

A Grand Tale of the Greyfriars Staff Strike Inside!

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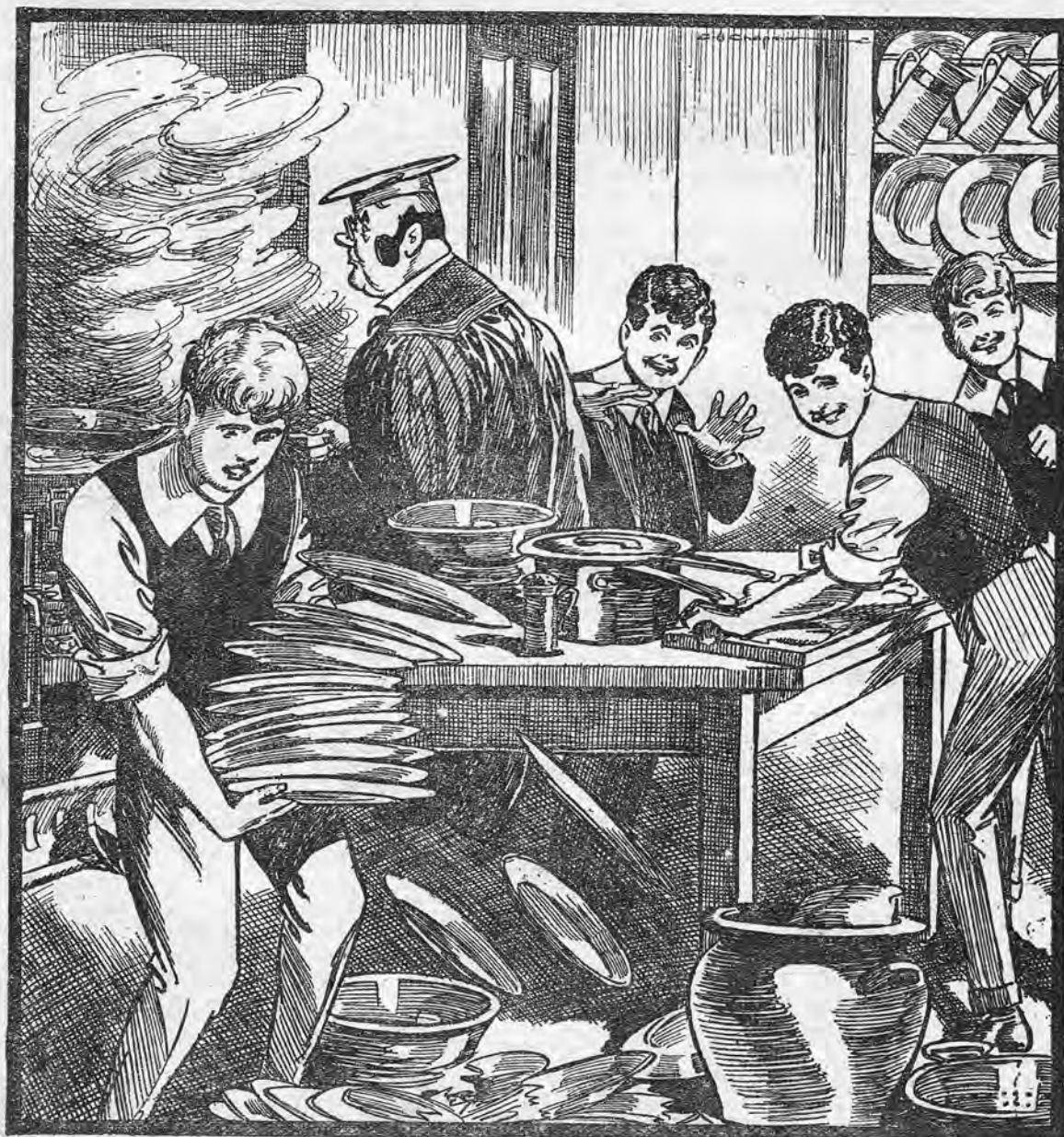
Greyfriars

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



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

Grand Four-page Supplement.
Edited by WILLIAM GEORGE
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The Schoolboy Domestics!

By FRANK RICHARDS.



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

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Deputation!

CLANG-CLANG!
The rising-bell rang out loudly in the keen morning air.

The juniors rose with the usual bustle and noise, and descended to breakfast with no thought of the exciting events which were to take place that day.

When the Remove took their places at their table they found most of the other Forms at table. But they were not eating. Even the Sixth were sitting idle, waiting for breakfast to come up.

"Been an accident, perhaps," said Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars. "I don't remember a delay like this before. Those juniors will begin kicking up a row soon!"

"And so shall I!" growled Loder, the bully of the Sixth. "I'm hungry!"

"It's rotten!" said Carne.

"Beastly arrangements at this hole of a school!" said Loder. "Time something was done, I should think!"

In the Remove the juniors were beginning to become impatient.

"What's up with the giddy servants?" asked Frank Nugent.

"Forgotten all about us, perhaps," suggested Johnny Bull. "My hat, this is funny! All the giddy Forms waiting for brekker! There's no sign of it yet!"

"Old Prout's getting waxy!" grinned Harry Wharton.

"The waxfulness is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence, boys!" said Mr. Quelch, with a worried frown.

He rose from his chair and crossed over to Mr. Prout, the Fifth Form-master. The two masters conversed together for a few moments, then Mr. Capper, of the Upper Fourth, joined them.

"Having a giddy confab!" said Temple of the Fourth.

"About time, too!" growled Fry.

"Oh, rather!" agreed Dabney.

The three masters parted, and Mr. Prout rang the bell. He had done so twice before, but there had been no response. The boys were beginning to get curious. Such a delay as this had never before occurred at Greyfriars.

At last Wingate got up and left the dining-hall. When he returned he was looking very excited and red. He crossed over to Mr. Prout, and handed the Fifth Form-master a note. Mr. Prout read it, and then uttered an amazed ejaculation.

"Upon my soul!" he gasped. "Good gracious!"

Mr. Prout was a middle-aged gentleman with a semi-bald head, and he gazed at the

note with an air of incredulity. He rose, gave the note to Mr. Quelch, and the two masters talked excitedly together for a few moments. Then Mr. Prout hurried from the room.

Meanwhile, the boys had been looking on with growing impatience. They wanted their breakfast, and wondered what on earth had happened. Mr. Quelch and Mr. Capper had their work cut out to keep the juniors in check.

Five minutes after Mr. Prout's disappearance he returned, and with him came the Head. Dr. Locke was looking pale and worried, and a silence fell upon the school as he held up his hand.

"Boys," he said gravely, "an extraordinary thing has happened! I—I scarcely realise it even now. No doubt some of you are aware that I dismissed Dibbs, the groom, yesterday for pilfering."

"Yes, sir," chorused a score of voices.

Everybody at Greyfriars knew all about that. Dibbs had been dismissed because someone had been stealing food from the store-room, and a voice exactly like that of Dibbs had been heard. But what the Greyfriars fellows did not know was that the voice was really Billy Bunter's—the fat ventriloquist of the Remove Form—which was used to throw Mrs. Kebble, the good dame who looked after the stores, off the scent.

Dibbs had proved his innocence, and the staff had demanded that Dibbs should be reinstated. But Dr. Locke refused to accept the demand.

"Well, my boys, the rest of the servants have conspired against me, and actually demand that Dibbs be reinstated. They have temporarily struck work as a protest against my decision! It is extraordinary, astounding! Mrs. Kebble, in whom I had the greatest confidence, appears to be one of the ringleaders. She has prepared no breakfast, and a deputation is to come to my study at nine o'clock."

There was a buzz of excitement.

"My hat!" gasped Harry Wharton.

"The servants have struck!"

"No giddy brekker!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"It's awful!" groaned Billy Bunter, in dismay. "My hat, I shall faint if—"

"Silence!" shouted Wingate.

The Head resumed.

"I shall deal with the deputation in the only way possible," he said firmly. "The circumstances are peculiar, and I need not describe them to you now. I shall refuse to meet the servants' demands, and shall dismiss Mrs. Kebble from my service. It is the only thing I can do—the only way to retain my

authority over the household. By dinner-time, boys, matters will be settled, and the usual household arrangements running smoothly!"

"But how about brekker, sir?" yelled Billy Bunter.

"Silence, there!" roared Wingate.

"I think, Wingate, that the boys certainly have the right to inquire about breakfast," said the Head. "It is extremely unfortunate, but I can do nothing to alter the circumstances. I dare say most of you have gone without your breakfasts before now, and you will enjoy your dinners all the more! I am extremely sorry, but I myself can do nothing!"

Most of the boys took the news philosophically, and only one or two of them—Billy Bunter included, of course—grumbled. It was very exasperating to be done out of their breakfasts, but, under the circumstances, there was no help for it.

So the boys dispersed, and raked out the leavings from last night's tea. Taking it altogether, they managed fairly well.

Dr. Locke was very perturbed, and held a long consultation in his study with Mr. Prout and Mr. Quelch. Mr. Prout was of the opinion that he could quell the rebellion very soon if he had his own way, but Dr. Locke thought otherwise. He decided to deal with the matter himself. Mr. Prout was an excellent scholar, and had a flattering opinion about himself, but the Head felt that he was hardly capable of dealing with a matter of this description. It was a task to be undertaken by the headmaster himself.

"It is an astounding state of affairs," said the Head, with a worried look. "I shall be very firm, and refuse to discuss matters. I am convinced that Dibbs is guilty, and that this is merely an attempt to get him reinstated. The servants have been planning it among themselves, thinking that I should be foolish enough to comply. I shall quell the rebellion with a firm hand!"

"It is the only thing to be done," said Mr. Quelch.

"Quite so," agreed Mr. Prout.

Nine o'clock boomed out on the old clock-tower, and almost to the second the deputation arrived. There was a tap upon the Head's door, and the deputation entered. The Head sat at his desk, and the two Form-masters stood on either side of him.

The deputation entered.

Gosling, as the chosen spokesman of the party, led the way. His face was very red, and he had obviously braced himself up for the occasion by liberal allowances of gin-and-water. Behind him came Mrs. Kebble, her face stern and her lips set. Mrs. Minble followed, looking rather uncomfortable.

Then came Trotter, the cook, and, finally, Dibbs' sister. Dibbs himself thought it wisest to remain below.

The door closed, and the Head looked at the deputation with a stern face.

"You, Gosling," he said, "are the spokesman, I presume?"

"Wot I says is this 'ere!" said Gosling, rather thickly. "I'm honly actin' as spokesman 'cos nobody else don't relish the job! I 'ope, sir, as you won't think I'm bein' disrespec'ful—"

"Pray proceed, Gosling!" said the Head testily.

"Hain't Hi proceedin'?" exclaimed the porter, beginning to feel more confident. "We've come 'ere, sir, to point hout to you that you've done a great injustice! Dibbs his innocent, an' we, as a body, demand that you give 'im back 'is post! Seein' as he's done nothink, it'll 'only be the right an' honourable thing to do!"

"Nonsense, sir!" snapped Mr. Prout. "Dibbs was guilty of very dishonourable conduct, and—"

"Wot I says is this 'ere," said Gosling. "I'm a-talkin' to the 'Ead—"

"How dare you!" exclaimed Mr. Prout.

"Please let me deal with the matter, Mr. Prout," said the Head gently. "Gosling, am I to understand that you have any further proof of Dibbs' innocence?"

"Many further proof?" ejaculated Gosling. "Why, we've got enough, in my opinion!"

