

Special Boat Race and Grand National Number!

The BOYS' FRIEND 2d

EVERY MONDAY.

SIXTEEN BIG PAGES!

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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending March 28th, 1925.



Here is a photograph of the Cambridge crew taken during a practice spin. Even if they do not start favourites for the Boat Race, they are sure to want a good deal of beating. Inset left is a picture of Mr. A. G. Wansbrough, their stroke.

Below is a photograph of the Dark Blues, who are the heavier crew of the two. Their supporters expect them to avenge, on Saturday, the defeat of Oxford last year. Inset right is a portrait of their stroke, Mr. A. V. Campbell, who is an old Blue.

The Rival Crews!

“THE ROOKWOOD BOAT RACE PARTY!” AND “THE BARRING-OUT AT ST. KIT’S!” INSIDE!

YOU'LL ENJOY THIS TOPPING STORY OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. AT THE BOAT RACE!

The Rookwood Boat Race Party!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

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

In high spirits Tubby Muffin's Boat Race party sets out to see the battle of the Blues!



The 1st Chapter. Unexpected!

"Muffin!"

"I—I didn't, sir!"

"What?"

"It wasn't me."

Mr. Richard Dalton, master of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, gazed at Reginald Muffin blankly.

Jimmy Silver & Co. smiled.

The chums of the Rookwood Fourth were discussing the Boat Race prospects in the doorway of the House, and Tubby Muffin had joined them there; not to discuss the Boat Race, but in the hope of extracting a small loan from one member or another of the Fistical Four.

Then Mr. Dalton stepped into view and called to Muffin, apparently to the dismay of that plump youth.

Tubby's denial was prompt. Apparently he expected an accusation, and he did not wait for it to be uttered. Generally, Tubby had a few sins on his fat conscience. If tuck was missing at Rookwood, it did not need a Ferrers Locke or a Sherlock Holmes to trace the deed to Reginald Muffin.

"It wasn't, sir!" said Tubby eagerly. "I assure you, sir, that it wasn't me."

"You should say it was not I, Muffin," said Mr. Dalton severely.

Tubby stared.

"Of course it wasn't you, sir! I'm sure nobody would suspect you of bagging a pie from the pantry!"

"What?" ejaculated Richard Dalton.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four chortled. They could not help it. Mr. Dalton smiled, and then he frowned.

"Have you taken a pie from the pantry, Muffin?"

"No, sir! I've just told you it wasn't me," exclaimed Reginald Muffin. "I don't see why you should come to me about it, sir."

"I did not come to you about anything of the kind, Muffin. The Head desires to speak to you in his study. That is all."

"Oh!" gasped Muffin.

Mr. Dalton walked away, leaving Tubby Muffin blinking. Jimmy Silver & Co. chuckled.

"Oh!" gasped Muffin again. "He—he wasn't going to speak about the pie? I—I say, Jimmy, d-d-do you think he'll guess now that I had it?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Jimmy. "I fancy so."

"Just a few!" grinned Lovell.

"I—I thought the cook had been complaining to him, of course," mumbled Tubby. "It's rotten how people seem to take it for granted that I do these things. Of course, I never touched the pie, and I'm certain nobody saw me. I—I say, what do you fellows think the Head wants to see me for?"

"Something to do with a pie, I imagine," chuckled Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear!"

"Put some exercise books in your bags, old man," suggested Newcome.

"It will be six, and six from the Head is no joke."

"Keep your paws from picking and stealing, Muffin," said Jimmy

Silver severely, "and get along and see the Head. He doesn't like to be kept waiting."

"Oh dear!" groaned Muffin.

The fat Classical lingered.

A summons to the Head's study was a serious matter, and was supposed to be obeyed without an instant's unnecessary delay. But Reginald Muffin was not anxious to see his headmaster. He had only too much reason to suppose that the interview had some connection with a missing pie.

"I say, Jimmy—"

"Cut along, old man. The Head will lay it on harder if you keep him waiting."

"Suppose you go, old fellow?"

"Eh?"

"Own up to the Head that you had the pie—"

"Own up! But I never—"

"That's all right. The Head will believe you," said Tubby Muffin eagerly. "You're known to be a truthful chap, you know."

"My only hat!" said Jimmy.

"You see, the Head won't believe me if I say I never had it," said Muffin disconsolately. "But he will believe you all right if you say you did have it. See? And—and you don't mind a licking, Jimmy."

"Don't I?" grinned Jimmy.

"You see, I'm rather delicate," said Tubby. "Now, you're about as delicate as a rhinoceros. It wouldn't hurt you so much. See?"

"Fathead! Buzz off to the Head before I start you with my boot!" said the captain of the Fourth.

"I'll make it square," said Tubby. "I will, really! Look here! My pater's going to get leave for me to go and see the Boat Race, and—I'll take you with me if you'll—"

"Can it!" said Jimmy cheerfully.

And the Co. strolled down the steps into the quad, leaving Reginald Muffin blinking dully after them.

The fat Classical groaned, and started at a snail's pace for the Head's study.

The summons had to be obeyed; there was no help for it. Tubby Muffin arrived at last at the dreaded apartment and tapped feebly on the door.

It was so feeble a tap that it was not heard within the room, and the hapless Muffin felt a great deal like Daniel going into the lions' den, and Tubby was not of the stuff that heroes are made of. He did not dare to be a Daniel.

He stood irresolute, his fat hand raised to tap again, but not tapping. The door suddenly opened.

It was close on lunch-time, and the Head, probably, wanted his lunch. He had waited several minutes for Muffin of the Fourth, and several minutes his valuable time were much too much to waste on so insignificant a personage as a Lower boy.

The door opened and Dr. Chisholm came out.

Tubby, with his fat mind deeply occupied with his own unfortunate position, had not thought of that or expected it. There was a sudden collision.

Crash!

"What—what—bless my soul!"

"Ow!"

Bump!

Reginald Muffin sat down at the feet of the astonished headmaster of Rookwood.

"Upon my word!"

Dr. Chisholm stared down at Tubby over his glasses. The hapless fat junior quaked.

"Oh dear! Ow!"

"Boy!" thundered the Head.

"It wasn't me!" gasped Tubby.

"What? I sent for you, Muffin! I have waited three minutes for you!" exclaimed the Head. "How dare you keep me waiting? Rise at once! How dare you sit on the floor in that ridiculous manner?"

"I—I—I didn't!" gasped Tubby.

"What? You are doing so at this moment!"

"I—I mean I didn't—"

"Will you rise to your feet, Muffin, or will you not?" demanded the Head angrily. "Upon my word! I have a very great mind not to give you leave for Boat Race Day, after all!"

Tubby jumped.

"Wha-a-at?" he ejaculated.

"You ridiculous boy! You have caused me quite a shock! Why were you standing outside my study door?" demanded the Head.

"I—I—"

"Answer me, Muffin!"

"I—I—I thought it—it was the pie!" gasped Tubby.

"The pie?"

"Yes. Ow! Ye-e-es."

"Is the boy insane?" asked the Head, addressing space.

"Oh dear!"

Tubby Muffin wrigled to his feet. He stood quaking in every fat limb, with his terrified eyes fixed on the Head. Dr. Chisholm drew a deep breath and controlled his wrath. Perhaps the quaking terror of the hapless Tubby helped to calm him.

"You absurd boy, Muffin! I sent for you to tell you that I have received a request from your father for leave to be given you on Boat Race day."

"Oh!" murmured Tubby. Obviously it was not the pie, after all. Twice had Tubby's guilty conscience driven him to unnecessary admissions.

"It appears that Mr. Muffin wishes you to accompany him to view the race," said the Head. "I have consented."

"Oh, sir!"

"You have, therefore, leave to take the nine-thirty train on Saturday morning," said the Head. "You will be expected to return in time for roll at six. That is all, Muffin. You may go."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gasped Tubby.

The dignified Head of Rookwood sailed on down the corridor, leaving Tubby Muffin with his fat face irradiated with smiles.

The 2nd Chapter. Swank!

a fellow to make the least of anything.

The smallest occasion for swank, where Reginald was concerned, became like the beanstalk in the fairy tale. It grew and grew and grew.

As the actual facts stood, Mr. Muffin had requested the Head of Rookwood to grant his hopeful son an exeat for Saturday morning. The afternoon was a regular half-holiday, anyway. The Head had consented, as he was wont to consent to any reasonable request from a boy's parent.

That was all.

But that was not enough for a fellow of Tubby's lively imagination and propensity to swank.

He told Jimmy Silver & Co., going in to dinner, that he had special leave for the Boat Race day, and they congratulated him. During dinner the affair assumed larger proportions in Tubby's mind. And after dinner he told several fellows that the Head had specially selected him for this concession, and it might have been gathered from Tubby's remarks that the University Boat Race could scarcely have been considered a successful function at all minus Reginald Muffin.

That he was going to stand with his esteemed parent in the crowd on Hammersmith Bridge, and watch the eights from that popular coign of vantage, was a little circumstance Tubby did not mention. Reginald Muffin differed from George Washington in one important particular. Mr. Washington could not tell a lie. Reginald Muffin could not tell the truth.

Nobody belonging to Rookwood would see Reginald Muffin at the Boat Race. Therefore, it was safe to "spread" himself a little. Tubby began by spreading himself a little, and he finished by spreading himself a lot.

Any curious observer might have noted that Tubby's story grew in regular stages. Before dinner he simply had leave to go to the Boat Race. After dinner it was a special concession made to Muffin because, apparently, he was a fellow of unusual importance. By the time the Classical Fourth went into their Form-room that afternoon, Tubby was to be a member of an exclusive party on a motor-launch following the

"Let that cake alone!"

"After all, I couldn't very well take you, Higgs," said Muffin. "You'd be rather out of place among a fashionable party, with your big feet and bad manners."

"They're my sardines," said Jones minor, as Tubby's fat fingers came forward again.

"Look here, Jones—"

"I'm looking," said Jones minor grimly. "You don't bag my sardines, you fat boulder. If you want tea in the study, why don't you stand your whack like any other fellow?"

"I happen to be short of money for the moment," said Muffin, with dignity.

"Then I can make a suggestion," said Putty of the Fourth blandly. "Ask your pater to cut out the pate-de-foie-gras from that fashionable luncheon on Boat Race day."

"Eh?"

"And send you the quids he will save," said Putty.

