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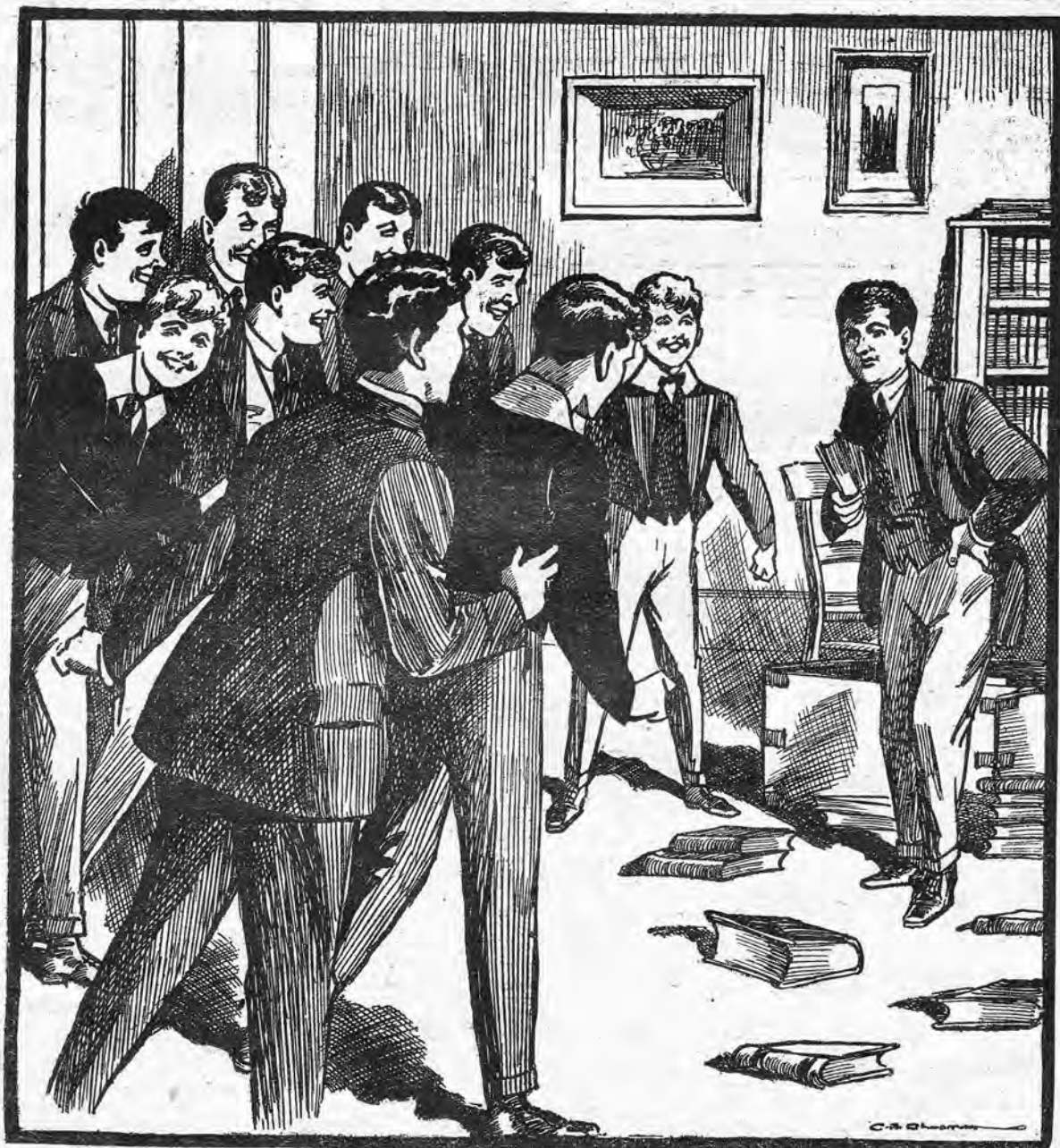
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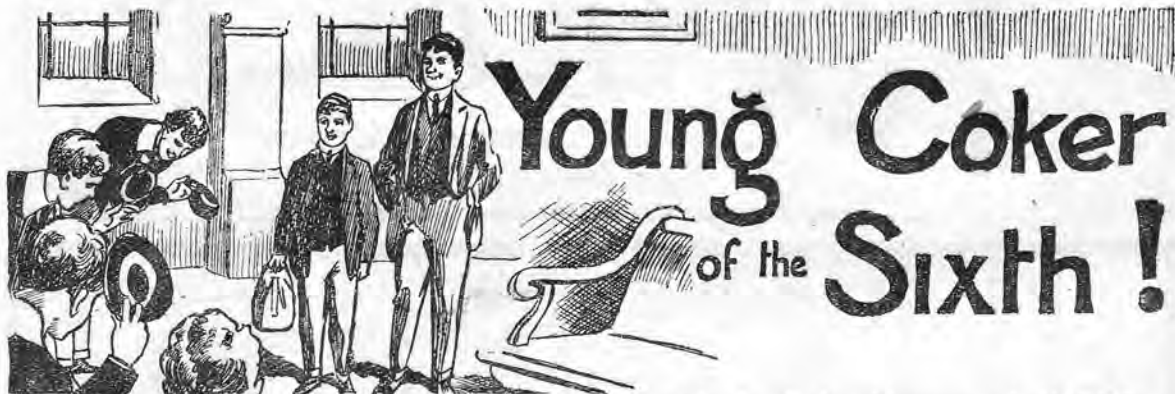
RAGGING THE "BABY" SIXTH-FORMER!
(One of the many exciting incidents in the grand Greyfriars story inside.)

**TWO LONG
COMPLETE SCHOOL
TALES
EVERY WEEK.**



**"BILLY BUNTER'S
WEEKLY!"**

Grand Four-page Supplement.
Edited by **WILLIAM GEORGE
BUNTER** of Greyfriars.



Young Coker of the Sixth!

A Magnificent Long Complete School Story, dealing with the Early Adventures of **HARRY WHARTON & Co. at Greyfriars.**

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Young Coker Arrives!

"**H** ALLO, hallo, hallo! Here they are! Now, make your best bow!"

Thus Bob Cherry of the Remove-Form at Greyfriars.

The fighting man of the Remove was at the station with his chums, Harry Wharton, Frank Nugent, and Johnny Bull, and they were there to meet Coker's young brother, who was coming to Greyfriars that morning.

Coker had asked the juniors to look after his minor, who was of a nervous disposition, very studious, and very quiet. Coker major had made up his mind that his minor would be put into the Remove. So it was wise of Coker to ask Harry Wharton & Co. to look after his inoffensive young brother. Bullies of the Bulstrode type were likely to make things hot for young Coker if they got the chance; in fact, Bulstrode had stated his intention of ragging Coker minor at the first opportunity.

Harry Wharton & Co. waited with considerable curiosity to see Coker minor. They wondered what he was like. They would naturally have expected a miniature edition of Coker major; but Coker's description of his brother was not like that. A brother of Horace Coker who was studious, quiet, and inoffensive would be worth seeing, as Frank Nugent remarked.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Here they are! Now, then, all of you make your best bow!"

The chums of the Remove chuckled; but they grew immediately grave as Coker major and Coker minor came up. The four Removites stepped forward in a row, and raised their hats at precisely the same moment, and bowed profoundly to Coker minor.

Coker minor was not much like Coker major.

There was a distant resemblance in features, and that was all.

Reggie was much smaller than his

brother, much less muscular, and extremely inoffensive in his manners. He looked like a fellow who had been somewhat crushed all his life by the overshadowing effect of a very big brother. Reggie had a big forehead, which indicated brains, and plenty of them; but his muscular development was not great. His limbs were very slim, and his eyes a little watery. But his face was full of good nature and kindness. If Coker minor had been more like Coker major, probably Coker major would not have liked him so much. As it was, nobody could possibly dislike Reggie Coker; and it was not surprising that the big, burly Horace took a protecting interest in his young brother.

Coker minor blinked in surprise at the four Removites as they stepped forward, raising their hats as if by clockwork. Coker major frowned.

"Now then; none of your little jokes!" growled Coker.

"My dear Coker," said Bob Cherry gracefully, "this is not a little joke. This is a respectful greeting. How do you do, Coker minor?"

"How do you do, young Coker?" asked Nugent.

"Comme vous portez vous?" murmured Johnny Bull.

"Wie geht's?" grinned Harry Wharton.

The Famous Four felt that they could not do more than greet Coker minor all together, and in three languages at once; but it was naturally a little surprising to Reggie, who did not know the little ways of the Remove. He stared.

"We've come to meet you," explained Bob Cherry. "Coker says you'll very likely be coming into our Form, you know—the Lower Fourth! Hence these smiles."

"Good!" said Coker major heartily. "I'm glad to see you kids here. It's very decent of you. Reggie, old man, these chaps are in the Remove, the Lower Fourth, you know; and they'll be

your Form-fellows. This chap is Wharton, captain of the Form."

"The Lower Fourth!" stammered Reggie.

"Yes."

"I—I'm very glad to see you fellows," said Coker minor mildly; "but—but I don't think I shall be going into the Lower Fourth."

"Well, we'll keep an eye on you—a fatherly eye—even if they shove you down into the Third," said Bob Cherry.

"Oh, good!" said Horace Coker.

"But I—I think they won't put me in the Third," said Reggie timidly.

"Oh, they couldn't put a chap of your age in the Second," said Harry Wharton. "You're older than I am."

"Oh, no; not in the Second!"

"I suppose you're not anticipating being put in the First Form, among the Babes, are you?" demanded Coker, with a puzzled glance at his brother.

"Oh, no, Horace! Goodness gracious!"

"Oh, I see," said Bob Cherry. "You're looking for a chance of getting into the Upper Fourth. Is that it?"

"No, no!"

"The Shell, then?" demanded Bob.

"Oh, no!" Perhaps—perhaps I might go into a senior Form," said Coker minor timidly.

Coker major snorted.

"Oh, don't be a young ass, Reggie!" he said. "I couldn't have a minor in the Fifth. It wouldn't be the thing. Come on; let's get to Greyfriars."

"Yes, Horace."

And the Greyfriars fellows left the station. Reggie seemed rather timid, but he tried to be very friendly with the Famous Four. In spite of his apparent ambition to get into a senior Form, he evidently wanted the friendship of the Remove fellows. Harry Wharton & Co. were very cordial to him; but they regarded him sometimes with dubious glances. If Reggie Coker got into a senior Form, the case would be very much altered. A senior boy no older

than themselves would be rather unusual. Sometimes a very clever fellow passed up in the school with unusual speed; and a case was remembered at Greyfriars of a Sixth-Former who had a twin in the Shell. But that kind of thing was not popular with either seniors or juniors; and Coker major himself was likely to take it very badly if he should find his minor in the Fifth along with him. Reggie glanced timidly at his big brother several times, but he did not mention the subject again, evidently being afraid of displeasing his major.

Quite a crowd of fellows were gathered at the gates of Greyfriars when Coker minor and his escort arrived there.

Bolsover & Co. were in full force; and Bolsover's declared intention of making things warm for Coker minor immediately upon his arrival had brought a good many fellows to the spot to see the proceedings.

Trouble between the bully of the Remove and the great fighting-man of the Fifth would be worth watching, in the opinion of the fellows who took a deep interest in fistio encounters—and there were a great many of them.

Bolsover frowned as he saw the Famous Four and Horace Coker with the new boy. His task looked a little bigger now than he had anticipated; but he had plenty of bulldog courage, and he did not retreat.

He planted himself in the middle of the gateway as they arrived.

"Hallo!" he exclaimed.

"Hallo!" said Coker. "Get out of the way, you young ass!"

Bolsover pointed to the new boy.

"Where did you dig that up?" he asked.

"Goodness gracious!" murmured Coker minor.

But Coker major did not say goodness gracious. He gave Bolsover a glare, and then, without wasting any more words upon him, rushed at him. In a moment the two fellows were grappling, and whirling round in the old stone gateway.

Powerful fellow as Percy Bolsover was, he hardly matched the Fifth-Former. He would have fared badly if he had not been backed up.

"Rescue!" he roared.

Vernon-Smith and Stott rushed to his aid. Coker was grasped by the two of them, and dragged over, and Stott sat upon him.

Bolsover panted.

"Keep that beast down!" he said. "I'll attend to the minor!"

"Goodness gracious!" gasped Reggie, as Bolsover strode towards him.

Harry Wharton exchanged a glance with his chums. The Famous Four closed up round Coker minor, and met the Remove bully with a cheerful grin.

"Hands off!" said Bob Cherry blandly. "Coker minor is under our protection."

"Get aside!" roared Bolsover.

"Not this evening! Some other evening," said Nugent sweetly.

"I'm going to lick him."

"Begin with us!" said Harry Wharton.

"By George, I will!"

Bolsover rushed at the Famous Four. In a twinkling four pairs of hands grasped him, and he was whirled off his feet.

Bump!

Bolsover gave a terrific gasp as he descended upon the ground. He lay there gasping for breath. All the wind had been knocked out of him.

The Famous Four turned to Vernon-Smith and Stott, who were holding the furious Coker on the ground.

"Let Coker alone!" said Harry Wharton crisply.

And the Bounder of Greyfriars and his companion thought it better to obey.

They would not have stood long against the Famous Four.

Coker jumped up as the two juniors released him. He did not take any notice of Vernon-Smith or Stott. He rushed towards Bolsover, who had also gained his feet.

"Put up your paws, you cad!" he exclaimed. "I'll show you whether you can rag my young brother or not!"

"Hurrah!"

"Go it, Coker!"

"Buck up, Bolsover!"

A single-handed contest with the burly Coker was not what Bolsover had planned. But there was no getting out of it now.

He put up his hands, and faced Coker's terrific onslaught.

But even Bolsover could not stand against Horace Coker. Coker simply knocked him right and left, and Bolsover's tough fight only made his punishment worse.

Bolsover went to the ground with a crash at last, with red streaming from his nose, and one of his eyes closed.

Coker stood over him, glaring.

"Do you want any more?" he roared.

"Groo! No!" gasped Bolsover.

"Are you going to let my minor alone?"

"Groo! Yes!"

"Mind you do, or you'll get it warmer next time!" growled Coker. "I'm much obliged to you Wharton. Come on, Reggie, and I'll take you in."

And Coker major linked arms with his minor and walked him away across the Close to the School House.

Bolsover sat up.

He blinked painfully out of one eye, and dabbed his nose with his handkerchief. He gave the Famous Four a deadly look.

"You—you rotters!" he stuttered. "So you're backing up Coker against your own Form, are you, you rotten sneaks?"

Wharton flushed angrily.

"Nothing of the sort!" he exclaimed. "But we're not going to let you pile on a new chap who's not big enough to tackle you. You're a rotten bully, and you've only got what you deserve. Go and eat coke!"

And the Famous Four walked away, leaving Bolsover to bathe his damaged nose in the fountain in the Close, and mutter vows of vengeance.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

A Shock for Coker!

REGGIE COKER was looking a little scared as he was accompanied by his big brother into the School House. Coker major dabbed his nose, which had suffered in the combat, though not so seriously as Bolsover's. Reggie looked at him in a distressed way.

"You are hurt, Horace," he said.

Coker grinned.

"Only a little claret from the boko," he said. "That's nothing. You'll get used to that sort of thing here."

Reggie looked alarmed.

"Do—do the boys fight very much here, Horace?"

"Ha, ha, ha! I should say so."

"Goodness gracious!"

Coker major patted him on the shoulder.

"You'll be all right, Reggie," he said affectionately. "You've got a big brother to stand by you, you know. Depend on me. If any chap touches you, I'll hammer him till his life isn't worth living! But you'll have to learn to look out for yourself, too, you know. I'll give you some boxing lessons every day, and

teach you to stand up and take your punishment."

Coker minor did not look overjoyed at the prospect.

"Oh dear!" he said.

"You're not afraid, Reggie, are you? You can't be a coward, you know."

Coker minor coloured.

"I'm not a coward, Horace. I'm not afraid. But—but I came here to study, you know. I—I want to get on, you know, with my lessons. I had no idea the boys would be rough."

