; but the Head seemed a little difficult to satisfy. His face grew grimmer and grimmer, as Gunner turned out spadeful after spadeful of earth. There was a sudden crash as Gunner's spade struck something hard. A thrill ran through the watching crowd; even the Head started. A chip of wood flew from the end of the spade.

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

"Touched it, sir!" said Gunner cheerily. "I'll have it out in a minute or two now."

"You may proceed, Gunner," said the Head, and there was much less acerbity in his manner.

It was really striking and extraordinary for the spade to crash upon wood six inches below the surface of the earth, where it had been covered for centuries by the ancient flagstones.

Gunner shovelled away earth at a great rate. The Head signed to the crowd to keep back, but every neck was craned forward. Gunner cleared

"Who's discovered it?" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

There was a murmur as the Head came sweeping out of the School House, with Gunner at his heels. Gunner's amazing statement had spread already. The rumour that the Rookwood treasure was discovered was fairly blazing through the school. Jimmy Silver & Co. heard it as they came in after cricket, and they gasped.

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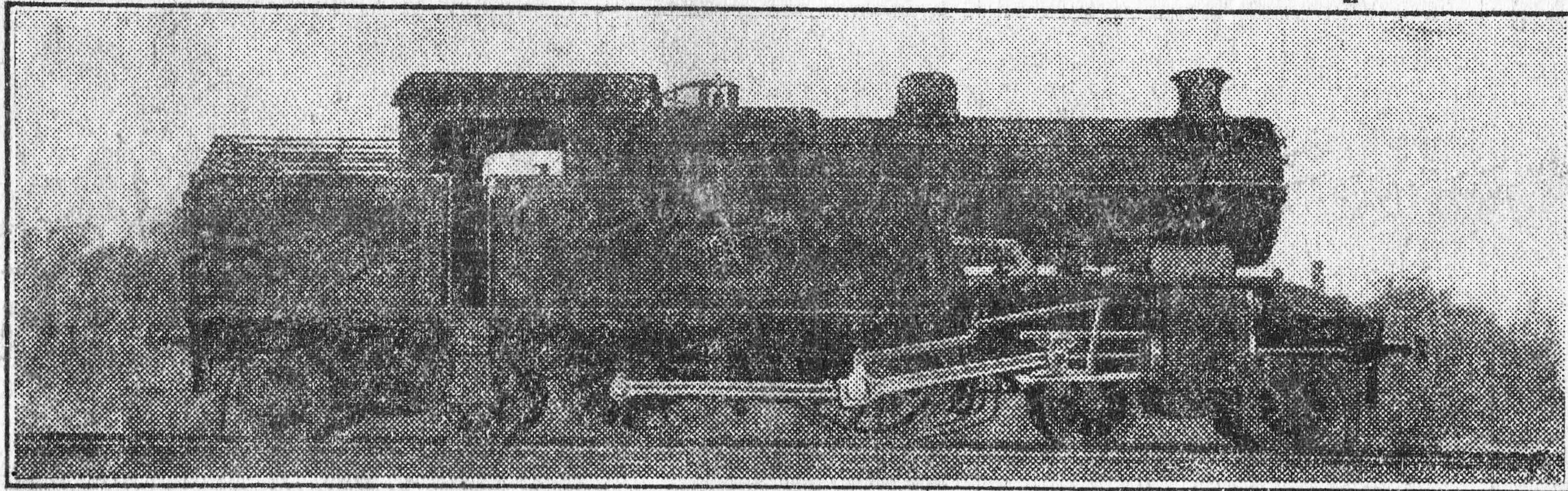
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POLRUAN'S QUEST!

By MAURICE EVERARD.

(Continued from page 533.)

afternoon the conflagration was completely under control, with all her men aboard except us and the seven who had been drowned.

"Which reminds me—" began Joe; but Frank silenced him.

"You're not in this circus, old man. You're a spectator."

"Specked tater or not, I can admire pluck when I see it," protested Joe. "Gentlemen, I congratulate you on the pluck which pulled you through."

"I'm afraid," said Grantley, with a shake of his head, "we haven't ourselves to thank for our good fortune. For four days and nights we clung to the boat, and at last succeeded in righting it, when our two companions—an American named Bartlett, from Baltimore, and a Spanish officer from Corunna—"

"Ah, that's where me and General Moore fought that big battle against the Turks. Yes, I remember it well, seeing that General Moore was my great-uncle on my father's maternal side. You see, gentlemen, General Moore and me, being first cousins—Well, where had you got to?"

"Nearly to the end," replied Grantley. "Here are the papers to prove our story, and a statement Bartlett signed before he passed away. For a week we drifted at the mercy of wind and current, then a clipper ship bound for the Cape picked us up and left us here stranded."

"Good enough—good enough for me!" said Tremorne, extending his immense hand. "Gentlemen, you're signed on as deck-hands, and you can start doing the work of Bill Harris and Bert Pengelly, which will be indisposed to-morrow. Frank, I deprecise you to interdoce our friends to the ship's company, and if they like they can stay aboard till we return to England."