"Look here, Putty, you rotter—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you fellows don't believe what I've been telling you—"

"Oh, my hat!"

"I've been thinking of making up a party to take from Rookwood," said Tubby loftily. "The Head would do anything my pater asked him, so there would be no difficulty about leave. There will be room for a few fellows on the launch—"

"If not, your pater could leave out a duke or two!" suggested Putty.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, now I won't take you!" howled Tubby. "I was going to be kind to you fellows, as you're in my study. But it would be rather thick taking fellows of your stamp into a fashionable party of Society nob. Yah!"

And Tubby Muffin rolled indignantly out of Study No. 2, leaving his study-mates chortling.

Reginald Muffin rolled along the Fourth Form passage, where most of the Classical Fourth were at tea in their studies. With all his glorious and expensive prospects for Saturday, Reginald Muffin was, for the moment, in an impetuous state—not a novel state for him to be in. He looked into the end study and found the Fistical Four there.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and



THE BOAT RACE! "Here they come!" "Hurrah!" All eyes were on along the crowded banks of the river followed "Oxford, I think!" said Jimmy Silver. "Cambr

boats. During class the motor-launch became Mr. Muffin's own motor-launch, and by tea-time Mr. Muffin's launch was to start from Mr. Muffin's own riverside mansion—Putney Oaks—with a distinguished company of the nobility on board.

"I wish I could take you fellows," Tubby Muffin remarked in Study No. 2, where his study-mates—Jones minor and Higgs and Putty of the Fourth—were at tea. "I'd really like to take you chaps. Ow!"

Tubby had stretched out a fat hand to the cake. The cake belonged to Higgs, and Higgs had delivered a sharp rap on Tubby's fat fingers.

Newcome were going through their pockets, apparently in search of cash, Arthur Edward Lovell, at the corner of the study table, was deep in Cross Word problems. Lovell still nourished a hope of bagging tenners by means of Cross Word puzzles. So far, no tenners had materialised, "but hope springs eternal in the human breast."

"You fellows—" began Muffin.

Lovell waved an impatient hand at him.

"Cut!"

"I say—"

"Know a word of nine letters beginning with X and ending with K,

You'll laugh loud and long when you read "April Fools at Rookwood!" next Monday's great story of the chums of Rookwood School!

with C H N in the middle?" asked Lovell.

"Nunno."
"There's a dashed Greek word in this puzzle," said Lovell. "Tain't fair to spring Greek on chaps. Buzz off, Muffin!"

"You fellows like to go to the Boat Race?"

"Eh? What? Yes, rather!" said Lovell, for the moment ceasing to trouble over the elusive word he required, which began with an X and ended with K. Really, that word was likely to keep Lovell busy a very long time before he found it.

"What-ho!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "Is the Head going to give us leave, too?"

"Well, he would if my pater asked him," said Muffin. "My pater's got no end of influence with the Head. I should simply have to put it to my pater."

"Put it, then!" grinned Raby. "No objections in this study."
"It will be rather decent, you know," went on Tubby. "We lunch at Putney Oaks—"

"A picnic under the oaks?"

"Nunno! Putney Oaks is my pater's place on the river," explained Tubby airily. "We lunch there, and then the pater's launch will take us. We follow the eights all the way. Tea later at Mortlake, and a run back to the school in the pater's car. How would you fellows like it?"

"Oh, ripping!" said Newcome.

"Topping!" said Jimmy Silver.

"You go in the car, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"Then you lunch at your pater's place on the river."

"Exactly."

"Then you follow the race in your pater's magnificent, gilt-edged motor-launch."

"Eh? Just so."

"Then tea at Mortlake, in tip-top style, and a first-class Rolls-Royce to bring you back to Rookwood."

"You've got it."

"And then you wake up!"

"Eh?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the end study, as Tubby blinked at the captain of the Fourth.

"I—I say, I'm giving you the straight goods, you know," urged Tubby. "Honest injun, you know. That's the programme, and if you

over tea in Hall that he desired to discuss the Boat Race party.

"Come on, Tubby!" shouted Arthur Edward Lovell, from the stairs.

But Tubby Muffin only snorted, and turned a deaf ear. The Fistical Four "tea'd" in Hall without the company of Reginald Muffin.

The 3rd Chapter.

Gunner is Pleased!

Peter Cuthbert Gunner, of the Classical Fourth, frowned as Tubby Muffin looked into his study. Dickinson minor grinned. Dickinson minor was not a very bright youth, but he was bright enough to take ninety-nine per cent. discount off all that he heard from Reginald Muffin. Gunner, with all his faults, was not a suspicious fellow, and not a distrustful fellow. He had, indeed, a great capacity for belief: he believed that he could play football and cricket, and that he was the cleverest fellow in the Fourth, and—in spite of the plain evidence of his looking-glass—that he was a handsome fellow. With such guileless faith in his composition, Gunner was really the very fellow that Muffin wanted to meet.

"You cut, Muffin!" said Gunner crossly. "I don't like favouritism. The beak's given you an exeat. He hasn't given me one."

"I say, Gunner—"

"Oh, get out!" said Gunner.

Tubby Muffin, after a glance at the study table, was distinctly disinclined to get out. There was a cake on the table, twice the size of Higgs' cake, there were two kinds of jam, and a jar of jelly, and a dish of eggs, and other things. Gunner's manners and customs often exasperated his study-mate, but at tea-time Dickinson minor always felt that he could forgive Gunner and tolerate him a little longer.

"If you'd care to join my party for the Boat Race, Gunner—"

"What's that?"

"I can take as many fellows as I like," said Tubby recklessly, with his eye on the cake. "Some of the Sixth have asked me already, but I've turned them down. I want to take a fellow who will really do me credit in a fashionable party. So I thought of you, Gunner."



TUBBY AND THE HEAD COLLIDE! Tubby Muffin stood irresolute, his fat hand raised to door suddenly opened and Dr. Chisholm came out. Tubby, with his fat mind deeply occupied with his own thoughts, there was a sudden collision. Crash! "What—what—bless my soul!" "Ow!" Bump! Reginald Muffin sat down at the feet of the astonished headmaster of Rookwood.

"Do!" said Muffin. "The Head's bound to give me leave, as I'm joining your party, and you've got leave already."

"Certain!" said Muffin, fervently hoping that the Head wouldn't.

"Tuck in, kid!"

Tubby Muffin tucked in. An invitation of that kind never had to be repeated where Reginald Muffin was concerned.

"What's the programme?" asked Gunner. "We leave here by train in the morning, I suppose?"

"Ninety-three," said Muffin, with his mouth full. "The pater was going to send the car, but it will be wanted to fetch some of his fashionable guests from the West End. We keep only three cars, you know."

"Only rats!" grunted Dickinson minor.

"The car will be at the London terminus to meet us," said Muffin. "That's all right. Then a run down to Putney, and lunch at the Laurels."

"Good!" said Gunner. "Try the cake, Muffin."

"Thanks, I will. After lunch at the Beeches, we—"

"At the what?"

"The Beeches—my pater's place on the river."

"I thought you said the Laurels."

"Oh! Ah! Yes! I mean the Laurels," said Muffin hastily.

"The house hasn't got two names, has it?" asked Gunner, staring at the fat Classical.

"Yes. I mean, no! The fact is, it's really two houses turned into one—the Laurels and the Beeches," explained Tubby. "The Laurels had only twenty-four rooms, so my pater bought the next house."

"Oh! I see."

"Pile it on, Muffin!" said Dickinson minor, with deep sarcasm. "Make it a bit steeper. It was Putney Oaks last time I heard of it."

"Putney Oaks is the park attached to the house," said Muffin calmly.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Don't be captious, Dickinson," said Gunner severely. "You carp at a fellow. You're always carping, you know."

"Muffin's pulling your silly leg," grunted Dickinson minor.

"Oh, I say!" murmured Muffin, with an uneasy blink at Peter Cuthbert. But he need not have been uneasy.

"Pulling my leg!" repeated Gunner. "It's not so jolly easy to pull my leg, Dickinson. If you think I'm the kind of fellow to have his leg pulled, I can only say you're a bigger idiot than I ever supposed, and that's saying an awful lot. I'll ask you to be a bit more civil to a fellow I ask to tea, Dickinson."

"Look here—"

"Dry up, Dickinson. You've got too much to say, and you can't say I haven't told you so before. I've told you so scores of times. Shut up, old man; give us a rest!"

Dickinson minor sulkily shut up. He finished his tea and left the study, leaving Reginald Muffin deep in discussion with Gunner, on the subject of the Boat Race party. Muffin ate while he talked; but he had not very

much talking to do: Gunner was always prepared to take the lion's share in a talk.

When the spread was finished and Muffin rolled away, all details were settled, and Muffin's only hope was that the Head would decline to give Gunner leave on Saturday. Tubby had so fertile an imagination that while he was spinning his yarns he almost believed them himself, if not quite.

Putney Oaks and the motor-launch seemed quite real to him while he was talking to Gunner. But when he reflected on the matter afterwards and realised to what he had committed himself, Reginald Muffin had quite a cold feeling down his back. Gunner was easy to delude, but if he found himself deluded, he was likely to cut up rusty; and he had a punch like a steam-hammer, which Tubby was far from anxious to sample.

Later that evening, when Reginald Muffin came down to the Common-room, Peter Cuthbert Gunner came over to him with a rather grim look on his face. Muffin understood at once that Gunner had been telling the fellows of his great excursion for Saturday, thereby evoking merriment in the Classical Fourth.

"Look here, Muffin," said Gunner. "I suppose it's straight, what you were telling me—it's all right about Saturday?" Obviously a doubt had crossed Gunner's unsophisticated mind. "If you've been pulling my leg I'm going to smash you! Now, then?"

Gunner clenched a big fist. "Straight as a string, of course!" gasped Muffin, with an anxious eye on the fist.

"Peel says your pater keeps a fried-fish shop in Islington."

"He doesn't!" howled Tubby.

"Then it's all square?" asked Gunner. "If it's not, I'm going to make an example of you!"

"Square as a die!" Tubby Muffin had no desire to be made an example of.

"Right-ho, then!"

And all was calm and bright—for the present! But Tubby had a very uneasy feeling that the calmness and brightness would not last over Saturday, and that in the long run that feed in Gunner's study might cost him more than its value.