Coker chuckled.

"My dear kid, they're not spoonies at Greyfriars," he said. "Fellows learn to take care of themselves here. What does a thick ear or fat nose matter? You get over it, and it teaches you to stand punishment without whining. Mind, I'm supposed to be rather a fighting-man myself; but I'll give you some good advice. Never get into a fight for nothing; but never try to sneak out of one. And when you fight, fight till you drop. Always hit your hardest, and, even if you get licked every time, fellows will soon learn to leave you alone."

"Oh!" said Reggie.

"That chap Bolsover, for instance," said Coker major. "He's a bully, and terrorises kids in the lower Forms; kids who haven't the nerve to stand up to him, you know. He can lick nearly anybody lower than the Fifth. But there are some fellows he doesn't try to bully. They would stand up to him, and he would have a tough fight every time; and he doesn't want that all day long. He bullies chaps who don't resist. If ever you're bullied, fight till you can't stand. That's good advice!"

"Ye-es."

"You'll soon get used to standing up for yourself. I'll give you a good going in the gym every day, so that you'll get used to being punched hard," said Coker encouragingly.

"You—you're very kind, Horace," faltered Reggie.

"I mean to be kind," said Coker.

"I'm going to look after you, but the best thing I can do for you is to teach you to look after yourself. And, look here, as you're such a jolly clever little beggar, you'll soon get up into the Fifth—by the time I get into the Sixth, very likely—and then you'll be a senior, and they can't touch you."

Reggie brightened up.

"Oh, if I am a senior I suppose they—they won't be able to go for me?" he said.

"Oh, no! The Sixth are sacred!" grinned Coker. "Even I have to let the Sixth alone."

"Oh, good!"

"Here's the Head's study. He told me to bring you to him as soon as you arrived," said Coker. "He's going to put you through your paces himself. Do your level best, and see if you can squeeze into the Shell."

Coker knocked at the door.

"Come in!" said the deep, pleasant voice of Dr. Locke.

Coker gave his nose another hasty dab, and led his young brother into the Head's study.

Dr. Locke looked at them with a kindly glance.

"My young brother, sir," said Coker.

"Very good, Coker. How do you do, Coker minor? You may leave him with me, Coker."

"Yes, sir."

Coker whispered to his minor as he went to the door:

"Buck up, Reggie! The Head's a real brick! Come to my study as soon as

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NEXT

FRIDAY!

"COKER COMES

ROUND!"

A SPLENDID STORY

OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

4 "Chuckles" is the Best Paper for Funny Pictures & Working Models!

you're clear, and tell me what Form you're in. Study No. 3, in the Fifth; anybody will tell you where it is."

"Yes, Horace."

And Coker major left the Head's study, closing the door after him. Coker minor was left to the ordeal of an examination at the hands of the doctor.

A good many stares were turned upon Horace Coker as he came down the passage into the hall.

"So your young brother's arrived?" asked Hobson of the Shell grimly.

"Yes," said Coker.

"Good! Settled about his Form yet?"

"No."

"I hope he'll come into the Shell," said Hobson. "If he does, I'm going to ask to have him put in my study."

Hobson's look conveyed very clearly that his intentions were not friendly, if he succeeded in getting Reggie into his study.

"Same here!" said Temple of the Fourth. "If he comes into the Fourth, I'll ask to have him in my study. I'll make him sorry for himself!"

Coker snorted.

"Mind, if anybody rags my young brother, he'll have me on his track!" he said.

"Rats!"

"Rot!"

"Yah!"

Coker major controlled his temper with difficulty, and walked away. He realised that he would have all his work cut out to look after his minor if he went into the Fourth or the Shell.

He hoped that Reggie would be put into the Remove, where, at all events, the Famous Four had undertaken to stand by him. Coker was looking very thoughtful and a little worried as he came into his study in the Fifth Form passage.

Potter and Greene were there, and they bestowed a glance upon Horace Coker that was not so friendly as usual.

"Been all this time looking after your minor?" demanded Potter.

"Yes," said Coker defiantly.

Greene grunted.

"Well, I think it's rot!" he said.

"And look here, Coker, we're jolly well not going to be swarmed by your minor in this study! Why can't you let him alone?"

"He's my young brother, ain't he?"

"Well, we can't have this study mixed up in fag rows," growled Potter.

"But leave the kid to shift for himself and find his own level. You haven't succeeded in making the Shell or the Fourth feel very friendly towards him, anyway."

"The fact is, Coker, the less you have to do with your minor the better it will be for him," said Greene. "You've been jolly high-handed with the lower Forms yourself, and they'll take it out of your minor, especially if you interfere and back him up."

"We can't have him scuttling into this study when the fags are after him, Coker."

"No fear!"

Coker glared at his study-mates.

"You go and chop chips!" he said truculently. "I'm going to look after Reggie. And I'll have him in this study as much as I like!"

"Look here, Coker—"

"And I'll thank you to be civil to him!" snorted Coker. "He's coming in here presently, after he's seen the Head, and you chaps may as well clear out and let us have the study for a bit. I want to jaw with Reggie."

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"Look here!" roared Potter. "If you're going to coddle your minor you're not going to coddle him in our study!"

"Rats!"

"And if you want to throw over fellows in your own Form, to chum up with a fag, we'll jolly well change into another study!" shouted Greene.

"Change, and be hanged!" retorted Coker.

"Look here—"

"Oh, travel off, and be quiet!"

Potter and Greene gave Coker furious looks, and tramped out of the study, slamming the door behind them.

Coker did not seem to mind. He was thinking of his minor, not of the Fifth-Formers. He sat down to wait for Reggie to come.

It was a considerable time before his minor appeared.

There was a timid tap at the door at last, and it opened, and the inoffensive face of Coker minor looked in. Coker jumped up.

"Here you are, Reggie!" he exclaimed cheerfully. "Come in, kid! We're going to have a jolly tea together! I've booted the other chaps. Come in! Squat down in the armchair!"

Reggie went in.

Coker pushed him into the armchair. There was a strange hesitancy in his minor's manner, an uncertainty in his look, which Coker attributed to the strain he had been through of an examination with the Head.

"Cheer-ho!" said Coker encouragingly. "Did it go all right?"

"Yes, Horace."

"The Head's all right, ain't he?"

"He is a very kind gentleman," said Reggie.

"He's a brick!" said Coker. "I'm glad you got through all right. What Form have you been stuck in—Remove?"

Reggie shook his head.

"Ah, I'm rather sorry for that, in a way!" said Coker. "Wharton and the rest would have stood by you in the Remove. They're cheeky young rotters sometimes, but they've got a lot of good points. I hope it isn't the Fourth!"

"No," said Reggie, "it isn't the Fourth!"

Coker looked a little anxious.

"You may have trouble in the Shell," he said. "Hobson is very ratty. You see, Hobby used to chum with me when I was in the Shell, and he was rather waxy at my getting my remove and leaving him among the juniors. Of course, I couldn't chum with Hobby after I was in the Fifth—infra dig., you know. But I'll see that he doesn't damage you, old man."

"But—but it isn't the Shell," faltered Reggie.

Coker started.

"My sainted aunt! You don't mean to say that the Head's been ass enough to shove you into the Fifth!" he exclaimed in dismay.

"N-no!"

"Not the Fifth?"

"No!"

Coker stared blankly at his young brother. Even then the terrible truth did not dawn upon him.

"Then what on earth Form have you been stuck into?" he demanded.

"The Sixth!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Coker Objects!

THE—the—the Sixth!" Coker stuttered out the words.

He could hardly grasp it at first. He stared blankly at Reggie, who

looked very uneasy, and shifted under his amazed gaze, with a guilty look, as if he knew that he had done something enormous.

"The Sixth!"

Reggie nodded.

"The Sixth!" thundered Coker.

"Yes, Horace!"

Coker gasped for breath.

"I—I suppose you're joking?" he said, with forced calm.

"No, I'm not joking, Horace."

"The Sixth!"

"Yes."

"Rot!" said Coker angrily. "If this is a joke, young Reggie, I don't like your jokes. Now, then, let's have the truth."

"B-b-b-but it is the truth, Horace," said Reggie, in dismay. "I—I hoped that I should get into the Sixth, you know."

"You hoped you would?"

"Yes."

"You—you—" Coker broke off. Words were inadequate to express his feelings.

"M-my tutor said I—I should be all right for the Sixth," said Coker minor timidly. "I—I was going to tell you at the station, b-b-but you seemed not to—like the idea—"

"The Sixth!"

"Yes. I—I'm all right for the Sixth, Horace. I know I'm young, but I've studied, you know; I've done the work for the Sixth, and—and I'm quite up to it. M-my tutor says I'm rather clever, you know. And—and the Head mentioned that he's had younger chaps than I am in the Sixth once or twice. It—it doesn't depend on age, you know."

"The Sixth!" repeated Coker, as if any other words refused to come from his tongue. "The Sixth! The Sixth Form!"

"You—you are not angry with me, Horace?"

"The Sixth!"

"I—I wish I hadn't been put into the Sixth now," faltered Reggie, looking at his brother's clouded and angry face.

"But—but the Head said—"

"You young rotter!" said Coker, in a tone of concentrated anger. "So you've come to Greyfriars to spring a thing like this on me! I wonder you ain't ashamed of yourself!"

"Oh, Horace!"

"It's a caddish thing," said Coker. "My hat! Me in the Fifth, and lots of fellows saying that I ought still to be in the Shell, and my young brother in the Sixth over my head! It's disgraceful!"

"Horace!"

Coker moved restlessly about the study. He could not doubt the truth of the statement any longer, and his astonishment was giving place to fury.

"I shall be chipped to death! Won't Potter and Greene chuckle. I've just been rowing them because they didn't want me to chum up with a fag, even if he was my minor. The Sixth! You in the Sixth, swanking over your elder brother—"

"Oh, I—I wouldn't do that!" gasped Reggie. "You can't think that of me, Horace."

"They'll laugh me out of Greyfriars!" yelled Coker. "Here I've been making the rounds of the lower Forms to try to get the fags to treat you decently, and now you go and get into the Sixth over my head!"

"I—I'm sorry, Horace. But—"

"Won't they yell when they hear of it? Won't they cackle? I fancy I can see Hobson. He'll ask me if I'm going to fag for you!"

"Oh, Horace!"

NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!"

A GRAND

TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. By OWEN CONQUEST.

"I won't stand it!" roared Coker. "I won't have it! If you think I'm going to put up with this, you've jolly well made a mistake!"

"Oh!"

"It's an insult to me! I'm not having it. Look here, kid, you march straight back to the Head, and tell him you can't go into the Sixth."

"Horace!"

"I'll try to stand you in the Fifth, if you like, though that would be ridiculous enough," said Coker. "Major and minor both in the Fifth! A pretty fool I shall look! All the fellows will say that if I'd done a proper amount of work I ought to have passed into the Sixth before you got into the Fifth!"

It struck Reggie that the fellows would be quite right, but he did not say so. He did not wish to exasperate his brother further.

"But I'll try to put up with you in the Fifth," said Coker, calming down a little. "Go and tell the Head he's a duffer, and that you're going into the Fifth."

"I—I can't!"

"Well, you can leave out the part about the duffer," said Coker considerably. "But tell him you can't possibly go into the Sixth."

"I—I can't, Horace!"

Coker stopped still and fixed his eyes upon his minor. He did not look at him—he glared.

Reggie cowered in the chair. "You mean you won't?" roared Coker. "It's impossible, Horace."

"Do you think I'm going to stand you in the Sixth—over me?" shrieked Coker. "It—it can't be helped."

"Will you go to the Head?"

"I can't!"

"Well, if you can't, I can! said Coker. "I tell you I won't stand it! I shall be chipped to death! If you won't do your plain duty and go to the Head and tell him that it's impossible, I'll go myself."

"Horace!"

"Are you going?"

"N—no—"

"All right! Then I will!"

Coker rushed to the door. Reggie jumped up in alarm.

"Horace! Oh, I say, Horace—"

Slam!

Coker minor dropped, gasping, into the chair again.

Coker major strode furiously along the passage. Several fellows who saw him pass stared at him in surprise. One or two spoke to him, but Coker brushed them aside without answering. He strode on without a pause till he reached the Head's study, and knocked, and entered, without waiting for the Head to ask him to come in.

Dr. Locke looked up. He did not notice for the moment how red and furious Coker's face was. He nodded genially.

"Ah! You have come to speak about your young brother, Coker?" he said, in his pleasant voice.

"Yes, sir!" said Coker sulphurously.

"A very clever lad—a most clever and well-informed lad," said the Head. "Your brother will do you credit here, Coker. You are not yourself distinguished by scholarly attainments; but I hope now that that is rather due to carelessness on your part, rather than to any want of natural ability. I hope that you will take example by your brother, and do your best to join him in the Sixth Form."

"Sir!"

"It must have come to you as a pleasant surprise," said the Head. "No other boy in the Fifth Form here has a younger brother in the Sixth."

"Dr. Locke!"

"It is a great distinction, Coker. I dare say you were surprised."

"Yes, sir, I was very much surprised," gasped Coker; "and not pleased, either."

"What?"

"Isn't there some mistake, sir?"

"Mistake?" repeated Dr. Locke, his brow growing stern. "What do you mean, Coker?"

"My minor can't be in the Sixth, sir, when I'm only in the Fifth!"

"Why not?"

"Because—because it will make me look a silly ass, sir!" blurted out Coker.

Dr. Locke smiled slightly.

"I am sorry for that, Coker. I do not look at it in that light; but, in any case, it is unavoidable. You cannot expect me to put Coker minor into a lower Form than the one he is suited for simply be-

at Greyfriars. Hobson's expression was so very peculiar that the juniors left off their discussion to stare at the Shell fellow.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo!" Bob Cherry exclaimed. "Seen a ghost, Hobby?"

"No! Have you fellows heard?"

"That depends," said Bob Cherry.

"We heard the rising-bell this morning. We heard old Quelch in the Form-room. We heard a silly ass coming up the passage, and saw him look into the study!"

"Have you heard the news?" roared Hobson.

"Which news?"

"About young Coker."

"In trouble again?" asked Harry Wharton.

"Then you haven't heard?"

"Heard what? Out with it, you ass!"

"He's in the Sixth!"



"I object to my young brother being in the Sixth, sir!" roared Coker, forgetting for the moment the respect due to the Head. "Coker!" said the Head. "Leave my study at once!" (See chapter 3.)

cause you appear to have an objection to seeing him in a higher Form than yourself."

"The fellows will say—"

"Ahem! I am afraid that I cannot concern myself with what the fellows say, as you express it," said the Head stiffly.

"And now, Coker, my time is valuable and—"

"You—you mean to stick him in the Sixth, sir?" said Coker dazedly.

"I have already said so."

"I object, sir!" roared Coker, forgetting for the moment the respect due to the reverend Head of Greyfriars. "I object, sir! I object!"

"Coker!"

"I think it's rotten!" gasped Coker.

Dr. Locke rose, and, resting one hand on the table, raised the other and shook his finger reprovingly at Coker.

"Coker, this is not the way to speak to your headmaster. Leave my study at once!"

Coker looked at the Head's frowning brow, and the torrent of words died upon his lips. He clenched his hands hard, and strode, without another word, from the Head's study.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Rough on Reggie!

HOBSON of the Shell looked into Study No. 1 in the Remove passage. Harry Wharton & Co. were all there discussing football, a subject now of growing interest

"Eh?"

"The Head's put him in the Sixth!" shrieked Hobson. "It wasn't bad enough to have his major in the Fifth, when he doesn't know enough to be in the Shell. They've put Coker minor in the Sixth!"

"My only uncle!"

"He's got a study to himself in the Sixth; he won't have to sleep in a dorm, where we can get a chance at him!" said Hobson, his face flaming. "He's a giddy senior; they'll be making him a prefect next. What do you think of that?"

"Well, it is a surprise," said Nugent.

"How is old Coker taking it?"

Hobson chuckled.

"Coker? He's ramping—simply ramping!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Fancy a kid like that in the Sixth putting on the airs of a senior!" said Hobson.