"Of course," said Mrs. Kebble. "Yesterday we were quite mistaken about Dibbs, and we have now positive proof that he is innocent. I admit that I was hasty, and if I had stopped to look into the matter I should have found out the truth for myself. Mrs. Mimble can prove that Dibbs was talking to her when the incident actually happened."

"That I can, sir!" said Mrs. Mimble.

"So can I, sir!" said Dibbs' sister.

"But there were no boys in your shop at the time, Mrs. Mimble?" asked the Head. "There is nobody but you yourselves who could testify that Dibbs was in your shop!"

"I saw Dibbs leavin' Mrs. Mimble's shop, sir," said Trotter.

"Was there anybody in the Close at the time?"

"Nobody, sir; honly me."

"You see, sir," explained Mrs. Mimble, "most of the boys were doing their preparation, so wouldn't want to come to my shop. It's always a slack time."

"Then the fact remains," said the Head, "that I've only your word to go on that Dibbs was actually in the shop?"

"Isn't my word good enough?" shouted Mrs. Mimble indignantly.

The Head tapped his desk impatiently.

"My good woman, I do not doubt your good motives," he said, "but if you wished me to believe this story you should have told it to me last night when Dibbs was brought to me on the first occasion. Mrs. Kebble and Gosling were then quite convinced that Dibbs was guilty, actually telling me that they'd heard his voice, and found the remains of the stolen goods in the harness-room! I will speak plainly, and tell you that I believe you have connived together, and concocted this story in order to make me reinstate Dibbs!"

"Oh, sir!" gasped the cook.

"It's an insult!" exclaimed Mrs. Kebble wrathfully.

"I do not mean to be insulting," said the Head quickly. "In any case the matter is trivial, and you were prompted by purely sympathetic motives to take up this stand. But I am not deceived, and I tell you, once and for all, that I put my foot down firmly! Dibbs is dismissed!"

Gosling stepped forward.

"An' that's your last word?" he said dully.

"Yes, Gosling, it is. You may all go!" said the Head.

"Oh, may we?" roared Gosling. "Hi don't mean to be disrespec'ful, sir, but wot Hi says is this 'ere. We came to this study to make you learn sense, an' do the proper thing! And we ain't goin' to leave until you consents to reinstate Dibbs! That's flat, ain't it, sir?"

The Head's brow grew black.

"You are insulting, Gosling," he said angrily. "I have already stated my decision, and I shall not alter it!"

"You mean Dibbs is chucked hout?" said Gosling.

"Exactly!"

"Then you're more hobstinate than Hi thought you'd be!" shouted the porter, getting excited. "Wot Hi says is this 'ere. Hif you don't agree to our terms, we strike!"

"You scoundrel!" shouted Mr. Prout.

"We strike!" repeated Gosling. "Hall of us!"

And the deputation nodded approval.

"How dare you!" exclaimed Dr. Locke angrily. "How dare you stand there and behave in this outrageous manner? You will all return to your posts at once! Dibbs is dismissed, and I refuse to discuss the matter further! Gosling, I will not dismiss you, as I think you are behaving under stress of excitement. But if you do not immediately bring this absurd scene to a conclusion, I shall reconsider my decision!"

"Hall right!" shouted Gosling recklessly. "You can do as yer like, you hobstinate old mule! His Dibbs goin' to be kep' on, or his 'e not?"

"He is not!" shouted the Head, white with fury.

Gosling banged his fist on the desk.

"Then we strike!" he roared. "We strike till you come to your senses! Hi halways thought you was a lot too big for yer boots, an' now bi tell you so to yer face!"

"Good gracious!" gasped Mr. Prout.

"This is outrageous!" added Mr. Quelch.

"You are right!" said the Head. "Gosling, you will leave the school at once!"

Mrs. Kebble bristled.

"If Gosling goes," she declared flatly, "I go!"

"Madam, I had already decided to dismiss you!" said the Head.

"You old donkey!" shrieked Mrs. Kebble.

"Dear me!" gasped the Head. "This—this is unbearable!"

"Well, you've brought it on yerself!" roared Gosling. "We're standin' together in this affair, an' there ain't goin' to be no backin' hout! If Dibbs ain't took on agin we all leave together! I ain't goin' alone, nor Mrs. Kebble ain't goin' alone! We all goes together!"

"Ear, ear!" said Trotter.

"If Gosling goes, I go, too!" exclaimed the fat cook.

Dr. Locke was speechless.

"And so do I," said Mrs. Mimble.

"An' me, too!"

"An' me, too!"

The servants were unanimous in their decision.

"Now," roared Gosling triumphantly, "wot 'ave you got to say? We're the masters of the situation, an' we ain't a-goin' to be done! Wot I says is this 'ere—"

"Silence!" thundered the Head.

"Which Hi won't be silent!" shouted Gosling. "Hi ain't goin' to be shut up by no man!"

"How dare you?" raved Dr. Locke, pale with fury. "Leave my study at once, all of you! If I consented to this outrageous proposal I should lose all authority in the School! Every servant is dismissed! You will all leave within the hour. Mrs. Mimble, kindly remove your goods from the School shop."

"I will," shouted Mrs. Mimble, "and be right glad to!"

"I never see sich a hobstinate—"

"Go!" thundered the Head. "Leave my room!"

"Then hall the servants his dismissed?" gulped Gosling.

"Yes, sir; every one!"

"Then hall I've got to say is, you don't know wot you're a-doin' of! Hif you think we're a-goin' to take it quiet, you're mistaken!"

And Gosling, having delivered that final word, gave a final bang on the desk and stamped over to the door. The other servants, hot and flustered with anger, followed him out as the door closed.

"Good gracious!" gasped the Head. "This is terrible!"

And he sank back in his chair and mopped the cold perspiration from his brow.

Then Mr. Prout, master of the Fifth Form, came to the rescue with a brain wave. He suggested that the boys should do the domestic work, and the Head's frown relaxed.

"But would they not be too old?" said the Head doubtfully. "The Fifth, you know, consider they have a dignity to keep up, and—"

"But I do not propose enlisting the services of my boys. As you say, sir, they would consider themselves too dignified to undertake kitchenwork. The Second and Third are too young; but, I think, the

Remove would just suit our requirements. I will get together a party of Remove boys, and set them to work immediately. In that way we shall be able to provide the whole school with the usual dinner at a little after the accustomed time."

"Very well, Mr. Prout," said the Head. "Do as you suggest. It is certainly a way out of the present difficulty, and I trust you will be successful in your rather doubtful enterprise."

"Never fear, sir; I am quite confident!" said Mr. Prout.

And the Fifth Form-master departed on his errand. He emerged out into the Close, and called a large crowd of Removites round him. Nearly all the juniors were in the Close, and they crowded round eagerly.

"Boys," said Mr. Prout genially, "I have a proposition to make to you—at least, to make to members of the Remove Form. At present it looks very much as though there'll be no dinner for the whole school, but if I can rely upon your assistance, I think we can combat the difficulty."

"We're with you, sir!"

"Rather!"

"You can rely on us, sir!"

"I want a dozen Remove boys to volunteer to help me in the kitchen. Under my direction, you will prepare dinner for the whole school. Those boys who will help me, kindly hold up their hands!"

For a moment there was silence. The juniors were too surprised for a moment to take action. The proposition was so startling that they could not realise the meaning of it for a moment. Then Billy Bunter raised his fat hand skywards.

"I'll help you, sir!" he bawled from the back of the crowd.

"Thank you, Bunter!" said Mr. Prout.

"Trust Bunter to be first!" grinned Nugent.

"Oh, really, Nugent," protested Bunter. "I think it's up to us to help Mr. Prout! If we don't we sha'n't get any blessed dinner! That's what I'm thinking of!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

A score of hands went up, and Mr. Prout beamed all over his face.

"I knew you would be sensible, boys," he said. "But I only want a dozen."

And Mr. Prout proceeded to choose his helpers. He picked out Billy Bunter, the Famous Five, Mark Linley, Micky Desmond, Fisher T. Fish, Tom Brown, Bulstrode, and Hazeldene.

Lord Mauleverer, the dandy of the Remove, had been among the crowd at first, but as soon as he heard Mr. Prout's proposal he hurried into the School House with rather more haste than dignity. Lord Mauleverer had no desire to be amongst the chosen ones.

Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth grinned loftily as they passed the Removites. They had heard what was going on, and were inclined to be superior.

"I say, Cherry, my boy," said Temple, "there's a pair of boots in my study that want cleaning. Just give them a rub over, will you? I'll give you a halfpenny for your trouble!"

"Silly ass!" said Bob Cherry, turning red.

"Now, then, no insolence!" said Temple sharply.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

"He, he, he!" giggled Fry.

"Do you want a thick ear?" asked Bob Cherry dully.

"Just hark at him!" said Temple to the grinning juniors. "These Remove chaps are the new skivvies, ain't they?"

"Oh, rather!"

"You fatheaded chumps!" roared Bob Cherry warmly. "If you don't shut up, I'll shove some giddy red pepper in your dinner, Temple!"

"You'll catch it hot if you do!" said Temple.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Cackling fatheads!" sniffed Temple.

"Oh, rather!" said Dabney.

And the Upper Fourth heroes strolled away.

Mr. Prout looked round.

"Come, boys!" he said. "There's no time to waste!"

"Right you are, sir!"

"Lead on, Macduff!" grinned Bob Cherry, sotto voce.

And Mr. Prout entered the School House with the new Greyfriars domestics following him in a grinning crowd.

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THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Cooking!

MR. PROUT stood in the kitchen, surrounded by his helpers.

The fire, it was found, was still in, and was now roaring cheerfully. The Removites had very great difficulty in keeping their faces straight, for Mr. Prout presented a very unusual appearance.

The Fifth Form-master was not possessed of very extensive hair—in fact, he was quite bald on the top of his napper, as Bob Cherry described it. And as he could not very well stand in the kitchen cooking with a mortar-board upon his head, he had changed it for a white chef's cap, which he found in the kitchen cupboard.

Mr. Prout rather fancied himself as a cook, and he thought it would only be doing the thing properly if he wore a chef's cap. Mr. Prout considered that the boys would be more impressed.

But they weren't impressed; the Removites, in fact, had nearly burst into a roar when Mr. Prout donned his unusual headgear. "Now, boys," said the Form-master briskly, "we must get to work! It is no light task, as you may imagine, to prepare dinner for so many boys. Therefore, you will have to work very hard. I will now allot you your various duties, and trust that there will be no quarrelling."

"We're on, sir!"

"Anything you like, sir!"

And the juniors bustled about with great haste. Very soon the kitchen presented quite a busy appearance. Mr. Prout had found the larder very well stocked, and he soon set about preparing a very special dinner. Exactly what it was going to be the juniors did not know, but Fisher T. Fish found himself allotted to the task of mixing up a huge bowl of flour, milk, and other ingredients, to make a pudding-crust. The things were all ready for him, and Mr. Prout looked at the American junior rather doubtfully as Fisher T. Fish rolled up his sleeves.

"Do you think you can manage it, Fish?" he asked.

"Yep! I guess so, sir!" said Fisher T. Fish confidently. "I'm not going to be beaten by a measly old pudding! I guess the chaps will vote this pudding-crust the best they've ever eaten!"

"Yes; if they get through it!" said Harry Wharton.

"Which is jolly doubtful!" added Nugent. "Look here, you slab-sided ass," said Fisher T. Fish wrathfully, "I guess I can make a pudding as well as any of you silly fatheads!"

"Silence!" said Mr. Prout angrily. "Fish, proceed with your work, and do not make such free use of those slangy words!"

"I guess I was aggravated, sir!"

"Any boy who starts squabbling again will be sent out of the kitchen!" said Mr. Prout.

