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# The BOYS' FRIEND 2d

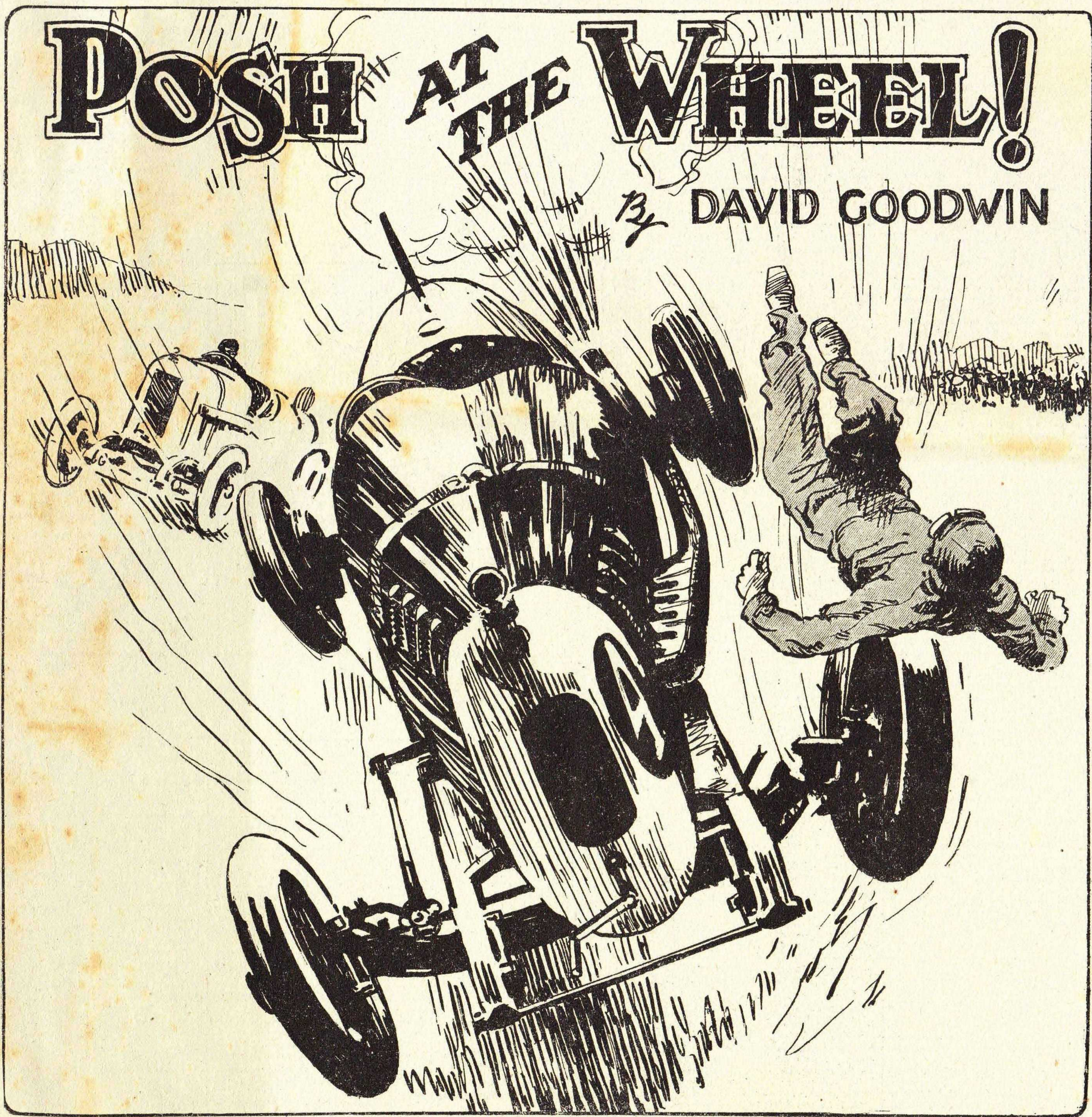
EVERY MONDAY.

SIXTEEN BIG PAGES!

No. 1,241. Vol. XXV.—New Series.]

THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending March 21st, 1925.]



**A Track Tragedy! Disaster befalls Posh during the great race at Brooklands**

*(A thrilling incident from David Goodwin's powerful new story in this issue.)*

THERE'S A LAUGH IN EVERY LINE OF THIS SPLENDID STORY OF THE  
CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



# Gunner's Brain Wave!

By  
**OWEN CONQUEST.**

(Author of the tales of Rookwood  
appearing in the "Popular.")

Gunner's ingenious way of doing lines causes a stir at Rookwood!

## The 1st Chapter.

### Asking For It!

"Take a hundred lines!"  
"Is that all, sir?"  
"What! Take two hundred lines, Gunner!"  
"As many as you like, sir!"  
Mr. Dalton gazed at Gunner. The whole of the Classical Fourth gazed at him.  
Peter Cuthbert Gunner did not mind. Indeed, he seemed rather to enjoy the sensation he was causing. Gunner loved the limelight.  
He never had all the limelight he was entitled to. For instance, Jimmy Silver never gave him a chance of showing the wonderful things he could have done—perhaps—at football. If he wanted to make a speech in the junior debating society—as he did at every meeting thereof—he was certain to be coughed down.  
Cheeking his Form master in class was one way of getting into the desired limelight—a rather dangerous way. Mr. Dalton, master of the Rookwood Fourth, was not a man to be trifled with.  
Upon that perilous path Peter Cuthbert Gunner had embarked, whether from sheer recklessness, or incipient lunacy, the juniors did not know.  
Gunner was annoyed with Mr. Dalton to begin with.  
He had been in arithmetical difficulties. When Gunner added a column of figures from the top, and added it again from the bottom, two widely-divergent results were obtained. Gunner was accustomed to this phenomenon, and was not particularly worried about it. But Mr. Dalton seemed to take it rather to heart; and he had talked to Gunner.

His talk was emphatic, and to the point. The effect it produced upon Gunner was simply to make him yawn. When Gunner was bored, he yawned; and he made no secret of the fact that his Form master was boring him now. Hence the hundred lines.  
When a fellow received lines, naturally he would have liked to say something, such as "Go and eat coke!" or "Bother you!" But fellows never said those things, of course. Form masters were not men to be talked to in that manner. Gunner, apparently, supposed that they were! He was sitting up brightly and cheerfully in his place, cheeking Mr. Dalton as though it was merely a harmless and necessary amusement in lesson-time.

"As many as you like, sir," he repeated, as Mr. Dalton seemed too astonished to make any rejoinder. "Hand 'em out."  
"Oh my hat!" murmured Lovell.  
"You irabjous ass!" whispered Putty of the Fourth, who was next to Gunner. "Cheese it, you fooling chump!"  
"Mind your own bizney, Putty."  
"You'll get—"  
"Rats!"

Putty of the Fourth shrugged his shoulders; his good-natured warning was quite wasted on Gunner. Putty, who was a humorist in his way, often entertained himself by pulling Gunner's leg; Gunner being as obtuse as he was big and burly and obstreperous. But Putty was really sorry to see a fellow rushing upon trouble in this way. It was a half-holiday that afternoon, and Gunner looked like getting enough lines to last him till tea-time.

"Silence!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, as three or four fellows whispered to Peter Cuthbert. "Gunner, you are recklessly impertinent!"

"Think so, sir?" said Gunner cheerily.

"I can scarcely understand you, Gunner," said the Fourth Form master, really more puzzled than angry. "However, I shall take you at your insolent word. Take five hundred lines."

"Sure that's enough, sir?"  
"What?"  
"Hand 'em out, sir; they don't cost you anything, you know," said Gunner encouragingly.

"Bless my soul!"  
If Gunner wanted the limelight, he had it now. Fellows craned their necks to stare at Gunner.

There was a breathless silence in the Form-room.

Mr. Dalton had been "cheeked" before; fellows like Peele or Gower sometimes ventured upon it; sometimes Mornington gave his Form master a little polished sarcasm. But certainly nothing like this had ever been heard in a Rookwood Form-room before.

Gunner was the cynosure of all eyes.  
He sat merry and bright. The fact that he had enough lines now to fill up his whole afternoon did not seem to trouble him in the least.

"Gunner," said Mr. Dalton, "I shall give you a thousand lines, and you will bring them to me before bedtime this evening."

"Hear, hear!" said Gunner.  
"And if you utter one more word of impertinence, I shall call you out before the class and cane you very severely," said Mr. Dalton.

"That's all right, sir."  
"Silence!"  
Gunner was silent now. Apparently he was only "out" to collect lines, and did not want to add a caning thereto.

Third lesson went on to its termination. Gunner still quite cheery and evidently untroubled by his whacking imposition. Few fellows in the Fourth would not have preferred a caning to a thousand lines, which really was a staggering impot. Gunner had his work cut out for the afternoon and evening; and the afternoon was a half-holiday, and, for once, fine. Gunner was beyond the comprehension of the Fourth.

When the Form was dismissed the juniors crowded round Gunner in the corridor. They wanted to know.

"What's this game?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

Gunner grinned.

"Pulling Dicky Dalton's leg," he answered.

"Pulling his leg!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Just that!"

"By bagging a thousand lines?"

"Exactly."

"Well, by gad!" said Mornington.

"It's the queerest way I've ever heard of, of pulling a beak's leg. You'll have to do the lines."

"That's where the joke comes in."

"Oh, it's a joke, is it?" asked Raby.

"What-jo! The joke of the term."

"And where does the joke come in?" asked Newcome.

"You'll see when those lines are handed in," chuckled Gunner.

"Of course, I was annoyed with Dalton. He takes up too much of a fellow's time, and keeps on butting in when a fellow's bored with him. But I meant to get his rag out, anyhow, because it's such a ripping wheeze. You see, I can do those lines in next to no time."

"How's that, umpire?" asked Rawson.

"Pooh! Some silly old dodge of sticking three or four pens together," said Lovell. "I've tried that, and it jolly well doesn't work with Dicky Dalton."

"Nothing of the kind," said Gunner contemptuously. "A wheeze like that would be just your mark, Lovell! I've got brains."

"What?"  
"Brains! That's what they forgot when you were turned loose, old fellow. Leave it to me."

Peter Cuthbert Gunner walked away with Dickinson minor, his

Tap!

It was incessant.

Tubby Muffin was the first to notice it.

Muffin, of the Classical Fourth, was coming up the Fourth Form passage to the end study, to catch Jimmy Silver before he went down to games practice, in the hope of extracting a small loan from "Uncle James."

Muffin forgot both "Uncle James" and the hoped-for little loan, as he heard that strange sound proceeding from Gunner's study.

He stopped outside Study No. 7 and listened.

Tap-tap-tap-tappetty-tap-tap-tap!

"My only hat!" murmured Reginald Muffin, in wonder.

He knocked at the door, and there was no reply. Then he called through the keyhole:

"You there, Dickinson?"

There was no answer, so presumably Dickinson minor was not there.

"You there, Gunner?"

"Go away!"

Gunner was there, evidently. The answer was in his powerful voice. And it came short and sharp.

"What's the game?"

"Don't bother!"

"What are you up to, Gunner?"

"Clear off!"

"Is it Morse?"

"Fathead!"

"Well, what is it?"

"Go and eat coke!"

The tapping ceased while Gunner was speaking. Now it was resumed, and it went on as fast as ever.

It sounded something like the tick-tick of the telegraph, and something like the tap-tap of the cobbler. There could be no telegraphic apparatus in Gunner's study; neither was it likely that he was mending shoes. Really, the peculiar sound was inexplicable.

laughter was the proper outcome, from Putty's point of view. Instead of which there was a burst of wrath from Higgs. Rejecting those incredible dates, he had seized a fives-bat, and driven Putty of the Fourth out of the study, blind and deaf to the excellence of Putty's little jest.

The humorist of the Fourth had had to depart quite hastily. There was no arguing with a fives-bat in the grip of a fellow so insensible to humour as Alfred Higgs.

Hence the morose expression on Putty's face. He had several aches and pains, and his jest was unappreciated, which was the unkindest cut of all. But as the poet declares, "hope springs eternal in the human breast," and Putty came along the passage towards Reginald Muffin, with the intention of springing his little jest on the fat Classical, in the hope of better results. And then he heard the mysterious tap-tap-tapping from Gunner's study.

"Jolly queer, ain't it?" said Tubby Muffin. "Can't be cobbling shoes, can he? It sounds like a hefty sort of clock-ticking."

Putty grinned. But he became serious the next moment. He seemed to see here a new opening for his peculiar humorous proclivities.

"Sounds like an infernal-machine ticking away," he said.

Tubby Muffin stared.

"A—a—a what?" he ejaculated.

"Those jolly old things that Anarchists use to blow up people with," explained Putty. "They are timed to go off at a certain time, and they tick like a clock."

"Oh, my hat!"

Tap, tap, tap, tap, tap!

Tubby Muffin backed away from the door of Study No. 7.

Certainly, a Rookwood study was a very unlikely spot for Bolshevistic activities. But undoubtedly that sound was similar to the deadly tick of an infernal-machine. Tubby had read about such things, though he had never expected to hear one.

Tap-tap-tap-tappetty-tap-tap!

"I—I say, it can't—!" began Tubby uneasily. "Even that idiot Gunner wouldn't be ass enough to mess about with explosives."

"I fancy Gunner's ass enough for anything," said Putty, shaking his head. "He was asking Dicky Dalton for lines this morning, and a chap wouldn't do that unless he was a bit off his rocker."