"Has he put on any airs?" asked Mark Linley innocently.

"Huh! Of course he will!"

"Well, give him a chance till he does."

"Rot! We're going to show him that we're not going to have kids of his age swanking about as seniors!" snorted Hobson. "I looked in to ask you fellows if you'd come?"

"Come? Is it a feed?" asked Tom Brown.

"Feed be hanged! We're going to

THE POPULAR.—No. 139.

OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY! "COKER COMES ROUND!" A SPLENDID STORY

show Coker minor what we think of him, having the awful cheek to sneak into the Sixth. Half the Shell are going, and a lot of the Fourth. Temple & Co. are frightfully waxy about it. We're going to Coker minor's study to turn him out!"

"Better go slow," remarked Bulstrode, with a grin. "Coker major may be there."

"Coker major's more wild with him than anybody else," said Hobson. "Coker major won't interfere; no danger of that."

"You'd better let the kid alone," said Wharton decidedly. "If he's entitled to go into the Sixth, I suppose the Head did right in putting him there. We're not going to have a hand in ragging him, anyway. Looks to me as if he's likely to have a rough time."

"Yes, rather!" yelled Hobson. "We're going to make it rough for him—rather! If you won't join in you can stay out, and be blowed!"

And Hobson tramped away angrily. Harry Wharton & Co. exchanged amazed glances. The football committee was thinking of anything but footer now.

"Well, this is a giddy surprise!" said Harry Wharton. "Coker the Second will have a hard row to hoe in the Sixth. The seniors won't like it. Loder and Carne and Walker will get their backs up, for a cert!"

"And poor old Horace! He was so particular about making things easy for his minor in a lower Form," said Nugent, laughing.

"I suppose he will feel ratty. I don't see why he should, but—"

"We said we'd stand by the kid if he came into the Remove," said Harry Wharton hesitatingly. "If he's in the Sixth, I suppose we're not called upon to interfere. A Sixth Former might think it cheek on our part if we did. But if that crowd's going to rag him—"

"Let's go along and see fair play," suggested Mark Linley.

"Hear, hear!"

And the football committee left Study No. 1, and made their way to the Sixth-Form passage. They found a big crowd going in the same direction.

All the juniors seemed to be exasperated.

The fellows who, remembering Coker major's high-handed ways, had intended to "take it out" of his minor, were simply wild at hearing that their intended victim had been placed in the highest Form, among the prefects. To "take it out" of a Sixth-Former was a very unusual proceeding, and likely to lead to painful results, but in their exasperation the juniors were simply flocking towards the new fellow's study. Hobson of the Shell was the leader, but Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth were well to the fore. Tubb and Paget and Bolsover minor of the Third were there, too. They were more exasperated than anybody

else, as the new Sixth-Former would have the right to fag them, and each of the heroes of the Third was convinced that he could knock the new senior into a cocked hat in a fair fight. And to fag for a fellow whom he could knock into a cocked hat was too deep a humiliation for any fag.

"Come on," said Hobson; "let's have him out! Don't make a row. We don't want Wingate to come chipping in."

Hobson threw open the new fellow's door without the preliminary of knocking.

There was a little startled exclamation from Coker minor.

Reggie was kneeling beside a box of books, which he was unpacking. The sight of the books increased the wrath of the ragers. Greek and Latin classics seemed to form the majority of them, showing that Coker minor was that most reprehensible of all persons—a "swot," otherwise a reading fellow. Reggie rose to his feet in alarm, as the threatening crowd filled his doorway and overflowed into the study.

"G-g-good-afternoon!" he said feebly.

"G-g-good-afternoon!" repeated Hobson, with exquisite mimicry. "I suppose you're young Coker?"

"Yes, please."

"Yes, please!" roared Hobson. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"A rotten spooney!" said Benson.

"A blessed noodle!" said Temple of the Fourth.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"I—I say, I—I hope I haven't offended you fellows," said Reggie, in bewilderment.

"Well, you have," said Hobson sternly. "You're in the Sixth?"

"Yes, please."

"Well, what do you mean by being in the Sixth—hey?" demanded Hobson, in a magisterial voice.

"I—I—I—"

"Do you think we're going to stand your cheek?"

"Oh dear!"

"Do you think we're going to fag for you?" shrieked Tubb, shaking an inky fist into the study. "Yah!"

"Goodness gracious!"

"Have him out!" roared Bolsover of the Remove.

"Bump him!"

"Chuck his rotten books out of the window, the beastly swot!"

"And chuck him after them!"

"Hurrah!"

"We're fed up with Cokers!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Reggie Coker hardly knew whether he was on his head or his heels. He was seized in the grasp of a dozen hands, and his beloved books were grasped and tossed about the study. Reggie gave a cry of dismay.

"Oh, please, you fellows—"

"Chuck it!" came the voice of Harry Wharton from the passage. "Let him

alone, Hobby. We're not going to have it!"

"Yah! Go and eat coke!" retorted Hobson.

Outside in the passage the Famous Four were striving to reach the study. But the crowd was too thick, and nobody was disposed to make room for Harry Wharton & Co. to pass. There was a yelling and swaying in the passage, the excited juniors having quite forgotten Hobson's cautious admonition to make no noise.

"Let us come in, you bounders!"

"Yah! Buzz off!"

"Clear out!"

"Oh! Please don't!" gasped Coker minor, as Hobson and Temple swung him into the air. "I—I—I say—please—Ow!"

Bump!

"Give him another!"

"Hurrah!"

There was a sudden swaying and scuttling in the passage. The crowd cleared off as if by magic. Wingate of the Sixth, with a cane in his hand, strode into the study. He did not waste time in words. He laid the cane about him with strict impartiality upon all who were within reach. Even the unfortunate Coker minor received a lash or two as he rolled out of the grasp of the ragers.

The ragers made a wild rush to escape. There was no arguing with Wingate; he had evidently not come there to argue. The cane rose and fell like lightning, and the ragers, yelling and bawling, fell over one another in their haste to get out of the study. There was a block in the doorway, and before the jammed juniors could extricate themselves the cane had told upon their backs and legs and shoulders. They broke into the passage and fled, whooping.

Wingate turned breathlessly to Coker minor.

"All right?" he called.

Reggie gasped.

"Oh dear! Oh dear!"

Wingate grinned.

"If they should come back again, take a cricket-stump to them," he said. "But I don't think they'll come back again. They've had a lesson."

And the ragers did not come back again. They were nursing their injuries in distant corners; and, in spite of their exasperation, they agreed that ragging in the Sixth Form passage was not quite good enough.

But it was extremely doubtful if Reggie Coker of the Sixth had been ragged for the last time. Others besides juniors ragged. Sixth-Formers sometimes ragged one another. Young Coker had to think of them as well as the Removites.

THE END.

(Another splendid Greyfriars story next Friday in the POPULAR. In the meantime, get the "Magnet Library" next Monday, and read the extra-long, complete story of Harry Wharton & Co.)

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"CHAMPION OF THE REMOVE!"

A Magnificent New, Extra-Long, Complete Tale of School and Sport at Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

THE POPULAR.—No. 139.

NEXT
FRIDAY!

"THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!"

A GRAND

TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO.
By OWEN CONQUEST.



GUNNER TURNS UP!

A Splendid Long Complete School Story of
JIMMY SILVER & CO. at Rookwood.

By **OWEN CONQUEST**

(Author of the Famous Rookwood Yarns in "The Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Under Cover of Night!

LOOKS like something up!" remarked Jimmy Silver.
"It does—it do!" agreed Lovell.

It was, in fact, pretty plain that something was "up" at Rookwood School that morning.

The Fistical Four, the heroes of the Classical Fourth, were chatting in the quadrangle, while they waited for the bell for first lesson.

Old Sergeant Kettle, who kept the school shop, had been seen to stride into the School House, with a frowning and troubled brow.

As the old sergeant generally looked good-humoured, the Fistical Four had observed him with surprise.

Mr. Kettle was in a disturbed and wrathful frame of mind, that was clear.

In a few minutes he had emerged from the School House again, accompanied by the Head himself.

The juniors respectfully "capped" the Head as he passed, but Dr. Chisholm, evidently very much disturbed, had not even observed the salute.

They hurried across the quad, and disappeared through the beeches.

"My word!" said Newcome, with a whistle. "What's the matter with the Head?"

"And the merry sergeant?" remarked Raby.

The Fistical Four wondered.

Tubby Muffin, the fattest junior on the Classical side at Rookwood, came from the direction of the tuckshop, and joined them. There was a discontented expression on his podgy face.

"Closed!" he announced indignantly. "The tuckshop ain't open this morning, you fellows. I wanted some toffee. Awful cheek of the sergeant, I think, not opening before lessons—what?"

"Something's up!" said Jimmy Silver. "The Head's there," growled Tubby. "He's gone in with old Kettle, and the shop ain't open. Rotten!"

"You fellows know what's up?" asked Erroll of the Fourth, joining the juniors. "We've got to go into Hall instead of the Form-rooms!"

"My hat!"

"Mr. Bootles says—had it from the Head, I suppose. Hallo, here comes the Head!"

Dr. Chisholm came rustling back, and disappeared into the House, without a glance at the surprised juniors.

A minute or two later Bulkeley and

Neville and the other prefects were shepherding the Rookwood fellows into Big Hall.

Jimmy Silver & Co. marched in with the rest in a state of very great surprise.

It was only too clear that something was up, and it appeared to be in connection with the sergeant and the school shop. But what it was was a mystery.

It was evidently an affair that concerned the whole school, for the Modern prefects were marching the Modern fellows in, as well as the Classics.

Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Fourth, came into the Hall, and Tommy paused to speak to Jimmy Silver.

"Know what's on?" he asked.

"Haven't the faintest idea," said Jimmy.

"Haven't you?"

"Not a bit!"

"Somebody going to be flogged, perhaps," remarked Tommy Cook. "What have you Classical bounders been up to?"

"More likely a Modern going to be sacked!" retorted Jimmy Silver.

"Rats!"

"Fathead!"

"You Classical chump—"

"You Modern ass—"

"Order there!" called out Bulkeley of the Sixth, with a frown. "Shut up, you fags. Do you hear?"

The fags promptly "shut up." The Head was entering the Hall by the upper door.

The whole school stood to attention. The silence could almost be felt as the Head rustled in.

All eyes were upon Dr. Chisholm.

His knitted brows showed that he was angry.

"Rod in pickle for somebody," Mornington murmured to Erroll. "Who's been found out, I wonder?"

"Silence!"

The Head glanced over the assembled school.

"Boys!" His voice was very deep.

"A most unprecedented thing has occurred. During the night the school shop has been broken into, and a quantity of Sergeant Kettle's stock abstracted!"

"Oh!"

"Some person or persons," resumed the Head, his eyes glinting—"some person or persons, at present unknown, have committed this unprecedented act of dishonesty and outrage. An entrance was forced into the building, a shutter being broken, and goods to the value of several

pounds taken. I am ashamed to think that such a boy is sheltered under the roof of Rookwood."

"Oh crumbs!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

"Silence!"

"Some boy," resumed the Head, "some unscrupulous boy has helped himself in this dishonest manner. Needless to say, the most severe punishment will be visited upon the offender. As he must be here present, I call upon him to stand forth!"

Deep silence.

"I am waiting!" came the deep voice of the Head. "I give the delinquent the opportunity of making a frank confession before the school. If he comes forward immediately I shall administer a flogging. Otherwise, the matter will be strictly investigated, and the offender will be expelled from Rookwood when discovered. I will wait one minute!"

Silence again.

Many expressive looks were cast at Tubby Muffin by his Form-fellows. They felt that, for his own sake, Tubby would do better to own up at once. But the fat Classical only glared at them ferociously, and remained silent.

The minute elapsed.

"Very well," said the Head at last, compressing his lips. "Investigation into this act of lawless dishonesty will proceed. Justice will be dealt out to the offender, with the most rigid severity. Dismiss!"

And the school filed out.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Muffin is Indignant!

DURING morning lessons the attention of the Rookwood fellows was not wholly fixed upon school work.

The raid at the tuckshop had caused considerable excitement, and there was very keen interest in the "investigations" which were presumably going on.

Few of the Classical Fourth doubted that when the delinquent was revealed he would turn out to be Tubby Muffin.

Indeed, Mr. Bootles, who knew Tubby pretty well, allowed his glance to rest upon the plump youth several times, in quite a significant way.

After morning lessons there was a general exodus to the school shop.

Every fellow was keen to see exactly

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NEXT FRIDAY! "COKER COMES ROUND!" A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

what had happened there, and how the raider had obtained an entrance.

They found Sergeant Kettle in a grumpy mood.

The sergeant had lost at least three pounds worth of goods, and he was a little doubtful about compensation. Certainly the bill would be sent to the culprit's father when he was discovered. But he had not been discovered yet.

Jimmy Silver & Co. surveyed the damage done. A little window had been forced, a shutter broken, and the raider had crawled in through the window. The shutter was nailed up now.

"Regular burglary, and no mistake!" said Lovell.

"Which of you Classics did it?" asked Tommy Dodd sweetly.

Lovell snorted.

He would have been glad to attribute the amateur burglary to the Moderns, but he was convinced himself that Tubby Muffin was the guilty party. Tubby's egregious appetite had brought disgrace upon the Classical side at Rookwood.

"Of course, it was Tubby!" growled Lovell. "He's a disgrace to the school!"

"I didn't do it!" yelled Tubby.

"Draw it mild, Tubby!" said Newcome. "Where is the loot?"

"How should I know?" yelled Tubby, exasperated. "I tell you I was fast asleep last night, and never even dreamed of getting out of bed. I never went near the blessed shop. I don't know anything about it!"

Jimmy Silver hesitated.

"Well, somebody did it!" he said.

"I didn't!" howled Muffin.

"Honest Injun?" asked Jimmy Silver, impressed at last by Tubby's earnestness, which was growing almost hysterical.

"Yes, honest Injun—honour bright—anything you like!" gasped Tubby Muffin. "I—I didn't know that shutter could be busted in like that—I mean, of course, I wouldn't have done anything of the sort under any circumstances."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's a rotten shame!" mumbled Tubby. "I swear I never had anything to do with it! Yah!"

"He must be spoofing!" said Lovell, a little impressed himself, however. "Still, it may have been one of the Moderns."

"I believe you, Tubby," said Jimmy Silver at last. And he quitted the study with his chums.

"If it wasn't Tubby, who was it?" demanded Newcome.

Jimmy shook his head.

"Blest if I know! But I think Tubby's telling the truth for once. May be a Modern after all."

And the Fistical Four gave up the problem, and went to dinner.

THE THIRD CHAPTER. Out of Bounds!

"IT'S rotten!" Jimmy Silver made that remark after dinner.

It was a sunny afternoon, and there was nothing special doing at Rookwood, and the Fistical Four were feeling inclined for a ramble out of gates.

And that was barred.

All Rookwood was "gated" by order of the Head, on account of the escaped convict, who was supposed to be lurking in the neighbourhood.

It was exasperating to all the Rookwood fellows.

The Classics, especially, were exasperated with Geoffrey Gunner, absconding solicitor and fugitive from justice, who had chosen to seek a refuge in the neighbourhood of the school.

The fact that Gunner had once been a

Modern fellow at Rookwood elicited sympathy on the Modern side of the school, but none whatever on the Classical side.

The Classics declared that the fellow had brought disgrace on his old school, and that the sooner he was "lugged" the better.

Tommy Dodd & Co., and most of the Modern juniors, maintained that Gunner was an injured innocent, the victim of a silly judge, and a fat-headed jury, condemned on circumstantial evidence, which any novelist could have told you was not to be relied upon.

Tommy Dodd's reason for this belief was the fact that Gunner had once been a Modern at Rookwood.

The Modern side would not own up to a convict, so it was necessary to believe that he was an injured innocent. Tommy Dodd & Co. made it a point to believe it.

"Rotten isn't the word!" Lovell remarked. "Suppose we did meet that giddy convict on the heath, as the Head thinks we might! He wouldn't eat us!"