The Fifth Form-master turned away to the stove, and Fisher T. Fish dived his hands into the flour-bin.

"Look here, you grimy Yankee bouncer," said Tom Brown wrathfully, "you ain't washed your hands! It's likely we're going to eat a pudding after it's been mixed up by your unwashed paws!"

"The esteemed Fish has perhapsfully forgotten that august detail!" murmured Hurree Singh. "His honourable hands certainly look like the esteemed dirt. The grimefulness is terrific!"

"Rats!" said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess my hands are all right!"

"Go and wash 'em!" murmured Bob Cherry.

"I guess—"

"We won't eat a scrap of that pudding if you don't!"

"Piffle! Look here—"

"You ass!"

"You clump!"

Mr. Prout turned away from the stove.

"What is the matter?" he demanded testily. "Am I to be annoyed by this continual squabbling? What is the trouble now?"

"Why, Fish is diving his dirty manlers into the giddy flour!" said Tom Brown indignantly. "He ain't washed them since last week!"

"You rotten fibber!" roared Fisher T. Fish. "Well, yesterday," amended the New Zealand junior.

"Is that true, Fish?" said Mr. Prout, looking at Fish's hands suspiciously. "I trust THE POPULAR.—No. 148.

that you have not attempted to make the pudding-crust without first washing your hands?"

"I guess they're clean enough, sir!"

"Show them to me!"

Fisher T. Fish held out a pair of floury hands. They were certainly rather grimy underneath, and the whiteness of the flour aggravated the effect. Mr. Prout sniffed.

"The boys were quite right to draw my attention to this!" he said. "Fish, go and wash your hands at once! I'm surprised at you!"

"I guess—"

"Go and wash them!" roared Mr. Prout.

The American junior went into the scullery, and chuckles went up from the other juniors. Mr. Prout turned again to the stove, and the others went on with their various duties.

Fisher T. Fish returned shortly, and then proceeded to make his pudding-crust. He doled out a supply of flour into a big bowl, and then began to mix it. Presently, when the dough was of a firm consistency, he planked it out on to a board. Fisher T. Fish was now beginning to present a floury appearance. His clothes were floury, his face was floury, and his hair looked as if it was turning prematurely white. But the American junior didn't mind. He had succeeded in making his pudding-crust, and that was the main thing. He rolled it out on the board vigorously.

For the time being there was silence in the kitchen.

The room presented a very animated appearance.

Mr. Prout was standing at the stove, with a frying-pan in one hand and a fork in the other. Every now and again he turned over a huge slab of meat, and an appetising odour rose into the air. Mr. Prout's face was hot and flushed, and it really looked as though he was doing his best to fry that also!

Mark Linley and Hazeldene were hard at it peeling potatoes as though for a wager. As a matter of fact, Hazeldene had made a bet with Linley that he'd get his painful finished first. The stakes were a pocket-knife against an electric-lamp, and the two juniors were piling into the work at top-speed.

Bob Cherry had just collected a huge pile of plates, and was crossing the kitchen rather uncertainly. His objective was the side-table under the window, and Bob had bitten off rather more than he could chew.

Suddenly Frank Nugent looked round from his work, and grinned as he saw Bob Cherry coming.

"Look out, you ass!" he said sharply.

"Eh? What?" gasped Bob Cherry.

He swung round instinctively, being under the impression that he was about to trip over something on the floor. The pile of plates tottered, paused for one dizzy second in uncertainty, and then toppled over with a crash!

"My only Aunt Georgina!" gasped Bob. "Ha, ha, ha!" howled Nugent.

"Do you mean to say you startled me like that on purpose, you giddy idiot!" said Bob wrathfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Frank Nugent.

Mr. Prout turned from the stove with a start which nearly caused his glasses to fall into the ash-pan. Even that little incident nearly resulted in disaster. Mr. Prout made a clutch at his glasses, and jerked the frying-pan forward. Fortunately, he recovered it in time, but not before a spurt of fat had splashed itself all down Mr. Prout's waist-coat!

"Good gracious!" he gasped. "I—I—Upon my soul!"

He looked round with a red face, and several audible giggles were turned into discreet coughs.

"What was that appalling din just now?" said Mr. Prout, glaring round. "Dear me, Cherry, have you dropped those plates?"

"Dropped them, sir!" said Bob Cherry innocently.

"Yes, Cherry, dropped them!"

"They—they do seem to be rather bent!" faltered Bob.

There was a suppressed gasp of merriment.

"Bent!" shouted Mr. Prout. "How dare you joke on such a matter, Cherry? How could you be so clumsy as to drop that pile of plates?"

"How could he be?" murmured Frank Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm sorry, sir," said Bob Cherry. "Something startled me!"

"Something startled you!" repeated Mr.

Prout angrily. "If you cannot be more careful over this work, Cherry, I shall send you from the kitchen!"

"Oh, sir!"

"Pick those plates up immediately, and then help Singh and Desmond with the apples. Fish will be ready with the crust soon, and I want the apple-puddings to be in immediately."

"They'll take hours to cook, sir!" grined Bulstrode.

"Nonsense!" said Mr. Prout. "I know what I am doing, Bulstrode. When the school has finished the first course, the apple-puddings will be done to a turn."

"Yes; if ever we get through the first course!" murmured Harry Wharton.

"What did you say, Wharton?" said Mr. Prout.

"I merely made a remark about the first course!" said the captain of the Remove.

"Well, make no more remarks, Wharton, but be quick with that suet!" said Mr. Prout sharply. "Chop it up finely, or the puddings will be spoilt. It is imperative that the suet should be fine!"

"The suet may be fine," chuckled Johnny Bull, "but I'll bet the puddings will be rotten!"

Mark Linley lifted his nose into the air, and sniffed.

"There's a rummy niff, sir!" he said. "There's a what, Linley?" asked Mr. Prout severely.

"A—A peculiar aroma, sir!" said Mark Linley innocently. "Can't you smell it, sir? Like something burning!"

"Oh, my hat!" gurgled Bob Cherry. "It's the giddy meat!"

"Eh!" exclaimed Mr. Prout, sniffing. "Dear me, I believe the meat is burning!"

"Smells like it, sir, doesn't it?"

Mr. Prout rushed across to the stove, and the juniors nearly exploded. A cloud of smoke was rising from the frying-pan, and Mr. Prout raised it from the stove in dismay.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed. "The meat is ruined!"

"Never mind, sir," said Bulstrode, "there's the joint in the oven. That's doing all right, I think!"

"I hope so, Bulstrode," said Mr. Prout, with a worried frown.

He bent down quickly and grasped the oven door.

Then Mr. Prout gave vent to a fiendish yell.

"Ow!" he roared. "Yow-ow!"

"What's up, sir?"

"Handle hot, sir!"

"Dear me, I am severely burnt!" groaned Mr. Prout. "I had clean forgotten that the handle of the oven door would be hot!"

"Yes, sir; it is rather peculiar," said Johnny Bull, "considering there's a whacking great fire in the grate!"

"Don't be impertinent, Bull! I am really hurt!"

"Shall I fetch the blue-bag, sir?" asked Bob Cherry.

"No, Cherry, you will not!" roared Mr. Prout, very red in the face. "Get on with your work, and do not make so many interruptions! It is mainly because you boys are such a nuisance that I have burnt myself."

And Mr. Prout savagely grabbed the cloth and opened the oven door. The Removites were grinning delightedly, for, although Mr. Prout considered that he was a first-class cook, the juniors thought quite the opposite. Happily, the joint was cooking merrily, and no further mishaps occurred.

Fisher T. Fish succeeded in finishing his crust, and the apple-puddings were made. Shortly afterwards the potatoes were put on the stove to cook, and the boys found they had a breathing space.

"Hallo!" said Bulstrode suddenly.

"Where's Bunter?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"Have you sent Bunter anywhere, sir?"

"No, Cherry," replied Mr. Prout. "Isn't he here?"

"No, sir; but I expect I know where he is!"

"My hat!" ejaculated Nugent. "In the larder!"

Mr. Prout started.

"Do you really think so, Nugent?" he exclaimed. "I will investigate at once!"

And Mr. Prout strode from the kitchen and made his way to the larder. He opened the door quickly, and there was a crash. Billy Bunter stood before the Fifth Form-master, just finishing the remains of a beef-pie.

NEXT
FRIDAY!

"THE AMAZING NEW BOY!"

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

"What are you doing here, Bunter?" thundered Mr. Prout.

"I—I— Oh, really, sir, I—I just came to look round!" said Billy Bunter, in dismay. "I—I haven't been eating this pie, sir! It was only just a crumb!"

"Do not lie to me, Bunter!" shouted Mr. Prout. "Go into the school quarters at once, and I will report your conduct to Mr. Quelch. I am extremely sorry that I consented to bring you here! You are a most gluttonous boy!"

"Well, I was hungry!" said Billy Bunter defiantly. "I didn't have any brekker this morning, and my fees include brekker!"

Mr. Prout snorted in disgust. "Go," he shouted, "before I thrash you!" And Bunter went.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Trotter Thinks He Knows!

TROTTER, the dismissed Greyfriars page, walked briskly in at the gates. It was still early in the evening, although fairly dusk. Trotter marched straight into the School House, and tapped at the door of Study No. 1 in the Remove passage.

"Come in, fathead!" sang out Harry Wharton's voice.

Trotter grinned, and accepted the invitation.

"Trotter!" exclaimed Harry Wharton in surprise. "My hat, what are you doing here, Trotty?"

"I've bin thinkin', Master Wharton—"

"Go hon!" said Bob Cherry, who, with Johnny Bull and Inky, was taking tea with Harry Wharton and Nugent.

"It's right, Master Cherry," said Trotter seriously. "Somethink struck me 'arf an hour ago, so I thought I'd come up and talk to you about it. Gosling an' all the rest of us are in a fearful stew because o' this affair about Dibbs! It wasn't Dibbs who took them things out of the store-room, Master Wharton—it wasn't 'im at all!"

"Who was it, then?" asked Wharton.

"It was Master Bunter, sir!" announced Trotter firmly.

"Bunter—Billy Bunter?"

"Yes, young gentlemen," said Trotter earnestly. "When we—Gosling an' me—knew out o' the 'ouse to rush arter Dibbs we found Master Bunter there, an' it was 'im who said that he'd seen Dibbs jump out o' the store-room window. I know that Master Bunter ain't particular about tellin' whoppers, an' that must have bin one o' 'em!"

"By Jove!" said Bob Cherry. "I wonder if you're right?"

"I know as I am, Master Cherry. It's as plain as anything Master Bunter is a ventriloquist, an' it struck me, sudden-like, that it would jest be one o' 'is tricks to himitate Dibbs' voice to save himself. If Master Bunter 'adn't been there, I shouldn't 'ave suspected nothin'. But 'e was there—an' I'm sure as he's the culprit!"

"My only topper!" ejaculated Frank Nugent. "You're right, Trotter! It's as plain as your face! What an ass I was not to think of it before! Bunter's the cause of all this trouble, and he's allowed Dibbs to be dismissed without saying a word!"

"The fat rotter!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "The fraud ought to be scalped!"

"The boifulsness in the esteemed oil ought to be terrific!" said Hurree Singh.

"I've been a-thinkin' of it out," said Trotter. "It ain't no good goin' to the 'Ead an' tellin' 'im all this 'ere. 'E wouldn't believe it without proof, so I reckon I'd better come up 'ere to-morrow mornin' an' do a sort of detective hact! Hif I keep my heyes on Master Bunter I'm sure to find out afore long 'ow 'e manages to git into the store-room!"

And Trotter proceeded to outline his scheme. When he departed he was looking satisfied. Lord Mauleverer was at the gate, and the schoolboy earl was looking very bored.