"That's so. But— He's got the door locked," said Muffin. "I—I say, he ought to be stopped!"

"The Head ought to be called," said Putty, with owl-like seriousness. "If Gunner is going to blow us all up—"

"Oh crumbs!"

"You keep watch here while I cut off to warn the Head—"

"No fear! I—I mean, you keep watch while I call the Head!" gasped Tubby Muffin.

Jimmy Silver & Co. came cheerily along from the end study, Jimmy with a footer under his arm. The Fistical Four were bound for Little Side for games practice. Jimmy came along in time to hear Tubby Muffin, and to catch him by the collar as he was starting for the stairs.

"What's this?" inquired Jimmy.

"Don't stop me. I'm going to the Head!" gasped Muffin.

"What for, you ass?"

"Don't stop him!" ejaculated Putty. "Gunner's got an infernal-machine in his study!"

"What?" roared Jimmy.

"Can't you hear it ticking? Cut off, Muffin! The explosion may come any second. For goodness' sake, warn the Head!"

Tubby Muffin made an effort to wrench himself away. He was quite convinced that the Head ought to be warned, and still more convinced that it was a good idea to get as far as possible from Study No. 7 before the explosion came.

But Jimmy Silver held on to his collar.

"You fat duffer—"

"Leggo!" gasped Muffin.

"Haven't you ever heard a typewriter before?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

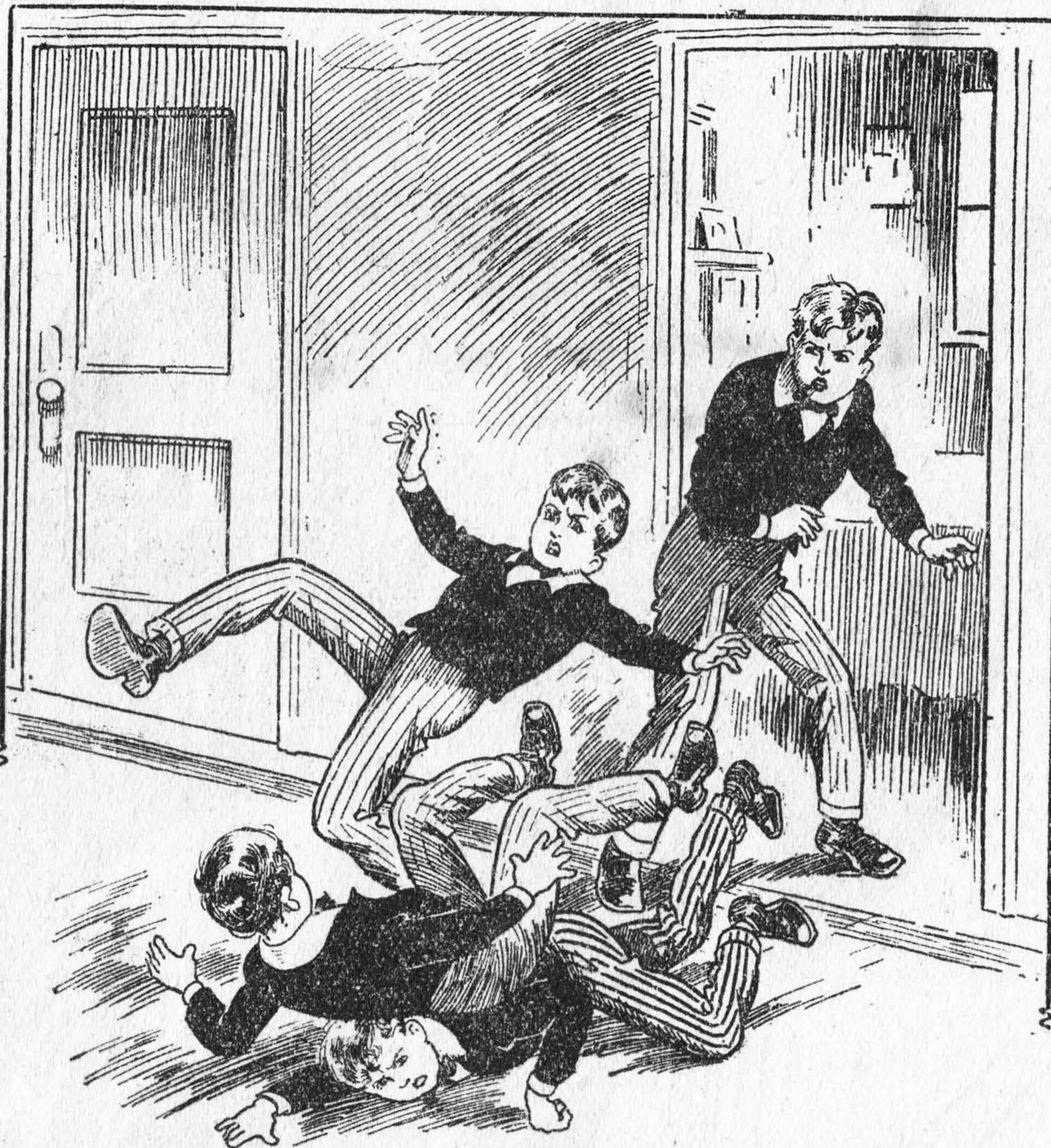
Reginald Muffin jumped.

"A—a—a—a typewriter?" he stammered.

"Yes, ass!"

Tap-tap-tap-tap-tappppppp! went on the strange sound from the study.

"Oh, you silly ass!" said Putty, in despair. "You were bound to butt in and spoil a joke! Fancy the Head's face, if he came up here to look for an infernal-machine, and found it was only a silly ass clicking a typewriter!"



**THROWN OUT!** Gunner made a sudden jump at the three fags. Stacey and Wegg found their collars gripped and their heads meeting with a terrific concussion. Crack! "Oh!" "Whoop!" "Outside!" grinned Gunner. Wegg and Stacey whirled through the doorway and sprawled over Lovell minor in the passage.

study-mate, leaving Jimmy Silver & Co. staring. That Gunner was every imaginable sort of an ass, they knew already; but that a fellow should consider it a "joke" on his Form master to bag a thousand lines from that gentleman passed their comprehension—even when the fellow was Peter Cuthbert Gunner.

Either Gunner must have some extremely deep dodge up his sleeve or Gunner was a born idiot, that was clear.

The Classical Fourth inclined to the latter theory.

## The 2nd Chapter. Gunner's Typewriter!

Tap! Tap-tap! Tappetty-tap-tap!

Tap-tap-tap!

**ANSWERS**  
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2

Putty of the Fourth came out of Study No. 2, and glanced at Tubby outside Study No. 7.

Putty was looking a little morose. Teddy Grace, of the Fourth, was a born jester. He lived and moved and had his being in an atmosphere of japing and practical joking. Often and often his little jokes fell flat; indeed, Putty himself had often fallen flat under the heavy hand of some exasperated victim of his peculiar sense of humour.

Such was the case now.

He offered his study-mate, Higgs, a lot of dates. Alfred Higgs was fond of dates, and he had thought it very kind of Putty—generous, indeed, as Putty had told him that he could have as many dates as he liked.

And then, with a cheery smile, Putty had offered Alfred Higgs an almanac!

It had taken Higgs, who was not very bright, about a minute to realise the little joke, and to understand what kind of "dates" Putty was presenting to him.

When he realised it, a burst of

In a few weeks' time!—Great new Competition. Look out for further details!

Tubby Muffin, quite reassured now, glared at Putty.  
 "You—you—thumping dummy!" he roared. "You were pulling my leg! You were going to make me call the Head. I might have got a licking. I—I—"  
 Tubby Muffin was not a fighting-man but he forgot that circumstance in his exasperation and he made a jump at Putty, and a fat fist crashed on Teddy Grace's nose.  
 "Yaroooh!"  
 Bump!

Putty of the Fourth sat down with startling suddenness.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Fistical Four. That outcome of Putty's jest seemed to them funnier than the jest itself—much funnier.  
 "Oh, my hat! Why, I—I'll—"

Putty scrambled to his feet, and Tubby Muffin scudded away to the stairs. Four juniors grasped the infuriated humorist as he was rushing in pursuit.

"No, you don't!" grinned Lovell. "You asked for it, and it jolly well serves you right!"

"You silly owl, leggo!"  
 "You shouldn't be so jolly funny, old bean," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "You might have got Muffin a licking—"

"Blow Muffin!" growled Putty, dabbing his nose with his handkerchief. "Let go, you asses! He's gone now. What is that thumping ass Gunner doing with a typewriter in his study?"

"Goodness knows!"  
 Jimmy Silver knocked at the door of Study No. 7.

"Gunner!"  
 "Go away; I'm busy!"  
 "What are you up to, you ass?" shouted Lovell.

The door was unlocked and Gunner opened it. He gave the Fistical Four a nod and a grin.

"You're interrupting me," he said. "But I don't mind letting you chaps see my wheeze. Look!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked. On the study table stood a little machine, a typewriter of the kind that is called portable. It was quite a nice little machine, and it had cost fourteen or fifteen pounds. There was a sheet of paper on the roller, several typed sheets beside the machine, and a volume of Virgil propped up against the inkstand. Gunner grinned at the staring juniors.

"Something like a wheeze, what?" he asked.

Jimmy Silver gasped.  
 "You're doing your lines on a typewriter?" he howled.

"Just that."  
 "Oh, my only hat!"  
 "That—that—that's the wheeze!" ejaculated Arthur Edward Lovell.

"That's it," said Gunner complacently. "The idea flashed into my brain the other day. I think of these things, you know. I'm the kind of fellow to think of them."

"You are!" gasped Jimmy.  
 "Brains, you know," said Gunner.

"I know all about typers. The pater's got fifty in his offices. Gunner's World-Famed Hardware, you know. I just asked him to send me one, and it came this morning. That's why I was pulling Dicky Dalton's leg in class. He thinks he's landed me with a whacking impot that will last me till bedtime. I'm knocking it off at the rate of fifty words a minute. See? Ha, ha, ha!"

Gunner roared.  
 "I'm going to let Dicky Dalton see me loafing about, and he'll think the lines aren't done—right up to bedtime—see? At the last minute I'll trot them in. What?"

"Oh, my hat!"  
 "First time a typer's ever been used for doing impots, what?" grinned Gunner. "I'm the fellow to start new things like this. Original genius, you know. I fancy I'm the only chap in the Fourth that can take a rise out of Dicky Dalton. But I'd better get on. You fellows buzz off."

Gunner bustled the astonished juniors out of his study, slammed the door on them, and locked it again. The tap-tap-tapping of the typewriter recommenced.

"Well, this beats it!" ejaculated Putty. "I thought I knew every kind of idiot Gunner was, but he's full of surprises."  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"What on earth will Dicky Dalton say when the lines are handed in?" ejaculated Raby.

"Goodness knows!"  
 "Gunner hasn't thought of that detail," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "I think a fellow ought to give him a tip. I say, Gunner."

"Shut up!"  
 "But I say—"  
 "Go away!"  
 "Look here—"

"You talk too much, Jimmy Silver. For goodness' sake give your chin a rest, and give me a rest!"  
 "Oh, all right!" said Jimmy Silver. And he walked away with his friends, and Peter Cuthbert Gunner continued to tap, tap, tap on his typewriter in a mood of great satisfaction, with the complacent knowledge that he was the only fellow at Rookwood who ever thought of these bright ideas.

**The 3rd Chapter.  
 Not Quite a Success!**

Mr. Richard Dalton frowned. From his study window Mr. Richard Dalton sighted Gunner of the Fourth sauntering in the quad with his hands in his pockets.

Mr. Dalton was busy marking papers in his study. A half-holiday was not so leisurely for a Form master as for the members of his Form.

Busy as he was, however, he simply could not help noticing Peter Cuthbert Gunner outside.

Gunner had passed and repassed his window not once, but many times, and Mr. Dalton was forced to observe him at last.

It occurred to him that Gunner actually was parading up and down as near to the study window as possible in order to catch his glance.

The fact that several juniors were regarding Gunner with grinning faces

had time to do the lines for which he had fairly begged in the Form-room; and if he did not do them all there would be trouble for him.

So Richard Dalton gave his attention to marking papers, and disregarded the swanking Gunner in the quad.

Gunner continued his parade for quite a long time, in the hope of "drawing" Richard Dalton. But he did not succeed. The Form master remained, to all appearance, oblivious of his existence.

"He jolly well saw me, all the same!" Gunner confided to Dickinson minor, as he walked away with him at last.

"Must have!" agreed Dickinson.  
 "Got his rag out, you bet," grinned Gunner.

"Risky, you know," murmured Dickinson minor. "Form masters can always take it out of you, if they choose."

"Oh, Dalton's just!" said Gunner. "So long as my impot's done he can't say anything. Can't grouse at a fellow for strolling in the quad."

"Nunno. But—"  
 "And it's done, you see," chuckled Gunner. "I knocked it right off on my typer. What a wheeze—eh?"

"Hem!"  
 "What are you grunting about, Dicky?"

"Suppose—"  
 Dickinson minor was going to suggest that Mr. Dalton might not

Fourth Form-master to see him loafing about the passages.

Until time came for prep Gunner was still in evidence downstairs; Mr. Dalton could not come out of his study without seeing him.

Mr. Dalton was a good-tempered young gentleman, but he was growing considerably exasperated.