"We'd run him in!" said Raby.

"Hear, hear!"

"Anyway, we don't want to be kept bottled up within gates till he's nabbed!" growled Jimmy Silver. "Why, it's nearly a week since old Boggs came to tell the Head the fellow had been seen about here! Why haven't they caught him? They're paid to do it."

"Most likely he's cleared off from the neighbourhood."

"Shouldn't wonder," said Newcome.

"He's certainly not been seen or heard of lately. Look here, are we going to be gated for ever on account of that rotter?"

"We're jolly well not!" growled Jimmy Silver. "I don't see it at all! Look here, the bobbies don't seem able to find this man Gunner. Suppose we take a hand in the game?"

"Oh!"

"I dare say we could run him down fast enough," argued Jimmy Silver.

"We know the wood from end to end, and the heath, too, and the old quarries. We've had a lot of scouting practice, and know how to pick up tracks."

"But we can't get out of gates!"

"We can get over a wall!" said Jimmy Silver sententiously. "I don't see passing a half-holiday within gates on account of a measly convict!"

There was a murmur of agreement from the Co.

They were "fed up" with gating, and there was a prospect of excitement in looking for the convict, too, though they had not much expectation of coming across him.

Jimmy looked for the Colonial chums—Pons and Conroy and Van Ryn—and the trio at once joined in the scheme. Flynn and Oswald joined up as well.

Nine juniors made their way cautiously to the point of the school wall which was well screened by the old beeches.

"Hallo! Breaking bounds, you young bounders?"

It was Tommy Dodd's voice.

The Modern junior was leaning against a beech, apparently in deep thought, when the Classics came quietly by.

"Mum's the word, Doddy," said Jimmy Silver. "We're tired of gates. Come along with us, and look for the convict!"

Tommy Dodd grinned.

"Where are you going to look for him?" he asked.

"In the wood."

"You think he's there?"

"Well, I suppose so," said Jimmy Silver; "or else in the old quarries on the heath. Unless he's cleared off, of course."

"He had some reason for coming into this neighbourhood," remarked Van Ryn. "He came back here because he was an old Rookwood chap, and knew the ground. I dare say he's hidden in the quarries."

"Must be getting pretty hungry by this time, if he is," said Tommy Dodd.

"I dare say he steals grub from the farms."

"Well, I wish you luck," said Tommy Dodd, with unexpected good-humour.

"I'll give you a bunk up, if you like."

"Thanks!"

The Classics slipped over the school wall one after another, the last to climb being helped from below by the Modern junior.

Tommy Dodd grinned after them, and strolled away through the beeches.

The nine Classics scuttled across the road, and made haste to put a few fields between them and the school. They did not want to be spotted out of bounds. It would have meant a painful interview with the Head afterwards.

All through that sunny afternoon they put great keenness and energy into the hunt for the missing man, whose "cheek" in seeking refuge near Rookwood was the cause of the school bounds being drawn in.

If the eager Classics had found him, there were certainly enough of them to capture him and march him off in triumph to the police-station.

But if the missing convict was there, he was well concealed.

All the scoutcraft of Jimmy Silver & Co. did not enable them to pick up the trail of the missing man in the wood, or on the heath. They found no "sign" to guide them. Much to the disappointment of the juniors, the one-time Modern of Rookwood was conspicuous by his absence.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Tommy Dodd Figures it Out!

"PENNY for 'em!" said Tommy Cook.

"Twopence, if you loike, bedad!" remarked Tommy Doyle.

Tommy Dodd was thinking.

His two chums had joined him in the quadrangle, and they had found Tommy Dodd very silent and plunged in thought.

His brows were knitted, and his whole expression was that of concentration in mental effort.

"I think I've got it!" Tommy Dodd said, at last.

"Got phwat?"

"The abbey ruins!" said Dodd.

The other two Tommies stared at him. Tommy Doyle tapped his forehead in a significant way.

"The abbey ruins!" repeated Cook.

"Yes, I think so."

"What are you driving at?"

Tommy Dodd nodded, in reply to his own thoughts. He was evidently satisfied with the conclusion he had come to, whatever it was.

"Come up to the study," he said.

"Phwat for, intoirly?"

"Come on, and don't argue, old chap."

Quite mystified, Cook and Doyle followed Tommy Dodd to Mr. Manders' House, and up to the study. Dodd carefully closed the door, his chums watching him in silence, and really wondering whether there was anything wrong with Tommy Dodd's "upper crust."

"I've thought it out," said Tommy Dodd impressively. "Now, you chaps, about that poor fellow, Gunner."

"Oh, Gunner?"

(Continued on page 13.)

NEXT
FRIDAY!

THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!

A GRAND
TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO.

By OWEN CONQUEST.



BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!

A GRAND FOUR-PAGE SUPPLEMENT

Edited by

WILLIAM GEORGE BUNTER of Greyfriars School.

Assisted by

HIS FOUR FAT SUBS—SAMMY BUNTER of Greyfriars, **FATTY WYNN** and **BAGGY TRIMBLE** of St. Jim's, and **TUBBY MUFFIN** of Rookwood.

Contributions from the Three Famous Schools.

Things We Want to No!

By **BILLY BUNTER.**

When is the staff of my "Weekly" going to resoom operashuns?

Why did they go on strike in the first plaice?

Have they ever herd the proverb about ratts shipping a deserted sink?

What greevanse have they got against me, which always treeted them with eggstream kindness and jenny-rossity?

Are they aware of the fackht that I got out this number all by myself—that I have been edditer, subb-edditer, and printer's devvil rolled into one?

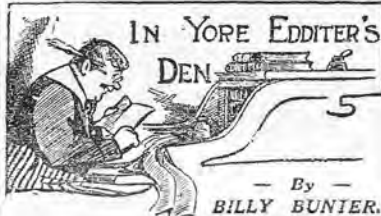
Are they also aware of the fackht that if they leeve me in the soop much longer I shall be in a frightful stew, and possibly devvelop water on the brane?

When, oh, when are they coming to there senses—if they've got any?

Are they aware that I am about to take up the studdy of semaphore, bekawse if they drive me off my dot I shall say, "Oh, dash!"

Will they agree when they see this Speshul All-Bunter Number that it nocks all previous issews into fitts?

Or will they themselves go into fitts when they see it?



By **BILLY BUNTER.**

My Deer Readers,—I am in the toyles this week!

The members of my staff are still on strike, with the rezzult that I've got to get out this number entirely off my own batt! I karn't even get any help from Dick Penfold, and the other fellows who jenerally kontribute to this jernal.

Hear am I, stranded, in a terribal plite! Either the paper shuts up shopp, or I perduce it single-handed, and write every word of it myself. I have desided upon the latter corse. It meens sitting up late every nite, burning gallens of midnite oil. It meens the edditer waisting himself to a shaddo. But I'll do it!

I karn't bare the thort of dissapoynting thowsands and thowsands of boys and girls. I can well imagine the konsternation their wood be if "Billy Bunter's Weekly" suspended publication. On that fatal dawn when no issew of my "Weekly" appeared everybuddy wood go into deep morning!

Friends, Romans, countrymen, I shall carry on! The cry goes round, "Billy Bunter is sticking to his post. His staff is on strike, but his manly spirit is undornted. He meens to see things threwh."

I trussed, deer readers, that by neckst week the strike will be over, and that harmony will be restored—as the man said when he repaired the pianno.

Up to the prezzent, my four fat subbs will not budge from the position they have taken up. They deklare that they will not budge from the position they have taken up. They deklare that they will not resoom work under any serkumstances.

Very well! We will weight and sea! I have no dout that my readers will vote this All-Bunter Number one of the gratest triums of modern jernalism. Every single word in this issew has been ritten by your perspiring, but undornted, pal,

Yore Edditer

The Gorger's Song!

By **BILLY BUNTER.**

Sum fellows say
I'm gorging all day.

It's a fackht that I love a good feed.
What if I munch
Ten corsers for lunch?
It don't meen I'm guilty of greed!

I'm for ever going dubbles,
Going dubbles in the hall.
Two lots of pie

I'm eager to try.
'Twill build up my fat and my mussel,
that's why!
That is all I live for,
Helpings large and small.
I'm for ever going dubbles,
Going dubbles in the hall!

Some like to stuff
Doe-nutts and duff
At dinner and supper and tea.
Gorgers they are,
And the biggest by far
Is yore edditer—W. G. B.!

I'm for ever going dubbles,
Going dubbles in the hall.
Pastries and pies
Gladden my eyes.
I'm always lording them up to the skies!
Hark! The gong is sounding!
Bunter's on the hall!
I'm for ever going dubbles,
Going dubbles in the hall!
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The Staff Strikes!

A Sketch in One Act. By BILLY BUNTER.

(NOTE.—Dick Penfold looked at this mannuuscript when I had finished it, and the silly ass maid a lot of alterashuns in the speling. I trussed my reeders will excuse all the speling errors, and bare in mind that I am not guilty.—Ed.)

CHARACTERS :

BILLY BUNTER	{	Editor of "Billy Bunter's Weekly."
BAGGY TRIMBLE	{	The Four Fat Subs.
FATTY WYNN		
TUBBY MUFFIN		
SAMMY BUNTER		

BILLY : Ah! I am in a traitor's grip !
The rat deserts the sinking ship !
FATTY : Call me a rat again, you chump,
You'll hit the floorboards with a bump !

[Enter BAGGY TRIMBLE.]

BILLY : Hallo ! Here's Trimble come to see me,
And his expression's far from dreamy !
An active gleam shines in his eyes
As if he's going to mesmerise !

BAGGY : I'm finished—absolutely finished !
My energy is quite diminished.
I've worked for you with might and main ;
I'll never work for you again !

BILLY : If all my staff becomes so mutinous
The other fellows will be hootin' us,
They'll say my paper's going West,
They'll say it can't survive the test !

BAGGY : The chaps can say just what they like,
I'm quite resolved to go on strike !

BILLY : Another rat deserts the ship !
It's fairly given me the pip !

BAGGY : The work I've done is such a strain
Upon my sensitive young brain,
I simply can't keep up the pace,
And therefore I resign my place !

[Enter TUBBY MUFFIN.]

BILLY : Here's Muffin come to pay a visit !
How now, my podgy pal, what is it ?

TUBBY : I'm tired of work—I'm tired of writing
A general strike seems most inviting.

BILLY : You're the fourth chap to tell me so,
This isn't loyalty, you know !
Your action leaves me in the lurch,
The four of you deserve the birch !

TUBBY : Look here, I've never been a shirker,
I've always been a willing worker !
But really, Bill, the strain's too great,
I'll leave your "Weekly" to its fate !

BILLY : O treachery ! O base deceit !
I've given you nice things to eat !
I've treated Trimble, you, and Wynn,
As if you were my kith and kin !

TUBBY : Unless you give me bigger wages
I'll write no further for your pages !

BILLY : Go, all of you, and do your worst !
I took you to my heart at first,
I thought that you were all first-raters,
But you are just a pack of traitors !
Although you've left me on the shelf
I'll tackle everything myself.
I'll write my "Weekly"—every line,
And thus defeat your base design.
Go ! Leave me to commence my job,
And to enjoy a quiet sob !

[Exit the Four Fat Subs.]

CURTAIN.

(SCENE.—The editorial sanctum of "Billy Bunter's Weekly."
The editor is seated at the table, scribbling industriously. Enter SAMMY BUNTER.)

SAMMY : Look here, you inmate of the Zoo,
I've got a bone to pick with you !

BILLY : Trot out your troubles, little man,
And I'll remove them, if I can !

SAMMY : I'm sick of working for you, Billy,
The strain of it will drive me silly !
From morn till night I slog and slog,
I'm treated like a blessed dog !

BILLY (wrathfully) : How dare you talk to me like that ?
Silence, you under-sized young brat !

SAMMY : I won't be silent any longer !
I'd punch your head if I was stronger !
I'm sick of death of all this slavery,
And all your cunning tricks and knavery.
Yes, the whole business is unsavoury,
And if I had an ounce of bravery—

BILLY : Dry up, you cheeky little rat !
What have you got to grumble at ?

SAMMY : The wage I get is not enough
To buy a chap a pinch of snuff !
Besides, I'm tired of constant scrubbing,
It makes a fellow feel like blubbing !
I come and scrub the floor each morn,
And all I get is withering scorn.
Such treatment fairly makes me choke,
I will not do another stroke !

BILLY : You mean that you will go on strike ?

SAMMY : Yes, put it that way, if you like !

BILLY : Then go ! I'll get another sub
To do your job, you crawling grub !

[Enter FATTY WYNN.]

BILLY : Hallo ! Here's Fatty from St. Jim's !
Behold his plump and rounded limbs !
Why have you come to see me, Fatty ?
Why do you look so wild and ratty ?

FATTY : I've come to say, my podgy chief,
Your "Weekly" soon will come to grief !

BILLY : Good gracious ! What's the matter,
Wynn ?

FATTY : My job's gone West—I've turned it in !

BILLY : Now, this is really most alarming !
It's blunt, it's brutal, it's disarming !
Sammy sends in his resignation
And you increase the consternation !

FATTY : The salary I get from you
(For two months' past it's overdue)
Won't buy enough to feed a gnat !
I'm telling you the truth, that's flat !



A Magniffiscent Long Kompleat Story of the Footbawl Feeld,
Showing How a Yung Player Fort his Way to Fame and Forchune.

By BILLY BUNTER.

"BOO!"
"Call yoreselves footbawlers?"
Deep and hollo grones ekkoed
across the footbawl feeld at Pink-
friars Skool.

On that brilliyunt September afternoon, the
Remove Form had played its first match of
the sezoon against Lowcliffe, and the rezult
had been a smashing victory for Lowcliffe
by umpteen goles to nil.

The Remove specked taters were looking
very sick and soar.

"Horton," they cride, addressing the kaptin
of the defeeted team, "you karn't play
footer for toffee! You're not fit to be
skipper of a kindergarten!"

A pail flush spread over Horton's feechers.
"I doue my best!" he muttered.

"Rats!"
"Yah!"

"Go and eat koke!"

Horton passed on, noring his lower lipp with
sullen chaggrin.

"I say, you felloes," said Billy Stunter, a
fat, banson fellow of fifteen summers, "it's
time we had a new skipper!"

"Here, here!"

"I beg to propose, seckond, and carry
myself unanimously for that post."

"Hooray!"

"Our neckst match is against St. Tim's, on
Saturday. Horton's team can take a back
seet, and I'll get up an eleven to take its
place."

"Bravvo!"

"You can play, Podd, and you, Glutton;
you, too, Bishy. You must come out and
pracktiss regularly, and we'll give St. Tim's
the licking of there lives!"

Billy Stunter was in deadly Ernest. He got
to work with a Will. He at once began to
Bob about to get reeroots for his team.

They turned out to pracktiss every day, and
although they were ruff and roar material
at first, Billy Stunter soon licked them into
shape.

"We're going grate guns!" he declared.

"I'm certain we shall lick St. Tim's into a
kocked batt!"

"Horton and the others are orfally ratty
about it, Billy," said Tom Glutton. "They
don't like the idear of your getting up a
rival team."

"I don't suppoze they do," said Billy
Stunter grimly. "But they'll have to lump
it! Remove footbawl is going to the doggs,
and it's up to sambuddy to revive it."

On the mourning before the match, Billy
Stunter borroed a bike, and rode into Port-
field to buy a new footer jersey. He had
such a big chest development that he had
eplit a duzen jerseys in suxsession.

Having bort the jersey, Billy skweezed it
on to his barrel-like frame, and rode back to
Pinkfriars.

He was in grate spirits.

"This afternoon," he eggsklaimed, as he
pedalled gaily along, "I shall leed my merry
men to victory against St. Tim's. What a
nock-out it will be for Horton and his set!
Har, har!"

Even as he spoke, Billy Stunter became
aware of a sudden russling noyse in the
hedge. He slowed up, and listened; and as
he did so, a duzen figgers sprang out upon
him.

Billy rekknised them at a glance.