"Allo, Master Mauleverer, wot are you doin' 'ere?" said Trotter.

"I'm the beastly lodge-keeper, my dear fellow!" said Lord Mauleverer, yawning. "Quite against my wishes, Mr. Quelch has set me the task of staying at this rotten gate until locking-up time! Begad, it's fearful! There's a whole hour yet!"

Trotter grinned and passed out. Since tea Mr. Quelch had, indeed, been upon the warpath. The juniors found that they were being turned into domestics in

earnest. To their utter disgust, Temple, Dabney & Co., and over half the Upper Fourth, were allotted to the task of making beds for the whole school! There had been an uproar at first, but Mr. Quelch was firm, and at last Temple, Dabney & Co. realised that their turn had come. But they were not the only ones to be given unwelcome tasks. Several boys were ordered to go round the school and clear up after the day's work. The dining-hall required tidying, the kitchen putting straight, and a dozen other important jobs cropped up.

Harry Wharton & Co., having been employed during the morning, were let off now, and the Famous Five, soon after Trotter had departed, sallied out of the gates on a visit to the village. They required some tuck, and as Mrs. Mumble's shop was closed, there was nothing else for it but to go down to Uncle Clegg's, in Friardale.

"Don't be late, my dear fellows!" said

Trotter doesn't show him up to-morrow I'll jolly well do it myself!"

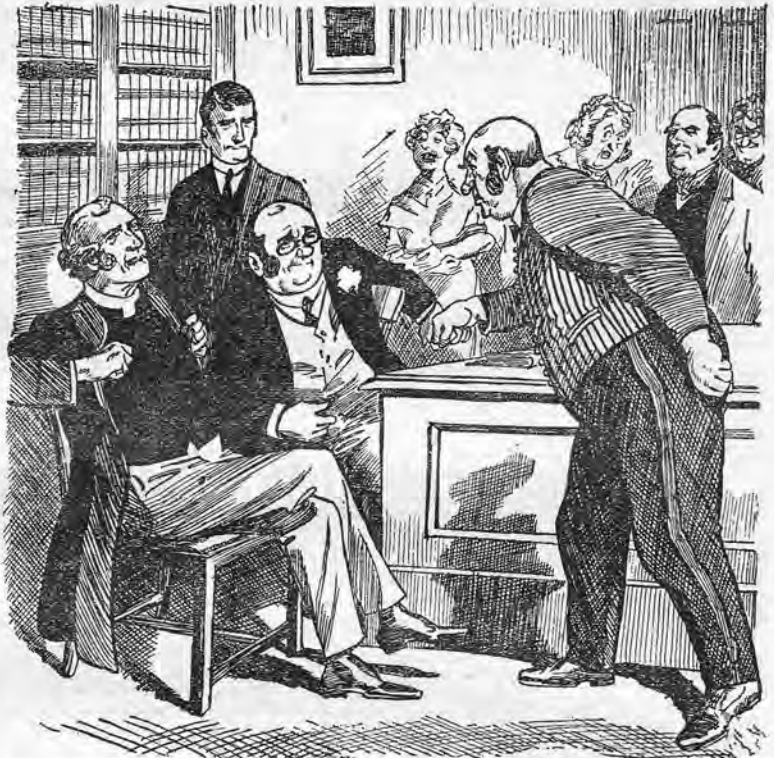
And the rest of the Co. unanimously agreed that Billy Bunter ought to be stopped at his little game. The Owl of the Remove did not dream that exposure was near. Had he done so he would not have slept so comfortably in his bed that night!

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

On the Track!

THE following morning the situation was unchanged.

The worried Head of Greyfriars was still unable to procure servants to fill the places of the old ones, and he was now forced to wire to London for some. But even with resorting to this expedient the new servants would not be at Greyfriars until evening.



"Is Dibbs coming back?" asked Gosling, who was at the head of the deputation. "No, he is not!" said the Head. Gosling banged his fist on the table. "Then we strike!" he said. "We strike till you come to your senses!" (See Chapter 1.)

Lord Mauleverer, as the Famous Five passed out. "Begad, I shall lock you out if you are! It is my duty, you know!"

"Rats to your duty!" said Bob Cherry.

Mauly hadn't long to wait, for the Famous Five were back before the hour was up. As they passed across the Close a dark form appeared and passed one of the lighted windows quite close to them. Bob Cherry let out a shout:

"Hallo! That you, Bunter?"

But the fat junior appeared not to see or hear them, for he ran up the School House steps, and hurried inside without turning round.

As soon as Harry Wharton & Co. had reached the seclusion of Study No. 1 the captain of the Remove banged his fist on the table.

"Trotter was right!" he declared.

"What are you jawing about?" demanded Frank Nugent.

"Why, didn't you notice anything peculiar about Bunter?" asked Wharton. "His face was jammy, and he had come from the back premises! He'd just been on a raiding expedition. The fat little bouncer is the cause of all this trouble with the servants! If

So there was another day of upset and disorder staring the harassed Form-masters in the face. It was very worrying, and Dr. Locke scarcely knew what to do. He almost wished he had listened to his deputation's demand, and reinstated Dibbs.

But the end of the trouble was very near, had the Head only known it. Trotter, Gosling, and the other servants had remained in the village, for they were still convinced that they would be able to prove Dibbs' innocence, and make the Head realise that he had done them all an injustice even though he had dismissed them for insolence. They had been excited and angry at the time, and when the Head realised that the whole thing was a sheer misunderstanding, he would probably let the matter pass.

Trotter, especially, was certain of getting at the truth. Immediately after breakfast—and a very unsatisfactory breakfast it had proved—Trotter presented himself at the School House. Trotter was not in his page's uniform. He did not wish to be seen there by any of the masters.

"Oh, here you are, Trotty!" said Harry Wharton, who was discussing Bunter's guilt

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"FORESTALLED!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

BY FRANK RICHARDS.

with Frank Nugent in Study No. 1. "We were just talking about you. I think it's time we had an ending to this rotten state of affairs! We simply couldn't get through another day without all of you coming back!"

"You realise how much we're worth now!" grinned Trotter. "But, jokin' aside, Master Wharton, I think as you're right. Considerin' as it's Master Bunter who's bin the cause of it all, I think it's only right that 'e should be showed up!"

"Well, the only thing to do," said Frank Nugent thoughtfully, "is to trick Bunter into going to the store-room. If we can get him to go there at once, you can be on the watch round the back, Trotty, and see how he gets in. There's a giddy mystery connected with it. I'm jolly certain the fat boulder doesn't get in at the window. It may seem taking advantage of him, but in a case like this we can't afford to be too lenient."

"No fear!" said Harry Wharton. "Why, Bunter's a crawling worm! He's actually kept mum and let all the servants be dismissed! Why, he ought to be publicly flogged! If we prove Bunter to be the culprit, and take him before the Head, I don't reckon it'll be sneaking. At a time like this, when the whole organisation of the school is out of order, it would only be doing the fair thing both to Dr. Locke and to the servants!"

"That's what I think!" said Nugent firmly. "O' course," agreed Trotter, "it wouldn't be sneakin', Master Wharton! In a case like this 'ere it wouldn't be right to do nothin' else. There's all us servants to think about. Why, if you let matters stand, you wouldn't sleep comfortable!"

Harry Wharton banged the table. "I've got a wheeze!" he said quickly. "The very idea! I admit it's a bit of a stratagem, but if Bunter doesn't walk into this trap you can call me a fatheaded chump! Just listen to this!"

And Harry Wharton rapidly outlined his scheme.

"My hat!" ejaculated Frank Nugent. "It's ripping!"

"Not 'arf!" said Trotter. "It'll work a treat! When are you going to do it, Master Wharton?"

"Now—this very minute!" replied the captain of the Remove quickly. "I think it's my duty to do it, and I'm not going to back out. Before we can go to the Head we simply must have proof. We're going to have lessons this morning, but if this idea pans out all right, we shall cop Bunter on

the hop before lessons start. Trotter, you buzz off round to the back; you know what you've got to do."

"Right-ho, Master Wharton!"

And Trotter disappeared.

"Now, Franky," said Wharton, "say your lines to me."

Frank Nugent grinned.

"I say, Wharton," he said carelessly, "they're going to clear out the store-room this morning! Every blessed thing's coming out, and before lessons are over the room will be bare!" How's that?"

"Ripping!" said Harry Wharton. "I'm off to find Bunter. When I repeat your words to him, I don't think he'll jump to the giddy wheeze."

"No fear!" said Frank Nugent. "He'll be too anxious about the grub!"

Harry Wharton found Billy Bunter standing under one of the old elms in the Close. As a matter of fact, the Owl of the Remove was feeling far from comfortable. He knew that he was the cause of all the trouble, and Bunter felt that he ought to own up. But he wouldn't do it; he hadn't the courage.

Harry Wharton strolled up carelessly.

"I say, Bunter," he said, "heard the latest?"

"The latest?" repeated Billy Bunter. "What do you mean?"

"Why," said Wharton, "somebody has just told me that they're going to clear out the giddy store-room this morning!"

Bunter started.

"What's that?" he asked, with an assumption of carelessness.

"Somebody told me that the store-room's going to be cleared out during lessons," repeated Wharton, watching Bunter out of the corner of his eye. "Of course, that's only what I've heard. I wonder if it's anything to do with this striking bizney? Perhaps the Head's going to see what grub there is in the store-room, so that he can rake up a dinner."

Harry Wharton scratched his head. It was a signal to Frank Nugent. The latter appeared on the School House steps.

"I say, Harry!" he bawled. "I want you!"

"Right-ho!" shouted Wharton.

And he hastened across the Close, leaving Bunter under the old elms, looking somewhat startled. As Harry Wharton had anticipated, the Owl of the Remove had swallowed the bait without a thought of disaster.

"The store-room's going to be cleared out—eh?" he muttered, in dismay. "And I was relying on another feed to-night! I'm famished!" He looked round him quickly.

"I wonder if I dare go round to the back now? There's nobody in the servants' quarters, and even if I'm spotted, nobody would connect me with nicking things out of the store-room. I can say I dropped something down the coal-hole!"

And Billy Bunter, dismayed at the thought of being done out of another feed, rolled off across the Close. As Wharton had expected, his greed had got the better of his caution, and he was doing the very thing which would bring about his downfall. Harry Wharton's stratagem was in no way a dishonourable one. He had not told a lie. He had simply acted a part, and Bunter had been deceived.

The back quarters were lonely and deserted, and Bunter noticed, with keen satisfaction that the blinds of the kitchen and scullery were down. Without waiting a moment, he crossed over to the stone slab which covered the coal-hole, and swung it back. A moment later he had disappeared.

Trotter came into view from the stable. "My 'at!" he ejaculated to himself. "So that's the way 'e did it! The artful young raskin!"

Trotter nimbly dropped through into the coal-cellar, and cautiously made his way after Billy Bunter. He nearly uttered an exclamation of astonishment as he just caught sight of Bunter's legs disappearing upwards through a trapdoor into the store-room.

But Trotter had seen enough. With a look of triumph on his face, he hurried out by the way he had come, and rushed into the Close. Wharton, Nugent, Johnny Bull, and Bob Cherry saw him instantly, and they rushed across.

"We've got 'im!" gasped Trotter breathlessly.

"Good!" panted Harry Wharton.

"Master Bunter went down the coal-ole!" went on Trotter quickly. "I follered 'im into the cellars, an' found that there's a trapdoor leadin' up into the store-room. I can see now 'ow Master Bunter did the trick! My 'at, an' I never knowed as there was a trapdoor there!"

"The artful young bounder!" exclaimed Wharton. "He deserves to be shown up!"