His belief was, naturally, that Gunner had not done his impot, and was setting up to defy authority in order to gain a little cheap notoriety in the Lower School.

Such a proceeding Mr. Dalton intended to deal with very drastically when the time came.

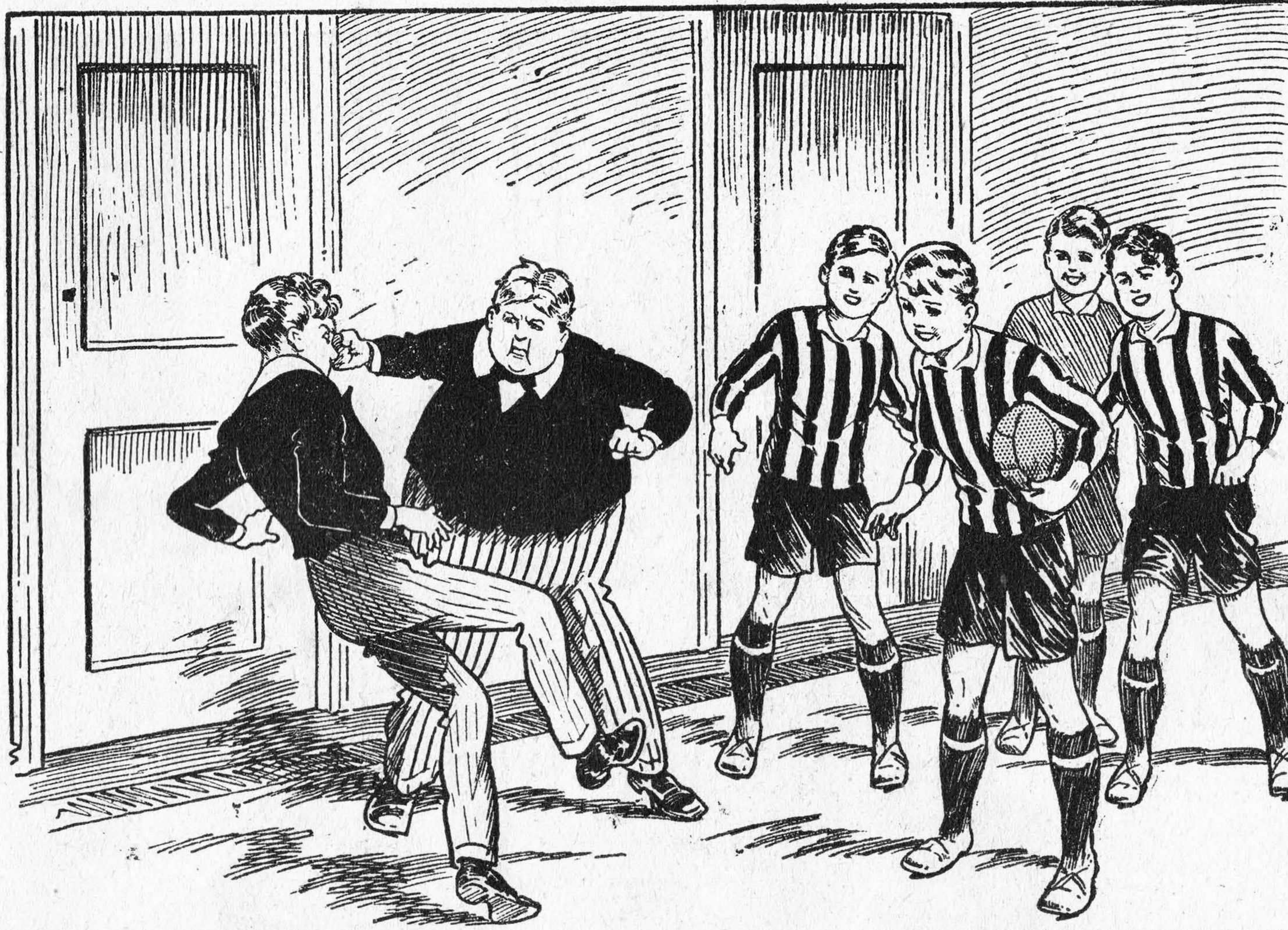
Gunner was smiling over his prep in Study No. 7 that evening.

After prep he came downstairs, and again the master of the Fourth was allowed to see him loafing about, evidently thinking of anything but lines.

As bed-time drew near most of the Classical Fourth became keenly interested in Gunner's wheeze and the probable outcome thereof. At half-past eight Bulkeley, of the Sixth, looked into the junior Common-room to marshal the Classical Fourth off to their dormitory.

"May I take my lines to Mr. Dalton first, Bulkeley?" asked Gunner meekly.

"Buck up, then," said Bulkeley. "Why haven't you done it before, if you have got to do it? Cut off!"



**TUBBY HITS OUT!** Tubby Muffin glared at Putty Grace. "You—you—thumping dummy!" he roared. "You were pulling my leg! You were going to make me call the Head. I might have got a licking—I—I—" Tubby Muffin was not a fighting man but he forgot that circumstance in his exasperation and he made a jump at Putty, and a fat fist crashed on Teddy Grace's nose. "Yaroooh!" Bump! Putty of the Fourth sat down with startling suddenness.

strengthened that impression of Richard Dalton's.

Gunner was "checking" his Form master again.

He was "showing off."  
 Mr. Dalton frowned, but he did nothing more than frown. Really, there was nothing more he could do.

Gunner had a tremendous impot to work through, and undoubtedly he ought to have been working through it. But he had been ordered to bring in the lines before bedtime, and if he cared to leave his task late that was his own business. He would have to take the consequences if the lines were not done in time. To intervene in the matter until Gunner actually failed to hand in his impot at the specified time was scarcely feasible.

No doubt this impertinent junior was "showing off" to give his Form master the impression that he was going to neglect that impot. Then he would hurry through it, and get it done at the last moment, or try to do so. If he failed he would pay the penalty of failure, and of having wasted his time in "swank." Possibly he had some scheme of helping hands. The impot might come along in three or four "fists," a few hundred lines being contributed by other fellows—not an uncommon occurrence in the Fourth.

There were occasions when Mr. Dalton closed a kind and judicious eye to a variety of "fists" in the matter of impots. On this occasion, however, he was going to be extremely keen and watchful. Gunner

be satisfied with typed impots. Such a very new departure for Rookwood. But Gunner was not in need of suggestions. From his Olympian height of intellectual superiority he looked down with disdain on the trifling and unimportant opinions of other fellows.

"Suppose rats!" he interrupted. "It's the biggest wheeze ever thought of; and if you think it isn't, Dicky, that only shows you're a silly ass."

"I was only thinking—"  
 "You weren't," said Gunner. "You can't old chap." The merest hint of criticism was enough for Gunner. "Don't say any more. If a chap can't talk sense he can always shut up. Do it."

"Oh, all right!" said Dickinson minor nettled. "Just as you like."

"That's better. You see, old chap, you're rather dense," said Gunner kindly.

"Oh!" murmured Dickinson minor. "I'm going to keep under Dalton's eye all the jolly old afternoon," said Gunner brightly. "All the time he'll be thinking that my impot's not done, and will be saving up a regular thunderstorm for me. Fancy his face when I hand it in—complete!"

Gunner chuckled joyfully.

In his view it was no end of a joke. A good many fellows were interested in Gunner's proceedings; for once Peter Cuthbert had his due and attracted general attention.

At tea-time he showed up in the Hall, merely to catch Mr. Dalton's eye there. After tea he allowed the

Gunner had left it till the last moment, hoping that Mr. Dalton would ask for his lines before a crowd of fellows. He wanted to score over Richard Dalton in the presence of an admiring Form. Richard Dalton was certain to ask for his impot before the Classical Fourth went to bed.

Gunner was right on that point. Mr. Dalton's stalwart figure appeared in the doorway just as Gunner was speaking to the prefect.

"Gunner!"  
 "Yes, sir!"

"You have not handed in your imposition, Gunner," said Mr. Dalton in a deep voice.

"Just bringing it in, sir," said Gunner cheerfully.

"What!"  
 "I've got it here, sir."

Mr. Dalton started a little, and there was a breathless hush in the Fourth. The climax had come.

"You have, then, written out your imposition, Gunner?" said Mr. Dalton, after a brief pause.

"Every line, sir."  
 "I fail to understand how you can have done so, Gunner, as you appear to have been quite unoccupied this afternoon. However, give me the lines."

Gunner brought his imposition to the Form master.  
 Mr. Dalton took it and stared at it.

It was not written on foolscap but typed on sheets of quarto size, pinned together at the corner.

Mr. Dalton blinked at it.

"What—what is this, Gunner?" he ejaculated.

"My thousand lines, sir."

"You have not written these lines."

"Yes, sir; on a typewriter."

"A—a—a typewriter?"  
 "Yes, sir; I asked my pater to send me a typer the other day," said Gunner cheerily. "I thought it would come in useful, sir. No objection to a fellow typing his lines, I suppose?"

Bulkeley, of the Sixth, stared at Gunner. The Fourth Form fellows were watching Mr. Dalton. There was a pause.

"Gunner," said Mr. Dalton at last. "There appears to be some misunderstanding here. Impositions are not inflicted because the production of a large number of lines is an end in itself. The object is punishment of an offender. You are a very stupid boy, Gunner, an unusually stupid boy—"

"What?"  
 "For that reason I desire to deal leniently with you, Gunner. It is my duty to be patient with stupidity."

"Eh?"  
 "But impertinence is another matter," said Mr. Dalton sternly. "You have been impertinent, as well as stupid, Gunner."

"Sir!"  
 "In order to remove all misapprehension I will explain, Gunner, that as lines are inflicted as a punishment they must be written by hand. You will, therefore, write out this imposition again, and will be detained on Saturday afternoon for the purpose."

"Oh!"  
 "I should double the imposition if it were not already so heavy," said Mr. Dalton. "I shall not, therefore, double it; I shall cane you. Will you kindly lend me a cane, Bulkeley?"

"Certainly, sir!"  
 "Bend over that chair, Gunner."  
 "I—I say—"

"You need say nothing, Gunner; you are wasting time. Bend over that chair at once!" said Mr. Dalton in a formidable voice.

Gunner almost collapsed over the chair.

Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack! Whack!

Mr. Dalton handed the cane back to Bulkeley and walked out of the Common-room. The Classical Fourth marched off to their dormitory, all of them grinning, with one exception. That exception was Gunner. Peter Cuthbert Gunner wriggled spasmodically as he walked, and he had not the slightest inclination to grin.

"No end of a joke, old chap!" murmured Putty, of the Fourth. "Ripping, in fact! Dalton's face was worth watching, as you said it would be. So was yours."

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Yours especially, Gunner!" chuckled Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Worth a guinea a box!" said Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "The joke of the term," said Raby. "Why don't you laugh, Gunner?"

Gunner did not laugh. He groaned.

He was still groaning when Bulkeley turned the lights out in the Classical Fourth dormitory. Chuckles ran from bed to bed; the outcome of Gunner's wonderful wheeze had quite an exhilarating effect on the Fourth. But Peter Cuthbert Gunner failed to see where the joke came in—his own joke, too!—and he only groaned dismally.

**The 4th Chapter.  
 Amazing!**

Peter Cuthbert Gunner, having enjoyed notoriety for one afternoon, retired next day into his accustomed obscurity. If he had any further interest for the Classical Fourth it was as the owner of a typewriting machine. Certainly, a fellow who could have a fifteen-pound typewriter simply by asking his father for one was a fellow rather to be envied. Fellows were interested in the typewriter, and quite a number of juniors came along to Study No. 7 to try the machine, till the novelty wore off. But the machine remained in evidence after that. Having it in his possession, though it was certainly useless for writing out impots, Gunner made use of it in many ways. If he had to send a note to a fellow he would type it; if he stood a spread in his study he would type out the invitations. The heir of Gunner's World-famed Hardware, Ltd. had ample pocket-money, and many

(Continued overleaf.)



# Gunner's Brain Wave!

(Continued from previous page.)

expensive things, and he rather liked letting fellows know it. It was something, at least, to be the owner of a thing that had cost fifteen pounds—a large sum in the estimation of most Fourth Formers. So Peter Cuthbert liked to keep his typewriter well in evidence.

He typed out the footer lists for Jimmy Silver, he typed the addresses on his letters home, he typed out exercises—in fact, the clicking and tapping of the machine in Gunner's study was frequent, and painful, and free, and Dickinson minor confided to most of the Fourth that he was fed-up with Gunner. Gunner, in fact, was the only fellow to whom he did not confide how fed-up he was.

There was no doubt that Gunner liked to make his machine heard, and if a fellow remarked upon it Gunner would observe, in a careless sort of way, that it cost fifteen pounds, and that he could have a dozen of them if he liked to ask.

"How's a fellow to do his prep, with that thumping ass kicking up such a row in the study?" Dickinson minor inquired of the Fourth. "I wish some of you fellows would raid that typer and chuck it away!"

"It may come in useful, though," remarked Putty of the Fourth thoughtfully.

"What rot!" "Well, what have you got in your silly head now?" inquired Jimmy Silver, catching the look in Putty's eye—a look he knew well. Evidently the jester of the Fourth was "at it" again.

"Gunner types invitations to tea now!" said Putty.

"I know, I've had one!" said Jimmy, laughing.

"Well, I haven't," said Putty. "But I've seen them about—thick as the giddy leaves in Vallombrosa. There's a great advantage in a typewriter—the fist can't be identified!"