The 4th Chapter.

Tubby Going Strong.

Reginald Muffin had an unusually good time during the next few days. He was pally with Gunner, and being pally with Gunner meant a free run of a study that was like unto a land flowing with milk and honey.

But that was not all.

Tubby had had some uneasy twinges on the subject of his magnificent invitation to Gunner. But he realised that he was fairly landed, and had to trust to luck in the matter. And, on the principle that it was as well to be hung for a sheep as for a lamb, Muffin extended his generous invitations further. Indeed, he felt that the more fellows that

accepted his invitations the better, for the Head was less likely to give leave to a whole crowd than to one or two fellows. And if the Head refused leave, it was all right for Tubby.

There is an old proverb that one fool makes many, and, undoubtedly, there is a great deal in the force of example. Gunner talked a great deal about the great time he was going to have on Boat Race Day, and Dickinson minor began to wonder whether after all there was something in it. There was the undoubted fact that Tubby Muffin's father had obtained for him an exeat on the great day, to begin with. When Gunner generously declared that he would put in a word for him with Muffin, Dickinson minor assented; and Gunner put in the word, and his study-mate was included in the party. The same day Alfred Higgs graciously asked Muffin to step into the school shop after second lesson—and Muffin stepped in promptly. All was grist that came to Tubby's mill.

"About that little party of yours," said Higgs, over the ginger-pop.

"Yes," said Tubby, beginning on his sixth jam-tart.

"I thought it was all gammon at first," said Higgs. "You're such a gasbag, you know. But Gunner and Dickinson seem to think it's all right. Look here, Muffin, if you're really taking a party out on Boat Race Day, you oughtn't to leave out your own friends."

"I don't know that you're a friend of mine," said Muffin loftily.

"Have another ginger-pop, old fellow."

"Thanks, I will."

"And try those doughnuts—they're really good."

Muffin tried the doughnuts. He found them good, and tried them again.

"What about Saturday?" hinted Higgs.

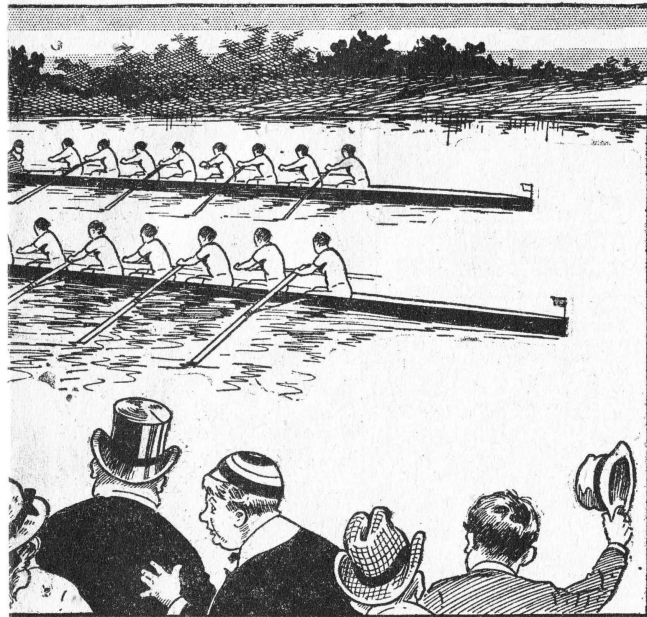
"My dear man, I'll be glad if you'll come," said Tubby. "I'll ask my pater to telephone to the Head and get you leave. Easy as falling off a form."

"Good!" said Higgs.

Jones minor was the next. At the reasonable cost of two ginger-pops and one bun, he secured an invitation to the Boat Race party. The same evening Townsend and Topham came graciously up to Tubby Muffin in the junior Common-room. The two nuts of the Fourth seldom or never noticed the existence of Tubby Muffin, as a rule. Now they were all smiles—and Tubby was well aware of the reason. Belief in the Boat Race party was spreading, and Tubby Muffin, for once, was a fellow worth knowing. Tovsky and Topsy were added to the list.

The next day, after morning class, Arthur Edward Lovell was observed by his chums to be in a rather thoughtful mood. They supposed at first that it was Cross Words, and that Arthur Edward was in mental search of a word beginning with

(Continued overleaf.)



In the two graceful skiffs and the oars that dipped and gleamed. A roar of voices and accompanied the eights as they pulled. They were by almost in a flash. "Edge, you mean!" snorted Arthur Edward Lovell indignantly.

fellows would like to come, we'll talk it over—over tea. You haven't had your tea yet?"

"Not yet," grinned Raby.

"It's a go," said Jimmy Silver. "Let's talk it over, over tea, Muffin. Come on, we don't want to be late for Hall."

"Eh?"

"We're teeing in Hall to-day—funds run out. Come on, old chap, and let's talk over the arrangements for the Boat Race party."

The Fistical Four walked out of the end study, and headed for Hall. Tubby Muffin blinked after them. But he did not follow. It was not

Peter Cuthbert Gunner relaxed.

"You can come in," he said.

Muffin came in.

"Take a pew!" said Gunner hospitably.

Muffin drew a chair to the table. Dickinson minor eyed him rather morosely. True, there were ample supplies in the study; but Gunner was, in a sense, Dickinson minor's property, and Dickinson did not want to see another fellow pulling his leg, for the sake of the crumbs that fell from the rich man's table.

"So you're making up a party—what?" said Gunner genially. "The fact is, I'd like to come, Muffin."

The Rookwood Boat Race Party!



(Continued from previous page.)

"We haven't heard from the Head yet," Gunner remarked. "I suppose it's all right about leave to-morrow, Muffin?"

"Oh, quite!" gasped Muffin. "Has your pater telephoned?" asked Dickinson minor. Tubby breathed hard.

"The—the fact is, I—I forgot to write and ask him," he said. "What!"

"It's too late now," said Muffin regretfully. Then, as he noted Gunner pushing back his cuffs, he went on hastily: "But it's all right. I'll ask the Head myself in the morning. It's quite all right!"

"I hope so—for your sake, Muffin," said Gunner.

"XYZ" and ending with "J." But, for once, it was not Cross Words. "About that party of Muffin's—"

said Arthur Edward.

"Gammon!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Well, is it gammon?" said Lovell argumentatively. "After all, there's nothing uncommon in it—there will be plenty of parties going to the Boat Race. I don't see that it's gammon. A good many of the fellows have arranged to go, and even Muffin couldn't be such an ass as to ask fellows to a party that isn't coming off. Why, he would be jolly nearly lynched!"

"Something in that," assented Raby.

"He's asked us," said Lovell. "I can't say that we took it very civilly. I don't see being left out."

"But—" said Jimmy dubiously.

"Old fellow, you're always 'butting'—a good deal like a dashed billy-goat!" said Lovell. "Muffin's had a good many feeds in our study, and if he wants to stand something in return for once, I don't see why we should turn him down."

"But—"

"There you go again. My idea is that we should go," said Lovell. "I want to see the Boat Race, if it can be fixed. It really ought to be a whole holiday on Boat Race Day, if the Head could only see it. If Muffin can take us, why shouldn't we go?"

"If!" said Jimmy.

Lovell snorted.

"You're too jolly clever for this world, Jimmy!" he said. "You know too much, you know. Always 'butting' and 'iffing'!"

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"Well, I don't mind," he said.

"We know Muffin's got leave, anyhow, and there may be something in it. If we can get off from school, we can jolly well see the Boat Race, Muffin or no Muffin! But can we?"

"More 'buts'!" snorted Lovell.

"Muffin says that his pater has got some influence with the Head, and can arrange it."

"He says so!" agreed Jimmy.

"Lots of the fellows seem to believe him—only, you're so jolly clever!" said Lovell. "I think we ought to accept Muffin's invitation."

"We've turned it down already."

"That's all right. I'll ask him to tea."

"But—"

"If you can't say anything but 'but', Jimmy, you really might give a fellow a rest!"

"Oh, all right!" said Jimmy Silver resignedly. "I leave it to you, old chap."

So it was left to Lovell; with the result that Reginald Muffin came to tea in the end study that afternoon—and four more names went down on his list for Boat Race Day.

The Fistical Four having thus given in their adhesion, as it were, Muffin's Boat Race party was now taken quite seriously by all the Classical Fourth. Instead of having his invitations greeted with merriment, Tubby Muffin was now sought after, and fellows hinted, or declared plainly, that they would like to join up.

Tubby Muffin had no objection. By this time he almost believed in the party himself; and, anyhow, a few fellows more or less made no difference.

Oswald and Flynn, Hooker and Peele and Gower, were added to the list, and then Rawson and Conroy. Really, it looked as if Reginald Muffin would be leading quite an army to invade Putney on Boat Race Day!

On the last evening before the great date Tubby was quite a lion in the junior Common-room; he was the cynosure of all eyes in the Classical Fourth. But he had some inward qualms; he could not help thinking of the outcome when the bubble had burst.

crowd of fellows who had accepted his extensive invitations for Boat Race day. And it looked now as if that last hope was going to fail him. And what was going to happen then Reginald Muffin did not care to contemplate.

The 5th Chapter. Off to the Boat Race.

There were cheerful faces in the Classical Fourth Form at Rookwood School the following morning.

Reginald Muffin was not very cheerful. At breakfast he ate only enough for three fellows, which showed that some secret worry had affected even his appetite.

After breakfast Muffin was slipping away by himself, when Arthur Edward Lovell caught him by a plump arm. Muffin had an idea of keeping in strict seclusion till the Fourth were in class, and then scudding off to Coombe to catch his train. But Muffin was too important a personage on this especial morning to be lost sight of.

"This way, Muffin," said Arthur Edward cheerily.

"I—I say—"

"Mr. Dalton wants to speak to you."

train at the London terminus, sir," said Lovell.

"Very good. That is the arrangement, Muffin?"

"Yes, sir."

"And I may take it that Mr. Muffin will see the whole party safely in their train for the school after the race?" asked Mr. Dalton.

"C-certainly, sir."

"Very good. I will speak to the Head."

"T-thank you, sir!" murmured Muffin.

Mr. Dalton walked away, leaving an eager crowd awaiting his return. Tubby Muffin waited for him more eagerly than the rest. The Head, after all, was sometimes crabby, especially early in the morning. It was quite probable, at least possible, that he would pooh-poo the whole thing, and send Mr. Dalton bootless away. To that hope Reginald Muffin clung; it was all that he now had to cling to.