The juniors hurried round to the yard, and concealed themselves in the stable. They did not have to wait long. After five minutes Billy Bunter appeared, rather grimy after his contact with the coal, and he clambered laboriously out of the hole. And as he set the stone slab in place, the Removites rushed out upon him.

"Got you!" shouted Harry Wharton wrathfully. "We've caught you fairly and squarely, Bunter. You fat swindler, you deserve to be sacked!"

"I—I say!" gasped Bunter. "I—I've been down there to look for something, you know! Leave me alone, you beasts!"

"We're going to take you to the Head!" said Wharton grimly.

"What!" roared Bunter. "I—I—"

"Oh, shut up! The game's up, you worm!" And Billy Bunter, howling and struggling, was hastened off to the Head's study.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

The Return of the Innocents!

DR. LOCKE looked up from his desk with a worried frown as there came a tap at the study door.

"Come in!" he exclaimed wearily. The door opened, and the juniors, with Trotter behind them, crowded in. Billy Bunter was looking pale now, and he was quaking visibly.

"Dear me!" exclaimed Dr. Locke. "What is the meaning of this intrusion?"

"We've found the culprit, sir!" said Harry Wharton grimly.

"It's a lie!" yelled Billy Bunter. "I had nothing to do with it! I didn't go into the store-room to nick grub at all!"

"Oh, so you admit you did go in!" said Bob Cherry quickly.

"I—I—"
"Silence!" exclaimed the Head. "Pray explain the meaning of this extraordinary scene, Wharton! Why have you brought Bunter into the study by force? Has he been breaking the school rules?"

"He's the cause of all the present trouble, sir," said Wharton. "It seems that you've made a mistake, sir. Dibbs was innocent of robbing the store-room, after all. It was Bunter all the time, sir!"

"What!" exclaimed Dr. Locke, his brows

(Continued on page 18.)

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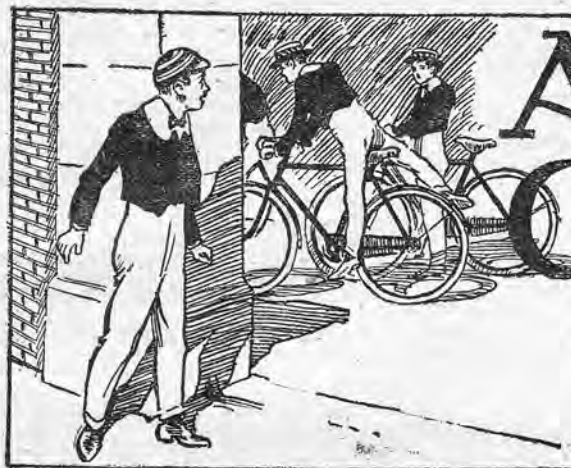
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NEXT FRIDAY!

THE AMAZING NEW BOY!

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. BY OWEN CONQUEST.



A Bone of Contention

A Splendid Long Complete School Story
of JIMMY SILVER & CO., the Chums
of Rookwood.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Crisis!

As the Prince of Denmark remarked long ago, that was the question! It was a pressing question, an important question—in fact, a burning question. It was a question that disturbed the serenity of the rival sides at Rookwood.

It is true that the excitement was confined to the Junior Forms. Bulkeley, the captain of the school, did not seem worried about it. Though he was head of the Classical side, he did not seem to care whether the Head's nephew became a Classical or a Modern. Indeed, he gave no sign of ever having heard of the Head's nephew. It was the same with Knowles of the Sixth, the captain of the Modern side. He went on his way regardless, so to speak.

It was among the juniors that the question burned. Possibly Jimmy Silver & Co., the Classical heroes, were not sorry to have one more reason for going on the war-path against their old rivals of the Modern side. Possibly Tommy Dodd, the great chief of the Modern juniors, welcomed another bone of contention.

Be that as it may, there was no doubt at all that Classicals and Moderns were quite excited about the matter, and the question was a burning one—so burning that it was almost a conflagration.

So matters stood when it became known that the Head's nephew was actually arriving the next day. Then the excitement was at fever-heat.

What the Head's nephew was like, and whether he was the right sort or any other sort, nobody knew or cared. All they knew was that his name was Gunter, that his parents lived in a far Western State in America, and that he was being sent to England to complete his education. But such points were of no consequence. What really mattered was that it would be considered a leg-up to the side that received him, and a "whack in the eye" for the side that did not receive him.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were prepared to carry off the new-comer by main force, kidnap him into the end study, and persuade him with the poker and tongs until he swore to become a Classical.

The three Tommies and the other Modern heroes would willingly have headed him up in a barrel if there had been no other way of capturing him.

Those heroic methods certainly did not seem to be feasible; but on both sides the juniors were prepared to stick at nothing, or next to nothing. Somehow or other the youth from the Far West had to be bagged.

If that youth had known how highly he was prized, even before his arrival at the school, he might have felt extremely flattered. But there was really nothing for him to be flattered about. He was simply the bone of contention. If the Head's nephew had not existed at all, the Fistical Four and the three Tommies would have found some other reason for deadly warfare and raids and reprisals.

But, as it was, the Head's nephew filled the whole horizon, so to speak. After lessons the next day Jimmy Silver & Co. thought of nothing else. It was a half-holiday that day, and they had all their time to bestowing upon the important enterprise.

Jimmy Silver called a general meeting of the Classical Fourth in the end study after dinner. Juniors packed themselves into the room, and put their heads together, and added their voices to the buzz.

Many and various were the schemes suggested. Kidnapping was the favourite idea. The choice of sides was to be left to Gunter himself.

Flynn of the Fourth argued that Gunter could be persuaded to plump for the Classics, once he was in the end study, with the Classical Fourth there to argue with him. Jones minor said he would listen to reason if hot water were poured down his back. Hooker suggested sticking pen-nibs into his legs, while Higgs favoured the process of "batting."

But Jimmy Silver pointed out—that could not be denied—that persuasive as all those processes were, they would not make Gunter "enthuse" for the Classic side. They were more likely to put his back up.

"Taking it that he's a sensible chap, he only needs to have the facts of the matter pointed out to him," said Jimmy Silver. "What we've got to do is to get at him before he reaches the school, and tell him how matters stand. He's bound to be grateful to us for taking so much trouble about him."

"It's an ungrateful world," said Lovell doubtfully.

"I've been making some inquiries," said Jimmy Silver. "He gets here by the four train at Coombe, and Mack has to take the trap to meet him."

"Might tip Mack to take us in the trap, and meet him at the station," suggested Hooker.

Jimmy Silver smiled pityingly. "Do you think the Modern cads haven't thought of that? Of course, a horde of the rotters will bike to the station."

"We can kick 'em out!"

"They might kick us out!" "If you think we can't lick the Moderns, Jimmy Silver—" began several voices hoily.

Jimmy waved his hand.

"Peace, my infants! Of course we can lick 'em. But we don't want to be scrapping with a gang of Moderns when the new kid arrives. We've got to bag him, and we can lick the Moderns any day!"

"True, O King!" said Lovell.

"I've been thinking it out," resumed Jimmy Silver. "He gets to Coombe at four, and the Moderns are sure to be there. He's coming from London. But to get to Coombe from London you have to change at Latcham."

"That's a jolly long way from here," said Raby.

"All the better! The Modern cads are less likely to think of going there," said Jimmy Silver. "If we meet the kid at Latcham, and get into his carriage after he's changed trains, we can talk to him for nearly an hour without any Modern worms wriggling in to spoil it. In fact, we can help him to change trains, look after his baggage, and so on. Make ourselves obliging—carry his bags for him—"

"Catch me carrying bags for a new kid!" said Topham.

"Fathead! We want to bag him, don't we? That will make a good impression on him, and show him what ripping chaps we are! Then we jaw to him in the train, and stand him tarts and things—we'll get some in Latcham. By the time we get to Coombe we'll all be sworn chums, and he will go straight to the Head and ask to be a Classical."

"Jolly good idea!" said Newcome. "What about a train to Latcham?"

"Bike it," said Jimmy Silver. "No good throwing money away in these hard times. Besides, we shall want all our tin to stand treat to the kid. And we'd better get off pretty soon, or we shall be late at Latcham. Who's going?"

Topham yawned.

"I'll leave it to you chaps," he said. "I don't feel up to a bike ride of fourteen miles. It's that, if it's an inch."

"If it were an inch you wouldn't feel up to it, you slacker!" growled Jimmy Silver. "We four can do it; but all you fellows had better turn up at Coombe at four. It's quite possible those Modern worms may have some scheme for collaring the kid—they're mean enough for anything. Every chap in the Classical Fourth has got to be at the station at four. Better tie some knots in your handkerchiefs; you never

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NEXT
FRIDAY!

"FORESTALLED!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

know what may be wanted. A stump or two might be handy, too. As for that bike ride, it's nothing to us, though it would knock out some of you."

"Swank!" grunted Townsend.

The council of war broke up, and the Fistical Four hurried away for their bikes. It was understood that the rest of the Classics were to be at Coombe Station when Mack, the porter, went there with the trap.

But Jimmy Silver sincerely hoped that physical force would not be needed. Only in the very last resource would hot water be poured down the back of the Head's nephew or pen-nibs stuck into his legs.

The four Classics wheeled out their machines. They passed the three Tommies as they made for the gates. The Modern chums stopped to stare at them, looking exceedingly suspicious.

"Whither bound?" called out Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, going for a spin, you know!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Like us to come?"

"Sorry! We're rather particular about the company we keep!"

And the four rushed their machines out, and mounted, and pedalled away. Tommy Dodd wrinkled his brows in deep thought. The Moderns were on their way to the bike-shed, too.

"Blessed if I don't smell a mouse!" said Tommy Dodd. "Where are they biking away to all of a sudden?"

"Latham!" said Cook, with conviction.

"Sure, they're after the new kid!" said Doyle. "They've thought of the same wheeze, Tommy darling! And if we go—"

"There'll be a scrap."

"Four against three, too!"

Tommy Dodd burst into a chuckle.

"They're off to Latham; not much doubt about that!" he agreed. "Four of them! Go and call Towle and Webb and Lacy and Wadsley, Cookey!"

"But what—"

"They're coming with us. Then we'll be seven to four, and if we don't knock those Classic duffers out, you can use my head for a footer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tommy Cook rushed away, while Doyle and Dodd wheeled out seven bicycles. Five minutes later seven Modern juniors were riding gaily away from the gates of Rookwood—on the track of the four Classics.

That great idea of meeting the new boy at Latham had occurred to the fertile brain of Tommy Dodd as well as Jimmy Silver. The Classics had started first, but on this occasion it was not an advantage to be first in the field. For the Moderns were following, with heavy odds on their side, and it was certain that there would be casualties when the rivals met at Latham.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Battle Royal!

JIMMY SILVER & CO. put on good speed, and the miles vanished under the whizzing wheels of the Classical bikes.

It was a pleasant ride through leafy lanes and shady woods; but the Classical four had no eyes for scenery just then. They had important business on hand, and they only thought of putting on speed.

Dusty and crimson, they rode into the country town of Latham, and jumped off their machines outside the railway station.

"London train in yet?"
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NEXT
FRIDAY!

"THE AMAZING NEW BOY!"

"Ten minutes, sir."

"Oh, good!"

"Ten minutes before the boulder arrives here!" panted Jimmy Silver, fanning himself with his straw hat. "Done to a 't.' We'll book the bikes for Coombe by rail—we can't leave 'em here. I'll do that while you get a bag of tarts and a cake, Lovell. Then we'll wait on the down platform, and greet him as he gets off the train."