"How's that an advantage?" "That depends. I think I can turn it to advantage, in Gunner's case," said Putty.

Putty of the Fourth said no more. But the next time Gunner went for a walk Putty dropped into Study No. 7 and sat down to the typer.

For a quarter of an hour Putty of the Fourth was tapping merrily on Gunner's machine, and when he departed there was a cheery grin on Putty's face.

Gunner came in cheerily from his walk, and met with a surprise. Carthew of the Sixth was in the Hall, and he came up to Gunner with a frowning brow.

"You cheeky young ass!" said Carthew.

Gunner stared. "Take a hundred lines!" "Eh! What! What have I done?" demanded the astonished Gunner.

"If you think you can ask Sixth Form fellows to tea in a fag study, it's time you learned better!" said Carthew. "Bring those lines in after tea."

He walked away, leaving Gunner staring blankly. The Fistical Four, coming in from footer practice, found him there, apparently rooted to the floor.

"You fellows seen Carthew lately?" asked Gunner. "Think he's going mad!"

"What!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver. "He's just given me a hundred lines for inviting Sixth Form fellows to tea."

"Well, it's a cheek," said Lovell. "The Sixth don't tea with the Fourth, as you jolly well know, or ought to know!"

"But I haven't asked them!" roared Gunner. "I wouldn't have any silly owl of a Sixth Form ass in my study at any price!"

"Hallo, you're there, Gunner!" Neville of the Sixth came up. "What sort of a cheeky young duffer do you call yourself?"

"Eh?" "Sixth Form prefects don't tea with fags," said Neville. "I suppose you're such a duffer you don't under-

stand. But take care—you'll get six next time!"

"Look here, Neville—" "That's enough!"

The prefect walked away.

"Have you been asking all the Sixth to tea, Gunner?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver in astonishment.

"I haven't asked any of the silly chumps!" howled Gunner. "They seem to think you have."

"Blessed if I can understand it! I always thought the Sixth a set of silly owls; but it looks to me as if they're all potty now!"

Hansom and Talboys of the Fifth came along. They seemed to have been looking for Gunner. "Here he is!" said Hansom.

"Cheeky young sweep!" said Talboys.

decent tea!" said Gunner. "I can afford it!"

"Yaas, I know you're burstin' with filthy lucre, old scout. Don't mind my mentionin' it, but if you ask Shell fellows to tea you're bound to stand somethin' decent. We'll come."

"Oh, yes, we'll come!" said Selwyn.

Gunner felt as if his head was turning round.

"You'll come!" he stuttered. "And who's asked you?" "Eh? Why, you have!"

"I haven't, and I'm jolly well not going to!" roared Gunner. "I don't want any swanking Shell chumps in my study, I tell you! Go and eat coke!"

"Look here—" began Smythe warmly.

"Cheeky young cad!" said Selwyn indignantly.

"Oh, go and eat coke!" snapped Gunner. "You're not sponging on me for a spread, I can tell you!"

The two Shell fellows glared at him. After honouring a Fourth Form fag by accepting an invitation—real or supposed—this was rather too much. They collared Gunner, bumped him on the landing, rolled him over, and walked away, leaving Gunner gasping.

"Well, my hat!" spluttered Gunner.

He limped into Study No. 7. It was getting near tea-time, and he found Dickinson minor there, who looked at him rather curiously.

"Manage what?" "Tea!"

"Tea," repeated Gunner. "I mean, with so many fellows coming," said Dickinson. "This study won't hold a dozen chaps."

"Have you asked a dozen chaps to tea?" ejaculated Gunner.

"Of course I haven't! You have!" "I have?" yelled Gunner.

"Well, haven't you?" demanded Dickinson. "I've heard from a lot of them that they're coming, anyhow."

"Who's coming?" shrieked Gunner.

"Higgs and Jones minor and Peele and Gower and Conroy and Van Ryn and Muffin and Lattrey and Oswald and Flynn and Hooker and—"

"Cheese it! I haven't asked anybody!"

"Oh, you're dreaming!" said Dickinson minor testily. "They jolly well think you have, anyway. Then there's Wegg and Stacey and young Lovell of the Third, and Snooks and Jones minimus of the Second, and—"

"I suppose this is a jape," said Gunner. "The fellows are pulling my leg! Fifth and Sixth chaps in it, too! But I'm jolly well not going to be japed by you, Dickinson! Out you go!"

"What!" roared Dickinson. "Outside!"

Gunner was amazed, but he thought that he had found the

opened it, and grinned their most ingratiating grins as Gunner stared across at them. As a rule, they did not think much of Gunner of the Fourth; now they were prepared to treat him with the greatest respect and admiration.

"Here we are!" said Snooks brightly.

"Not too early?" asked Jones minimus.

Gunner glared. "What do you want?" "Eh? We've come to tea!"

"You've come to tea in my study—two little, sneaking, inky, grubby fags! I'll give you tea!"

Gunner made a rush across the study.

Snooks and Jones minimus had hoped to be welcomed hospitably. But they could not imagine for a moment that Gunner was rushing across to greet them with hospitality. It was only too clear that Gunner was on the warpath; and the two startled fags dodged out of the study in a great hurry.

"I—I say—" stammered Snooks. "Look here—" gasped Jones minimus.

"Let me get at you!" roared Gunner.

The two heroes of the Second took the greatest care that Gunner did not get at them. They went down the passage as if they were on the cinder-

path. "He's mad!" gasped Snooks. "Mad as a hatter," stuttered Jones minimus. "After asking us, you know! Run for it!"

The fags vanished. Gunner slammed his door wrathfully. Apparently this amazing jape had spread through the school, from the Sixth to the Second. Gunner was quite prepared now for more fellows to arrive at Study No. 7, pretending that they had been asked to tea there.

And he was not disappointed. Five minutes later there was a tap at the door, and three members of the Third Form presented themselves to view—Lovell minor, Stacey, and Wegg.

Gunner gave them a deadly look.

Snooks and Jones minimus had escaped unhurt. Gunner did not mean the heroes of the Third to escape. He was feeling, by this time, that he wanted to take it out of somebody. Lovell minor and his friends came in useful for the purpose.

"Oh! Here you are! You've come to tea, I suppose?" said Gunner moving in a casual sort of way towards the three.

"Yes, old scout," said Stacey. "Awfully good of you to ask us."

"Oh! I asked you, did I?" said Gunner.

"Eh? Yes, of course, or we shouldn't have come!" said Wegg.

"Wouldn't you?" said Gunner with a savage grin. "Well, now you've come, I'll give you tea—hot!"

He was within reach now. He made a sudden jump at the three fags. Lovell minor went whirling into the passage; Stacey and Wegg found their collars gripped and their heads meeting with a terrific concussion!

"Crack!" "Oh!"

"Whoop!" "Outside!" grinned Gunner.

Wegg and Stacey whirled through the doorway, and sprawled over Lovell minor in the passage.

Slam! The door of Study No. 7 closed on them.

Peter Cuthbert Gunner returned to his solitary tea-table feeling better. Lovell minor and his friends sat up and blinked at one another in alarm and consternation. They came to the same conclusion that Snooks had arrived at.

"He's mad!" breathed Stacey. "Get out, for goodness' sake!"

And the Third-Formers departed hurriedly. They met Grant of the Third coming up the stairs.

"Going to tea with Gunner?" asked Stacey.

Grant nodded. "Don't! He's mad!" "Ass! He's asked me to tea—"

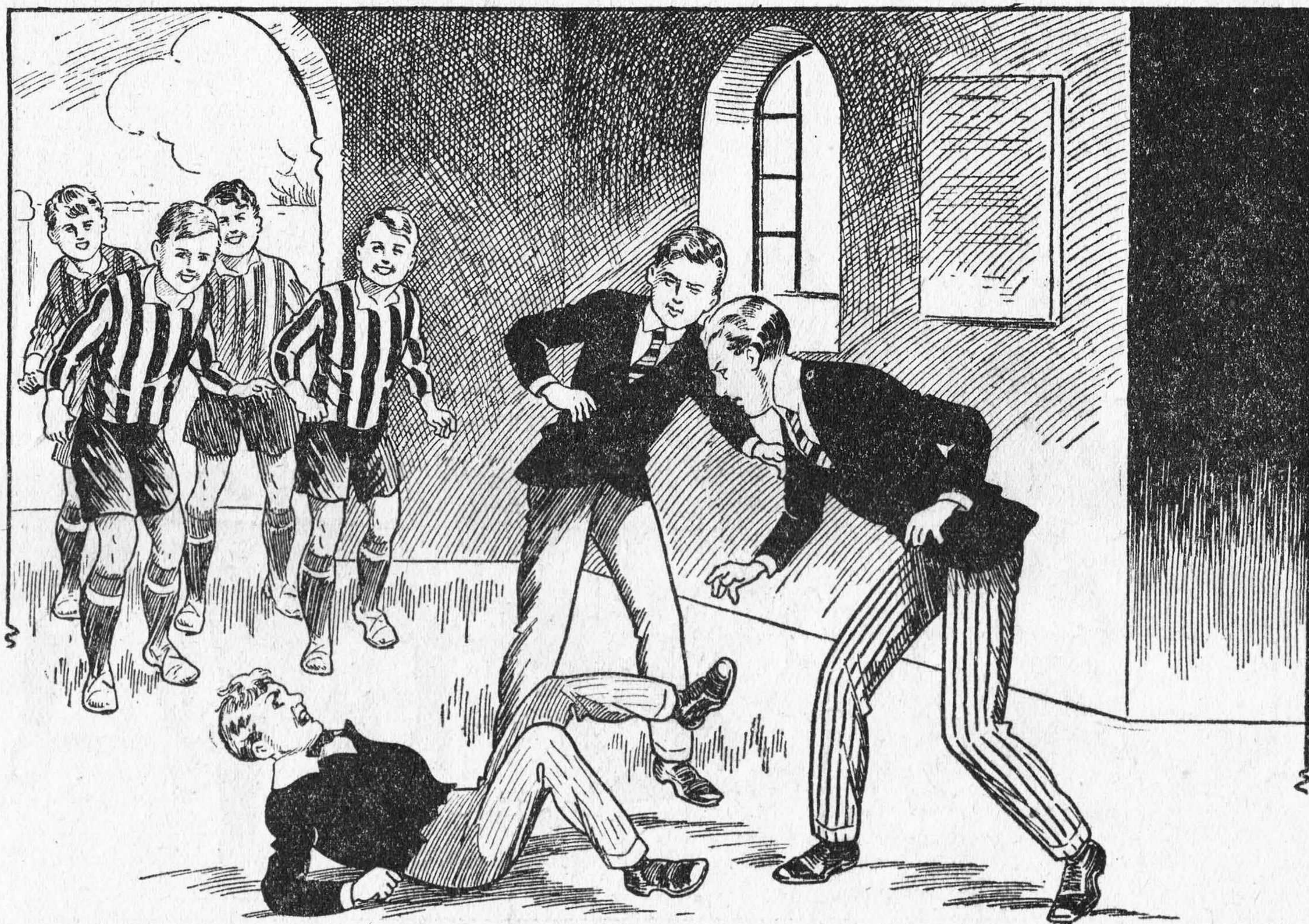
"He asked us, and as soon as we got in, he jumped on us and pitched us out like a lunatic—"

"You can't pull my leg," said Grant, and he walked on, and tapped at the door of Study No. 7.

Gunner opened the door. He was ready for the next comer, with a big cushion in his hand.

"Come to tea?" he asked. "Yes, I— Yaroooooh!" roared Grant of the Third, as the cushion landed with a terrific swipe. Grant was fairly swept away.

He sprawled along the passage and rolled over. He blinked up and saw Gunner coming after him with— (Continued on page 608.)



**GUNNER SITS DOWN SUDDENLY!** "You seem to think a lot of yourself, young Gunner," said Hansom of the Fifth. "But, if you think that senior fellows will come to tea in a fag study, you're making a mistake!" "What?" howled Peter Cuthbert Gunner. "Cheek like that has to be put down!" said Hansom. "I never—" began Peter Cuthbert. Hansom and Talboys did not heed Gunner. They collared him, up-ended him, and sat him on the floor hard.

"You seem to think a lot of yourself, young Gunner," said the captain of the Fifth. "But, if you think that senior fellows will come to tea in a fag study, you're making a mistake."

"What?" howled Gunner. "Cheek like that has to be put down," said Hansom.

"I never—" Hansom and Talboys did not heed Gunner. They collared him, up-ended him, and sat him on the floor hard. Then they walked away laughing.

Gunner sat and blinked up at the Fistical Four.

"What does it mean?" he gasped. "Has the whole school gone potty while I've been out of gates? I've never asked any of the Fifth to tea! I don't want swanking seniors in my study!"

"Well, either they're potty or you are!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "And most likely it's you, Gunny. You're a bit that way, anyhow."

"Ha, ha, ha!" The Fistical Four walked on, greatly surprised. There seemed to be some extensive misapprehension somewhere, and they could not make it out. Still less could Gunner make it out. He limped away up the staircase, and on the landing he came on Smythe and Selwyn of the Shell.

Adolphus Smythe gave him a patronising nod.

"Anythin' decent for tea?" he asked.

"Eh! What? I always have a

"Oh, you've come in!" said Dickinson.

"Can't you see I have?" growled Gunner. His temper was getting a little sore.