Mr. Dalton came back in a few minutes. The juniors hung on his words—especially Tubby Muffin.

"My boys, I am glad to say that Dr. Chisholm has acceded to my request. He has left the matter in my hands, and the excursion, therefore, will take place."

hesitation. The juniors crowded into the train and changed into the express at Latcham Junction, and the express boomed away with them Londonwards.

Tubby Muffin sat silent and thoughtful.

As a rule Tubby had plenty to say for himself—too much, the Fourth Form fellows often thought.

Now he said nothing; if spoken to, he answered in monosyllables.

For a fellow who was taking a happy party to a handsome function on Boat Race day, Reginald Muffin seemed quite out of spirits.

It might have been expected that he would expatiate with more eloquence than ever upon the magnificent mansion by the river, the super-launch that was to carry the Rookwooders in the wake of the racing eights, and the other glories he had airily sketched out to his guests. But now that these glories were close at hand, they seemed to pall on Reginald Muffin—he did not open his mouth even to swank.

He was, in fact, in a state of horrid trepidation, wondering what on earth was going to happen when London was reached. For certainly there would be no Mr. Muffin, and no big car, waiting for the Rookwood party. When the hapless Tubby was boasting, he hardly realised that untruthfulness was lying; and it is to be feared that it was not his fat conscience that was troubling him now. But something was troubling him.

"Here we are!" chortled Gunner at last.

The Rookwooders poured out of the train, and mingled with a big crowd on the London platform. "Don't get lost, any of you," said Arthur Edward Lovell. "We'd never find one another again in this scum. Here, Muffin."

He caught Muffin by the shoulder just in time, or indubitably Reginald would have been lost in that "scum."

"Keep with us, Muffin!" said Gunner. "What the thump should we do if we lost you, you young ass?"

Muffin had the grace to blush.

"I—I—"

"Keep hold of my arm," said Gunner.

To make assurance doubly sure, as it were, Peter Cutbert kept hold of Tubby's arm. And, in a cheery crowd, the Rookwooders poured out of the station.

The 6th Chapter. The Boat Race!

"Bus it!" suggested Jimmy Silver.

Gunner snorted. "Dash it all, we can't bus it, and leave Mr. Muffin hanging up here, you know," said Rawson.

"Hem!"

"The car must be here somewhere," said Gunner. "I've tipped a porter to find it. He hasn't found it yet."

"Is he a young porter?" asked Jimmy.

"Eh, yes! Why?"

"Good! Then he will have plenty of time to find the car," said Jimmy cheerily. "In fifty or sixty years, say—"

"Oh, don't be an ass! The car must be here. Your pater knew the time the train got in, didn't he, Muffin?"

"Oh, yes, certainly. But I think—"

"Well, what?"

"I—I think there may have been a breakdown," gasped Muffin. "Look here, I'd better telephone home, I think. I can telephone from this station."

"Good egg!" agreed Arthur Edward Lovell. "We've been hanging up here for twenty minutes, and if we hang on much longer, it will queer the lurch."

"I won't be a tick!"

"I'll come with you," said Gunner.

"You needn't trouble—that's all right," said Muffin hastily.

"Oh, you'd get lost as likely as not—this way, fathad!"

"Oh, dear!" murmured Muffin.

Peter Cutbert Gunner accompanied Muffin to the telephone-box. But in the presence of Peter Cutbert, all desire to telephone had departed from Reginald Muffin.

"Pile in," said Gunner impatiently.

"I—I—I've forgotten the number," stuttered Muffin.

"Forgotten your own telephone number!" hooted Gunner.

(Continued on page 624.)



DODGING GUNNER! "Well, where's the house, Tubby?" asked Gunner, for about the twentieth time. "Oh dear!" "What did you say, Muffin?" "Look! There they come!" exclaimed Muffin, with an inspiration. Gunner stared round towards the gleaming river, relaxing his hold on Muffin's arm as he did so. In an instant Reginald Muffin jerked himself away and vanished in the crowd.

Tubby's inward qualms intensified.

"It—it's all right! In fact, the Head as good as told me I could take a few fellows if I liked!" he stammered. "Rely on me!"

"Good!"

"Anyhow, Mr. Dalton would put in a word for us," said Arthur Edward Lovell thoughtfully. "Our giddy Form master is a giddy old Blue himself, and jolly keen on the Boat Race. I'm sure he would speak to the Head if we put it to him nicely."

"Oh, don't do that!" gasped Muffin. "It—it's not necessary—not necessary at all."

"Well, a fellow can't make too sure, in a case like this," said Gunner. "Mr. Dalton's a good sort, and I think he'd fix it for us if he could."

"Good egg!" said Rawson.

"I'll speak to Dicky Dalton in the morning," said Lovell decidedly.

"Now, your father expects us all, Muffin—"

"Eh?"

"I suppose you've let your father know how many guests to expect?"

"Oh! Yes. Of course."

"Well, it would be rather rotten to let him down. It's jolly kind of him to stand a treat like this to a party of schoolboys. Mr. Dalton will see that, I'm sure."

"Sure to!" agreed Gunner.

Tubby Muffin went to bed that night in a rather perturbed frame of mind. His last hope was that the Head would refuse leave, to the

"Oh dear!"

"Anything the matter, Muffin?"

"Oh, no!"

"You're not looking very bright."

"Oh, right as rain—ripping, in fact. I—I'm as happy as anything!"

groaned Tubby Muffin.

"Come on, old fat tulip!"

Five or six fellows were round Tubby Muffin, as he was led up to Mr. Richard Dalton in the corridor. The master of the Fourth gave Muffin a gracious smile. For once Muffin would have preferred to see his Form master frown. He guessed what that kind smile meant.

"I understand, Muffin, that your father desires to take a party of Rookwood boys to the Boat Race to-day," said Mr. Dalton.

In the presence of his invited guests there was only one answer that the hapless Muffin could make.

"Yes. Just so, sir."

"The Head has already given you leave to go," said Mr. Dalton, "and I have no doubt that he will grant leave to a number of your school-fellows. I shall be very pleased to make the request to him, at all events. It is understood, of course, that your father will be in charge of the party."

"Oh, quite!"

"Mr. Muffin will be meeting our

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THE ROOKWOOD BOAT RACE PARTY!

By Owen Conquest.

(Continued from page 618.)

"You see—"
"Well, of all the thundering asses!" exclaimed Gunner, in disgust.
"Let's get back to the fellows, then, and have another look for the car."
The miserable Tubby was marched back.
"Telephoned?" inquired Jimmy Silver.
"The fat duffer's forgot the number—"
"Ah, my hat!"
"Hallo, here's my porter—perhaps he's found the car."

openly scoffing now; but Gunner was still unwilling to believe that anyone, even Muffin, could or would have ventured to spoof him.
Muffin, putting the best face he could on the matter, walked on quite jauntily, as if assured of coming upon Putney Oaks round the next corner.
"Aren't we getting near yet?" inquired Dickinson minor.
"You said it wasn't far from the bridge, Muffin."
"Along the tow-path here," said Muffin. "That's the quickest way."
"Hadn't you better ask a policeman?" inquired Dickinson minor sardonically.
"Ah, give him a chance," said Gunner. "I'm going to smash him if he's been pulling on legs. He won't see the Boat Race if he has."

feared to recognise a Rookwood fellow.
"Here they come, Reginald!" said Mr. Muffin. "What are you staring about you for, Reginald? Do you not want to see the Boat Race?"
"Ah, yes!" gasped Muffin.
"Reginald!" murmured a voice in the throng, about six feet from Tubby and his father. "Hear that, you fellows?"
Tubby Muffin blinked round, and blushed as he met the smiling glance of Jimmy Silver, Lovell and Raby and Newcome, grouped there with the captain of the Fourth, glaring at him.
"So there you are!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell.
"I—I—"
"Here they come!"
"Never mind Muffin, you fellows," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "Keep your eyes on the boats! Oxford's leading!"
"Hurrah!"
All eyes in the swarming throng were on the two graceful skiffs, and the oars that dipped and gleamed.
A roar of voices along the crowded banks of the river followed and accompanied the eights as they pulled.
They were by almost in a flash.
"Oxford, I think!" yelled Jimmy Silver. Jimmy had a second cousin twice removed in the Oxford crew.
"Cambridge, you mean!" said Lovell. Lovell's uncle was a Cambridge man, and Lovell had certain information that Cambridge were a winning crew this year—straight from the horse's mouth, so to speak.
"Oxford's leading by half a length!" said Jimmy.
"You mean, Cambridge is leading by three-quarters of a length," said Lovell.
"Where's your eyes, old fellow?"
"Where's your sense, old chap?"
"Look here, Lovell—"
"Look here, Jimmy Silver—"
"Ah, cheese it, you fellows!" said Raby. "They're gone—and they look to me much of a muckness. Let's get out of this! My toes have been stamped on about a million times!"
"Let's bag that fat villain Muffin!" said Newcome.
"Good egg!"
"Ah, let him rip!" said Jimmy. "His father's with him, you know. He will keep till we get back to Rookwood!"
And the Fistical Four surged along cheerily with the crowd, leaving Tubby Muffin to "keep."

arrive there. He was surrounded as soon as he came into the dormitory.
"Now, you fat villain, what have you got to say for yourself?" roared Gunner.
Tubby gasped.
"You fellows, I'm sorry—awfully sorry! I—I couldn't carry out the programme—there was a fire—"
"A what?" yelled Lovell.
"A fire! Putney Laurels—I mean, the Oaks—that is, the Beeches—was burned to the ground last night!"
"Only hat!"
"So the whole thing was off," said Tubby Muffin. "But I'll tell you what! Next Boat Race day I'll take you all—"
Reginald Muffin was interrupted. Hands that seemed interminable were laid upon him, and the next few minutes were the most exciting in Tubby Muffin's experience. Indeed, but for Bulkeley of the Sixth coming in to see lights out, it really looked as if Reginald Muffin might have been strewn in fragments along the floor of the Classical Fourth dormitory.
Tubby was not good at arithmetic; but had he been a whale at it, he could not have counted the number of aches and pains he took to bed with him that night. He was still groaning after all the other fellows were asleep.
And that was not the end. For days and days afterwards Tubby Muffin's life was crammed with incident. No member of the Boat Race party came on him without bestowing at least one kick upon his fat person—especially Gunner. After all the other fellows were satisfied that Tubby had had enough Gunner was not satisfied, and for days and days Reginald Muffin was busy dodging Gunner. It was quite a relief to Tubby when the term ended, and he hoped fervently that after the vac the Classical Fourth would have forgotten all about the Rookwood Boat Race party.