"How shall we know him?" asked Raby. "Lots of people get down here. It's the junction."

"H'm!" Jimmy Silver hadn't thought of that so far. "H'm! Oh, we'll know him all right. He'll be in Etons most likely. Anyway, we shall spot him. He'll have a bag or a box, too, you know. Buck up!"

Lovell, duly provided with cash, started for the nearest confectioners. Silver and Raby and Newcome wheeled four bikes into the station, and duly booked them for Coombe. Then they came out to meet Lovell.

Lovell came back to the station with three large paper bags. The Fistical Four, still breathing hard after their ride, sampled a tart each from one of the bags. They were thus engaged when there was a clatter in the street, and seven cyclists stopped before the station.

"Modern cads!" ejaculated Lovell.

"My hat! Tommy Dodd!"

The Fistical Four stared blankly at their old foes. The Moderns had arrived, and their looks showed that they meant business. They hooked their bikes to the kerb, and came towards the Fistical Four at once.

"Fancy meeting you!" said Tommy Dodd genially, and the Moderns chortled with great glee.

"What do you want here?" demanded Jimmy wrathfully. "If you're thinking of bagging the new Classical chap—"

"We're not. We're thinking of bagging the new Modern chap," chuckled Tommy Dodd. "We don't want to hurt you innocent kids. But if you don't clear off instanter we're going to wipe up the pavement with you, shove you in the gutter, and rag you till you'll think the Huns have got hold of you. That's the programme."

"Look here—"

"Bow-wow! The train's due, and there's no time for talk. Are you going to clear off?"

"No," yelled the Classical four.

"We shall jolly well clear you off, then."

"You—you Prussians!"

"Nuff said! The train's signalled," said Tommy Dodd. "Shove these Classical goats out of the way, kids!"

"Line up!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

"Give 'em socks!" shouted Cook.

The Moderns did not pause for a moment. There was no time to be lost, and they had come there on business. They rushed at the four.

The four were some of the best fighting-men in the Fourth Form at Rookwood. But seven to four were long odds.

But the Fistical Four put up a terrific resistance.

It was a record, the fight that ensued. Both sides were in deadly earnest, and the Rookwood heroes had never cared for hard knocks.

Porters came out of the station to look on. Cabmen gathered and passed cheery comments on the progress of the battle. Urchins appeared from all quarters, and formed a cheering ring. In the quiet old town of Latham the new and unlooked-for excitement seemed to be greatly appreciated by the natives.

But the porters, at least, had to leave the thrilling scene before the result was decided, for the London express came in. In that express was the Head's nephew—the unknown youth who had travelled from a distant State in the Far West, little dreaming of the commotion his coming was to cause in the Lower School at Rookwood. But the London express and the Head's nephew were totally forgotten by the juniors engaged in deadly strife.

Fistical as the four were, they were overmatched by odds. They were down at last, and the Moderns sat on them, and kept them there. Sprawling on the pavement, Jimmy Silver & Co. panted for breath, pinned down by the victorious Moderns.

"Had enough?" panted Tommy Dodd.

"No!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "I'll pulverise you! Hang on to 'em, kids, and they'll miss the train. Our fellows will catch the new kid at Coombe. Hang on these rotters!"

"What-ho!" panted Lovell. "Hang on!"

"Leggo, you Classical idiot! You're licked! What more do you want?"

"Leggo, be jabsers!"

The struggle went on on the ground. An old lady was shrieking for the police, imagining that the dusty and furious juniors were a dreadful gang of hooligans, who ought to be arrested at once. Fortunately, the police force of Latham was not on the scene.

There was a shriek of a whistle, and the express rolled out of the station again. Tommy Dodd panted with wrath.

The local train for Coombe was timed to depart five minutes later. Probably the Head's nephew was already in it. Only a few minutes remained for the Moderns to join him in the local, and the Classics, defeated as they were, were still hanging on!

It was distinctly exasperating. Like the man in the story, who was dead but would not lie down, the Classics did not seem to understand that they were beaten.

"Will you leggo?" shrieked Tommy Dodd. "You're licked, ain't you?"

"Hang on!"

"Stick to the cads!"

"Bump their nappers!" shouted Tommy Dodd.

Bump, bump, bump, bump!

(Continued on page 13.)



*The Woman
with the
Tiger's Heart*

Thrilling New Story by
SESSUE HAYAKAWA

This remarkably powerful story has been specially written for "Kinema Comic" by the famous Japanese Screen Actor, and should not be missed on any account. Start reading it T-O-D-A-Y. It is only one of the many good things appearing in this week's

THE
KINEMA COMIC 24

On Sale Everywhere.

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.
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.

GYMNASTIC JOTTINGS!

By ...
LORD MAULEVERER.

Although the weather is wintry, I feel like a grease-spot! In a moment of weakness I consented to join Billy Bunter's Gymnastic Class. After an hour's "physical jerks" I am still alive—but only just, begad!

Our plump Editor would make an excellent drill-sergeant. You wouldn't believe what a bully he can be on occasion. He raps out orders like a machine-gun. From the moment that operations commence, you are kept hard at it. And if you are of a frail and delicate constitution woe betide you.

Our first exercise was to hop round the gym twenty times on the left foot. Then we hopped round twenty times on the right. If we showed any sign of slacking, our instructor brandished an Indian club—and then there was more hopping!

Talking of hopping, I am reminded of an excellent story concerning a man whose brother had had the misfortune to lose both his legs. "In spite of this handicap," said the man, "my brother can still do a good day's work." "Indeed!" said a friend. "And what does he do?" "Oh," was the reply, "He's 'hopping' in Kent!"

When the hopping exercise was over, we were compelled to march round the gym in single file, holding a couple of hefty dumb-bells above our heads. I like not the ponderous dumb-bell. It is hard, heavy, and hateful. And the weight of the beastly thing, after you have been carrying it a few minutes, seems to increase tenfold.

The only morsel of consolation I got out of the dumb-bell exercise was when I dropped one of my dumb-bells on the slippery foot of our plump instructor. Then it was Bunter's turn to do some hopping! He leapt wildly in the air with a yell of anguish, while Skinner played "The Floral Dance" on his mouth-organ.

Never again shall I indulge in gymnastic exercises. My constitution simply won't stand it, begad!

Supplement I.]

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!



By ...
BILLY BUNTER.

My Dear Readers,—I was always under the impression that "physical" was spelt "fizzical," but on looking in the dictionary I found it was not so.

Why on earth they want to spell "physical" with a "p" passes my understanding. Why, they might as well commence "Bunter" with an "X"!

I should like the word much better if it were spelt "fizzical," too. It would remind me of the fizzing of a soda-water syphon. However, what the dictionary says is law, and we must stick to it—as the fellows said when they sat in the glue.

Physical culture. That is the subject of this number. It is one of the most important things in life, and if we want to keep fit and in the purple of condition—or is it the pink?—we must practtiss it all we know.

The swot believes in mental culture. He developeps his brain, but not his body. Consequently, we find him a scraggy, bony spessimen of humanity—pigeon-chested, with nock neeze and a crick in the back.

Now, I devvelop my brain. But the difference between me and a swot is that I devvelop my body as well. I believe in physical culture. Next to grub, it is the greatest necessity of life.

This special number on physical culture will supply a long-felt want. Thousands of boys and girls who have never swung an Indian club will start swinging one. Those who have never touched a dumb-bell in their life will start throwing them about the room. A great craze for physical culture will spread through the country, and I, W. G. B., will be responsible for it!

Excuse more, dear readers. I've promised to go and have some fun with my old pal, Jimmy-nasticks. In other words, I'm going to repair to the jim, to perform some acrobatic trix.

Your cultured chum,

Your Editor.

:: Bunter's :: Gymnastic Class!

By **Dick Penfold.**

Arms bend,
Arms stretch.
Move to the fight in roars!
In other words,
You silly chumps,
Move to the right in fours!

Eyes right,
Eyes left.
Copy your Uncle Bill.
Halt! Front!
Stand at ease!
(Sammy, you ass, stand still!)

Quick march!
Double march!
Toddy, you're out of step!
Now, then, Fish,
Stop your jaw!
I'm sick of your "Nope!" and "Yep!"

Right dress!
As you were!
You must take your cue from me
(As the landlord said
To Loder when
They played at billiards—see?).

Fall in!
Fall out!
Fall wherever you like!
I'm sick of this!
I'm going out
For a ride—on Cherry's bike!

THE POPULAR.—No. 148.

The Pitfalls of Physical Culture!

By RALPH RECKNESS CARDEW.

(Editor's note.—The reader is requested not to take Cardew's article seriously. The silly ass is talking out of the back of his neck. He knows, in his hart of harts, that physical culture is a fine thing. But then, Cardew always was a sinnick!—Ed.)

Some people avow that physical culture is the greatest thing that ever happened. They swear there is nothing like it. So long as you swing dumb-bells and Indian clubs, practice deep breathing exercises, and so forth, you will get wonderfully fit, and live to a ripe old age. So say the champions of physical culture.

But the proof of the pudding is in the eating.

I have just taken a course of physical culture myself, and I will leave it to the reader to judge whether I have derived any benefit from it or not.

The first thing I did was to buy a hand-book dealing with physical culture. This cost me a bob. I swotted up all the exercises, and resolved to carry them out next day.

A deep breathing exercise came first. The instructions laid down were as follows:

"On rising in the morning, stand in front of an open window and inhale the fresh, pure air. Breathe the air in through your nose, and then exhale through your mouth. Repeat this about a dozen times."

When I woke up next morning I diligently carried out this exercise.

A fierce snowstorm was raging. The flakes—of a dirty-white colour—beat into my face, getting into my eyes and mouth in a most provoking manner.

It so happened that the chimney-sweeps were at St. Jim's that morning sweeping the chimneys, and all the soot and smuts mingled with the snow, and were then inhaled by me.

"The fresh, pure air." Oh, the irony of it!

Withdrawing hurriedly from the window, I consulted my handbook to see what the next exercise was.

It was as follows:

"No matter what the season of the year, you should treat yourself to a cold tub in the open air as soon as you have completed the breathing exercises. The 'tub' need not necessarily take place in an actual tub. The river will answer the purpose, or a pond, or even a deep puddle of water. Don't stay in long. Just give yourself a total immersion, towel yourself briskly, and you will experience a glorious, exhilarating glow."

I didn't relish the idea of a cold tub. Still, I was determined to give this physical culture business a fair trial.

Wrapped in a bath-robe, with my feet encased in slippers, and with a towel slung over my shoulder, I went downstairs in quest of a suitable place to have an open-air tub.

The only thing I could find—barring the fountain—was a large tank near the woodshed.

Shivering in the snowstorm, I fought my way in the direction of this tank.

"It may be empty," I thought. "In which case—"

But it wasn't empty. It was three-parts full of water. And on the top thereof was a sheet of ice close on half an inch thick.

I have heard of people "breaking the ice," but I never had personal experience of it until that morning.

I bashed my knuckles against the ice till it cracked. Presently a large hole was formed. Then I slipped off my bath-robe and took the plunge.

"Yaroooooh!"

My shriek of anguish echoed across the snow-covered quadrangle.

Had I suddenly stepped into a refrigerator

the effect could not well have been worse. The water seemed to freeze my vitals. And no sooner was I in the tank than I leapt out again, dancing like a dervish in a frantic endeavour to get some warmth back into my system.

I went back raving to the dormitory, and vowed that never again would I attempt to carry out Exercise 2 in the "Physical Culture Handbook."

The third exercise in the book was a very strenuous one. It was nothing less than an hour's work at the punching-ball in the gym.