Harry Horton was the leader of the gang,
and Bob Berry, Frank Bluegent, Johnny

Bullock, Hurree Warble, and Tom Clown
were with him.

"Coller him!" cride Horton.

Billy Stunter rolled off his masheen, and
landed in the roadway with a dull thud. But
he was on his feet again in an instant, with
the life of battle gleeming in his I.

"You rotters!" he cride threw his clenched
teeth. "This is a plott—a dasterly plott to
kidnapp me!"

"Coller him!" repeated Horton.

Billy Stunter drew himself up to his fool
hite. His fists were titely clenched. Sparks
were flashing from his I's.

"You cowherds!" he cride skornfully.

"You are six to one! Is this yore idear of
fare play?"

The only response was a mocking larf, as
Horton and his kronies came on.

Billy Stunter shott out his left.

Biif!

Horton was down.

Billy Stunter shott out his rite.

Biif!

Berry was down.

Billy Stunter shott out his left and rite at
the same time.



With a mity kick, Billy Stunter shott
the first gole for his side.

Bluegent, Bullock, Warble, and Clown were
down.

"Ow, ow, ow!" they cride, in their
angwish.

In six sekkonds Billy Stunter had disposed
of the six yung hooligans who had tride
to kidnapp him.

Then our hero, with a gay larf, lept on to
his masheen and road away along the rode.

He reeched Pinkfriars just as the dinner-
gong was sounding.

It was stake-and-kidney pooding for dinner,
and Billy Stunter did fool justiss to it. He
devoured not only his own porshun, but the
porshuns of the six felloes who were absent.

Billy always beleived in laying a solid
foundashun before playing footbawl.

When the meel was over, he mustard
his men—they were hot-stuff footbawlers—and
marched them down to the feeld of play.

The St. Tim's team, kaptined by Tom
Terry, was already on the ground.

"Where's Horton?" i-kwired Terry, in
surprise.

Billy Stunter chuckelled.

"Horton's dead in this act!" he said.

"This is my own team, and you'll find us a
much tuffer proposition than Horton's rag-
time eleven!"

"Yes, rather!"

Amid breathless eggssitement, the two teams
lined up.

Peep! went the wissle. And the neckst
minut Billy Stunter was away, with the ball
at his toes.

Their was a dead hush as he ran, while
the crowd cheered wildly.

"Go it, Billy!"

"Good old Stunter!"

"Shoot!"

"Gole! Gole! Gole!"

With a mity kick, Billy Stunter had shott
the first gole for his side!

The St. Tim's goalle terved very red, and
looked very blue, as he picked the ball out
of the nett.

"That's meerly the first instalment!" said
Billy Stunter, with a chuckle. "Their's more
to follo!"

Five minnits later Billy was again thred-
ding his way threw the oppersition. He hit
the senter-half on the nose, and he knocked
the foolbacks flying. Then he took another mity
kick, and the ball landed in the nett with a
forse that burst the bladder.

"Gole!"

"Hooray!"

The Remove Form at Pinkfriars were two
up! And by half-time they had added four
more—all from the skilful boot of Billy
Stunter!

The St. Tim's felloes looked very dejected
during the interval. But Billy Stunter & Co.
were merry and brite. There faces beemed
like fool moons.

In the sekkond half, Billy Stunter ran riot.

He was in deadly form. Nobody could
stopp him, and the St. Tim's backs hopped
out of the way when they saw him coming.

Billy was playing at senter-forward, and
he rekwested his wing men to feed him well.

"I always like to be well fed!" he eggs-
plained, with a chuckle.

No less than ten goles were added in the
sekkond half—all from the boot of Billy
Stunter—and the Remove won the match by
sixteen goles to nicks.

As he came off the feeld Billy Stunter was
approached by a distingwished-looking gentle-
man in a top hatt and frock-coat.

"Let me interjuice myself," said the
stranger. "I am Mr. Tallent Hunter, a
director of the Aston Villa Footbawl Clubb.

I have watched yore display, Master Stunter,
with interest, approval, and admirashun!

Allow me to ring yore hand!"

Billy Stunter smiled modestly.

"It was nothing!" he mermered. "Had I
been in my usual form, I should have kicked
twice as meny goles as that!"

"Then you are hudeed a marvel! I will ask
yore headmaster to allow you to tern out
for the Villa on Saterdag."

"Oh, good!"

There is no need to deskribe what folloed,
deer readers.

Suffice it to say, that Billy Stunter played
for the famus Villa clubb, and scored three
goles. They were offside, but that maid no
differece.

One of these days Billy Stunter will become
an International. And when he plays for
England his name—like chewing-gum in
America—will be in everybody's mouth.

Hears to Billy Stunter, the fiting foot-
bawler! And threw storm and shine, threw
fare whether and fowl, long may he rain!

As for Harry Horton and his tribe, their is
nothing for them to do but to berry there
diminished heads. They karn't play foot-
bawl for toffy!

THE END.

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A Deed of Destruckshun!

By Billy Bunter.

I NEVER enjoy my meals in September. The wasps won't let me! How I hate them, the littel beests, with there kontinual buzz-buzz! Like the bubbles in the song, "They fly so high, they reach the sky," but they never fade and die, the littel pests! They swoop down and attack you—espeshully if you've got a jammy mouth!

I was having tea in the tuckshopp the other day, and was enjoying myself famusly, when a wasp came and settled in the middle of the jam-tart I was about to eat. I tride to sweep it away with my arm, but I only succeeded in knocking a cupple of jinjer-beer glasses off the counter. They were shivvered to attoms.

"That will be one-and-sixpence, Master Bunter!" says Mrs. Mimble sternly.

"But, my dear madam," I protested, "it was the wasp's fault—not mine!"

Mrs. Mimble frowned.

"Don't argew, Master Bunter! Pay for the dammdidge!"

"Good grashus, ma'am! I shall be broke till the end of the term!"

"I karn't help yore troubles!" said the tuckshopp dame, unsimperthetically.

I paid for the dammdidge, and settled down to my tea again. As I did so a wasp settled down on my nose. I struck at him with my klenched fist, and knocked him out in the first round. The littel beggar departed—but not before he had given me a severe sting.

My nose began to swell vizzibly. It got bigger and bigger, and redder and redder. And the pane was simply dreadful.

"I say, ma'am!" I gasped. "I've been stung!" That wasp has taken a lump out of my nose!

Mrs. Mimble smiled.

"It looks as if it has added several lumps to it!" she said, sarkastick-like.

"What shall I do to get rid of this swelling?" I inkwired.

"You had better apply a blew-bagg, Master Bunter. I will get one for you."

The good dame did so, and then she attended to my nose. By the time she had finished her treatment the pane was worse than ever. I could hardly bare it. I was in such aggerney that I couldn't stopp to finish my tea.

Neckst mourning I eggspckted the swelling to have gone down. But it had dan nuthing of the sort. My nose was a site for gods and men and littel fishes.

I said to Quelchy, when we went in to mourning lessons:

"Pleese, sir, will you eggscuse me from Form-work this mourning?"

"On what grounds, Bunter?" says he.

"I've been stung by a wasp, sir," says I.

"Karn't you see that my nose is dubble its normal sighs?"

"That need not prevent you from carry-

ing on with yore work as usual, Bunter," says the hartless, callus beest.

So I had to remane in the Form-room, swotting Lattin verbs, when I ought to have been in the sanny, being nursed back to belth and strength.

Sum of my readers may lart at this, but I can assure them that a wasp sting is a very serious affare, I wunce had a cuzen who was stung by a wunce. They berried him in the local semetery. (I mean the cuzen, not the wasp!)

By dinner-time that day my nose was so bigg that sum of the feloes suggested playing footbawl with it.

I was in a fearful state of mind and boddly. The very menshun of the word "wasp" goaded me to savvidge fury. I inaid up my mind to start a croosade for eggsterminating all wasps.

I asked Bob Cherry if he could tell me how to destroy a wasps'-nest.

"Blow it up with gunpowder!" says he.

"But I don't go about carryng a barrel of gunpowder on my person!" says I.

"Karn't you suggest sumthing more practical?"

"Well," says Bob, stroking his chin thort-

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fully, "you could soke sum peaces of ragg in parraffin, set fire to them, and smoke the wasps out—see?"

"Thanks!" says I. "That's a kappital idear."

It was easy enuff to get some peaces of ragg. I pinched a duzen of Toddy's hangkercheefs.

It was easy enuff also, to get sum parraffin. Their was a tin of it in the woodshed. I swamped it (the parraffin, not the woodshed) on to the hangkercheefs, and went in serch of the wasps'-nest.

In the Close I met Fisher T. Fish. He was groning as if he was in grate pane.

"I say, Fishy," says I, "can you tell me if their is a wasps'-nest near here?"

"Ow! Yes! I've just sat on one!" groned Fishy. "It's in the stump of that elm-tree over yonder."

"You speak," says I, "as if you were in angwish."

"Angwish!" groned Fishy. "Angwish isn't the word for it! I've been stung all over my annatermy! Yow! I guess I won't go within a mile of that wasps'-nest again! Say, porpuss, what are you doing with those hangkercheefs?"

"They are soked with parraffin," I eggspained. "I'm going to set fire to them, and smoke the wasps out of house and home!"

"Good! But mind you don't get stung in the process."

"I don't mind being stung in the process,"



I jumped up like a jack-in-the-box, with umpteen wasps clinging luvvngly to me!

so long as I'm not stung in the face!" I replide.

I then maid my way in the direckshun of the tree-stump, from which a perpetual buzzing noyse emanated.

Taking a box of wax vesters from my pockitt, I ignited one, and set fire to the hangkercheefs. Then I buried them on to the wasps'-nest, and went and sat down on the bank near by to watch dervelopments.

Wood you believe it, deer readers? I don't suppoze you will, but it's a fack.

I sat down right in the middle of anuther wasps'-nest!

Oh, the aggerney and pane!

I shall never forgett that moment to my dying day. I jumped up like a jack-in-the-box, with about umpteen wasps clinging luvvngly to the rear porshun of my annatermy.

"Ow! Yow! Yarooooh!" I shrieked wildly. "I'm being stung in about fifty plaices at wunce!"

Peter Todd came running towards the spott. He looked simperthetic at first—untill he caught site of his hangkercheefs, smoldering on the tree-stump. Then his eggspression became murderus.

"You—you fat pirate!" he rored. "You Vandal! You've destroyed my perfectly priceless silk hangkercheefs! Take that—and that—and that!"

What with Toddy punching me in front, and the wasps stingng me in the rear, I had a terribul time.

When at last I was aloud to crawl away, I felt as if life was not worth living.

And it won't be, either—untill the wasp sezoon is over!

STOP PRESS KOLLUM!

Friday, 4.5 p.m.

The Edditer of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" sent the following tellygram to the Strikers:

"Are you willing to meet me at Greyfriars this afternoon to diskuss weather this Tom Foolery shall go on, or weather their shall be a settlement? Free refreshments will be provided at the Konferense."

Friday, 5.30 p.m.

Tellygram reseived by the Edditer from the Strikers:

"We are on our way to Greyfriars to enter into negotiations. Don't forget to reserve a jolly good feed."

Friday, 6.15 p.m.

The Strikers arrived, and konferred with the Edditer, Fatty Wynn acting as spokeman. Mr. Wynn prommist that if the salleries of the four subbs were put up, they wood have no objections to resooming work at wunce. The Edditer replide that he must be given time to think it over.

Friday, 6.30 p.m.

The lion and the lams—that is to say, the Edditer and the Strikers—sat down together, and demollished fifteen doemnts, a duzen jam tarts, a cupple of current cakes, and two seed ditto. After which, Mr. Wynn maid the following speech:

"Mr. Edditer, I am too fool to say much at the moment, but I begg of you to yeeld to our demands, so that we may resoom work without delay. This strike has gone on long enuff. We are all heartily sick of it, and eager to get back into harness again."

The Edditer replide that he wood lay awake all nite to konsider the matter, and let the Strikers have a haughty-matum in the mourning.

Satterday, 10 a.m.

The Edditer despatched the following tellygram to the Strikers:

"I have given every konsideration to yore demands, and have desided to dubble yore salleries. Pleese resoom work at wunce."

Satterday, 12.12 p.m.

THE STRIKE IS OVER—OFFISHUL!

Neckst week's issew of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" will kointain kontributions from my four fat subbs, as formerly.

GUNNER TURNS UP!

(Continued from page 8.)

"Yee. We've agreed that he's innocent, and the victim of circumstantial evidence, or something of the sort."

"Ahem!"

"Don't you agree?" demanded Dodd warmly.

"Sure an' we do, Tommy darling. Anythin' for a peaceful life. What about Gunner?"

"He used to be at Rookwood, on the Modern side," continued Tommy Dodd. "After he got away from the police, he made a break in this direction, and has disappeared since. Well, what was his reason for coming in this direction?"

"Sure, and I haven't an idea. Silly ass, I suppose," suggested Doyle.

"Fathead!"

"Faith, I think—"

"He came in this direction because he knew, from his experience at Rookwood as a boy, that he could find a hiding-place near Rookwood," said Tommy Dodd. "That's as plain as your face—which is saying a lot."

"Why, ye omadhaun—"

"That's why the bobby from Coombe came to tell the Head about it," declared Tommy Dodd. "The police know why he scoted in this direction; they've guessed, same as I have."

"Shouldn't wonder," agreed Cook, after some thought. "He may be skulking in the old Coombe quarries."

"Jimmy Silver thinks so. A gang of those Classical chumps have gone out of bounds to look for him there."

"My hat! Why didn't ye call us up to stop them?" exclaimed Doyle indignantly.

"Because I want them to go. Old Gunner isn't in the quarries, my sons, nor yet in the woods," said Tommy Dodd serenely. "I've thought it all out. Chap can't live on grass and stones, and there's nothing else to eat in the woods and the quarries. He might hide there for a few days at the most. That's all. Jimmy Silver won't find him."

"Faith, and you spake as if you knew where he is," exclaimed Doyle.

"I think I do!"

"What?" yelled Tommy Dodd's chums simultaneously.

Tommy Dodd smiled with satisfaction. He had succeeded in astonishing his devoted followers.

"I think I know where he is!" he repeated. "What price the abbey ruins, inside the walls of Rookwood—what?"

"My hat!" murmured Cook.

"Sure, Tommy, it's dreamin' ye are!"

"Why not?" persisted Tommy Dodd. "Those old ruins are a bit unsafe for a stranger, but Gunner would know all about them, as he used to be a Rookwood chap in his giddy youth. He would watch his opportunity, and climb in over the wall by night, and scuttle into the old abbey. Fellows hardly ever go there excepting to explore on a half-holiday sometimes, and it would be easy enough for him to keep out of sight in the vaults then."

"I—I suppose so. But—"

"But what?"

"How could the fellow live there, you ass?" said Cook.

"Fathead! What about the burglary at the tuckshop?"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"You see, it's quite clear," said Tommy Dodd eagerly. "Old Gunner was a chap at Rookwood, and knew all about the school shop. Old Sergeant

Kettle kept it when Gunner was in the Fifth Form here. He knew exactly where to go for his grub. I dare say he's lurked about, trying to get hold of some grub without leaving signs behind him, and couldn't, so he simply had to bust in the tuckshop and help himself, and chance being spotted. As nobody knows he's here, it was put down to a Rookwood chap, and I dare say Gunner foresaw it would be."

"If it was Gunner!" grinned Cook.

"I tell you he's there!" roared Tommy Dodd wrathfully. "I've worked it out in my mind, and I feel certain of it."

"Well, leave him there, and let's get out of doors," said Doyle.

"Oh, you're an ass, Doyle! He's innocent, and it's our duty to help him, as an old Modern who's down on his luck. I'm not going to see an old Modern starve," said Tommy Dodd indignantly. "He must be pretty cold in that old ruin. The nights are getting jolly chilly now. It's up to us. Anyway, I'm going to help him a bit. You can back me up or not, as you like."

"Oh, we'll help you—if he's there!" said Cook.

"What are you winking at Doyle for, you ass?"

"W-w-w-was I?"

"Yes, you chump! You can go and eat coke, and I'll look after poor old Gunner on my own!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.