DICK POWELL'S NATIONAL!
(Continued from page 620.)
Over the obstacle he swept, and then he settled down to ride for his life over the remaining stretch of flat to the winning-post.
"Boy Blue! Boy Blue!"
"No, no! Black Knight wins it for a certainty!"
The roars of the crowd threatened to rend the skies as, seemingly locked together, Boy Blue and Black Knight flashed past the winning-post. But the next moment the numbers went up in the frame, and it was seen that Black Knight had won. And the judge gave the verdict in the black's favour by a short head. The National had been won and lost, and Dick, thrilling with excitement, proud as a peacock, had won the biggest steeplechase in the world on his first appearance on the race-course!
Dick Powell and his father, when they sat down at dinner that evening at the Larches, were without doubt, the two happiest people in the world. John Powell's luck had changed at last, and the trainer could not find words enough with which to sing the praises of his son for his splendid victory. All he could do was to thank him, which, added to the fact that his father had appointed him first jockey to the stable, was quite sufficient reward for Dick.
Dick thought of the tumble he had had during the meal, but as no one seemed to suspect that it was the cause of deliberate treachery, the youngster decided to say nothing about it. He had won the National, and he was in the seventh heaven of delight, and, as a consequence, was quite ready to forgive an injury. And so excited was he that he dreamed that night that he was riding the race over again—but it was next year's National! And the following morning, when he awakened, Dick chuckled heartily as he realised that he won that as well.
THE END.
(Special next Monday—'Payment Suspended!' another rattling fine story of Don Durrell, the boy millionaire. Don't miss it!)

"We sha'n't all find seats on one bus," said Gunner. "Better arrange to meet again at Putney Oaks."
"Or the Laurels—or the Beeches!" said Dickinson minor sardonically. "It comes to the same thing."
Gunner looked at him, and looked at Tubby Muffin. Extremely suspicious looks were being cast on Tubby by all the party now; and doubt crept into Gunner's suspicious mind.
"I'll keep with Muffin," he said. "This way, Muffin—"
"I—I say, Gunner—"
"You needn't say anything, I'm sticking to you till we arrive at Putney Oaks, or Beeches, or Laurels, or whatever it is; you seem a little mixed about it—here's our bus."

The Rookwood party broke into sections, and throbbing motor omnibuses bore them away to their destination westward.
That there was anything in Tubby Muffin's magnificent description of the Boat Race function at "Putney Oaks," nobody believed now—excepting perhaps Gunner. He was willing to give the fat Classical a chance to make good. He kept Tubby carefully with him; and the fat youth quaked beside him, dismally wondering what was going to happen. Really, he was paying dear for the leads in Gunner's study now. He almost wished that, on the day he had been called into the Head's study, it had really been about the missing pic, instead of leave for Boat Race day. But it was too late now for repentance—or even for confession: Gunner was quite equal to punching him right and left in a crowded omnibus. Tubby quaked and hoped for the best.
"Where do we get down?" asked Gunner.
"Putney Bridge!" gasped Tubby. Once out of the bus he had a vague hope of dodging away somehow.
"Here we are, then."

Reginald Muffin was the first of the Boat Race party to arrive at Rookwood School. He arrived there in fear and trembling.
The rest of the party dropped in—and they all seemed to have one desire, to interview Reginald Muffin.
But Muffin was not in a hurry to be interviewed.
That evening he was not to be seen.
Where he was was a mystery. Gunner wrathfully declared that he was hiding up in the box-room, or over in Manders' House. But wherever he was, he was not to be found, and the Boat Race party had to wait for bedtime. At half-past nine Reginald Muffin had to turn up in the Classical Fourth dormitory. He was the last of the Fourth to

THE END.
(There's a laugh in every line of 'April Fools at Rookwood!' next Monday's top-notch story of the clowns of Rookwood School. Be sure you read it. Order your copy of the BOYS' FRIEND in advance and thus make certain of obtaining it!)

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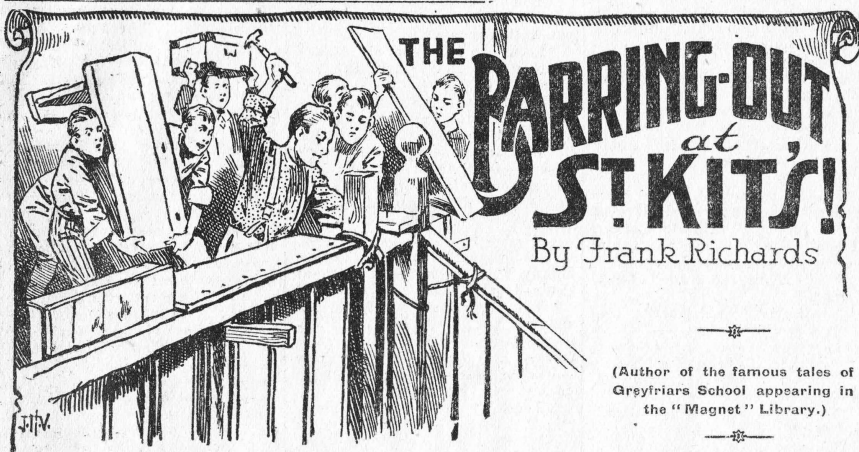
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(Author of the famous tales of Greyfriars School appearing in the "Magnet" Library.)

The rebels of the Fourth refuse to knuckle under to the tyrant of St. Kit's!

The 1st Chapter. The Rebels!

Bang! Bump! Thump! "They're going it!" said Babbie, of the Shell. "Going it, and no mistake!" remarked Gunter of the Fifth. "Cheeky young sweeps." The din from the Fourth Form passage indicated that the rebels of St. Kit's undoubtedly were "going" it.

Dinner was over, and most of the St. Kit's fellows had crowded up the stairs to listen and look on, in a buzz of excitement.

The wide landing which gave access to the Fourth Form staircase swarmed with fellows of all Forms.

As far as that landing, at the top of the second staircase, anyone was free to go if he liked. Beyond, the way was barred. On the Fourth-Form staircase itself no one was allowed to set a foot. It was a case of thus far and no farther!

At the bend of the staircase study tables were jammed in a stack and nailed together. Bob Rake was still driving in nails, with hefty swipes of a big hammer. He was improving the barricade, certainly not the tables. But it was no time to think of the damage done to the school furniture—that was only a detail, and it could not be helped.

Chairs and desks and other articles were being stacked behind the tables; even Algernon Aubrey St. Leger's sofa had been dragged from the top study to be added to the barricade. Algy's eye followed it rather sorrowfully, but he raised no objection. It was a time for sacrifices.

"It's a giddy barring-out!" said Babbie. "I never believed they meant business, but they do."

"Looks like it," grinned Price of the Fifth.

"What on earth will Carker do?"

"Echo answers, what?"

Bang, bang, bang!

Unprecedented affairs were taking place at St. Kit's. Only a short while ago Dr. Chenies, the headmaster of the school, had been attacked by a footpad in Lynn Wood, and, as a consequence of the injuries he had received, he had been ordered away by his doctor. To take his place a Mr. Carker had come to St. Kit's, and the new Head had quickly upset the school with the tyrannical way in which he dealt with the boys. Harry Wilmot, the captain of the Fourth Form, suspected Mr. Carker of being connected with the attack on Dr. Chenies, for he had seen him in conversation with a man named Slaney, who was wanted by the police for the crime. It was the Fourth Form at St. Kit's who at length decided to stand Mr. Carker's tyranny no longer, and

they determined upon a barring-out. At the present moment they were consolidating their position.

Bang! Bang! Bang!

Bob Rake's hammer was going strong. Bump! A heavy desk rolled against the barricade and jammed there. A chair rolled from the top of the stack and pitched down the stairs, rolling from step to step with a series of crashes. It narrowly missed Gunter of the Fifth as it came to a rest on the landing.

"Here, look out!" roared Gunter. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wilmot looked over the barricade.

"You kids had better clear off!" he called out.

"Kids!" ejaculated Gunter.

"Yes; you'll be in the way."

"You cheeky fag!"

The crowd was thickening on the landing, and there was scarcely standing room. Gunter, of the Fifth, stepped up on the Fourth Form staircase and leaned on the banisters there. To a large extent Gunter sympathised with the Fourth in their rebellion against Mr. Randolph Carker. But he wanted to make it clear that he, Gunter, a Fifth Former and a senior, was far too lofty a person-

age to pay any regard to fags of the Lower School.

Wilmot waved his hand to him.

"Get down from there, Gunter."

"Oh, cheese it, kid!"

"Nobody allowed on this staircase!" called out the captain of the Fourth. "Hop it, Gunter!"

"Rats!" retorted Gunter.

"Are you going down?"

"No!"

Whizz!

A cushion flew from above and caught Gunter of the Fifth on the side of his lofty head. There was a wild yell from Gunter.

He fairly span off the stairs and crashed down on the landing—or, rather, on the fellows who thronged the landing.

Babbie and Verney major of the Shell collapsed under him—Gunter was not a light-weight. Three or four fellows staggered right and left. There were howls of wrath and protest.

"You ass, Gunter—"

"Where are you butting to, you duffer?"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Gunter.

He found himself sprawling among innumerable feet, many of which trod on him hard. He sprawled and spluttered, and

scrambled up in a dusty and furious state, and shook an enraged fist up the Fourth Form staircase.

"You cheeky fags!" bawled Gunter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Do you think you can treat me like that old ass Carker?" roared Gunter.

"Just a few!" grinned Bob Rake. "I—I—I'll—"

"Keep clear of them, old man!" murmured Price of the Fifth. "What's the good—"

Gunter did not heed. He charged up the Fourth-Form staircase like a bull.

"Hallo! Here comes Gunter!" roared Bob Rake.

"Give him beans!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors who had stood up to Mr. Carker, temporary Head of St. Kit's, were not likely to flinch before Gunter of the Fifth. Gunter seemed to expect it, somehow; but Gunter often expected things that never came to pass.