"Punch the ball continuously, and with great vigour," were the instructions. "Do not pause, even for an instant. At the end of the sixty minutes you will feel as fit as a fiddle, and in great form for breakfast."

Well, I went along to the gym and carried out those instructions to the letter.

I slugged at that punching-ball as if I owed it a grudge. I treated it more severely than I would treat my worst enemy.

At last my circulation was restored—very much so! The perspiration shone on my brow, and I expended every ounce of energy I possessed.

And how did I feel at the end of an hour? As fit as a fiddle? Great Scott—no!

I was like a limp rag. I was as sapped of vitality as a squeezed lemon.

"In great form for breakfast," forsooth! I was in form for nothing. My arms hung limply at my sides, my breath came and went in great gasps. I was a wreck of my former self. I even lacked the energy to eat, and my brekker remained untouched—until Baggy Trimble caught sight of it!

I didn't get beyond Exercise 3 in the "Physical Culture Handbook."

The fourth exercise would have killed me. Of that I am certain.

You may say what you like about physical culture, but to my mind it's a snare and a delusion. It is full of perils and pitfalls.

Down with the dumb-bell! Away with the Indian club! If you want to get perfectly fit, banish 'em both! And banish all forms of physical exercise as well!

Yaw-aw-aw! Think I'll take forty winks now.

So-long, chappies!

(Cardew, you slacker, I suppose I shall have to take this article laying down. But if only I had you in my Jimnastick Class, I'd jolly well make you sit up!—Ed.)

BOXING NOTES AND NEWS!

By Fatty Wynn.

There have been plenty of "scraps," friendly and otherwise, at St. Jim's during the past week. The editor has kindly granted me a column in which to describe them:

TOM MERRY versus GEORGE FIGGINS.

This was a purely friendly affair, in the nature of an exhibition bout. Figgins stood up to his man with remarkable coolness and cleverness. Although less sturdy than Tom Merry, he gave a very good account of himself. On two occasions he broke through the Shell fellow's guard, and administered telling blows in the chest. On the whole, how-

ever, Tom Merry had slightly the better of an interesting bout.

GEORGE ALFRED GRUNDY versus ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY.

This began as a friendly bout, but it developed into something very different, owing to the bull-like tactics of Grundy.

Arthur Augustus boxed coolly, and showed heaps of science; but after Grundy had butted into him with lowered head on two or three occasions he became goaded to wrath, and began to put plenty of "pep" into his punches. Grundy returned the compliment, and both combatants were soon in the wars. To quote Monty Lowther's remark, "the red wine flowed freely," and the faces of both Grundy and Gussy were soon in a shocking state. Before any really serious damage could be done, however, Kildare of the Sixth came along and stopped the fight.

The two boxers speedily simmered down and shook hands, to the accompaniment of loud cheers.

JAMES MONTEITH versus GERALD KNOX.

This was a grim and serious affray

between two seniors—and prefects at that.

The affair took place by mutual agreement behind the chapel.

Knox had the better of the early exchanges, but in the third round he went all to pieces, owing to his being out of condition. Cigarette-smoking had not improved his chances of success.

Although he managed to survive the third round, Knox came a nasty cropper in the Fourth, a well-timed uppercut from Monteith lifting him clean off his feet.

Knox staggered up again, only to be sent down once more by a smashing blow between the eyes.

Monteith's victory was highly popular, and he was cheered to the echo.

REGINALD TALBOT versus AUBREY RACKE.

This contest was timed to take place in the gym at eight o'clock on Wednesday evening, but only one combatant turned up. Needless to say, his name was not Aubrey Racke!



"BLESS my soul!" Mr. Quelch had crossed over to the window of his study, and, like Good King Wenceslaus of old, he looked out.

The Remove-master's ejaculation was one of surprise and alarm.

And he had good reason to feel surprised and alarmed.

The hour was eleven o'clock at night. The old-fashioned Close of Greyfriars was carpeted with snow. The moon was at the full, and it was as light as day.

Mr. Quelch, whilst working on his never-ending History of Greyfriars, had heard movements outside. It was unusual for anybody to be abroad at that hour, so the Remove-master had stepped to the window to investigate.

And this is what he saw.

Mr. Prout, the master of the Fifth, was marching to and fro in the Close, like a sentinel on duty. He had no rifle—for which Mr. Quelch was truly thankful—but above his head he swung a pair of Indian clubs.

Mr. Prout was attired in tight-fitting trousers, and a sweater which might have fitted a fag in the Second, but which was ridiculously small for the master of the Fifth. Already the shoulder-seams had split. And it seemed probable that if Mr. Prout expanded his chest he would burst clean through the sweater!

"Bless my soul!" ejaculated Mr. Quelch again. "What ever is the matter with Prout? His antics are, to say the least of it, most peculiar! Why is he thus attired? And why is he wielding those clubs?"

Blissfully unaware of the fact that Mr. Quelch was watching his antics from the study window, Mr. Prout continued his peregrinations. The imprints of his shoes were plainly visible in the snow.

Although he was some distance away, Mr. Quelch could distinctly hear the laboured breathing of his colleague as the latter marched to and fro.

Moreover, he got a good view of Mr. Prout's face, on which was an expression of grimness and resolution.

The minutes passed.

Still Mr. Prout kept on with his nocturnal exercise. He cut so weird and grotesque a figure in the bright moonlight that Mr. Quelch could draw only one conclusion.

His colleague must be insane!

No person in possession of his right senses would patrol up and down in the snow, brandishing a pair of Indian clubs.

At length Mr. Prout halted. He laid the clubs down side by side in the snow, and then proceeded to give an exhibition of the goose-step. He waddled along in a duck-like manner, jerking his knees alternately in the air.

"Mad!" murmured Mr. Quelch. "Utterly mad! There can be no possible doubt about it!"

The longer Mr. Quelch watched the more convinced he became that Mr. Prout was, to put it vulgarly, "off his rocker." As the Americans would say, he had bats in his belfry. His curious antics, and the strange contortions he was making left no doubt in Mr. Quelch's mind that he was mentally deranged.

"For some time," murmured Mr. Quelch, "I have suspected that all was not well with Prout. He has behaved in a most strange and singular manner. Why, only the other morning I met him crossing the Close with a towel and bathing-costume. He told me he was going to take an early-morning dip—in November, too! Only a madman would contemplate such a thing!"

Mr. Quelch did not go down to remonstrate with his colleague—to try to persuade him to go to bed. Such a course, he reflected, might be dangerous.

When a man shows distinct signs of insanity, and he has a couple of Indian clubs within reach, he is not a safe person to approach.

Mr. Quelch realised this. And, instead of going downstairs to ask Mr. Prout what he meant by his strange behaviour, the Remove-master stepped to the telephone.

After he had called several times into the transmitter, the sleepy voice of an operator answered him.

"Put me through to Dr. Short, of Friar-dale, please," said Mr. Quelch.

"Very good, sir!"

There was another delay—a longer one this time.

Eventually, however, the drowsy voice of the doctor made itself heard:

"Hallo! Who is that calling me up at this time of night?"

"It is I—Quelch," said the Form-master.

"Oh, yes, Quelch! What is the matter? Has one of the boys been taken ill?"

"No, Dr. Short."

"Then, what—"

"There is something wrong with Mr. Prout."

"There always is!" grumbled the doctor. "Only the other day he was mixed up in a motor-cycle collision, and he came to me for



Mr. Prout picked up one of the clubs, and brandished it in the Remove Form-master's face.

first aid. After that he complained of a cold in the head—"

"He has something more serious than a cold in the head," said Mr. Quelch. "I very much fear that he has taken leave of his senses!"

"What!"

"Even at this moment, whilst I am speaking to you, Prout is performing extraordinary gyrations in the Close. He is marching up and down in the snow—doing what is known as the goose-step, in fact!"

"Bless my soul!"

"I think you ought to come at once!" said Mr. Quelch, in agitated tones. "It may be only a slight mental aberration—nothing serious. But, of course, there is no knowing how it may develop if left unchecked. Prout will have to be placed under supervision."

The doctor gave a grunt.

"I don't see the fun of turning out at this time of night, in all this snow," he said. "If Prout is wandering in his mind, you ought to refer the matter to the Lunacy Commissioners."

"But such a course would mean a delay of several days!" protested Mr. Quelch. "And it is imperative that poor Prout should be examined at once!"

"Very well," said Dr. Short. "I'm not a mental specialist—merely a country practitioner; but I'll come along and see if anything can be done!"

"Thank you, doctor!" said Mr. Quelch.

And he hung up the receiver.

There was an interval of twenty minutes, during which time Mr. Prout continued to

perform his weird and wonderful evolutions. Cold though the night was, the master of the Fifth was flushed and perspiring by this time. But still he kept on, and he would possibly have kept on all night but for the sudden arrival of the doctor in his small two-seater car.

Dr. Short was joined in the Close by Mr. Quelch.

Now that he had somebody with him, the Remove-master was not quite so chary of approaching Mr. Prout.

The master of the Fifth halted, and looked up in surprise at the doctor and Mr. Quelch bore down upon him.

"Dear me!" he murmured. "What is wrong?"

"That is precisely what I have come to find out, sir," said Dr. Short. "It appears that for some time past you have been indulging in strange antics."

"Sir!"

"Your mind is evidently in an overwrought state. Not for one moment do I suggest that you are insane—though, of course, there is no knowing what this may lead to!"

Mr. Prout looked utterly flabbergasted.

"Dr. Short!" he exclaimed. "You are insulting me!"

"Not at all."

"But you are! You are insinuating that I am—or—not quite right in the head?"

At this point Mr. Quelch broke into the conversation.

"You must admit, Prout," he said, "that your actions during the past hour have been the actions of a lunatic! I hate to use that word, but there is no other that adequately describes your conduct!"

"Quelch!"

"I glance from my window at eleven o'clock," went on the Remove-master, "and what do I see? A man in ridiculous attire, pacing to and fro in the Close, and brandishing a pair of Indian clubs above his head. What am I to deduce from that?"

"You may draw your own conclusions," said Mr. Prout tartly. "But the explanation is perfectly simple. I have taken up physical culture."

"W-w-what!" gasped Mr. Quelch feebly.

"I am not in the habit of repeating my observations," said Mr. Prout, with a frown, "but as you appear to be dense, I will do so on this occasion. I have taken up physical culture. I came to the conclusion that I was getting slack—that I was cultivating my mental powers to the exclusion of my physical powers. I was exercising my brain, but not my body. And I decided to take myself in hand. Every night, before retiring, I put in an hour's training."

"Dash it all!" shouted Dr. Short. "Have I been dragged from my bed for this? I understood from you, Quelch, that Mr. Prout was insane!"

"His behaviour certainly led me to that conclusion," said the Remove-master. "I will reimburse you, doctor, for the trouble to which you have been put. You may send in your bill to me, and it shall be promptly paid."

The doctor gave a snort, and went off in his car.

As for Mr. Prout, he looked so wrathful, and he picked up and flourished one of the Indian clubs in such an aggressive manner, that Mr. Quelch decided that it would be perilous to linger on the scene. So he turned, and beat an undignified retreat into the building.

"Sir!" thundered Mr. Prout, addressing his retreating colleague. "If either of us is insane, I must concede that doubtful honour to you!"

Mr. Quelch did not reply. He was well on the way to his study by this time. And on reaching that apartment he took the not unwise precaution of locking the door!

THE END.

THE POPULAR.—No. 148.

How to Keep Fit!

By TOMMY DODD.

I am glad somebody has at last woke up to the importance of physical culture.

That somebody is our plump and persevering editor, Billy Bunter, who has requested me to contribute a special article to this issue on the subject of keeping fit.