And the indignant Tommy jumped up and strode to the door.

"We're coming, Tommy."

"Oh, rats!"

Tommy Dodd took a dignified departure; but his chums hurried down after him, and rejoined him in the quad. The Modern leader deigned to be present at last.

"Well, come along," he said. "You two can remain on the watch, to see that nobody comes near the ruins. If anybody comes along, go for him and kick him out, if it's a junior. If it's anybody else, whistle."

"Right-ho!" grinned Cook and Doyle.

And leaving his chums on sentry duty at a distance from the abbey ruins, Tommy Dodd went forward alone, and with great caution plunged into the ruins of the ancient Abbey of Rookwood.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. A Startling Discovery!

THE ruins of what had once been Rookwood Abbey lay at a considerable distance from the school buildings, though enclosed within the school walls.

Trees grew among the shattered masses of old masonry, and shadowed the fragments of massive walls and deep windows. It was a pleasant spot for picnicking in the summer, but in autumn the place was seldom visited.

Tommy Dodd had thought it all out, and he was convinced of the correctness of his theory. The very proximity of the school, with its swarms of boys, made it unlikely that the hiding-place would be suspected, and for that reason it was safer for the hunted man than the wood or the quarries could have been.

It was really a very keen stroke of Tommy Dodd to connect the raid on the tuckshop with the missing convict. Everyone else seemed to have concluded, as a matter of course, that the raider had been a Rookwood fellow.

The Head had certainly so concluded, as the assembling of the school in Hall that morning proved.

Tommy Dodd's heart thumped a little as he passed under the trees, and through

the shattered remains of the old doorway.

Within the ruins lay without form and void. It was not easy to distinguish where the different apartments had been, so wrecked was the once imposing edifice. Much of it had been in ruins since the reign of King John, and untouched during the long centuries since.

The stone stairs that led down into the ancient vaults were almost blocked with broken masonry, but there was a passage that could be squeezed through, left by generations of schoolboy explorers.

Doubtless, in his days as a Rookwood fellow, Geoffrey Gunner, the convict, had explored those old ruins, as most of the Rookwooders did sooner or later.

What more natural than that he should remember the place when he was a hunted fugitive with nowhere to lay his head!

Stones and fragments of old mortar clinked about Tommy Dodd's feet as he felt his way cautiously down the encumbered steps.

He stood within the opening of the vaults at last. The old oaken door had vanished long years since, and, save for the piles of old, shapeless stone, the vaults were open to the day.

Tommy Dodd paused inside and looked about him.

The light of the afternoon sun penetrated for a few yards dimly, but beyond that all was blackness.

The deep, dark vaults were not inviting to the gaze, and Tommy, in spite of himself, felt a vague sense of uneasiness, and wished for a moment that he had brought Cook or Doyle with him.

But he threw off the feeling.

If the hunted man was there, there was nothing to be afraid of. Was not Geoffrey Gunner an innocent man, the victim of unfortunate circumstances, and was not Tommy Dodd there as his friend?

There was nothing to fear.

Tommy felt in his pockets for a match-box, and struck a match.

The light glimmered feebly about him as he advanced further, holding up the match before him.

The silence was unbroken, save for the shuffling of the juniors' boots upon the damp flagstones of the floor.

There was no sign of a hidden man. But Tommy Dodd knew that the vaults extended far into the depths, and it was certain that if Gunner was there he would retreat into the darkness at the sound of a step.

The match went out, but the Modern junior struck another, and another as he went on, looking about him with keen eyes.

But for Tommy's fixed belief in the innocence of the unfortunate Gunner, he might have hesitated to trust himself into so lonely a recess, where he believed a hunted convict was hidden.

But Tommy Dodd had argued so vehemently with the Classics upon that subject that he had ended by completely convincing himself.

He halted suddenly, with a low exclamation.

"By Jove!"

He bent down, striking another match.

In the second vault, close by the damp stone arch, lay a tin.

It was a tin that had contained salmon, and its jagged edges showed that it had been broken open by being hammered with a stone.

The smell of it was quite fresh. The tin had not been opened many hours.

It was impossible to suppose that a Rookwood fellow had descended into

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NEXT
FRIDAY!

"COKER COMES

ROUND!" A SPLENDID STORY

OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

those chilly depths to make a meal of tinned salmon.

Evidently the tin was a part of the loot of the tuckshop, and the man who had abstracted it was hidden in the vaults.

Tommy Dodd's eyes glittered.

It was the proof he wanted.

He stood up again and struck another match. The light glimmered on stone walls, running damp.

Save for the tin that lay at his feet, there was no sign of the vaults having been visited by a living being.

The match went out, and Tommy Dodd turned back and hurried to the opening. He scrambled up the stairs to the open ruins, and hurried to rejoin his comrades. He fancied he heard a sound in the vaults as he left, but he was not sure.

Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle were leaning on the old gateway, talking football, when Tommy Dodd came up breathlessly.

They looked at him with smiling faces. "Found yer merry old convict?" asked Doyle, with a yawn.

"Got him in your pocket?" asked Cook.

"Don't be a funny ass!" said Tommy Dodd. "He's there!"

"Gammon!"

Tommy Dodd explained what he had discovered. To his surprise and exasperation, his comrades still looked unconvinced.

"Do you think that tin of salmon walked here, you thumping asses?" demanded the Modern leader.

"I shouldn't wonder if Tubby Muffin's hid his loot there," grinned Cook. "It would be a safe place."

Tommy Dodd started a little. He had not thought of that, and certainly it was possible.

"Oh, rot!" he said uneasily. "Look here! I forgot we should want a candle, and, of course, you fellows didn't think of it. Wait here while I get my bike lantern, and we'll go down together."

"Right-ho!"

Tommy Dodd scudded off for his bicycle lantern, and returned with it in a few minutes.

Then his comrades, still with unbelieving smiles, followed him into the ruins.

On the stone stair Tommy paused to light his lantern, and then led the way into the vaults.

Cook and Doyle followed him into the second vault, where Tommy flashed the light of the lantern upon the empty tin.

"Look at that!" he snapped.

"Bedad, and it's there, intirely!" said Tommy Doyle, a little impressed at last. "Sure, Tubby would have used a tin-opener!"

"Of course he would!" said Tommy Dodd triumphantly. "And that tin's been bashed open with a stone!"

"My hat!" said Cook, blinking round uneasily. "If it's possible that the merry convict's here, I'd rather be outside, if it's all the same to you, Doddy."

"Fathead! We're going to find him!"

"B-b-but—"

Tommy Dodd snorted.

"Are you afraid? What is there to be afraid of?"

"Sure, I'd rather kape a convict at arm's length, intirely!" mumbled Doyle.

"Same here!" said Cook, with emphasis.

"Rats! Come on! We've got to find him, and I believe these blessed vaults go about a quarter of a mile. Follow your leader!" growled Tommy Dodd.

Tommy did not seem to feel the slightest misgiving. If he did, he concealed it very well. But Cook and Doyle

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looked and felt uneasy. They admitted now that it was possible that the convict was there, and they did not like the prospect.

In fact, the further they advanced into the gloomy vaults the less firm grew their conviction that Geoffrey Gunner was a wronged and innocent man.

Suppose he wasn't, after all, the innocent and injured victim of circumstances that Tommy Dodd believed?

It was possible, at all events. Suppose he was just an ordinary convict, with a bullet-head and a square jaw and a fist like a leg of mutton and the temper of a Hun?

However keen their leader was in the quest, it is certain that both the followers were far from anxious to spot the gentleman in the broad-arrow suit, but they followed on dutifully.

"Hark!" exclaimed Cook suddenly. He stopped and spun round, staring uneasily into the darkness behind.

The three juniors were in the sixth vault now, and there was still a long series stretching before them. The air was heavy and chill.

"What is it?" exclaimed Dodd, stopping impatiently.

"I—I heard something!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Faith, and I heard it then!" muttered Tommy Doyle, catching Cook's arm in his uneasiness. "There—there's somebody—"

"We can't have passed him!" muttered Tommy Dodd, flashing the light back.

Then he jumped, the blood suddenly rushing to his heart, for the rays of the lantern as they flashed back fell upon a fearful figure, and a wild, bristly, savage face, and eyes that gleamed and glittered.

It was the convict!

THE SIXTH CHAPT Not According to Programme!

TOMMY DODD & CO. stood quite still, their eyes fixed upon the hard, bristly, savage face, and the fierce and threatening eyes.

They had found what they sought. Tommy Dodd's theory had been well-founded. The one-time Rookwooder had sought a refuge in the old haunts he had known in his boyhood.

So far Tommy had been right.

But as he looked at the brutal face before him, Tommy Dodd realised, with a chill at his heart, that he had been right on no other point.

One look at that brutal face was enough to shake his faith in the innocence of the former Modern of Rookwood.

In fact, the convict had been to Tommy Dodd chiefly a thing of the imagination so far. He had thought chiefly of keeping his end up against the Classics rather than of weighing the real probabilities of the matter.

He had never dreamed of anything like this.

The man's clothes were ragged, dirty, damp, reeking with mud and moisture. He was partly in the broad-arrow garb, partly in hideous rags evidently stolen from a scarecrow.

And the three juniors were shut up in the vaults with him, far from help, and the convict was between them and the exit.

There was a long, dead silence, broken only by the chattering of Tommy Cook's teeth.

The convict stared at them without speaking, but with a ferocity in his look that chilled the unhappy Moderns.

Certainly Geoffrey Gunner must have changed very considerably since he was a Modern fellow at Rookwood School.

Twenty years, of which a good proportion had been spent in crime and in prison, had naturally made a difference.

It was Tommy Dodd who broke the silence. In spite of himself his voice faltered.

"Are—are you Geoffrey Gunner?"

"Hang you!" The man gritted his teeth. "What are you doing here?"

"We—we came to look for you."

"You'll pay for it, you meddling young hounds!"

He made a step towards the juniors as if to spring upon them, and the three Moderns drew closer together, their faces pale.

"Hould on!" exclaimed Doyle breathlessly. "We ain't athrow you, mister. We came here to help you, bedad!"

Geoffrey Gunner gave a savage laugh. "Don't lie to me, you young fool!"

"It's true, Gunner," said Tommy Dodd quietly. "We thought you were innocent, and—and sent to prison unjustly, and—and—"

"You silly young fool!"

"Oh!"

"Why should you have thought anything of the sort, you lying young hound?" growled the convict.

"Because—because we knew you'd been a Modern chap at Rookwood," faltered Tommy Dodd.

The man stared at him.

"What difference does that make?"

"Well, we—we thought—"

The convict interrupted him with a rough gesture.

"No more of your lies! You came here to look for me, and you've found me. You won't be allowed to tell what you know outside these vaults. Hava you told any others you have come here?"

"No!"

"Good!" said the convict, searching Tommy's face with a savage glance, and apparently satisfied that the junior was speaking the truth. "Mind, if I'm taken, I'll crack your skulls for you first. Understand that!"

"Faith, and we—"

"Look at that!"

The ruffian raised his hand and showed a heavy cudgel.

"If I'm taken, you won't live to chatter about it. I'd brain you now, but for—but I don't want to put the rope round my neck if I'm taken. But take care! I'm going to make sure of you. Put down that lantern!"

Tommy Dodd laid the lantern on the flags.

"You will be looked for," muttered the convict. "They will not look for you here, if they do not know you have come here. But, sooner or later—"

He broke off. "Does anyone else suspect that the school shop was broken into by someone who does not belong to Rookwood?"

"Not that I am aware of."

"Who is supposed to have done it?"

"A Rookwood chap!"

"I thought they'd figure it out like that," muttered Gunner. "I had to risk it—I was starving. I've been here three days. Why did you come here?"

"I guessed who busted into the shop," said Tommy Dodd.

"Then others may guess!"

"I suppose so."

Gunner compressed his lips.

TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:

NEXT FRIDAY! "THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!" A GRAND

"Hang you! Hang them all! It was a risk, but I had to take it. It's not safe to stay here longer—at least, I have food now. Look here, I'm going to keep you safe till to-night, and leave after dark. Don't make a sound or raise a hand, or I'll brain you where you stand!"

The three juniors exchanged glances. Resistance was out of the question.

They were three to one, but they would have little chance against the desperate man, armed with a heavy cudgel. Gunner was evidently ready to take the most desperate measures.

Indeed, he looked as if only fear of the possible consequences prevented him from doing them bodily injury, now.

"Put your hands together!" he snarled. "I'm going to tie them!"

The juniors hesitated a moment, but they obeyed.

The heavy cudgel was too dangerous at close quarters.

With one hand the convict jerked out their handkerchiefs. He put the cudgel under his arm while he bound their wrists together with the handkerchiefs.

The three Tommies stood with their wrists and hands in a sort of bundle.

Then the ruffian, with their own neckties and some of his own rags, tied their ankles.

The three juniors stood with great discomfort, helpless prisoners now.

Gunner shook the cudgel at them.

"Make a sound, and it's the last you will make!" he snarled.

He moved away into the next vault, taking the lantern with him.

The Modern juniors were left in the darkness.

"Faith, and this is a go!" mumbled Doyle. "Oh, holy Moses! Phwy did ye bring us here, Tommy Dodd?"

Tommy Dodd did not reply. His feelings were too deep for words.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER. Caught at Last!

JIMMY SILVER & CO. were home in time to answer "Adsum" to their names at calling-over.

They had returned in the dusk, and succeeded in climbing the wall unseen, and dropping into the quad.

So far as avoiding being "spotted" went, they had been lucky. But that was all their luck. They had come upon no sign of the fugitive during their long afternoon's scouting in the woods, and on the heath.

It was a disappointment.

For it was clear that the "gating" of Rookwood would last until the dangerous character was captured or until it was known for certain that he had left the neighbourhood.

"We'll try again on Saturday!" said Jimmy Silver, at tea in the end study. "The beast must be somewhere, you know. If he can be found, Rookwood scouts can find him!"

"Hear, hear!" said the Co.

Erroll dropped into the study after tea.

"Heard?" he inquired.

"That depends," said Jimmy Silver. "What is it? Has the merry raider of the tuckshop been found?"

"Tubby Muffin, you bet," said Lovell.

"No," said Erroll, with a smile. "That seems to be a mystery. Muffin's been questioned by Bootles it seems, and he's awfully indignant at being suspected. I don't think it was Tubby myself, though who it was is a giddy mystery. I came to ask you if you'd heard about the Tommies?"

"Oh, those Modern bouncers! What have they been up to?"

"They haven't turned up for call-over, and haven't come in since," said Erroll.

"As the whole school's gated, it means a row for them. Manders is waxy!"

Jimmy Silver whistled.

"Then they're out of bounds?" he exclaimed.

"Looks like it!"

"Silly duffers not to come in before call-over," grunted Lovell. "It's simply giving themselves away."

"It's jolly odd," said Jimmy Silver, wrinkling his brows in thought. "Tommy Dodd wouldn't come with us to look for Gunner. I thought he knew more than he let on, by the way he grinned at us. Is it possible he's been idiot enough to—?" Jimmy paused. "You know those duffers keep it up that Gunner was an innocent man, just because he used to

Towle nodded.

"He came into the bike-shed for his lamp, this afternoon; I was mending a puncture there," he explained. "I thought he was going to clean the lamp, or something—he never said he was going out. But he hasn't put it back, and he hasn't come in, so it looks as if he meant to make a night of it. Queer, ain't it?"

"Jolly queer," said Jimmy Silver.

"My only sainted uncle!"

"Hallo! What's biting you?" asked Lovell.

Jimmy caught him by the arm in his excitement.

"Think a minute! Tommy Dodd suspected where the convict was, I'm sure of it, and never believed that he was in



Tommy Dodd flashed the light of the lantern on the empty tin. "Look at that!" he snapped. A newly opened tin!" (See Chapter 5.)

be a Modern here. Would Tommy Dodd be crass enough to think of helping the man?"

"I think so, if he knew where to look for him," said Erroll. "But how could he have known?"

"Well, he looked as if he knew something."