In a moment, however, Lawless was on his feet.

"Sorry, Captain Tremorne, but that isn't quite what we want to do. You see, we're still soldiers of the Foreign Legion, bound by solemn obligation to fight for five years. All we ask is, in return for any work you may put us to do, that you take us as near as you can to Indo-China."

"Indo-China!" repeated Joe, scratching his head. "Let's see,

Dick, you're good at chemistry. Do we pass that town on our way to the South Seas?"

"Yes," said Dick; "it doesn't much matter what street we take, we've got to touch Colombo on our way East. Then we can go either by way of Singapore or the Banda Straits, and, on our way to Hong Kong, put Mr. Grantley and Mr. Lawless down at—"

"What's the name of the place you want to get to?"

"Haiphong," said Roger. "Haiphong—that's where the tails come from," said Tremorne. "All right, I'm not going to argue over trifles. Haiphong it is, my friends—and I've given my word to drop you there. Now, buzz off and let me see the stuff you're made of."

"Well, what do you think of it?" asked Frank when he and Dick, with the two other Englishmen, were gathered in a little group together on the afterdeck. "Isn't the old man simply top-hole?"

"Absolutely!" said Grantley. "And now you've done us such a good turn I think the time has come to do you one."

"Oh!" said Dick. "What sort of a turn?"

"Well," was the quick reply, "your boat has been laid up here a week now taking in stores, and there's been not a little talk about you in the town—where you're bound for, what cargo you're running, and all that sort of business."

"What cargo we're running? We're not running any at all!" replied the boy. "We steam light. This yacht belongs to Frank and me, and we're merely on a pleasure cruise round the world. What's the point, anyway?"

"The point is this," Grantley announced. "That two nights ago, while Roger and I were in our cubicles in the Sailors' Rest, we heard two fellows talking, and one of 'em was saying that it was his business to find out where you were bound for, so that he could cable the information through to a third party in Colombo."

"Oh!" said Dick and Frank together; and on both their lips hung the dreaded name of Bastwick.

(Another long instalment of this great sea adventure story will appear in next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND. Also a free photo of ex-Guardsman C. Penwill!)

THE MISPLACED ARMLETS!

(Continued from previous page.)

There were open fields on the other side of the road. At a word from his master, Dene headed over them, and came down. Leaving the aeroplane as she came to a standstill upon the grass, they hurried back to the scene of the disaster, fully expecting to find the Hawk either dead or badly injured beneath the overturned motor.

But they were doomed to disappointment. Although, when they gained help and righted the car, they found Rosenthal's valuable old masters and the suitcase containing the miniatures, there was no sign of the man who had been driving the vehicle, and they realised that he must have been flung clear and have made off into the wood.

Mr. Julius Rosenthal was delighted to get back his treasures. Superintendent Ranger asked Holdfast to call at Milnthorpe Police Station, that he might congratulate him upon recovering them and talk the matter over; and whilst the "Bulldog" was closeted with the tall, keen-eyed official, a letter was brought to the latter, which caused him to utter an angry cry.

"Look! Of all the cheek!" he said, through his teeth, passing the type-written epistle to Harry.

And Holdfast could not help grinning as he read it.

"Dear Mr. Superintendent," it ran.—"A sergeant and three constables in whom you will be interested, are prisoners in the disused barn in Wainwright's Meadow. Release the poor fellows promptly after receipt of this, for they will be getting hungry and thirsty, as policemen frequently do.—Yours ever, THE HAWK."

Holdfast accompanied the wrathful superintendent to the old barn, which stood in a field just out of Milnthorpe. There they found the sergeant and three men, who had been sent from the station to give protection to Rosenthal, bound and gagged, and lying huddled on the damp floor.

Superintendent Ranger raved at them, though, through Holdfast, the latest enterprise of the Hawk had failed. But it was of little use.

As he stood by, suppressing a grin only with difficulty, Harry Holdfast was asking himself who was this amazing criminal, the Hawk, and wondering how long it would be ere he again showed his hand.

Inwardly, Holdfast was determining to pit himself against the man, and clear up the mystery of his identity. But he little dreamed then of the adventures that were to be his before he achieved his object.

THE END.

(Another splendid story of "Bulldog" Holdfast will appear in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND.)

THE ROOKWOOD TREASURE!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Continued from page 536.)

what was evidently the wooden lid of a box.

"The oaken chest, sir!" he announced.