He reached the barricade and clambered on it, and at the same moment a chair-leg—used as a cudgel by Stubbs of the Fourth—smote him on his head. A five bat clumped on his shoulder. A golf-club, the property of Algernon Aubrey St. Leger, wielded by Algy himself, lunged at his ribs, and a cane that had once belonged to Carsdale of the Sixth lashed at his fingers.

Gunter had been very quick in getting up the staircase. He was still quicker in coming down.

He came down in a yelling heap. The fellows below crowded back to give him room to land, roaring with laughter. Bob Rake grinned over the barricade.

"Try it again, Gunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my hat! Ow, ow, ow, ow!"

Gunter picked himself up in a dizzy state. "You cheeky young villains! Ow, ow, wow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"This ought to be put down!" gasped Gunter. "Cheeky set of young scoundrels! If that old ass, Carker, had the sense of a bunny rabbit, and the pluck of a poodle, he would put it down fast enough! Ow!"

Gunter's sympathies seemed to have veered round from the rebels to the headmaster.

"Dry up, old man!" whispered Price.

He had spotted the lean form of

Mr. Carker coming up the lower staircase. But Gunter was too enraged to heed.

"I tell you any headmaster who knew his business would put this down at once!" he roared. "Precious state St. Kit's is coming to—fags barricading themselves in their passage and checking the Fifth! That dummy Carker ought to be booted out—that's what I think! That silly ass Carker—"

"Gunter!"

It was Randolph Carker's voice, sharp as steel.

"Oh!"

Gunter broke off quite suddenly.

The crowd on the landing made way for Mr. Carker. They were silent now—the laughter had died away. The look on Mr. Carker's lean, hard, savage face made them disposed for anything but merriment. The rebels of the Fourth were safe behind their barricade. But the fellows who had not rebelled were at close quarters with the tyrant of St. Kit's, and there was a cane under his arm which he now slipped down into his bony hand.

"Gunter!"

"Oh, yes, sir!" gasped Gunter.

"What were you saying, Gunter?"

"Oh, nothing, sir."

"I heard you!" thundered Mr. Carker.

"I—I—I mean—"

"Did you apply disrespectful and opprobrious epithets to me, your headmaster, Gunter?"

"Oh! I—I—no—yes—oh—"

Gunter of the Fifth became quite incoherent under the glare of Randolph Carker's malevolent eye.

"Bend down, Gunter."

"What?"

"Bend down over that stair!"

Gunter fairly jumped. Fifth Formers were never caned; they were never ordered to "bend over" by a master. Only a full meeting of the prefects could order a beating for a senior.

"Sir!" gasped Gunter.

"Do you hear me?"

"The Fifth are never caned, sir!" said Price, putting in a word loyally for his chum.

Mr. Carker gave Price of the Fifth a cold glare.

"Are you obstructing me in my duties, Price?"

"Oh, no, sir—oh, no!"

"You will take five hundred lines for impertinence!"

"Oh!"

"If you speak again I shall cane you!"

Price of the Fifth did not speak again.

Mr. Carker turned his basilisk eye upon Gunter once more.

"You heard my order, Gunter."

"I—"

"Am I to understand that you are joining in the rebellion of a portion of the Lower School against my authority, Gunter?"

"Oh, no, sir!" gasped Gunter.

"I am glad of it," said Mr. Carker. "If you do not obey me instantly, Gunter, I shall expel you from the school on the spot. I will brook no opposition to my authority while I am headmaster of St. Christopher's. Bend down!"

Gunter, with a crimson face, bent over.

Whack!

The cane came down hard, and there was an agonised gasp from Gunter of the Fifth. The barricade above was lined with faces, staring down. Some of the rebels chuckled.

"Poor old Gunter! Carker's taking it out of him!" said Wheatford. "He's a giddy scapegoat!"

All the fellows below heard Wheatford's remark. No doubt it was well founded. Certainly Mr. Carker was very keen to "take it out" of somebody; and he could not take it out of the rebels. Gunter had come in useful.

Whack!

"Yow-ow!"

Whack! Whack!

"Yarooooh!"

Mr. Carker seemed to think that he was beating carpets. The whacks came down on Gunter with terrific vim.



A WHACKING FOR GUNTER! "Bend down over that stair, Gunter!" thundered Mr. Carker, down hard, and there was an agonised gasp from Gunter of the Fifth. The cane came down, whacking! "Yow-ow!" Whack! Whack! "Yarooooh!" Mr. Carker seemed to think that he was beating carpets. The whacks came down on Gunter with terrific vim.

(Continued overleaf.)

Make a note of this! Arizona Jim, the famous Indian Agent, will reappear again shortly in another magnificent tale of the Wild West!



(Continued from
previous page.)

"Now you may go, Gunter."
"Ow, ow, ow!"
"Let that be a lesson to you."
"Wow!"

Gunter squirmed away, crimson and furious. Once more his sympathies had veered round, and he would have been glad to see Randolph Carker handled to any extent by the junior rebels. Indeed, Gunter would not have seen any cause for regret had Harry Wilmot & Co. lynched the unpopular headmaster.

Mr. Carker looked round at the silent crowd with a baleful eye.

"Let that be a warning to all of you!" he said, in a grinding voice. "This rebellion will be put down; every participant in it will be punished with the utmost severity. Any boy expressing sympathy with those rebels, or holding any communication whatever with them, will be punished. Did you speak, Babbie?"

"Oh no, sir!" gasped Babbie.

"You whispered to Verney major."

"I—I—"

"What did you say, Babbie?"

"N-n-nothing, sir!" almost groaned Babbie of the Shell. "I—I—"

"Will you repeat what you whispered to Verney major or not, Babbie?"

"I—I only said—"

"What did you say?"

"I—I said this was rather thick, sir!" groaned the unhappy Shell fellow.

"Indeed! Hold out your hand, Babbie."

Swish!
"The other hand!"

Swish!

"Now disperse, all of you!" said Mr. Carker.

The fellows were glad enough to disperse. They crowded down the lower stairs in silence, Babbie of the Shell squeezing his hands almost frantically as he went.

Mr. Carker was left alone on the landing, staring up at the faces that looked over the barricade with a black and bitter glance.

The 2nd Chapter. No Surrender!

"Wilmot!"
"Adsum!" called out the captain of the Fourth cheerfully.

He looked down at Mr. Carker, meeting that gentleman's baleful gaze fearlessly.

The bell will shortly ring for afternoon classes," said Mr. Carker. "I am taking the Fourth Form in a special class this afternoon, and I shall expect all of you to return to your Form-room."

Harry Wilmot laughed.

"You can expect," he answered.

"Yaas, old bird, you can go on expectin'," said Algernon Aubrey St. Leger. "No harm in that! Expect anythin' you jolly well like."

"Go home, Carker!" roared Stubbs.

"Clear out, Carker!"

"We're fed-up with you, old scout!" said Bob Rake. "Take your face away and bury it; it spoils the view!"

"You are head boy in the Fourth Form, Wilmot," went on Mr. Carker, unheeding the remarks of the rebels, though his lean face was pale with rage. "The responsibility for this outbreak rests on your shoulders."

"Admitted!"

"Mine, too, old man!" chuckled Bob Rake.

"And don't forget little me," said Algy cheerily. "We're all in it, Carker—the whole giddy family. Catchy on?"

"Hear, hear!"

"If you do not return to your Form-room you will be dealt with by the prefects," said Mr. Carker. "I shall flog the whole Form, and the ringleaders will be expelled. You will leave the school to-day, Wilmot."

"I think not," said Harry.

"And you, St. Leger—"

"Bow-wow!"

"And you, Rake—"

"Can it, old bean!" said Bob carelessly.

"You three will be expelled," said Mr. Carker, with a livid face. "The rest will be flogged. I warn you to return to your duty, and not to try my patience too far."

"I've asked you to take your face away," retorted Bob Rake. "If you don't do it, Carker, you will catch this sardine-tin with it."

"You young rascal—"

"Last time of asking!" said Bob, and he poised the missile to take aim.

Mr. Carker gave him a glare and jumped back. He disappeared down the lower stairs rather hurriedly.

Bob Rake chuckled.

"Well, we're for it now!" he remarked. "Who cares? We've handled the prefects once, and we can handle them again."

"Yaas, old bean!"

"I fancy the prefects are getting rather fed-up with Carker," said Harry Wilmot. "Anyhow, we can hold the Fourth Form passage."

"You bet!"

"We'll hold it against all the Sixth, with the Fifth thrown in," said Bob. "We're all right."

"But I say—" began Bunny Bootles.

"Don't!" said Algy. "Nothin' for you to say, Bunny."

"Look here—"

"You talk too much, old fat bean. I keep on tellin' you that you talk too much."

"Look here!" roared Bunny wrathfully. "We haven't had dinner."

"Don't I know it?" grinned Bob. Bob Rake had brought a healthy appetite with him from Australia.

"Well, then, I suppose we can't miss dinner!" said Bunny. "A barring-out is all very well. I'm as keen as any chap on cutting lessons—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But dinner's dinner," argued Bunny. "We can't live without grub—I jolly well know I can't!"

"You never know what you can do till you try," said Bob encouragingly. "You can hibernates, like a giddy Polar bear, you know—live on your own fat. It ought to last you for weeks."

"You silly owl!" roared Bunny. "Look here, I'm up against Carker, and I'm keen on cutting class; but I've got to have my rations. If we haven't any grub we can't hold on—that's clear. After all, we can make terms with Carker."

"Fathead!"

"Do you think he will send our meals up here?" demanded Bunny.

"Ha, ha, not likely!"

"Well, then, we've got to do something. I'm frightfully hungry already. And what do you think I shall feel like at tea-time?"

"Like a hungry octopus," suggested Bob Rake. "But I don't see that it matters, Bunny."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I do!" howled Bunny. "I'm not going to starve. After all, Carker can't sack the lot of us. If you three have to go I shall be sorry. I shall miss you, really. You'll have my sympathy. But, of course, we can't stay up here without grub."

"Dear old Bunny!" grinned Algernon Aubrey. "Have you finished?"

"No, I jolly well haven't. I—"

"Your mistake, you have," said

Bob. "Sit down and take a rest for a bit, old fat man."

Bump!

"Yooop!"