"Well, you're rather late, as I suppose we've got to get ready!" said Dickinson tartly. "Blessed if I know how we shall manage it!"

solution of the puzzle now. It was a jape, and his study-mate evidently was in it. Cheek from his humble follower, Dickinson minor, was not to be endured for a moment. Gunner collared Dickinson and hurled him forth into the passage in a roaring heap.

"You—you—you—" gasped Dickinson, sitting up dazedly. "Oh, you're off your rocker!"

"Do you want me to come out to you?" bawled Gunner.

"You cheeky idiot! You—"

Gunner strode out of the study in a towering rage. Dickinson minor promptly picked himself up and fled for the stairs. Really, he began to have doubts about Gunner's sanity. He vanished down the staircase at express speed.

Gunner, angry and annoyed, turned back into the study and slammed the door.

The 5th Chapter. [A Tumultuous Tea-Party! Snooks of the Second Form, came along the passage a little later with Jones minimus of that Form. Both the fags were looking very pleased and anticipative. Gunner's study was a study in which any fag of the Second would have been delighted to "tea"—it was a land of plenty, and Snooks and Jones minimus were looking forward to a gorgeous spread. They tapped at Gunner's door and

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# Gunner's Brain Wave!

(Continued from page 596.)

cushion upraised for another swipe. One blink was enough for the fag. He leaped to his feet and ran for his life.

Gunner's door slammed again. There was an interval after this. The fags of the Second and Third had been rather keen to come early and avoid the crush. But after about ten minutes, more guests began to arrive. Oswald of the Fourth looked in with a cheery smile, and Jones minor and Flynn were with him. Behind them in the passage appeared Lattrey and Peele and Gower, and then came Rawson and Townsend and Topham. It was quite a party.

"Not too early?" asked Oswald, rather surprised to find no signs of a spread in the study.

Gunner jumped up. "You fellows come to tea?" "Yes."

"So you're in it, are you?" "Eh! In what?" "Take that!" The cushion whizzed across the study, and Oswald took it, with his chin. He gave a roar. Another cushion followed, bowling over Jones minor. Then a Latin dictionary whizzed, and Flynn yelled with anguish. A Latin dic. landing fairly on the nose was no light matter.

"Look here, what's this game?" roared Oswald. Gunner did not answer.

He had a Greek lexicon in his hand, and was poised to hurl. Oswald rushed in and grasped him. The lexicon went to the floor with a crash.

"What do you mean?" yelled Oswald.

"You silly ass, we've come to tea—it's not a rag!" howled Flynn.

"Don't you want us?" demanded Gower. "If you don't, what the thump did you ask us for?"

"Is the fellow mad?" asked Townsend, in wonder.

Gunner almost raved. "I never asked you—I don't want you—I'll pulverise you—I know this is a jape—I—I—"

"You never asked us?" roared Flynn.

"No!" howled Gunner.

"What do you call this, then?" Flynn groped in his pocket, and produced a card, upon which was neatly typewritten:

"P. O. D. Flynn, Esq.,—P. C. Gunner will be glad of your company at tea this afternoon, in Study No. 7."

Gunner blinked at it. "Same as the one I have here!" exclaimed Oswald. "What the thump do you mean, Gunner? Asking fellows to a spread, and then—"

Gunner babbled. "I—I never! I—I—"

"Don't talk rot!" exclaimed Rawson. "Don't we know your giddy typing? You're the only fellow in

the Fourth idiot enough to send out invitations in this style."

"I—I didn't—"

Higgs and Tubby Muffin arrived, and then Hooker and Conroy. More fellows were coming, some of the Third and some of the Shell, as well as of the Fourth, and some Moderns from Mr. Manders' House. Evidently the invitations had been sent out on a lavish scale, though apparently not by Gunner.

There was quite a swarm in the passage. Jimmy Silver & Co. came along from the end study and added themselves to it.

"Hallo, what's the row?" exclaimed Jimmy, in astonishment. "My hat! This is a large party!"

"You, too!" gasped Gunner.

"Thanks for the invitations, old scout! We found them in the study when we got in."

"I didn't—I never—"

"But where's the spread?" asked Lovell. "Looks to me more like a dog-fight than a spread."

"Where's the spread?" howled Tubby Muffin.

"What's this game, Gunner?" Gunner gasped.

"There isn't any spread—"

"What?"

"Get out, the lot of you!"

"Eh!"

"I never—"

"So it's a jape, is it?" roared Higgs. "Do you call it a jape to ask fellows to tea and then tell them to get out?"

"I—I—I never—"

"Rag him!"

"Bump him!"

"Lynch him!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Gunner. "Leggo! Stop it! Chuck it! I tell you I—groogh—never—yaroooh—didn't— Oh, crumbs! Ooooh!"

The tea-party were angry—which was not surprising, in the circumstances. They collared Gunner of the Fourth, and ragged him right and left. The hapless Peter Cuthbert whirled about in the grasp of his enraged guests, bumped, and rolled, and hustled, and ragged, and scragged, till he hardly knew what was happening to him.

By the time the tea-party left, the study was in a parlous state.

Gunner was left alone at last, breathless, dusty, dishevelled, crimson, in the midst of a wrecked study. The invited guests departed without a spread; but they felt that they had had his value out of Gunner. When Dickinson minor came back an hour later, Gunner was still gasping and spluttering.

Putty of the Fourth felt that the jest was too good to keep to himself—he simply could not resist letting the Fourth know who really had typed those invitations on Gunner's machine, and distributed them around Rookwood.

The juniors roared over the story; and Putty of the Fourth felt that his genius as a jester was appreciated at last.

Gunner did not enjoy the joke. He packed away his typewriter, much to the relief of Dickinson minor. And he went to call on Putty of the Fourth with a fives bat in his hand.

The sounds that came from Putty's study, while Gunner was operating there with the fives bat, drew all the Classical Fourth to the spot. They dragged Gunner away at last, but not until it had been borne in upon Putty's mind, once more, that the career of a humorist was a chequered one.

THE END.

*("The Rookwood Boat Race Party!" is the magnificent long story of Jimmy Silver & Co. for Monday next. Be sure you read it. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance and avoid disappointment!)*

# IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers upon any subject. Address your letters to: Editor, "Boys' Friend," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

## A SPECIAL BOAT RACE NUMBER.

Next week's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND has a really big appeal to everybody. That goes without saying. But this time the "pull" is something quite extra, and immensely interesting to others who have not as yet had the luck to get in touch with the old "Green 'Un," with its matchless yarns. Next Monday our Boat Race Number will be on sale, a bit of intelligence most welcome to all my chums. But the Boat Race is a fixture which always rallies the whole crowd, young or old. That's why, so as to keep even with all demands, I have planned a special number of the "B. F.," with a capital article about the great tussle between Putney and Mortlake. What we all feel about the Boat Race is that it is the event which gives the k. o. to the winter. Spring is at the door. The Chiswick meadows have thrown off their grey, chilly look. The whole business of the Boat Race is dealt with on Monday. Get the BOYS' FRIEND!

## "THE ROOKWOOD BOAT RACE PARTY!"

Then, of course, Owen Conquest comes up to time with a high-spirited yarn of Jimmy Silver & Co. Tubby Muffin "tells the tale" about his father's castle on the towpath, there, or thereabouts, and the fat romancer asks a crowd. Tubby and his Muffineers, so to speak, get to the Boat Race, and after that many vastly strange things happen. Adventures tumble over each other. You will ask why did Rookwood credit Tubby's fairy tales? But even that tricky taradiddler sometimes tells the truth.

## "THE BARRING-OUT AT ST. KIT'S!"

On Monday this grand new story starts. It is a "goer," and no error! As Mr. Carver would not cease from troubling, the Fourth Form at St. Kit's rose as one man. The thrill starts with the first line. The Fourth Form has one ringing cry: "To the barricades!" The clarion has sounded, and the response is magnificent. This time it is a barring-out which will pale the ineffectual fires of all other risings read of in books or dreamt of in dreams.

## "POSH AT THE WHEEL!"

Come wheel, come woe! Posh gets into trouble, and is misjudged by his good-hearted but erratic employer. Posh meant jolly well when

he gave Cyril a bit of his mind. This was really worth having, if only the headstrong Babbit had understood. There is a cheery note next week, also a rush of exciting incidents. Whether he is up or down in the world, Posh is the right man.

## "DICK POWELL'S NATIONAL!"

A ripping yarn, this, for our next number. It is a toss up which plays leading role, Dick, or a horse called Black Knight. The latter is cast for favourite, but there are leagues and legions of uncertainties, glorious and otherwise, in that dramatic stretch of turf known as a race-course. Look out for the postman in the new story. That swift-footed functionary chips in with a certain letter, which means everything to young Powell. The tale hums with excitement, and the incidents dovetail together in proper style.

## "A PUT-UP JOB."

Pirates are a much misunderstood race of men. That idea may strike you with a thud when you read next week's Duncan Storm story of the Bombay Castle. It is mainly about pesky piratical Johnnies—fierce-looking fellows, whiskered, and nimble as grasshoppers, their waistbelts garnished with knives and forks, or whatever arms of offence may be in fashion at the moment. These, however, are not the pirates. Wait and see! Dick Dorrington & Co. are fated to meet a certain troop of mischiefmakers, led by one, Gaskho. Dick and his pals are not the boys to stir up trouble. It comes to meet them. You will see next Monday how the resourceful company of the Bombay Castle emerges from the rare old mix up. It is good reading, but what else does one expect from the trenchant Duncan Storm? Anyhow, don't miss the "Put-Up Job," and the real good job the author makes of it!

## "GOALIE!"

Every good sport has its faithful chronicler, and I much doubt whether any firmer or finer expert could be found than "Goalie" for his special job. In days of old, when knights were bold—or some of them—the jolly pastime known as quarter-staff was written up by those in the know. "Goalie" is more in the know about football than anyone, and he has a capital knack of negotiating the problems of the great game. You will find him busy at the honourable duty in our next number.

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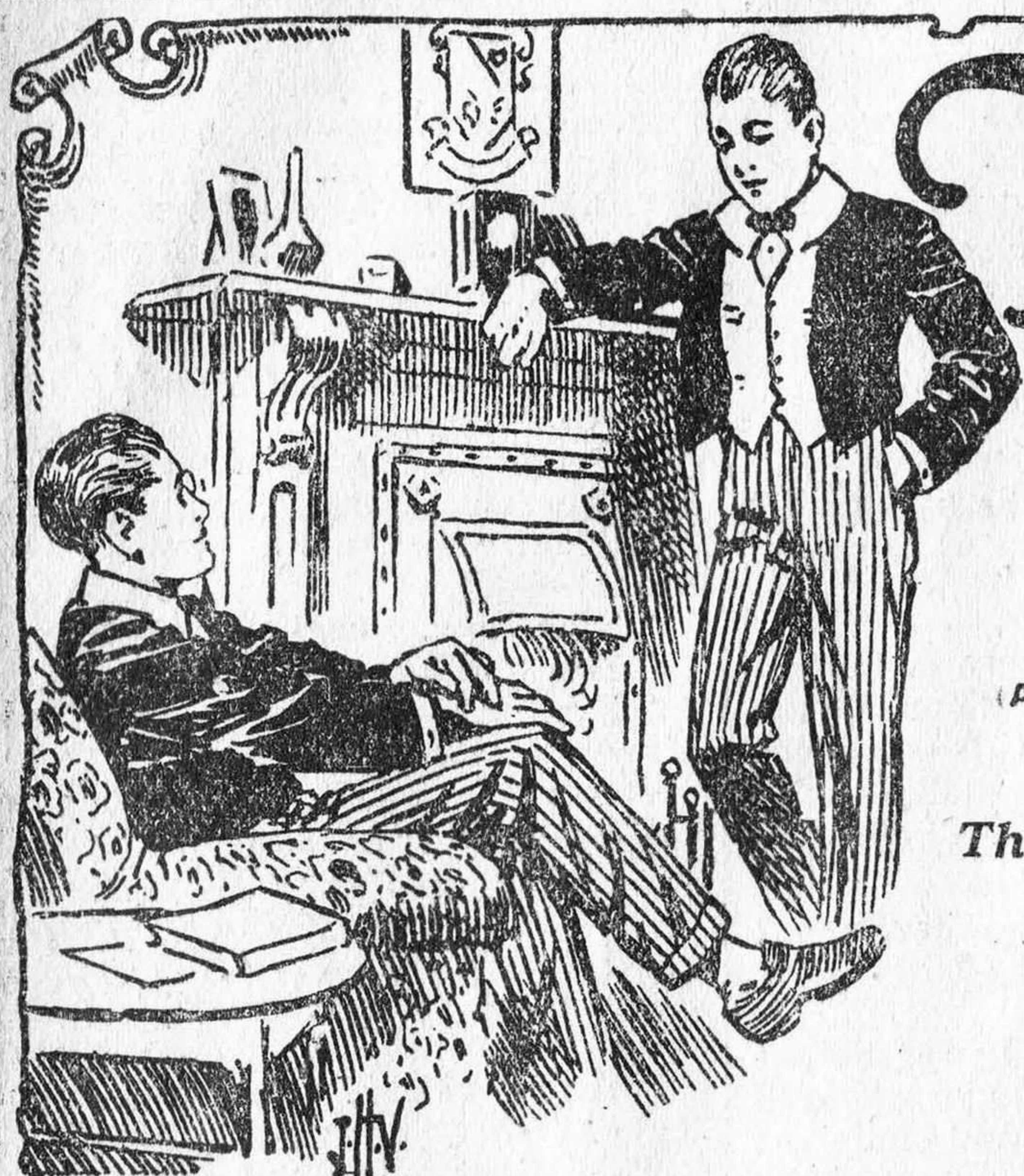
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The CAPTAIN OF THE FOURTH! By FRANK RICHARDS

Author of the famous tales of Greyfriars School appearing in the "Magnet" Library.