"That wood does not look like oak," said the Head, peering into the excavation. "It appears to me to be common deal, and— Bless my soul! There are some letters on it—stencilled on it, apparently—"

"Something in dog-Latin, sir, written by the old monks—"

"S—U—G," the Head read out, in surprise. "Clear away that earth, Gunner. Ah, now I see the remainder. A—R! Upon my word! Sugar! It is a box that has contained sugar; and those stencilled letters are quite modern—undoubtedly modern. The wood, too, is in too complete a state of preservation to have remained long in the earth. If you have played a foolish practical joke upon me, Gunner—"

Gunner gasped. Even he was astonished to find a cube-sugar box in the place of the expected oaken chest. He crashed the spade on it, smashing off the lid, with the intention of dazzling the Head into full belief by the sight of the golden candlesticks and chalices and pieces of eight. He fairly stuttered at the sight of the contents of the box. There were several half-bricks, and there was a quantity of cinders, and there was an old tomato-tin. The discovery was surprising, but not valuable. On top of the treasure lay a sheet of impot paper, and upon that sheet was daubed, in large capital letters:

"CLASSICAL FATHEAD! TRY AGAIN! BOW-WOW!"

Dr. Chisholm stared at the paper as if he were mesmerised. Gunner blinked at it, and wondered if he was dreaming. Even Gunner could not suppose that that cheery message had been written by the ancient monks of Rookwood. The crowd craned forward to see it, and the message passed from mouth to mouth; and then the depths of the Abbey vaults echoed and re-echoed with an unaccustomed sound—a terrific yell of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Silence!" thundered Dr. Chisholm. "All of you disperse at once—immediately! Gunner, you will come with me!"

"I—I—I—" stuttered Gunner,

"I—I had the document—I— Oh, my hat! Those Modern roiters—"

"You have broken into the vaults against my commands, you have wasted my time, you—"

thundered the Head. "Have you anything to say for yourself, you incredibly stupid boy?"

"They—they must have known I was behind the tree. They'd got all this up to pull my leg; they—they—I—I—" babbled Gunner incoherently.

"Do not stammer senseless words at me in that ridiculous manner, Gunner. I shall cane you for this severely. You are the stupidest boy in the school. Follow me at once!"

The Head swept from the vaults. Peter Cuthbert Gunner followed him, looking like anything but a happy and successful treasure-hunter. The quad swarmed with chortling Rookwooders—only the Head and Gunner looked serious.

"The frightful ass!" said Tommy Dodd, wiping away his tears. "Fancy his yanking the Head into it; never even thought of that, you know."

"Just like Gunner!" grinned Arthur Edward Lovell. "He would!"

"Oh, just!" said Jimmy Silver. In the Head's study Peter Cuthbert Gunner nourished a faint hope that his intended generosity to the Head would have the effect of mitigating his punishment for wasting that gentleman's valuable time. After all, he had been going to give the Head fifty thousand pounds out of the treasure—if it had materialised. In common gratitude the Head couldn't fail to consider that, Gunner thought. True, the treasure hadn't materialised, but if it had—Gunner's considerations were cut short by the dread command:

"Hold out your hand!" Judging by what followed, the Head was lacking in common gratitude. He swished just as if Gunner had never intended to give him fifty thousand pounds! Gunner felt that life was hardly worth living—especially to a treasure-hunter—as he crawled away to his study, and he found only a partial solace in punching Dickinson minor's head.

THE END.

(Another long, complete story of the adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. in next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND.)

EX-CROWN PRINCE'S MEMOIRS. AMAZING REVELATIONS!

The most sensational book of the year is undoubtedly the Memoirs of the Ex-Crown Prince, "Little Willie's" Own Life Story. Every word of this amazing series of self-revelations has been written personally by the Ex-Crown Prince, in his Dutch exile; in them the writer lays bare his whole soul and throws new and vivid lights on many aspects of the Great War, Germany's part in it, and the downfall of the Royal House of Hohenzollern.

No reader of the "BOYS' FRIEND" should miss this startling work, which appears exclusively in this week's "ANSWERS" on sale at all newsagents TO-DAY.

SPECIAL NOTICE.

I have been asked to insert the following: Will Clifford Bedford of Hoyland, nr. Barnsley, Yorkshire, write home at once and inform his relatives of his whereabouts. ED.

Advertisement for a bicycle with a 400 Model, \$5.15 cash, 12 1/2 months payment, and 15 days free trial.

Advertisement for PAIN'S PRESENTS HOUSE, featuring a 7 in 1 telescope and other optical instruments.

Advertisement for NERVOUSNESS treatment, describing symptoms and the benefits of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment.

Advertisement for HOME CINEMATOGRAPHS, including film equipment and accessories.

Advertisement for WONDERFUL MAGIC PENCIL, which writes invisible in colors.

Advertisement for STOP STAMMERING! with a cure and contact information.

Advertisement for 25 BRITISH COLONIAL POSTAGE STAMPS.

Advertisement for When Answering Advertisements, please mention this paper.

Advertisement for 3 MONTHLY TERMS shoes, featuring various styles like the Alton Ladies' Walking Shoe and Gent's Warwick Boot.

Advertisement for BOYS! Make a Shock Coil for 1/9, including a list of electrical parts and their prices.

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