Cuthbert Archibald Bootles sat down hard in the Fourth Form passage. The subject of dinner—important as it was from Bunny's point of view—was dropped. For some time afterwards Bunny's remarks were confined to "Ow, ow! Yow, ow!"

Many of the rebels, as well as Bunny Bootles, however, were thinking rather seriously on the subject of provisions. There were some supplies in the study cupboards, doubtless; but that quantity was not likely to last a hungry crowd of juniors very long. And it was quite certain that they had nothing to expect from Mr. Carker in the way of meals so long as they barred him out. On that point there was no shadow of doubt—no possible, probable shadow of doubt, no possible doubt whatever! Still, there was no idea of surrender.

It was "up" to Harry Wilmot, as leader, to solve the difficulty, and it was left to him. As a matter of fact, Mr. Carker's drastic measures had the effect of defeating their own end. If the ringleaders of the rebellion were to be expelled, and the rest flogged, there was nothing to be gained by surrender; if the tyrant of St. Kit's was to come down his heaviest he could not come down heavier. So unless they were starved out there was very little prospect of the rebels giving in.

More and more articles of furniture were dragged from the studies, and added to the barricade, nailed and screwed and jammed there till the sciences were quite imposing.

Then a round was made of the studies, and every window was carefully nailed up, so that it could not be opened. There were several tool-chests in the Fourth Form studies, and their contents were used freely. If the staircase was found impracticable the assailants were likely enough to try the study windows; and now the windows were likely to be found equally impracticable.

(Continued on the next page.)



The Semi-Finals.

The contestants for the Football Association Challenge Cup—to give it its proper title—have now been reduced to four, and on Saturday these four will do battle on neutral grounds for the right to appear at Wembley in due course. It has been an amazing competition so far, and we may expect it to remain amazing to the end. First one club and then another has been made favourite for the trophy; but almost as soon as the favourite has been "fixed" by the public at large, so the club has gone out. Indeed, there is a superstition among footballers that, for some mysterious reason or other, the favourites never win the trophy. It was so last season right to the very end. My readers will remember that Newcastle United and Aston Villa got through to the Final a year ago, and that practically everybody outside the Newcastle district felt certain that the Villa would win. In these notes we did not agree with this general summary, and plumped most boldly for a victory for Newcastle United. It came off, too; but I must not pursue that line of thought, or somebody will be sending me a hint that it is about time my trumpeter was given a decent funeral.

The Hour and the Man.

Last season the Semi-Finals were confined to clubs of the First Division—Newcastle United and Manchester City meeting at Birmingham, the while Aston Villa and Burnley struggled for supremacy at Bramall Lane, Sheffield. For once in

a way the Semi-Finals did not produce a drawn game, the Villa soundly beating Burnley by three goals to nothing, while Newcastle got the better of Manchester City by two goals, scored by that deadly marksman, Neil Harris. The Semi-Final



J. BEST (Coventry City).

of last season, at St. Andrews, stands out in my mind, however, because of the wonderful display of the Newcastle centre-half, Spencer. I had seen him play previously, and had only regarded him as just as ordinary club pivot; but he played an inspired game that day, and was duly rewarded. The members of the English Selection Committee were

present, and were so impressed by the display of Spencer that he was given the important centre-half position in the subsequent International match between England and Scotland. I happen to know that Spencer himself was just about as much surprised as anybody by his choice; but though one must always doubt the wisdom of picking a man for England on the strength of one outstanding display, I confess that the exhibition given by Spencer a year ago at St. Andrews was of the sort to carry many people off their feet.

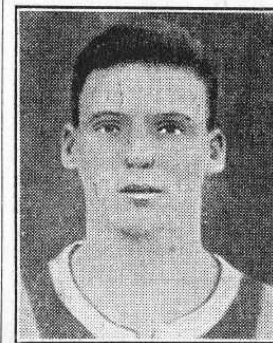
Using a Scottish Rule!

There are many ways in which the football authorities of Scotland do things differently from those in England. I was reminded of this when I was beyond the Border recently at a time when controversy was being waged over the action of Glasgow Rangers in postponing a League game because they had three men playing in an International match on the day the League contest should have been staged. The Scottish authorities permit a League match to be called off if either of the competing clubs has been asked to give three men or more for duty in an International game; but there are a lot of people who do not think that it is quite sporting for Glasgow Rangers, with their big resources, to take advantage of this rule. I cannot agree with the adverse criticism of the action of the Rangers, however, because, to my way of thinking, there is more to be said in favour of it than against.

Unfair Internationals.

The very essence of League football must surely be found in every team playing its best available eleven in every match. This principle is recognised in England, and it will be remembered that Newcastle United were heavily fined last season because they rested several players from a League game which was played just prior to the Cup Final. Now, it seems to me that if a team must always be played at the top strength

in a League game, the same principle applies when a side has to be depleted owing to the calls of an International. Let me take an actual case to illustrate the point I am trying to make. A few weeks back Scotland and Wales played an International match on a



F. HILTON (Notts County).

Saturday, and no fewer than six players of the Cardiff City first team were called up for duty in that game. On the same day Cardiff City had to play a League contest with more than half a reserve team. Surely it is contrary to the principles of League football that they should have to do this, because it was obviously easier for their opponents to get the points at stake than it would have been if the International match had not called away so many of Cardiff's regular first-teamers. Thus I think that the action of Glasgow Rangers in postponing their League game when an International match had made a heavy call on their men was a correct one. In a properly conducted League no side ought to be able to get "cheap" points from any opponents, because those cheap points might easily affect the placings of the clubs at the end of the season.

One of the Best.

During the past few seasons the struggles and the tribulations of the Coventry City club have been many, and even as I write the future of the side must be a matter for concern for officials and players. In one respect, though, Coventry are lucky. They have in Jerry Best one of the "best" goalkeepers I know. He is on the small side as keepers go, but is a very complete custodian all the same, and his consistency during the past four seasons has been remarkable. Right through the last two seasons he has never missed a Coventry first team match of any description, and unless something happens to him in the next few weeks he still has a chance of making this his third season in succession without missing a match. He has not escaped injury because he is afraid of taking risks. Indeed, he is full of dash and daring, and I recall that on one occasion he had quite a remarkable experience, for he was carried off the field shoulder-high at the end of an away match—at Cardiff.

A Half-Back to Watch.

Notts County recently strengthened their half-back line by the acquisition of Fred Hilton from Grimsby Town, a centre-half who may easily develop into a great player, for he is still very young. Hilton went to Grimsby three years ago from a Sheffield Sunday-School League team as a raw youth, and it was not until the present season that he really began to impress as a player of all-round ability. I know the people of Grimsby were very much upset when Hilton was transferred, but the boy wanted to get on, and funds were rather low.

"Goalie"

(Look out for another splendid footer article next week.)

Meanwhile, Harry Wilmot had directed a collection to be made of all the catables in the study cupboards. In the top study, and in Study No. 5 there were a good many things. The other studies were rather bare. All the supplies were pooled—it was a case of share and share alike. And while the rest of St. Kit's were preparing to go into the Form-rooms for class that afternoon the rebels of the Fourth picnicked in their passage—and the provisions, such as they were, were disposed of to the last crumb. It was a decidedly thin dinner, but it kept the garrison going for the present, at least. Only Bunny Bootles was deeply lugubrious. He was hungry when he started; he felt still hungrier when he had finished—a light colation only whetted his Gargantuan appetite. Bupny's view of the rebels' prospects was growing more and more dismal. Certainly he did not like the idea of a flogging, especially the drastic kind of a flogging that would be administered by Mr. Carker. But he was beginning to think that even a flogging was better than this. A flogging was painful enough for the outer Bunny, but a shortage of foodstuffs affected the inner Bunny—a much more important Bunny.

Fortunately, no one else shared Bunny's views. And a generous offer of Bob Rake's to roll him over the barricade was declined by Bootles without thanks. Doubtless, if he had led a surrender on his own he would have obtained his dinner. But he did not want to face the first fury of Mr. Carker's vengeance. If it came to a flogging Bunny hoped to be last on the list, when Mr. Carker's arm would perhaps be getting a little tired.

But he was feeling very dismal, and he gave Harry Wilmot & Co. a series of deeply reproachful blinks which did not seem to affect them in the very least. They seemed, indeed, heartlessly regardless of the yearning empty state of the inner Bunny.

Clang! Clang!
"There's the jolly old bell!" said Durance.

A footstep sounded on the stairs, and Bob Rake picked up an inkpot.

"That's for Carker's boko if he pokes it up this staircase again," he remarked.

But it was not Carker; it was Mr. Rawlings, the master of the Fourth, who appeared on the landing below.

Bob dropped the inkpot at once. There was no intention on the part of the rebels to show disrespect to Mr. Rawlings. They were quite well aware that he disliked the tyrant of St. Kit's quite as intensely as they did, and was, perhaps, even more anxious than themselves to see Dr. Chenies return to his old place.

"Good-afternoon, sir," said Bob. Mr. Rawlings looked up with a very troubled face.

"My boys!" he said. "Mr. Carker has requested me to take my Form as usual. I hoped to see you in the Form-room."

"Would Mr. Carker leave us alone there, sir, if we came?" asked Harry Wilmot.

"I cannot answer for that."
"We're not coming, sir."
"This is a shocking state of affairs, Wilmot."

"I know it, sir, and I'm sorry. But we're done with Mr. Carker."
"You refuse to return to the Form-room?"

"Yes, sir; we do not refuse you—we refuse Mr. Carker," explained Harry.

"Yaas, that's how it stands, sir," said Algernon Aubrey. "No disrespect to you personally, sir."

"We are willing to make terms," went on Wilmot. "If Mr. Carker will promise to leave us alone, entirely in your hands, sir, until Dr. Chenies returns to St. Kit's, we will stop the barring-out at once—that is, of course, if you will answer for it that he will keep his word."

"Hear, hear!"

"I am afraid that Mr. Carker will not consent to that, Wilmot."
"Then there's nothing doing, sir."

"I will at least tell Mr. Carker what you have said."
And the Form-master disappeared down the stairs.

"And now look out for the giddy fireworks!" said Bob Rake cheerily. "After we've given the giddy prefects another licking, Carker may come to his senses! If not, the barring-out goes on."
"What-ho!"

And the rebels waited in a cheerful and warlike mood.

The 3rd Chapter.

Mr. Rawlings Speaks Out.