"I remember you said so, in the wood," said Lovell. "But I don't see—"

"It's queer they haven't come in, anyway. Let's go and see if anything's been heard of them," said Jimmy Silver.

The Classics went down from the study, and walked over to Mr. Manders' House. There they met Towle of the Fourth, who was looking very glum.

"Seen anything of Dodd?" he asked.

"No. Hasn't he come in?"

"The duffer—no!" said Towle. "Manders is in an awful wax. They must have gone out of bounds, I suppose, but what the merry thunder did Tommy want a bike lantern for?"

"Did he take a bike lantern with him?" ejaculated Jimmy Silver, mystified.

the wood or the quarries. Then he clears off, with a lantern, in the daytime. Where could he want a lantern by daylight?"

"Give it up, unless he was going to explore the abbey ruins," said Lovell, after some thought.

"Tommy Dodd's gone to explore the abbey vaults, with a lantern. You can bet on that. I suspect that he thought he knew where to look for the convict. Put two and two together. Last night somebody broke into the tuckshop for grub. Well, a convict hounded by the bobbies can't buy grub in a shop, can he? It wasn't Tubby Muffin—it wasn't a Rookwood chap at all." Jimmy Silver breathed hard. "It was Gunner; and those duffers have gone to look for him in the old abbey, and—and they haven't come back!"

"Great Scott!"

Jimmy Silver's chums stared at him blankly, their faces growing pale.

They understood the terrible suspicion that had come into his mind.

(Continued on page 20.)

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A GRAND TALE OF ADVENTURES IN GERMANY!



The INVISIBLE RAIDER

A Magnificent New Serial of Adventure, introducing Ferrers Lord and Prince Ching Lung.

By SIDNEY DREW.

CHARACTERS IN THE STORY.

FERRERS LORD, the famous millionaire adventurer, and owner of the Lord of the Deep.

PRINCE CHING LUNG, a very old friend of Lord's, who has accompanied the millionaire on many adventures.

RUPERT THURSTON, a young Englishman, and friend of Lord's.

HAL HONOUR, known as the man of silence, engineer of Ferrers Lord's wonderful submarine. Honour has invented a marvellous paint which causes things to become invisible when painted with it. He has also built a new kind of aeroplane which he calls a helicopter, and which is covered with this new paint, but which is destroyed by

KARL VON KREIGLER, a mysterious professor, who has great power in Germany, and who holds the secret of Germany's great treasure-chest. Ferrers Lord has ferreted out one or two of the professor's secrets, and Von Kreigler realises that Lord is a very dangerous man. After this attack, Ferrers Lord despatches Rupert Thurston, with Honour and Ching Lung, with a message to Kreigler.

However, they succeed in escaping to a cavern, finding a high aperture in which to hide. The Germans give chase, but fail to find the fugitives.

Ching Lung, who is out scouting, comes upon a great treasure store, the secret Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies. Ching returns to the cave to inform his comrades of his great discovery.

(Now read on.)

Flood!

WHILE Ching Lung was telling the story of the discovery of the treasure-vault of Schloss Schwartzburg, the engineer was working. He felt about in the gloom for more stones, and built a second wall. Once he interrupted the prince with a warning not to speak so loud.

"Hal must be getting the wind up," said Thurston. "And you think, Ching, that all those boxes are filled with the real goods?"

"I'm sure of it; and the way those two rascals chuckled about it was convincing," said Ching Lung. "I saw what Von Kreigler got out of one of the boxes. They can't all contain plate, money, and goods, but if they don't, they hold valuable securities. I told myself it was Ali Baba's cave, only a thousand times richer, and so it is. There are no piles of gold lung about, or heaps of dazzling gems, as there was in the cavern of the forty thieves, for everything is arranged and ticketed in a businesslike way."

"The water," said the engineer.

Ching Lung had not left the bottle of water behind him, and the engineer soon had the lamp alight. He tore off his coat and fixed it over the barricade.

"Farther in!" he said briefly, and picked up the prisoner.

It was needless to explain the reason for these precautions to Rupert Thurston and the prince. Hal Honour had already spoken of poison-gas, though at the time he might have spoken half jestingly. Matters had taken a turn now that made it necessary to

be prepared for anything. While he could not think of blaming the engineer for leaving the cave to search for him, Ching Lung wished he had stayed there. Though the chance had seemed a remote one, he felt that he might have eluded General Goltzheim, Von Kreigler, and the soldier, and returned safely with his secret.

"And then it would have been no use," he said half aloud.

"What would have been no use, Ching?" asked Rupert Thurston. "What are you talking to yourself about?"

"I was having a sort of grouse at Hal for chasing me," answered the prince. "It would have been a close thing, but I was thinking I might have dodged Kreigler & Co. and accepted an honourable surrender. I was wrong."

"Quite wrong!" grunted the engineer.

"I don't quite see that, my son. If we'd got away to the Allies with the secret of the treasure it would have been a joy-ride for us."

"But it couldn't be done, and Hal knows it couldn't be done," said the prince. "Von Kreigler's offer wasn't any trick. I heard him tell Goltzheim that he intended handing us over to the British commanding officer, and that if we failed to surrender, he'd fetch the C.O. in person to shout at us through a megaphone. The Chief's message to us knocks all that on the head. He just says

'Carry on, and I don't see how anyone could twist another into that. Carry on means carry on purely and simply. It doesn't mean surrender, honourable or otherwise, either to Von Kreigler or to the British C.O.'"

"Good!" said Hal, nodding again.

"I don't suppose you can interpret it any other way, for it's short, sweet, and definite," Thurston agreed, "but it isn't too satisfactory. Not that I care, for I'm ready to carry on to the bitter end. We may be able to stick out till we starve, but Goltz and Von Kreigler won't be sitting still all the time. If they fail to dig us out or pursue us, they'll clear the treasure-cave and scatter the stuff all over the country."

"That's a big order, old man!" said the prince. "You may be sure Schloss Schwartzburg is well watched, for the Allies have an intelligence department. And you may be equally sure the Chief is watching, too. He knew something about this treasure, though perhaps he did not know where it was concealed. To get all that collection outside without rousing suspicion is more than a cunning old war-horse-like professor Karl could do. It would take a week or more to remove all the labels and seals. He daren't shift them without camouflaging them, for they look as if they contain valuables."

Hal Honour raised his head and sniffed the air uneasily. It was heavy and warm, but fairly pure. He touched his shirt-sleeve, and Thurston and Ching Lung took off their coats. Hal Honour carried them away with him to make the entrance more secure, for he seemed convinced that Goltzheim, now that he felt they knew the secret, would not hesitate to use that most abominable and cruel of all murderous weapons—poison-gas.

Though he had doubled the wall, there were many crevices in the uneven stones, and he had no material at hand with which to

stop them, for the sand that covered the bottom of the cave was useless for such a purpose. He had left one loophole that could easily be opened and stopped. He listened at it. The dark gallery was filled with strange noises, but all so faint and mingled, and coming from so far away, that he could make nothing of them. They reminded him of some huge engine or machine at work a very long way off. He was about to close the loophole with a stone, when another stone slipped and fell.

Splash!
The stone had not fallen against solid rock, though there had been solid rock there before. It had fallen into water. Now the engineer knew the meaning of the curious noises. On two sides of Schloss Schwartzburg the ancient moat still remained. They were pumping water out of the moat and flooding the galleries in an attempt to drown them like rats.

Hal Honour smiled grimly. The moat would be bone dry before they could pump half enough water to reach their cavern refuge. He went back to Thurston and Ching Lung, still smiling, and jerked his right arm up and down.

"Pumping!" cried Thurston. "Are they trying to drown us out, then?"

The engineer nodded, and handed Ching Lung a pocket-book and pencil. As Goltzheim and Professor von Kreigler were only too well aware that they were alive and had not escaped from the galleries, another message to Ferrers Lord could do no harm. Still, the prince was careful to write it in Chinese, and to code it. They were dealing with a crafty foe. He was afraid to tell the millionaire that they were in no immediate danger, for any hint as to their hiding-place might have been fatal.

"I'd like to tell the Chief we're well above water-level, but the gentle professor might decipher the thing and get the hint. This seems the loftiest gallery of the lot with the exception of the treasure-cave, and he knows we're not in there. He'd send a boatload of men along to prod the walls with poles," said the prince, "and when they'd poked down our wall, they'd start shying bombs in at us. A little joke like that would just delight old Goltzheim."

"Say, they're flooding the show, and it's thumbs up!" said Thurston. "All we really want the Chief to know is that we're still holding up our wicket."

"And a nasty wet wicket, too!" said Ching Lung. "Here you are, Harold, my son, get out your little ticker and shoot that at the Lord of the Deep."

Even through the barrier they could hear the swish and gurgling of the water that was pouring into the gallery. Suddenly the prisoner, whose behaviour had been excellent, asked for something to eat and drink. He declared that he was almost starving.

"So are we, Fritz," said Thurston. "We aren't actually starving at the moment, but there's something like a famine in the land. We're on strict rations. You'll get your share of the banquet when the time comes. Uninvited guests ought not to grumble at their welcome, you know."

"Listen!" said the engineer, holding up his hand.

The rats of Schloss Schwartzburg had taken **TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO.**
By OWEN CONQUEST.

NEXT **"THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!"** A GRAND

FRIDAY!

alarm. They were squeaking shrilly in their terror. There seemed to be none in the cave, but by the noise there were scores of them outside. Hal Honour built a cache of stones, placed their wine and provisions in it, and rooted it over.

"Good idea, Hal!" said Thurston. "If those brutes get at the stuff, it would soon be starvation for us. Your wall is rat-proof, isn't it?"

Ching Lung went to make sure. As he looked out he could see little fiery specks in the darkness. They were the eyes of rats, luminous in the gloom. The opposite wall seemed to swarm with the brutes that had climbed up away from the deepening water. It was the same on the near wall of the gallery, and the squeaking was tremendous. Half a dozen pairs of red eyes appeared in the hole. Ching Lung drove his fist at them, and felt it strike something soft and wet. The invading rats were hurled down into the water, and Ching Lung hurriedly put back the stone.

"Ugh! There's enough of the vermin out there to eat us all alive," he thought, "and if there's a hole left big enough to squeeze through, they'll raid us!"

Again the German demanded food, but was refused. As a two-legged rat is more dangerous than a four-legged one, Hal Honour untied him, and Thurston told him to walk round the cave a few times to exercise himself; and then the engineer trusted him up again, more carefully than before. If Fritz managed to free himself when they were asleep, they knew he would attack the provisions and wine, so they were cautious.

"Now, Hal, you and Rupert take forty winks," said Ching Lung. "Somebody must keep awake, for we can't tell what old Goltz will be up to next."

The engineer gave him the little wireless apparatus, and lay down. Ching Lung felt drowsy, for the atmosphere of the cave was growing oppressive. He whistled softly to keep himself awake. The chorus of squeaks had become less loud, or else his ears had grown accustomed to the sound. The prince heard a faint, silvery chime, and was wide awake. The little wireless apparatus was calling for attention. An answer to their message was coming through.

"Carry on!" said the wireless.

Still Undiscovered!

PROFESSOR KARL VON KREIGLER put his thumb and forefinger in his snuff-box, and lifted a pinch of snuff to his nose, spilling some of it over his much-powdered waistcoat, for his hand was rather shaky. The affair in the Devil's Gallery had upset him. He was not a fighting man or a hero. After the snuff he took a sip of weak brandy-and-water. General Goltzheimer was in his bed-room, having his when he came clanking into the beautiful saloon he was without the bandage, and looked much more dignified.

"In an hour, Excellency," he said, "according to the engineer's report, there will be from seven to eight feet of water in the lower galleries, and from four to five feet in the upper ones, which they dare not attempt to reach. If that is not enough to drown these swine-dogs, they are not human beings, but amphibious reptiles—overgrown newts or alligators. This flooding will do no damage to the treasury cave, will it?"

"Nein, nein! Those boxes are proof against fire and water," said Von Kreigler. "But why is it your men fail to find these people? Tell me that!"

"Ach, you know what a rat-warren it is!" growled the general. "It is full of dark holes and pestiferous corners. That is one reason why I did not use the poison-gas. If I had used the gas, it would not be safe to go down without masks for months to come. The water will find them, Excellency. I hope they are good swimmers, for good swimmers die hard, and I want the swine-curs to die hard!"

"I care not how they die, only that they die, general!" said Von Kreigler. "But do not let us deceive ourselves. I wish greatly there could have been another way. But they have the secret, and so there could be no other way. Where, then, are the bodies to be found? For they must be found."

"Why must their carcasses be found?" demanded the general. "Must we hold an inquest on such carrion?"

The professor almost lost patience. There was an unusual glimmer in his pale eyes as he blinked at Goltzheimer.

"Do not deceive yourself—the bodies must be found!" he said, shrugging his shoulders. "We are not on the battlefield now, general, with millions of men in arms. What we fight now, my friend, is a battle of brains. The bodies will be found in the moat. Pick out half a dozen of your smartest men, and drill them to tell the same story. The escaped prisoners are hard pressed. The north terrace is very lofty. They reach it, and are called upon to surrender. They refuse, and leap from the terrace to the moat, and are drowned. The secretary will write this story down, and you men will learn it by heart. A barrister will cross-examine them till they are perfect, that no question the Allies can put at the inquiry can shake their evidence or raise a doubt."

"To Lucifer with the Allies and their courts of inquiry!" roared the general, his moustache beginning to bristle. "It makes my blood red-hot!"

"Do not deceive yourself that the Allies are not in a position to hang you," said Von Kreigler gently. "That is the sad fact. We have been much wronged, it is true. For this Rupert Thurston to come here was an outrage! For Ferrers Lord to threaten was an outrage. The days of bluster are gone, and we can only whine and use our cunning. We have been much wronged, but we are grieved, we are in tears, that these three men should have lost their lives. Ach, we offered them to surrender with honour; offered to send them in safety to the Allies! They are stubborn, and it is sad! But if the truth comes out, general, they will hang you, as sure as there is snuff in this box! So I advise you to school your witnesses well!"

"And you?" asked Goltzheimer, scowling. "I? Who am I? Why should they hang a poor old professor, who is so quiet and harmless? If you think they will harm me, you deceive yourself. You are the military commander here, my dear general. Oh, no, they will do nothing to me; and they will do nothing to you, if you follow my advice. All this can be carried out so cleverly that there will be no atom of suspicion. It must be so, or someone will hang—and it will not be the quiet, simple-hearted professor! At the most, they may censure you, and ask the Supreme Council to dismiss you. And when you are dismissed, my friend, the poor professor will pull the strings gently, and you will find yourself in a higher position than before. Do not deceive yourself—I will not see you hanged or degraded!"

Then the professor rang for his secretary. The general stared at Von Kreigler, not with any liking, but with admiration, as he dictated to the secretary a description of the tragic deaths of Rupert Thurston, Harold Honour, and Ching Lung. It was simply worded, and sounded like a plain, unvarnished story of something that had actually happened. The professor told the secretary to make a type-written copy and bring it to him.

"And what will happen—of course, it's an impossibility—what will happen if the bodies

of the swine-curs are not to be found, Excellency?"

"Ach, that would be a terrible position, my friend!" said Von Kreigler, starting. "It would be terrible for both of us. They would suspect a secret assassination. It would be horrible! You frighten me by the thought of it! They would send troops to search the Schloss, and the great secret would be revealed! I tremble! Do not deceive me, general. There is no such danger—yes? It would be ruin, I tell you! All we have worked and planned for would be lost!"

"And what would you do, Excellency?"

"I? I would go to Russia," said Von Kreigler. "Perhaps it is not the pleasantest of climates, but with money even a bad climate is tolerable. I would advise you to go there also. For if you remain they will hang you, my friend! But we are talking foolishly. These three men are down there, and though they have eluded us living, they cannot elude us dead. And the story will pass. Our witnesses will be so drilled that the cunningest lawyer will be unable to shake their evidence. And if the impossible happens, there is another way. I have brains, general, so do not deceive yourself!"

He paced up and down the room, blinking and muttering to himself, a shabby, round-shouldered figure.