The Fourth Formers make final preparations for a great Barring-Out!

The 1st Chapters.

When Harry Wilmot gains the captaincy of the Fourth Form at St. Kit's by reason of the vote cast in his favour by Bob Rake, a new junior hailing from Australia, he invites the Cornstalk to dig in the top study which he—Wilmot—shares with his cousin Algernon Aubrey St. Leger and Bunny Bootles, the fat boy of the Form. Rake jumps at the chance offered him and soon becomes greatly attached to his study-mates.

One day Dr. Chenies, the headmaster of St. Kit's, is brutally attacked by a footpad in Lynn Wood, and as a consequence of his injuries he is ordered away by his doctor. A Mr. Carker, who has a reputation for being a tyrant, is appointed to take Dr. Chenies' place while the latter is away from the school, and no sooner does the new headmaster arrive at St. Kit's than he makes his presence felt.

Harry Wilmot, who quickly falls foul of Mr. Carker, is placed in the "Rat-trap"—the detention-room at St. Kit's, by order of the new Head. At night, however, Harry escapes by climbing down the ivy which grows thickly upon the walls of St. Kit's, and it is whilst he is making his way to a box-room window through which he intends gaining admittance to the school, that he sees the man who is wanted for the brutal attack upon Dr. Chenies, in conversation with Mr. Carker, at the French windows of the Head's study.

When Mr. Carker learns the next morning that Harry Wilmot has escaped from the "Rat-trap," he visits the Fourth Form-room with the object of administering a severe castigation to the Captain of the Fourth. The Fourth, who are in a rebellious spirit, eject the new Head from the room and then proceed to the Glory Hole, or junior Common-room, where they hold a meeting and decide not to do any more school work unless Mr. Carker leaves them entirely in the hands of Mr. Rawlings, their Form-master. It is whilst the Fourth are in the Glory Hole that the prefects come along to eject them. The Fourth, however, have the door locked, and Mr. Carker, not to be denied, orders the prefects to get in at the windows which open out on the quad. But the first attempt of Oliphant and his followers to dislodge the rebels by that means fails.

Beaten Off!

Oliphant of the Sixth turned to the garrison of the Glory Hole again, his eyes gleaming.

Between the snarling Mr. Carker and the rebellious juniors, Oliphant's usual good temper had quite failed him. He was in a towering rage now.

"I'm coming in," he said between his teeth. "You'll answer for any damage you do."

"You'll take the risk!" said Harry Wilmot determinedly.

Oliphant shook off Wake's detaining hand and plunged recklessly in. He caught the chair in Harry's hands and grasped it as he went plunging in, and rolled on the floor, dragging the weapon from the hands of the captain of the Fourth.

Wake was after him in a moment.

Bob Rake made a spring at Oliphant and landed on him, and Stubbs and Durance backed him up promptly. The captain of St. Kit's found himself pinned to the floor.

Wake was grasped by Wilmot and St. Leger, and he staggered to and fro with the two juniors clinging to his arms, till Scott tripped him from behind, and he came down with a crash.

But Tomlinson and Carsdale were coming through the window together, and behind them crowded Beauchamp, Lucas, Knott, and Sutcliffe. Behind them Mr. Carker was waving his cane and shouting encouragement.

Prefect after prefect dropped into the Glory Hole, in spite of the defenders at the windows.

Wake had a grasp on Wilmot, and they were struggling. And Lunley, Howard, and Bunny Bootles were already in retreat towards the other window.

Harry Wilmot realised that the tide was turning against the garrison of the Glory Hole and he was desperate. He dashed his clenched fists full into Rupert Wake's face, and Wake relaxed his hold, gasping and rolling over on the floor. Wilmot leaped up, with Wake's ashplant in his hand. He sprang to the window slashing out recklessly.

Four prefects were in the Glory Hole now struggling with the crowd of juniors—four more were clambering in hotly. But the reckless slashes of the ashplant drove back the clamberers—the lashes came across their heads and faces with all the strength of Wilmot's sturdy arm. Beauchamp yelled and rolled back into the quad—Lucas and Knott jumped clear—Sutcliffe plunged on savagely. But a terrific lash in the face made Sutcliffe yell and dodge back, and he lost his hold and fell into the quad again.

The next moment Harry was grasped behind by Carsdale and dragged back. He kicked out behind savagely, and there was a

wild howl from the bully of the Sixth. He released Wilmot and staggered back yelling with anguish. Oliphant was still on the floor, and Wake was there, too—six or seven juniors were kneeling or standing on them, keeping them down. Tomlinson, pursued into a corner, was defending himself frantically with his ashplant, as well as he could, against five or six fellows with rulers, chairs, and fireirons. The fray was growing desperate now.

Faces were at the window again—led by Sutcliffe, his face red with rage. Harry Wilmot slashed at them recklessly, and again the sill was cleared. The prefects were fully exposed to his blows as they put their heads in, and they felt that it was not good enough. Mr. Carker made a dash at Harry through the window with his cane, and the captain of the Fourth lashed back and caught the tip of Mr. Carker's prominent thin nose. And Mr. Carker jumped away yelling.

"Down them!" roared Bob Rake. "Sorry to tread on your face, Oliphant!"

"Gurrugh!"

"Your own fault—" "You asked for it, dear boy," said Algernon Aubrey. "We are only grantin' your earnest request, old bean."

"Grooogh!" "Lemme gerrup!" spluttered Wake.

"Keep off!" Tomlinson was yelling in his corner, fairly scared by the shower of blows falling on him from all sorts of weapons. "Scott, you young scoundrel, keep that poker away—yaroooch!"

"Hook it then!" said Scott.

"Keep off! L—yaroop!" yelled Tomlinson, as the poker came home again. He made a wild break for the window, and the juniors rushed victoriously after him.

Tomlinson plunged out, meeting Beauchamp, who was coming on again, half-way. The two Sixth Formers rolled to the ground together.

Carsdale was speeding along to the window at the other end of the Glory Hole. He tore it open and jumped out.

Harry Wilmot panted. Only two of the enemy remained in the

Glory Hole, and both were struggling helplessly under a crowd of juniors. The window was clear—the prefects outside, in spite of Mr. Carker's furious objurgations, were holding off from the attack. There was not one of them who was not marked in half a dozen places.

"Hurrah for us!" roared Bob Rake. "We've beaten them."

"Yaas, begad!"

"Hurrah!" gasped Bunny Bootles. "I say, Howard and Lunley have bunked out of the end window!"

"Let them go, the funks!" "They wouldn't help me up, the beasts—I—I mean I refused to run away, and they—"

"Come and sit on Oliphant."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, he might bite—you know Carker bit—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors. "Do you bite Oliphant?" "Gruuuuugh!"

"Throw them out!" panted Harry Wilmot. "The others are holding back—they've had enough! Chuck them out! Wake first!"

"You bet!"

"Out you go, Wakey!"

Struggling and panting, Rupert Wake was whirled to the window by six or seven of the Fourth. He was jammed on the sill and rolled out, and he went sprawling helplessly to the ground below.

"Now, Oliphant—"

"Chuck him out!"

"Will you go quietly, Oliphant, old scout?" asked Harry.

"No!" roared Oliphant.

"Chuck him out, then!"

The enraged captain of St. Kit's struggled furiously, and, overwhelming as the odds were against him, the juniors had their hands full with him. But he was whirled to the window.

There he made a desperate stand, clinging to the window-frame in spite of broken glass. But the whole crowd were at him, and under a torrent of blows and shoves and jabs, he rolled out of the window and dropped into the quad.

The rebels had won.

From the broken window of the Glory Hole a roar of cheering rolled into the quad and echoed from end to end of St. Kit's. And fellows of other Forms, looking on breathlessly from a distance, exchanged excited looks and comments.

"They've beaten the prefects!" said Babbie, of the Shell. "Oh, my hat! They've licked the prefects!"

"Cheeky young beggars!" said Gunter, of the Fifth. "They've got pluck, though!"

"Too much for Carker!" grinned Price.

And some of the Shell and the Third cheered in answer to the roar from the Glory Hole.

The Plan of Campaign.

"Ow!" "Yow!" "Wow!" "Oh, my eye!" "Oh, my nose!"

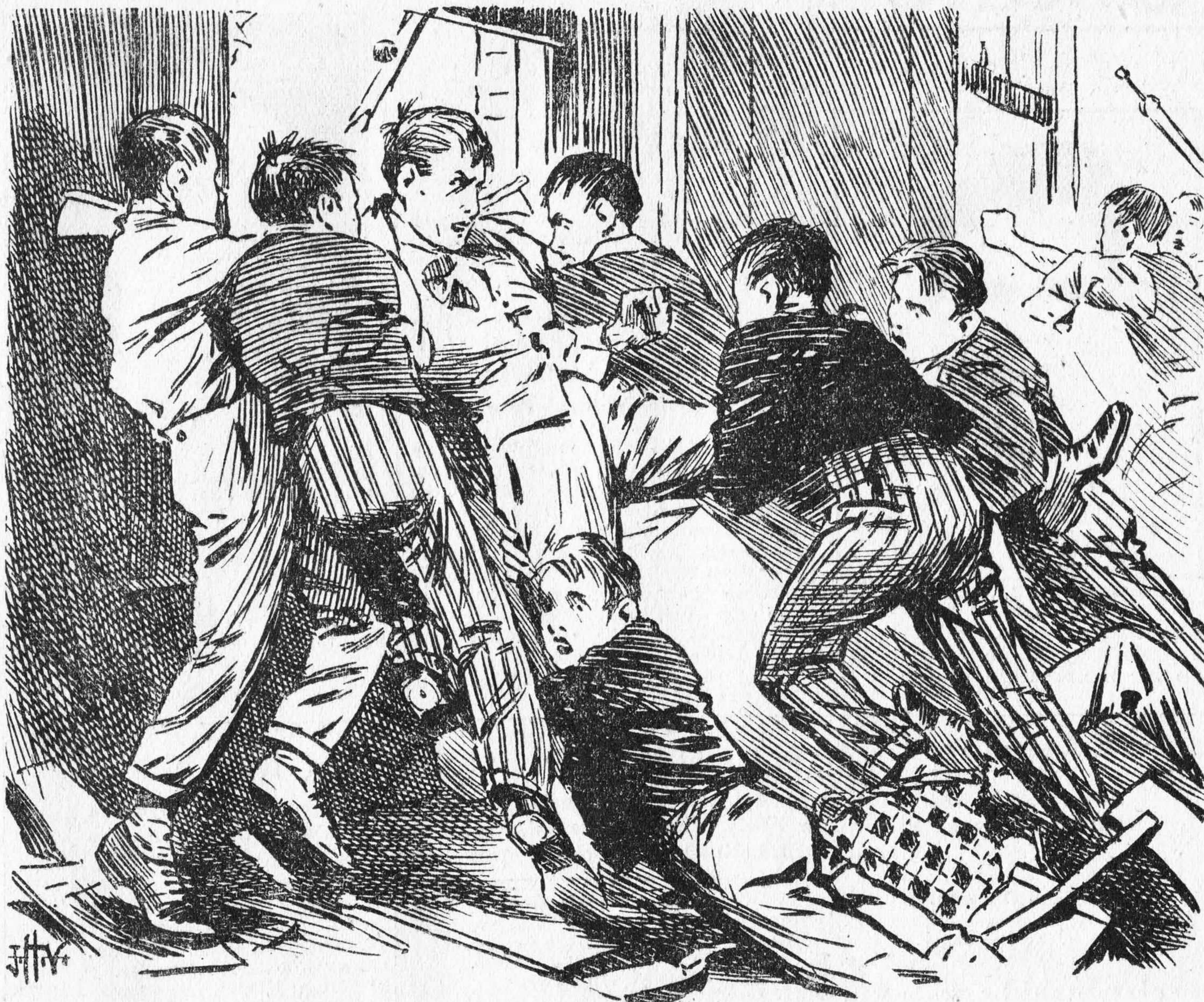
Such were the ejaculations among the heroes of the Fourth after the attack had ceased, and the Sixth Form prefects had retreated. There was a big casualty list in the Glory Hole.

Swollen noses were as thick as blackberries; black eyes were not a few; bruises and bumps were unnumbered.

But they had beaten the prefects! There was glory in that for the rebels of St. Kit's, and it consoled them for their numerous and extensive damages.

Oliphant & Co. had retreated; Mr. Carker having shaken a furious fist at the broken window, and dodged a flying inkpot, had gone into the School House—defeated, baffled, and in a towering fury. The quad was crowded with excited fellows, but none showed hostility towards the garrison of the Glory Hole—rather the reverse.

The heroes of the Fourth rubbed their injuries and uttered painful (Continued overleaf.)



IN THE HANDS OF THE REBELS! "Will you go quietly, Oliphant, old scout?" asked Harry Wilmot. "No!" roared Oliphant. "Chuck him out, then!" The enraged captain of St. Kit's struggled furiously, and, overwhelming as the odds were against him, the juniors had their hands full with him. But he was whirled to the window, and there he made a last desperate stand.



# The CAPTAIN OF THE FOURTH!

By FRANK RICHARDS

(Continued from previous page.)