Mr. Rawlings coughed.

He had stepped into the Head's study after tapping at the open door. Mr. Carker was there, standing by the windows, and talking to Carsdale of the Sixth.

He did not look round at the Form-master.

There had been bitter disagreement between them already; Mr. Carker's handling of his Form had drawn emphatic protests from Mr. Rawlings. Had he consulted only his own desire, the Fourth-Form-master would have kept entirely clear of the dispute, leaving Randolph Carker to still, if he could, the storm he had raised. But he had the good of the school at heart, and he felt a sense of responsibility towards the absent headmaster, whose place Mr. Carker was filling so badly. So far as he could, therefore, Mr. Rawlings wished to pour oil on the troubled waters.

But with reckless rebels on one side, and a hard, ruthless, suspicious man on the other, his task was not an easy one.

Mr. Carker knew he was there, but he did not turn his head. His manner was not pleasant to any of

the St. Kit's masters—to Mr. Rawlings it was least pleasant of all. He had received opposition from Mr. Rawlings—and his autocratic nature would not brook opposition. He found a pleasure in humiliating the Form-master. Mr. Rawlings coughed again. Still Mr. Carker did not turn his head.

"Excuse me, sir," said Mr. Rawlings, with a heightened colour. The Head gave him a careless glance.

"Kindly wait," he said. Mr. Rawlings, breathing hard and deep, waited.

The Head continued to speak to Carsdale, in a low voice, for several minutes. Then the bully of the Sixth quitted the study with a lurking grin at the Fourth Form-master as he passed him. Mr. Rawlings did not deign to heed his eyes on the Head.

"Now Mr. Rawlings—"

The unpleasant gentleman might have been speaking to Tuckle, the page, so far as his manner went.

"I have spoken to the boys of my Form, sir, as you desired me," said Mr. Rawlings, in a choking voice.

"Well?"
"They refuse to return to the Form-room."

"I am not surprised," said Mr. Carker—"not at all! I am quite convinced that it is necessary to make an example of the ringleaders of this disgraceful revolt."

"Wilmot has offered—"

"To submit?"

"No; I am afraid there is little prospect of submission in the present circumstances, sir. But the boys appear willing to return to their duty on condition that they remain in my charge—without interference from you, sir—until Dr. Chenies returns."
Mr. Carker sneered.

"Do you think that is an offer I can accept, Mr. Rawlings?"

"Probably not, sir; but you are the best judge of that," said the Form-master coldly. "I merely tell you what they have said."
"Doubtless with encouragement from you!" sneered Mr. Carker. "It would suit you, Mr. Rawlings. No doubt they are aware that you are in sympathy with their disgraceful conduct."

"That is enough, sir," said Mr. Rawlings. "I will retire—"

"As for Dr. Chenies' return," went on Mr. Carker, as if the Form-master had not spoken, "it is very doubtful—very doubtful, indeed—whether Dr. Chenies ever will return to St. Christopher's. At the governors' late meeting there was only the chairman's casting vote in favour of retaining his services as headmaster. Now that he is ill—obviously incapable of discharging his duties here—it is practically certain that he will retire. And in that event—a very probable event—I remain permanently headmaster of St. Christopher's."

"Indeed, sir."
"Yes, sir, indeed!" snapped Mr. Carker. "Disagreeable as it may be to you, Mr. Rawlings, such is the case."

"I do not pretend that it would be agreeable to me, sir," said Mr. Rawlings. "Is there anything else you wish to say to me?"

"Only that it is your duty to keep your Form in a state of proper discipline, and that the present difficulties have arisen, sir, from your disregard of that duty!" snapped Mr. Carker.

Mr. Rawlings' eyes gleamed.

"The present difficulties have arisen, sir, from your utter incapacity to fulfil the duties you have taken on yourself," he said grimly.

"What—what?"

master. The latter has vanished and left not a wrack behind, and Dick and his chums find themselves called upon to assist in the unravelling of a highly suggestive mystery.

"PAYMENT SUSPENDED!"

There is not much call for me to dilate on the grip of this yarn of the Boy Millionaire. It is the "bonne bouche" of next Monday's programme—at least, one of the prime features. Don Darrel discovers that his cheques have been stopped at the bank. This is the biggest surprise which could startle the understanding of an A 1 millionaire. His drafts come back with certain distinctly complimentary annotations disfiguring them. This is a real check, and no mistake. Millionaires appreciate hard cash, same as others, but they loathe feeling a draught. Luckily at this chilly juncture Don Darrel encounters an old friend. The latter has a rather sad tale to tell himself, for he cannot find a rider for a horse called Dove of Peace. If the Dove flies to victory it will be a veritable Dove of Pieces, for on this success depends its sale for a large sum. Don Darrel makes a brilliant suggestion, and his friend closes with it on the spot. After that things move with express speed. It is a magnificent yarn full of ups and downs, and with big things at stake. Don't miss this brilliant specimen of Victor Nelson's work!

"GOALIE!"

Our football expert runs up a fine score next week with his article on the great game.

MORE SURPRISES!

There are lots more wonderful features on the way! Be on the vive for further splendid competitions!

SIX J. B. HOBBS' BATS!

That's a fact worth noting. Six Cricket Autographed J. B. Hobbs Crickeet Bats figure on the Prize List which I shall shortly be putting up for the benefit of my chums. This offer will stand for each week. Full details shortly.

Your Editor.

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.

THE BOAT RACE AND THE GRAND NATIONAL!

It was up to the BOYS' FRIEND to take special note of these two outstanding events. That's one thing the old "Green 'Un" always does. Look out for what's coming to you! You have to follow that advice in the spring specially, for the landscape painter on the ladder sometimes drops his pot of paint or the brush he is wielding so manfully. Still, that's neither here nor there, as the man said when the gas retort went pop. The business in hand concerns the two momentous fixtures of the spring. This week's Special Number of the BOYS' FRIEND does full justice to both. Our Boat Race article is the real thing. It pips the target right in the centre, while the yarns are topping.

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

Carker is going it, but St. Kit's is going one better. Man, vain man, dressed in a little brief authority, plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven, as make the angels weep. I have lifted that bit out of Shakespeare because it just exactly hits the case of Carker. Next Monday's instalment of Mr. Frank Richards' grand serial shows the fighting stalwarts of the school rushing to the breach. The odds are tremendous, but Harry Wilmot and his followers take no thought of the risk. Desperate remedies are called for, and that's all about it. Carker has great power, but even he may well quail before the raging storm.

"POSH AT THE WHEEL!"

After the little breeze between Cyril Babbit and his trusty henchman. Posh, affairs swing along in spirited style with a rush of incident of the most taking kind. Look out for the sparkling account of the Great Moku Race next Monday. It will fetch you; so, too, will the generous action of Posh's employer. Like Posh, Cyril just does things that he finds want doing, and he does them jolly well.

"APRIL FOOLS AT ROOKWOOD!"

Oh, to be at Rookwood now that April's there! Some fellows almost wished they had not been at the school. The picturesque anniversary sacred to the cap and bells brings a fair old dust-up in its train. There's fun in fooling, however, so long as it is run on the mutual trust lines. There is a rare mix-up, with Gunner getting full honours. But Gunner does not stand alone! Look out for a hilarious time over next week's Rookwood enlivener!

"QUEER ISLAND!"

Duncan Storm leaves one in no doubt whatever about the queerness of the island to which Dick Dorrington & Co. make their adventurous way. Much that is passing strange has happened in the aforesaid chunk of land with water all around it. You will be interested in the seemingly incredible experience of Florestan Slapp, who is a cook by profession, and on the look-out for his old

"You are utterly unsuited for the post of a schoolmaster, and it is your tyranny that has driven my Form into rebellion, Mr. Carker."
"Mr. Rawlings!" shouted the Head.

"I will not mince my words with you, sir!" said Mr. Rawlings. "Nothing of this kind occurred in Dr. Chenies' time. I had no trouble with my Form before your arrival at St. Kit's. You, sir, are the cause of the whole trouble, and you may get out of it, sir, as best you may, without further assistance from me."

Mr. Carker gasped.
"Sir, you will leave St. Christopher's! I discharge you from your duties here! I—"
"I shall not leave St. Kit's, and I shall not accept dismissal from you, Mr. Carker."

With that the indignant master of the Fourth turned to the door. Mr. Carker made a stride after him, his face crimson with rage, and his lean hands clenched as if he would have struck him.

Mr. Rawlings faced him again with a grim look.

"Well, sir?" he said.
The new headmaster of St. Kit's backed.

"Nothing! Go!"
And the Fourth Form master went.

Mr. Carker cast a bitter look after him, and remained for some minutes in the study after Mr. Rawlings had gone. Then he left and went slowly down the corridor. At the foot of the big staircase the Sixth Form prefects were gathered in a group.

Undoubtedly, Oliphant and the other prefects would have been glad to keep clear of the rebels.

All of them showed signs of the battle with the rebels that had taken place that morning. All of them were "fed-up" with the new Head and his methods. Apparently they still felt that it was their duty to support the Head, but their allegiance was wearing thin. Even Carsdale was far from keen.

Mr. Carker looked at them with a frowning brow.

"Oliphant!"
"Yes, sir?" grunted the captain of St. Kit's.

"You are aware that the Fourth Form refuse to go to their Form-room?"

"Yes."
"You and the other prefects will see that they go there at once," said Mr. Carker. "I shall take them in a special class this afternoon."

Oliphant looked at him.
"How?" he asked grimly.

"You need not ask me to point out your duty to you, Oliphant. Order the juniors to their Form-room, and if they refuse to obey use force. You are authorised to use any amount of force that may be necessary."

Oliphant seemed to swallow something with difficulty.

"We'll do our best, sir," he said. "I shall await you in the Fourth Form-room," said Mr. Carker. "I shall expect you to bring the juniors there without unnecessary delay."

Oliphant breathed deep.
"It looks to me, sir, as if you've set us a job rather above our weight," he said. "We'll do our best; we can't do more."

"That is not the way to answer your headmaster, Oliphant."

The captain of St. Kit's made no rejoinder to that. He turned away to the stairs with feelings almost too deep for words. He had never been so strongly tempted to tell Randolph Carker what he thought of him.

(Whatever you do don't miss next Monday's exciting long instalment of this magnificent school story. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance and thus make certain of securing it!)