"It would be wise," he said at last, "to send the troops away from Schloss Schwartzburg—except your chosen witnesses—and bring in another regiment. Of what happens below there, the servants know nothing, and so they are safe. All will be well. We'll bluff these swine-dogs, general—make dupes of them!"

An hour later the pumps ceased working, and a motor-car brought Herr Ludwig Herkomer to the Schloss. Von Kreigler here telephoned for the famous German lawyer. The half-dozen soldiers Goltzheimer had selected as witnesses were sent for, and the door was shut. As the men stood at attention the general gave his moustache a tug and glared at them ferociously.

"There is a little lesson to learn, and this gentleman, Herr Herkomer, will teach it you," he said. "He will teach you so well that you will believe it. He will teach you so well that even to yourselves you will swear it happened, and will not dare to doubt it. And only to yourselves will you breathe a word of it, for it is a State matter, and not for other ears. If there should be any little blunder—" Ach, I pity the man who blunders!"

He made the lawyer a sign to begin, and the lawyer slowly and distinctly read over Professor Karl von Kreigler's account of how Thurston, Honour, and Prince Ching Lung, having escaped from their cell, refused to surrender, and jumped from the lofty north terrace into the moat to their death.

"Unfortunately—very unfortunate!" said Herr Herkomer. "A mad act!"

"I do not wish you to deceive yourself," said the professor mildly. "We had better understand each other. This mad act, as you call it, has not yet taken place, though the men are dead. It is to make it take place that I sent for you. Here are your pupils."

"For the court of inquiry that the cursed Allies are sure to force upon us!" added the general. "Drill this rubbish, and drill it well!"

For a moment the lawyer looked astounded, and then he read the type-written paper through a second time. He began to cross-question the men.

The general sketched a plan of the north terrace on a sheet of paper, and pinned it to the wall. The lesson lasted so long that Professor von Kreigler fell asleep in the middle of it, huddled up in a glided chair. One of the soldiers gave a mistaken answer, and his error brought an oath from the general, and also a blow that sent the man staggering, with bleeding lips. After that he made no more blunders.

"That is enough at one time for these sheep-brained dolts, Herr Herkomer!" said Goltzheimer. "They will get muddled. Tomorrow you will repeat the lesson. This is strange work for you, but it is of tremendous importance to the State, and I will see that his Excellency rewards you. Dismiss!"

The general made a hearty meal, which he washed down with many flagons of beer. Presently he awoke the slumbering professor.

"Our rats are drowned by this time," he said, with a grin, "and I have told them to pump the water out of the galleries!"

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NEXT FRIDAY! "OKER COMES ROUND!"

A SPLENDID STORY

OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

"Good, my friend!" yawned Von Kreigler. "Ach! I am tired! I did not know I had slept so long. Were you satisfied with Herkomer?"

"Ach! A clever fellow, Excellency—a very clever fellow! When he has finished there will be nothing to fear from the inquiry."

"Find the bodies, and there will be nothing to fear at all!" said Von Kreigler. "There is Ferra's Lord; but I can clip his claws. We will appeal to the Allies against him, tell them of his threats, and ask their protection. Diplomacy, my friend—diplomacy! The Allies cannot permit us to be bullied by an outsider. It is their prerogative to bully. They have swelled heads, and a little flattery and a few appeals will make their heads swell the more. Now I must write a letter full of tears to the British commanding officer. I will write, and you will sign it. Ach! It is sad—sad! Here are three lives thrown away. They would not surrender, that is the pity of it! You are shaken with grief, general—in the letter!"

"Heartbroken," chuckled the general, "in sackcloth and ashes, Excellency! To-morrow the flag will be flying at half-mast over Schloss Schwartzburg!"

While the professor was composing his hypocritical letter to the British commanding officer, the general buckled up his sword-belt and went out. He descended many steps till he came to the cell from which the prisoners had made their escape. The level was fairly high, and the water had not reached it. Farther down a hosepipe, hanging through an embrasure, and looking like a great snake in the gloom, was sucking out the water. By the light of lanterns a number of men were constructing a raft with planks and empty petrol-tins.

"When can you get through?" asked the general.

"In two hours," answered the corporal in charge. "It will be ten hours before the galleries are clear; but it will do for us in two hours."

"Report then without delay!" said the general.

He looked grimly at the bunch of pike-hooks the corporal was fastening to a line and then turned away. As the water became lower the raft was pushed farther along the gallery to keep it afloat. The petrol-tins made it very buoyant. At last five men boarded it, and began to pole it along the tunnel with the drag of fish-hooks trailing behind. They had brought lanterns and torches, and carried automatic pistols.

"Not a bite yet, corporal?" asked one of the soldiers, with a grin.

"Not yet; for the big fish are not here!" chuckled the corporal. "I shall get a bite in good time, and catch a swine-cur or two! I could curse them for the trouble they have given, only, they say it is unlucky to curse dead men! And there is Hermann Trubner. What the mischief has become of Hermann Trubner? He was in the high gallery with me when I was firing the machine-gun. Since then he is gone—lost—vanished!"

"They are fiends, these Englishers!" said another soldier. "They nearly took the windpipe out of Hans Sleipner! They jumped upon him out of the dark! And there was the general, I was almost at his side when he was struck down, and I saw nothing—not even a shadow!"

"Ach! They will do no more jumping out of the dark!" said the corporal. "Horrible men! Even when they are dead they trouble us! My head aches now answering questions to that lawyer. I hate to think of the inquiry that is coming! You will have to be careful then, comrades, for the general has promised to shoot the man who makes a blunder, and in little things like that he keeps his word!"

It was impossible to pass under the archway, so they waited, smoking their pipes and listening to the gurgling of the water.

In the cave it was Hal Honour's turn to watch. He removed the stone and looked out. Ching Lung had warned him about the rats, but they were no longer there. He fancied the water was lower than when he had looked out before, and dropped a stone and listened for the splash.

"They're pumping it out," thought the engineer.

He struck a match and lighted a piece of paper. It floated for an instant on the surface still alight, and he saw by the marks on the wall of the gallery that the water had receded almost a foot. At a rough guess, it would be many hours before the Buns could resume their search, unless they came by boat or raft. They were gaining time, and time was what Hal Honour wanted, for he knew that Ferra's Lord would not be idle.

The engineer could never be idle. He began to work out some complicated mathematical calculation in his notebook. Some sound made him raise his head. He noticed that the prisoner was awake and also listening. Honour put his finger on his lips as a warning to the man to keep silent, and again went to his peep-hole. At the end of the gallery he saw gleaming lights that were reflected in the black water.

It was the raft. The engineer roused Thurston. The raft advanced very slowly,

the corporal throwing out his drag of fish-hooks slantwise and drawing it in again. Exactly under the cave, the soldier who was poling the raft eased up to light his pipe.

"Nothing—nothing!" said the corporal, as the hooks came back empty. "Fiends of men! Where are they? What has become of them?"

"You are a bad fisherman, corporal!" said the man with the pole. "And why bother about fishing and dragging? We'll find them easy enough when the water is down! Ha, ha! I wonder if they laughed much? The general has pretty ideas. I'm not afraid to die, but I wouldn't care to die like that—to be drowned in this filthy pit! If it wasn't for the trouble they're causing, I could almost be sorry for them! Ja, ja! Not a nice way to die!"

"Quite good enough for such swine-dogs!" said the corporal. "If they could not swim, all the better. My father was a sailor, and he would not learn to swim. He always said that if a man fell overboard at sea he had only a dog's chance. It was better not to be able to swim, for the swimmer went through long agonies, while the non-swimmer just sank and died easily. And perhaps it is not so foolish, after all, as it sounds!"

The soldier began to use his pole again, and the raft floated higher up the gallery on its grim search till it reached the dead end. It drifted back by inches, showing that there was a little current. For the hundredth time the corporal's bunch of pike-hooks caught nothing.

"For me, I don't understand things," said the navigator of the raft. "I don't know why the general has killed these people; but that is his affair. But it is such a dirty way and such a difficult way! Poison-gas would have been easier! Why didn't the general open a cylinder or two?"

"Your head is all thick wood!" growled the corporal. "The general has to hand the bodies over to the British. If they had died of poison-gas, any fool of a doctor would have known that! You have a head of wood and mud for brains! Take that for your answer!"

"Ja! And your brains are thicker mud!" said the soldier. "Good! Any fool of a doctor can tell if a man dies of poison-gas, clever one! Only a very wise doctor, then, could tell if a man died of bullet-wounds from a machine-gun. And yet the general did not hesitate to use the machine-guns. Tell me why. Who has the brains of mud now? If not poison-gas, why bullets? Tell me that!"

"He was in a temper then, and you know what the general is when in a temper," said the corporal. "He has changed his plan. You know what we have to say at the inquiry. They refused to surrender, and jumped off the north terrace into the moat."

This was all Thurston could hear as the raft drifted away.

"Well!" asked the engineer.

"Here's their latest trick," said Rupert. "Von Kreigler and Goltzheimer have a new stunt, from what I gather. They're going to hand our bodies over to the British commanding officer when they're lucky enough to find them. The yarn is to be that we refused to surrender, and jumped over the battlements into the moat from the north terrace. That is one of the highest points of Schloss Schwartzburg. The Allies will hold a court of inquiry, of course, and you can bet Von Kreigler will coach his witnesses until nobody can pierce a hole in the yarn. If we had been drowned, I think they'd have got out of it!"

The engineer nodded.

"One of those fellows said that Goltzheimer did not use poison-gas because it would have been detected, and that he only used the machine-guns because he was in a violent rage," went on Rupert. "We've dodged drowning so far, and there seems no further risk of bullets or gas; but the prospect isn't exactly charming, Hal. If they capture us now, Goltz won't want to spoil a pretty story that he has taken so many pains to concoct. He'll make it the real thing and true in parts. He'll pitch us off the gallery into the moat. For the sake of the story, it's absolutely necessary to drown us."

"Hallo!" said Ching Lung, rousing himself. "What are you yarning to Hal? Has anything fresh happened while I've been snoring?"

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"GUNNER TURNS UP!"

(Continued from page 15.)

"We've got to look for him!" muttered Jimmy Silver resolutely. "We'll take a crowd—Erroll and Mornington, and the Colonial chaps, and Oswald—and a cricket-stump each. Come on!"

In ten minutes a dozen Classical juniors, with cricket bats and stumps for weapons, and several bike-lanterns, started for the abbey ruins.

They paused in the ruins to light the lanterns, and then Jimmy Silver led the way down the stone steps.

He strode into the first vault, flashing the light about him with his left hand and a cricket-bat ready in his right. His comrades crowded in after him.

In a body, with lanterns up and weapons ready, and with thumping hearts, the juniors advanced into the vaults.

"Hark!" exclaimed Jimmy.

It was a panting cry from the darkness ahead.

"Help!"

"Tommy Dodd!" shouted Lovell.

The Classical juniors rushed on. A minute later they stumbled over three juniors on the flagstones, tied together and shuddering with cold. Far off, in the distant darkness, faint footsteps were dying away down the vaults. They could guess whose were the footsteps.

"Get us loose!" panted Tommy Dodd. "Yow! We're chilled to the bone! Oh, my hat! Do you know that beast's here?"

"Gunner?"

"Yes!" The rotter—a regular Bill Sikes!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "He was going to slope after dark, blow him! You should have heard him swearing when he saw your lights just now!"

"Let's get out!" exclaimed Courroy.

And the juniors got out.

Half a dozen of the juniors remained on guard outside the entrance of the vaults, while Jimmy Silver and Tommy Dodd hurried off to the School House to acquaint the Head with the news.

Dr. Chisholm, astonished as he was, lost no time. The telephone-wires carried the news to the police-station, and half a dozen Sixth-Formers of Rookwood guarded the vaults till the police arrived.

And before the Rookwood fellows went to bed that night the officers of the law emerged from the abbey vaults with a prisoner in their midst, the handcuffs clinking on his wrist. And Geoffrey Gunner looked the last upon his old school, where he had vainly sought refuge from justice.

THE END.

(Another splendid story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next Friday in the POPULAR.)



A Word With Your Editor

YOUR EDITOR IS ALWAYS PLEASED TO HEAR FROM HIS READERS. Address: EDITOR, THE "POPULAR," THE FLEETWAY HOUSE, FARRINGTON STREET, LONDON, E.C.4.

For Next Friday!

We have another splendid programme in preparation for our next issue. The first long complete school story concerns the further adventures of Harry Wharton & Co., and is entitled:

"COKER COMES ROUND!"

By Frank Richards.

In this story we learn that Horace Coker, the Fifth-Former who has a minor in the Sixth Form, makes things hum in the Fifth and lower Forms when they set about ragging the youthful Reginald of the Sixth. In fact, in spite of the fact that he has declared he will have nothing to do with his brother,

"COKER COMES ROUND!"

entirely, and the fur flies, as Bob Cherry would put it.

The second complete school story is another splendid adventure of Jimmy Silver & Co., and is called:

"THE DUFFER OF ROOKWOOD!"

By Owen Conquest.

The Duffer, you may know, is Clarence, of Gander's Green. This not too bright youngster is undoubtedly a duffer—as you will readily agree when you read the amusing story of Rookwood in our next issue.

"BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY!"

There will also be a further supplement in the centre of next Friday's issue of the "Popular," entitled as above.

William George Bunter has been through stirring times in the course of the last weeks, but it hasn't upset his capacity for turning out screams, as you will know when you take up your copy of the "Popular" next Friday.

OUR GREAT SERIAL.

I am asked by Mr. Sidney Drew to acknowledge in these columns the many hundreds of letters of praise sent to him by readers of this popular paper. He tells me it is impossible to answer all the letters, and as I have seen the number of letters that have arrived for him, I can well understand Mr. Drew's view.

However, he hopes that his reader-chums will do him a further favour by telling all their friends about his latest serial,

"THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!"

a further instalment of which will appear in our next issue.

I endorse Mr. Drew's request. I sincerely hope that all of you who are enjoying the greatest serial this great author has written will spread his fame far and wide.

"POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 33.

Examples for this week's competition:

Chewing in Class.	Taunting the Skipper.
Football.	Words Fail When—
Secure from Loder.	Never Being Late.
Very Cute.	Nugent's Brother.
Spruce Schoolboys.	Bulstrode as Leader.
Muscular Fags.	Going to Cinema.

Read the following rules carefully, and then send in your postcard. Readers should particularly note that TWO efforts can be sent in on one card, but no effort may contain more than FOUR words.

Select two of the examples, and make up a sentence of TWO, THREE, or FOUR words having some bearing on the example. ONE of the words in your sentence must commence with one of the letters in the example.

1. All "Poplets" must be written on one side of a POSTCARD, and not more than two "Poplets" can be sent in by one reader each week.

2. The postcards must be addressed "Poplets," No. 33, The "Popular," Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C.4.

3. No correspondence may be entered into in connection with "Poplets."

4. The Editor's opinion on any matter which may arise is to be accepted as final and legally binding. This condition will be strictly enforced, and readers can only enter the competition on this understanding.

5. I guarantee that every effort will be thoroughly examined by a competent staff of judges, PROVIDED that the effort is sent in on a POSTCARD, and that it is received on or before September 22nd.

TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH to senders of the ten BEST "POPLETS."

RESULT OF

"POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 26.

The ten prizes of five shillings each have been awarded to the following readers, who have sent in the best efforts for the above competition:

Lionel Stebbing, 167, High Street, Lowestoft; Herbert W. Dixon, 93, High Street, Dorking; John Keylock, Buckingham Road, Aintree, Liverpool; Phillip J. J. Park, 1, North Cliff Street, Preston, Lancs; F. Johnson, 42, Andrews Street, Leicester; Ian Hamilton, 13, Leslie Place, Stockbridge, Edinburgh; William B. Macro, Camberwell House, Dickleburgh Common, Norfolk; C. Bovingdon, 66, Colville Road, S. Acton, W. 3; James D. Methvin, Clydeside, Woking Road, Guildford, Surrey; Fred A. Shaw, 61, Pontypridd Road, Porth, Glam.

Your Editor.

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