"I saw you bunking," answered Stubbs.

"Oh, I say!" "Well, we've beaten them," said Durance, with a grin. "Poor old Oliphant! He's got a black eye."

"He'll have another to match it if he comes fooling near me again!" said Bunny, truculently. "I say, let's go after them—let's go and wreck the Sixth Form studies!"

"Shut up, you fat ass!" "Let's go after Carker and lynch him!" roared Bunny, bursting with valour in the absence of the enemy. "Don't be funky! Keep your eye on me. What?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Right-ho! Bunny will lead," chuckled Bob. "Come on, Bunny! I'll drop you out of the window!"

"Eh?" "I think I see Carker in the distance."

"Oh!" "Ready?" demanded Bob.

"On second thoughts perhaps we'd better stick in the Glory Hole and keep the beasts out."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "I say, though!" exclaimed Bunny, struck by a new and really unnerving thought. "What about dinner?"

"Dinner!" repeated Algy.

"Yes, rather—dinner! It's dinner-time! Look out of the window—all the fellows are going in to dinner," said Bunny.

"With one of my straight lefts, you know," said Bunny.

"You can go along with them if you like, old bean."

"Carker would collar me!" "Yaas!"

"And wallop me, you fathead!" "Yaas! It would do you good."

"You silly owl!" roared Bunny. "I say, we can't go without dinner. Carker won't send us any here, I suppose."

"Ha, ha! Not likely!" "What are we going to do for dinner, Wilmot?" asked Bunny, anxiously.

The captain of the Fourth laughed.

"I haven't thought about that yet, my fat tulip!" he answered.

"Then you'd jolly well better think about it now!" said Bunny warmly. "I'm hungry—jolly hungry!"

"There isn't any grub here,

selves in a precious fix," remarked Verney minor. "Wish I'd chanced it with Howard and Lumley now."

"It's not too late," said Harry, with a curl of the lip. "The window's open. I fancy Howard and Lumley will be sorry for themselves when Mr. Carker spots them—if not already. I think it's very likely he's taking it out of them in his study now."

"Serve 'em right!" said Bob. "Yaas, begad!"

"But I say, what about dinner?" persisted Bunny Bootles. "Anybody got any toffee? I could hold out a bit on toffee."

"Shut up, Bunny!" "Oh, I say!"

"Yes, dry up a minute, fatty," said Harry Wilmot. "You fellows—we've got to think this out clear. We've held our own so far—"

"Hurrah for us!" chortled Bob.

"It's come to this—there's got to be a barring-out—"

"Hear, hear!" "If the rest of the Lower School had joined up we'd have collared the School House and held it against Carker."

"But they jolly well haven't," said Stubbs.

"No; but there's the Fourth Form passage—we can hold that against all comers. There's only the staircase up, and that's a narrow one. We could hold it against all the Sixth if they back up the prefects—as they will very likely."

"Yaas, begad!" "It's settled," said Harry, looking round. "We've gone too far to retreat now, if we wanted to. If Carker gets the upper hand now it's floggings all round and the sack for some of us. Who's for a barring-out?"

"Bravo!" "Hands up for a barring-out!" shouted Bob Rake.

Every hand went up, Bunny's fat

that's a cert!" said Bob Rake. "We shall have to do as they do in an open boat at sea, and become cannibals. Bunny's the fattest. I vote that Bunny goes first!"

"Oh, I say!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Still, it's got to be thought of," said Stubbs. "We've beaten them off and stalled off the Carker-merchant. But we can't stay shut up in the Glory Hole without any grub. And if we go out they'll collar us."

"Seem to have landed our-

paw as prompt as any. All the Fourth realised that there was no retreat open for them unless they could make honourable terms with the enemy—and that was only possible after a successful revolt and resistance. And the idea of a barring-out appealed to the excited juniors.

"Done, then!" exclaimed Harry Wilmot. "We bar out Carker & Co., and our motto is 'No surrender!'"

"No surrender!" roared the Fourth.

"But what about dinner?" "Shut up, Bunny!"

"That's all very well, but dinner—"

"Kick him, somebody!" "Yow-ow!"

"The fellows will all be at dinner now," said Harry. "The prefects most likely, unless they're too busy with Elliman's."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "We've got to get to our studies quiet and all together. If we're stopped we've got to fight our way."

"We're ready!" breathed Bob Rake.

The Fourth-Formers drew together, every fellow grasping a weapon of some sort—ruler, or poker, or shovel, or chair-leg. Bunny Bootles squeezed into the midst of the array. Bob Rake quietly unlocked the door of the Glory Hole.

The passage outside was vacant. After the defeat of the prefects, Mr. Carker probably thought that the rebels would remain locked in for security—probably he was at that moment devising new means of getting at the garrison of the Glory Hole. As for Oliphant & Co., they were probably not thinking of the juniors at all—they had too many bumps and bruises and swollen noses and darkened eyes to attend to.

From the direction of the dining-

(Continued on the next page.)

ejaculations, but they were not damped in spirits in the least. Success had its usual effect; even Bunny Bootles was valorous now, and glad that he had not succeeded in escaping by the end window with Howard and Lumley.

"Oh, my only aunt!" said Algernon Aubrey St. Leger. "I've got a bump on my napper as big as a roc's egg. I don't know how big a roc's egg is, but this bump is as big, or bigger. I believe my topper will go sideways—ow!"

"Look at my nose!" grinned Bob Rake. "All in the day's work, old top!"

"Oh, gad! Is it a nose?" ejaculated Algy, looking at it.

"It doesn't feel as if it was!" said Bob, rubbing it ruefully.

"We've beaten them!" said Stubbs. "Beaten the prefects! Lucky they couldn't all get at us at once!"

"Oh, rot!" said Bunny, loftily. "We'd have beaten the whole crowd! Did you see the way I handled Carsdale?"

"You did?" yelled Stubbs.

"I did—knocked him fairly flying—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"With one of my straight lefts, you know," said Bunny.

**IT'S GREAT!**  
"The Barring-Out at St. Kit's!" By FRANK RICHARDS, the splendid new story of Harry Wilmot & Co., commencing in next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND. Be sure you read it!

# FOOTBALL GOSSIP!

By "Goalie"

### To Keep Interest Going.

At this part of the season interest in the doings of some of the football clubs falls off. There are some teams which are out of the Cup competition, and whose positions in the League are what might be called neutral—that is, they have no hopes of winning a championship and are in no danger of being relegated. Thus the results of particular matches lose much of their importance, and some of the excitement is missing so far as the spectators are concerned. It was largely with a view to keeping matches between two "safe" sides full of life that the idea of a bonus for wins was first introduced. The fact that they get two pounds for a victory gives the men that little bit of extra incentive which helps towards a really thrilling encounter. Moreover, the spectators know that the players get a bit extra for winning, and, consequently, are not quite so ready to charge them with showing something below their best.

There are a lot of things which can be said against the system of paying bonuses for wins and draws, but the former aspect of the business should not be overlooked by those who want to abolish the bonus. After all, I do not see why the players of a club which wins should not get a bit more; and, for my part, I decline to believe that the bonus has led to more of the win-at-any-price spirit being introduced into the big games.

### The Worst Offence.

Mention of the bonus and its inducement to the players to put forth a big effort even when the result does not matter a great deal for League table purposes, reminds me that, above everything else, there is one thing which the average spectator will not stand. And that is the impression that this or that player is not trying. Only the other day I

heard a famous player most severely barracked because, somehow or other,



J. O'DONNELL (Everton).

he gave the onlookers the feeling that he was not putting his whole heart into the business. I don't suppose

the barracking of a player ever did him much good, and we do know that criticism from the home crowd has led to many a player asking to be put on the transfer list. But spectators will have their say, and as one of them put it to me the other day: "How else can we tell the management that we do not consider a player or players good enough for the team?"

### A Cutting Comment.

I know one club which has a spectator who, so far as my experience goes, ought to be given the barracking championship on account of the cutting things he says about the players of his favourite team. Here is a fair sample. In a certain match a particular player was meeting with no success at all. His exhibition was little more than one long record of sins of omission and commission. At last the champion barracker broke loose. "Hi, lad," he called out at the top of his voice, "come off t' field and strengthen the team!"

### A Transfer Without Parallel.

Last week I had something to say about the transfer system, and declared that, in my view, reform was considerably overdue. To follow this up, I may perhaps refer to a comparatively recent happening, which serves to show up the transfer business in its worst light. I refer to the case of Albert Pape, the centre-forward of Manchester United. A few weeks back he was a Clapton Orient player, and on a particular

Saturday went from London to Manchester to play against the United. At least, that was his intention when the team started out. But an hour before the match was due to take place Pape was transferred to Manchester United, and instead of playing for Clapton Orient against Manchester United he played for Manchester United against Clapton



W. McALLISTER (Middlesbrough).

Orient. This case showed up the transfer business in a very bad light; and now that the absurdity of it has been demonstrated so clearly, I hope there will be a big alteration before the start of another season. We may not approach the ideal of one player one club one season, but there should

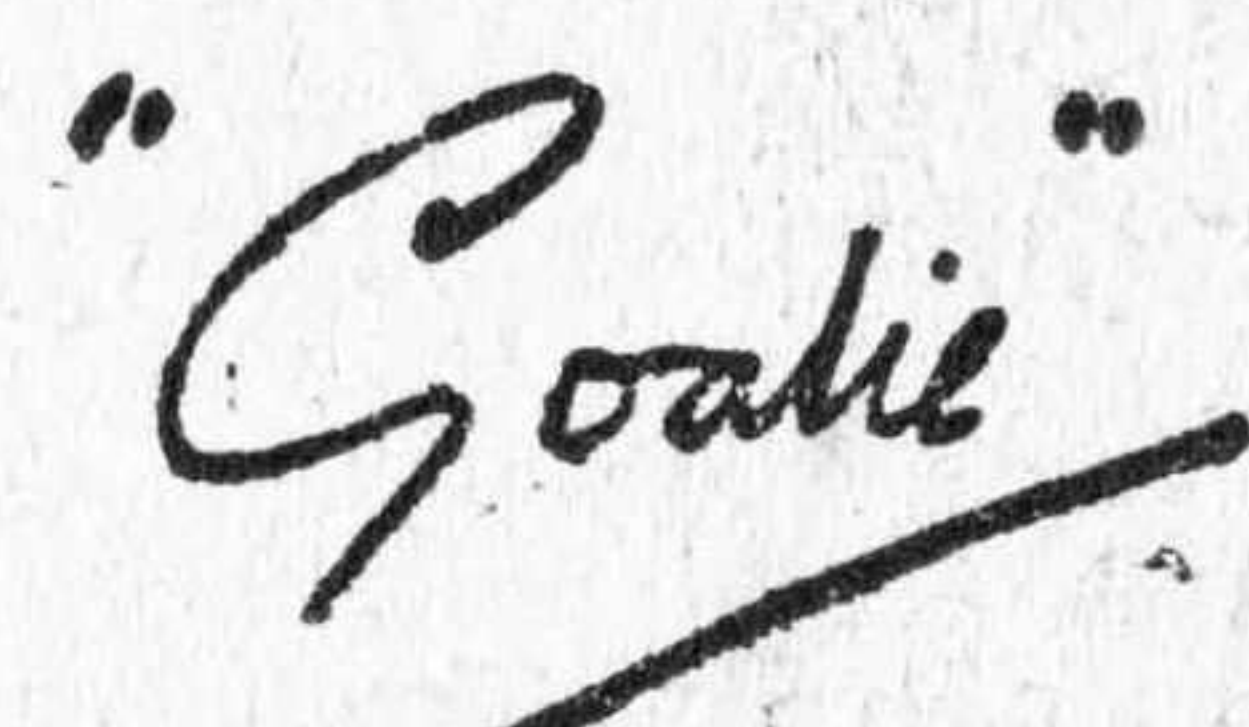
be a qualification period in League football just as there is in the Cup competition.

### Men Who Made Darlington.

There is every prospect of the people of Darlington being able to witness Second Division football next season, for the club is well placed in the Northern Third section. Consequently, it came as a surprise not so long ago when the club disposed of a couple of players—O'Donnell going to Everton and Scott being transferred to Liverpool. I happen to know, however, that the attendances at Darlington this season have not been big enough to relieve the management of financial anxieties, and there was a feeling that the club ought to get some cash in hand to enable them to make ground improvements and that sort of thing if, and when, they rose to the Second League. John O'Donnell, the left full-back, who went to Everton, is a native of Gateshead, and is regarded by many people as among the most promising young defenders of the day. When he went to Darlington only a short time ago he thought that centre-forward was the position in which he would find most use for his talents.

### Forward Who Went to Half-Back.

Another man who has made a move with very good results is William McAllister, the right half-back secured by Middlesbrough from Brighton to help them to escape the lowly places of League II. McAllister went from Ebbw Vale to Brighton and Hove as an inside-forward, but after playing many games at inside-right he seemed to lose his form. Later he "came back" in rather a surprising way as a right half-back, and it was to strengthen their intermediate department that Middlesbrough paid a substantial sum for his transfer.



"Goalie" will contribute another top-notch footer chat to our next issue. Don't miss it!

## WHAT MIGHT HAPPEN ON SATURDAY.

Below will be found our expert's opinion of the probable results of the big games to be played on Saturday, March 21st. The likely winning side is printed in capitals. Where a draw is anticipated, both clubs are printed in smaller letters.

**First Division.**  
ARSENAL v. Everton.  
Aston Villa v. Notts County.  
BLACKBURN ROVERS v. Tottenham H.  
BURY v. Cardiff City.  
HUDDERSFIELD T. v. Bolton Wan.  
LIVERPOOL v. Burnley.  
Manchester City v. Sunderland.  
NEWCASTLE UNITED v. Leeds United.  
NOTTS FOREST v. Preston North End.  
Sheffield United v. Birmingham.  
WEST HAM U. v. West Bromwich A.

**Second Division.**  
BARNESLEY v. Oldham Athletic.  
BLACKPOOL v. Stockport County.  
Bradford City v. Crystal Palace.  
DERBY COUNTY v. Chelsea.  
FULHAM v. Stoke.  
Hull City v. Manchester United.  
Middlesbrough v. The Wednesday.  
Portsmouth v. LEICESTER CITY.  
PORT VALE v. Clapton Orient.  
SOUTH SHIELDS v. Southampton.  
WOLVERHAMPTON W. v. Coventry C.

**First Division. Scottish League.**  
ABERDEEN v. Hamilton Acads.  
AIRDRIEONIANS v. Dundee.  
CELTIC v. Morton.  
HIBERNIANS v. St. Mirren.  
KILMARNOCK v. Cowdenbeath.  
Motherwell v. Third Lanark.  
Queen's Park v. Falkirk.  
Raith Rovers v. RANGERS.  
ST. JOHNSTONE v. Ayr United.

There's a tip-top story of Tom Merry & Co., at St. Jim's School, in the "Gem" Library. Out on Wednesday. Don't miss it!

room came a sound of knives and forks, and Bunny's mouth watered. But even Bunny did not think of venturing into the dining-room. Some of the prefects, at least, would be there—possibly even Mr. Carker himself.

"Quiet!" breathed Harry. On tiptoe the rebels of St. Kit's filed out of the Glory Hole and headed for the big staircase. They were prepared to make a rush for it and fight their way if they were stopped. But discretion, in the circumstances, was obviously the better part of valour. There was a gasp from some of the juniors as they crossed the hall and Mr. Rawlings came in sight. But the Fourth Form master passed on into the dining-room without glancing at the juniors, though certainly he saw them. They reached the big staircase.

There was a shout from a distance.

"Why—why—here they are!" It was Carsdale's voice.

"Hook it!" called out Harry. And throwing further concealment to the winds, the Fourth Formers scampered up the staircase with a rush. Carsdale, rushing after them, was collared on the stairs and hurled back into the hall, where he sprawled, yelling. And, with a breathless rush, the juniors swarmed up the Fourth-Form staircase above, and reached their own quarters.

**Barred Out!**

Randolph Carker was pacing the Head's study, his brows knitted, his hands clenched, his lead-coloured eyes glittering under his scowling brows. The tip of his long nose, where Wilmot's lash with the ashplant had caught it, glowed crimson.

The new Head of St. Kit's breathed fury as he paced the study. His rage at the turn of events was almost beyond words—and he was at a loss. The "strong hand!" had not served him; the rebels were still in rebellion; his authority was set at defiance by the Fourth and weakening all through the rest of the school. His new methods at St. Kit's had not been a success—and the thought of the Governing Board hearing of

the present state of affairs filled him with anxiety. The governors had sent him there—but not to turn St. Kit's into pandemonium. His prospects of permanently replacing Dr. Chenies in the head-mastership would be remote if this revolt and turmoil became known to the august governors.

It was all very well to contend that rebellious juniors had broken out of hand—that two or three ringleaders were responsible—the fact remained that nothing of the kind had happened in Dr. Chenies' time. That fact was certain to outweigh all Randolph Carker's explanations and protestations.

He gritted his teeth as he paced savagely to and fro.

The revolt must be crushed—ruthlessly crushed—the ringleaders expelled—the rank and file reduced to submission—but how? The "how" was a perplexity.

There was a tap at the door, and Carsdale of the Sixth looked in—rather dusty and rumped.

Mr. Carker gave him a glare.

"Well, Carsdale?" he rapped.

"They're out, sir—"

"What?"

"The Fourth have come out—"

Mr. Carker's face lighted up.

"They have come out?" he repeated.

"Yes, sir; I spotted them as I was going to the dining-room—they've come out of the Glory Hole and gone to their studies."

Mr. Carker breathed deeply.

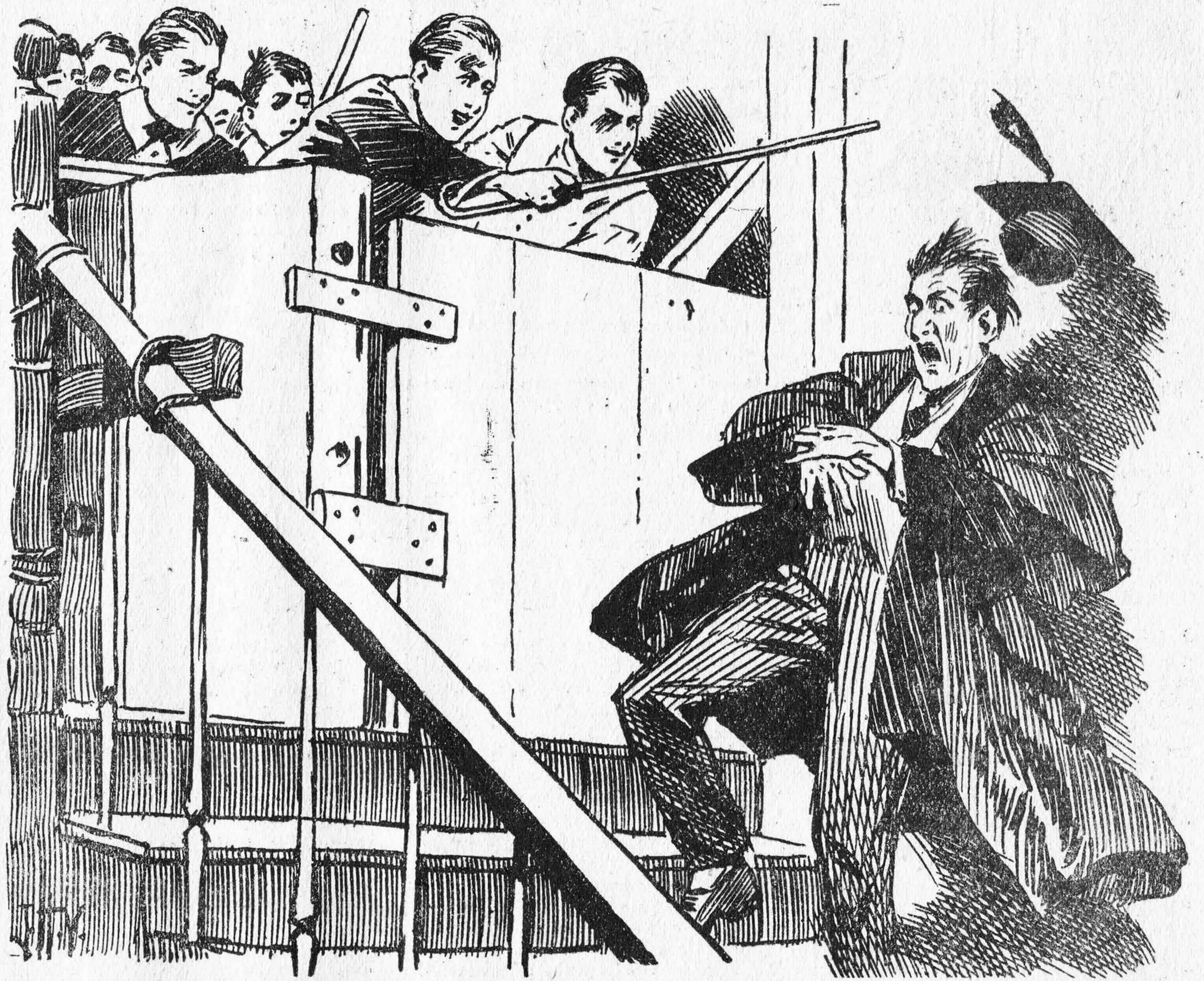
The difficulty before him, which had appeared almost insuperable, seemed to have rolled away of its own accord! He almost smiled.

"Ah!" he breathed, "they understand that it will not do—they know they cannot keep up this defiance of authority. Doubtless they know how I have already punished Howard and Lumley and Tracy." (A broken cane that lay on the study carpet seemed to indicate that the three deserters had been punished rather severely.) "I thought that this would not last long, Carsdale."

Carsdale took the liberty of doubting that statement, but he did not say so.

"So they are in their studies now, Carsdale?"

"Yes, sir."



**MR. CARKER GETS IT!** Mr. Carker laid hands on the barricade. He gave a wrench and the barrier creaked. Algernon Aubrey St. Leger reached over with his walking-cane, and gave a slash at the headmaster's knuckles, coolly and smilingly. "Yaroooop!" Mr. Carker jumped back, and almost lost his footing on the stairs.

Mr. Carker smiled and picked up a cane.

"I will go to them there," he said. "I have no doubt that I shall find the young rascals submissive enough now—no doubt they are thoroughly frightened at what they have done. Wilmot and Rake I shall expel from the school—however, I shall flog them first. I shall flog the whole Fourth Form. Carsdale, you will come with me and tell Oliphant and the rest that I may require their assistance. It is possible that there may be some slight trouble when the floggings commence."

Carsdale thought it very probable.

Mr. Carker picked up a birch and whisked out of the study. His face was full of bitter satisfaction—his eyes glittered with anticipation. Not for a moment did he doubt that the voluntary desertion of the Glory Hole meant that the revolt had broken down.

Very reluctantly the Sixth Form prefects gathered and followed Mr. Carker up the staircase.

There was something of a din from the Fourth Form passage above—a sound of dragging furniture. It puzzled Mr. Carker a little, and he hurried up the second flight of stairs and crossed the landing that gave access to the Fourth Form staircase.

That staircase led to the Fourth-Form passage, and nowhere else. It was a rather narrow one with a curve in it. That staircase was the sacred property of the Fourth; it was an unwritten law that any fellow of any other Form found on that staircase could be rolled down on his neck. Mr. Carker mounted the stairs with his "tail" of prefects behind him. He mounted as far as the bend.

There he stopped.

There were heavy oaken banisters on one side of the staircase, a wall on the other. Between the banisters and the wall half a dozen study tables were jammed with legs interlocked. Over the top of that barricade, hurriedly jammed into position, appeared the cheery face and swollen nose of Bob Rake. He had a hammer and nails in his hand, and was cheerily driving long nails through the legs and tops of the tables, nailing them together into a mass. Behind him a dozen of the Fourth

were busy stacking chairs and desks against the barricade of tables, filling the upper half of the staircase to the level of the passage above.

Mr. Carker stopped—and stared. It was not surrender, after all. That was evident. Bob Rake spotted him looking up, and nodded cheerily.

"Hallo, old bird!" he said.

"Rake!" spluttered Mr. Carker.

"Here's the merry old reptile!" roared Bob Rake.

The barricade was crowded with faces at once. Mr. Carker mounted the stairs till he reached the up-ended tables.

"Wilmot!" he shouted.

"Adsum!" said Harry, with a laugh.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Remove this furniture at once!"

"Oh, don't be a goat," remonstrated Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You hear me, Wilmot?" thundered Mr. Carker.

Oliphant looked at the other prefects, and the other prefects looked at Oliphant. The same thought was expressed in all their faces. They were fed up! For the present, at least, the St. Kit's prefects had had enough of scrapping with rebels. Without a word the Sixth-Formers turned and descended the stairs and went back to their interrupted dinner.

Mr. Carker had laid hands on the barricade.

He gave a wrench and the barrier creaked. Algernon Aubrey St. Leger reached over with his bonnie little walking-cane and gave a slash at the headmaster's knuckles, coolly and smilingly.

"Yaroooop!"

Mr. Carker jumped back and almost lost his footing on the stairs. He clutched at the banisters for support.

"Have some more, old bean?" asked Algy amiably.

"You—you young—young ruffian! I shall expel you for this, St. Leger!"

"Dear man!" said Algy.

"I shall expel you, Wilmot—"

"Rats!"

"And you, Rake—"

"Bow-wow!"

"Give him beans!" roared Stubbs.

An inkpot flew. It was followed by a cushion, and then by an apple in a state of over-ripeness. The inkpot missed, but the cushion caught Mr. Carker under the chin, and the ripe apple landed in his eye. It squashed there, and spread.

Mr. Carker gave a choking howl and lost his hold. There was a roar of laughter from the Fourth as he rolled down to the landing.

"Oh! ah! ow! yow! I—I will flog you all—I will expel you all—I—I—I will—I—I—I—" Mr. Carker fairly babbled with fury.

"Go home, Carker!" chirruped Bob Rake. "It's a barring-out, old top—a merry barring-out, and you can put that in your pipe and smoke it. Go home, Carker! Go and eat coke!"

"I—I—I—"

An inkpot whizzed down the staircase and dropped on Mr. Carker's head as he sat spluttering. Ink streamed down his face.

"Goal!" yelled Bob.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Randolph Carker staggered to his feet, daubed with ripe apple, streaming with ink, and scrambled away. A roar of hoots and cat-calls followed him.

The St. Kit's barring-out had begun! And nobody at St. Kit's—not even the rebels themselves—could surmise how it was going to end.

THE END.

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