Don't be a slacker. Don't go through life looking like a limp sack. You have muscles. Exercise them. Develop them. Make the little beggars as hard and strong as cricket-balls!

Some of you may wring your hands despairingly, and ask: "Alas! How is it done?"

This is where I, Thomas Dodd, come to the rescue. I have had many years' experience of physical culture, and the result of my experience is condensed in the exercises below. Study these exercises—practice them for all you are worth, and you will soon quit the ranks of the unfit, and your muscles will become strong, sound, and supple.

Some of the exercises may seem a trifle weird, not to say difficult, but you mustn't mind that. Tackle them every day until you've mastered the whole jolly lot!

FIRST EXERCISE.

On rising in the morning, stand upright on your bed in your pyjamas, hold your breath for twenty seconds (and be careful not to drop it!), then take a spring, which will land you on to the next bed. Should that bed be occupied, you will probably alight with great violence on somebody's chest. But if the somebody happens to be an enemy of yours, you needn't worry. Enemies must expect to be jumped on at times. Having sorted yourself out, walk on your hands to the washstand.

SECOND EXERCISE.

Fill the wash-basin with water, and balance it on your head while you count ninety-nine. It is possible that before you get to twenty the basin will become dislodged—in which event your neighbour will have to mind his eye, and you will have to mind your toes! After trying this feat every morning for a whole term, you will become fairly proficient, and your bill for smashed crockery-ware at the end of the term should not exceed five pounds!

THIRD EXERCISE.

This is of a rather more violent nature. Sprint round the dormitory fifty times in your bare feet, first of all making sure that your enemy (referred to in the first exercise) has not sprinkled the floor with inverted tin-tacks! If you find he has done so, then you must promptly "tacks" him with it!

FOURTH EXERCISE.

Roll over and over from one end of the dormitory to the other. This performance, while not improving the state of your pyjamas, will relieve the maid from the necessity of sweeping the dormitory! If you have ever seen a sausage-roll, or an apple-turnover, you will soon be able to perform this simple feat.

FIFTH EXERCISE.

As soon as you are clad and in your right mind, and ready to go downstairs, proceed to the landing, and turn a double-somersault over the banisters. You will thus get to the foot of the stairs in record time.

N.B.—For this exercise it will be necessary for you to have in your possession a yard of strapping-plaster, six yards of surgical dressing, and a gallon jar of embrocation.

SIXTH EXERCISE.

If there is a flagstaff in your quadrangle, climb to the top of it in best Tarzan-of-the-Apes style. When at the top, balance yourself on one foot, and recite "Drake is Going West, Lads," or—if you feel yourself falling—"A Little Bit On the Top!"

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Should you manage to get through these six exercises without fatal results, you will find them extremely beneficial.

For some weeks you will go about nursing bumps and bruises, but don't let this dishearten you. You will soon become proficient.

I have managed all these exercises myself—in nightmares! Shouldn't dream of attempting them at any other time!

(Editor's remarks: Dodd, you rotter, I asked you to let me have a serious article on physical culture. But you've made a joke of the whole subject. In your heart of hearts, you know that physical culture is a grand thing, a great thing, a Benny-ficial thing, and yet you pretend to disparage it. Very well! I am publishing your article, but you won't get a single cent for it! I will send the money to Alonzo Todd's Fund for Providing Cannibals with Parsley!—W. G. B.)

ANOTHER BONFIRE BALLAD.

By HORACE COKER.

P.S.—I found this in Harry Wharton's wastepaper basket, and, although it is late, I think readers will be interested in the spelling!—Ed.

The Guy Forks revells have begun,
You ought to see the fun, the fun!
The burning bonfire blazing brite,
The chapps all yelling with delite!

Grate shouts go up from earth to sky:
"Another guy! Another guy!"
Their's one of Quelch, and one of Prout,
And one of ME, without a doubt!

Their's one of Temple, one of Fry,
But not of Wharton—don't know why.
A ripping guy that fagg would make.
I'd love to burn him at the steak!

The krackers crack, the rockets rock
(My ear-drums won't servive the shock).
The catherine-weals go round and round,
And make a curious hissing sound!

The sparks shoot upward to the sky,
And other "gay yung sparks" stand by,
And shout, and sing, and shreek, and skeweal.
What glorious eckstasy they feel!

O Guy Forks Day! O Guy Forks Day!
I wish that you had come to stay!
If my Aunt Judy sent the "dibs,"
I'd be for ever lighting squibbs!

The tumult dies; the fire is dead;
The Greyfriars chaps go back to bed.
Twelve weery months must now go by
Before we shout, "Another guy!"

(And we sincerely hope that twelve months will go by before we see another of Coker's poems!—Ed.)

HEARD IN THE FORM-ROOM!

Form-master: "Muffin! How dare you eat chocolate in the Form-room?"

Muffin: "I believe in physical culture, sir."

Form-master: "Physical culture! What do you mean?"

Muffin: "Please, sir, I've just been to the tuckshop and bought a 'horizontal bar'!"

... A ... PRESENT FROM UNCLE PETER!

By Tubby Muffin.

Of my twenty-six uncles, Uncle Peter is by far the most generous. But his generosity takes a peculiar turn.

Instead of sending me fat remittances, like most uncles do, he sends me presents, which I generally manage to konvert into cash.

Feeling the need of ready money, I wrote to Uncle Peter in the following strane:

"Dear Uncle,—You will be pleased to hear that I am taking up physical culture, and for this purpos I shall re-kwire a set of Indian clubs, a set of dumb-bells, and a punching-ball. Please send them along as early as possible, and oblige.

"Your dewtiful nephew,
"REGINALD."

Now, if Uncle Peter had been at all awake, he would have said, "What do you want clubs and dumb-bells and a punching-ball for, when they are provided free in the jinnasium at Rookwood?"

But the dear old chap suspected nothing. He sent the things along; in fact, they arrived by return of post.

Now, in Latcham there is a second-hand shop where they buy anything, from rags and bones to Daimler cars: I took my presents along to them, and said to the proprietor, "I say, old froot, what will you give me for these?"

He looked at the clubs and the dumb-bells and the punching-ball, and he said, "Well, Master Muffin, these are certainly in egssellent kondition, but I haven't much demand for jinnastick equipment, so I can't offer you much. I will give you twenty-five shillings for the lot."

"But they cost pounds and pounds!" I said, agast.

The proprietor shrugged his shoulders. "You have heard my offer," he said.

After a good deal of argement, I took it, and strolled out of the shop the richer by twenty-five bob.

I had the feed of my life at the tuck-shopp when I got back to Rookwood, and then I dismissed the affair from my mind.

It was brought back to me with startling suddenness by the unexpected appearance of my uncle at Rookwood on the following Saturday.

"Well, Reginald," he said, shaking me warmly by the hand, "and how is the physical culture going?"

"Splendidly, uncle!" I replied.

Uncle Peter nodded.

"I should like you to do your physical eggersises in my presence, Reginald," he said.

"Oh crumbs!"

I tried to make all sorts of excuses, but my uncle soon found out that I had disposed of the clubs and the dumb-bells and the punching-ball; and in his fury he jolly nearly disposed of me! Anyway, he gave me a round dozen with his walking-stick, and for the next few days I experienced kopsidderable diffikulty in sitting down!

A Bone of Contention!

(Continued from page 8.)

"Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"You fellows hold them while we nab the new kid!" added Tommy Dodd strategically. "Come on, Tommy!"

Towle and Lacy and Webb and Wadley clung on to the four, and the three Tommies wrenched themselves away by main force. Tommy Dodd's collar was left in Jimmy Silver's grip, part of Cook's jacket remained to Lovell, and Raby retained a trophy in the shape of a necktie. But the three Tommies were free, and the Fistical Four were still pinned down and struggling.

Headless of their dusty and rumpled appearance, the three Tommies sped into the station. They rushed for the local platform. There was just time to take tickets for Coombe, and dash for the train.

Tommy Dodd looked wildly up and down the train. The Head's nephew must be in one of the carriages—but which? There was no time to seek him. But, fortunately, Tommy Dodd spotted a boy in Etons, with a silk hat, looking out of a carriage window.

"That's him!" gasped Tommy Dodd, breathlessly and ungrammatically.

The three Moderns rushed at the carriage, and tore the door open.

"Stand back!" yelled the guard.

The three Tommies would not have stood back if the Prussian Guard had been rushing at them, instead of a railway-guard. They boited headlong into the carriage. They boited, naturally, into the boy who already occupied the carriage, and knocked him flying. There was no time to think of trifles like that. They bundled in anyhow, sprawling over him and one another, and the guard—murmuring something very emphatic—slammed the door after them. The train was on the move.

Just as it vanished down the line, four hatless and breathless juniors dashed on the platform. Jimmy Silver & Co., left one to one with their foes, had hurled the Moderns off at last, and dashed after their rivals, hoping against hope that they would be in time—to see the local train vanishing down the line.

They gazed after it dumbly for some moments, pumping in breath. Jimmy Silver was the first to speak.

"Done!" he gasped.

"Fairly diddled!" groaned Lovell.

"Oh, my hat!"

"Licked to the wide, and by Modern reiters!" snorted Raby.

Jimmy Silver's eyes gleamed.

"We're not licked yet. Come and get the bikes. We'll beat that crawling local to Coombe. All the fellows are there. We'll have the chap, if we have to yank him away by the hair of his head! Come on!"

They panted their way from the station. Outside, four Modern fellows looked at them lugubriously with discoloured eyes. Towle and the rest were not feeling chirpy after that terrific combat. But they brightened up at the sight of the Classics' downcast faces. They realised that the three Tommies had bagged the prize.

"Hurrah for us!" chortled Towle.

"Yah! Licked hollow! Go home!"

Manfully resisting the desire to give the Moderns another "whopping"—there was no time to waste in whopping Moderns—the Fistical Four wheeled out

their bikes, and departed. They pedalled away determinedly. If hard riding could save the day, the Classics would not slack. But could it?

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Catching a Tartar!

"YOU thundering idiots!"

A boy with a crumpled topper and a rumpled collar sat up on the floor of the carriage, gasped for breath, and glared ferociously at Tommy Dodd and Doyle and Cook.

The Modern three staggered to their feet.

In their haste in entering the railway-carriage they had not had time to worry about what they bumped into. They had barely landed as it was. They stared at the stranger, and gasped for breath—they were a little hurt themselves. But it came back to Tommy Dodd's mind that it was necessary to be very nice to the Head's nephew, if this was the Head's nephew.

But was it?

Seeing a fellow in Etons and topper at the carriage window, Tommy Dodd had concluded that this was the fellow. But now he asked himself whether it was or not.

The boy, being in Etons, was doubtless a schoolboy. But he did not look much like what they expected of the Head's nephew.

Of course, they had never seen that highly-prized young gentleman. But they had dimly pictured a nice, neatly-dressed, quiet and soft-spoken fellow, perhaps a little namby-pamby. A headmaster's nephew might naturally be expected to be something like that.

But this especial individual was not nice, or slim, or soft-spoken, and most decidedly not namby-pamby.

He was no older than Tommy Dodd, but he was bigger, much more heavily built, and evidently had no end of muscle and sinew. His skin was darkly sunburnt, and his eyes deeply-set and gleaming hard. His features were large and irregular, his jaw very square and strong. His hands and feet were big, like the rest of him, only more so. His Etons did not fit him very well, and they were not of the cut that was expected of a Rookwood fellow. They were rather particular about their clothes at Rookwood. This chap didn't seem particular at all.

His voice was loud and sharp. His temper was not angelic—not in the least what the temper of a headmaster's nephew ought to have been. His dark face was reddened with anger.

Tommy Dodd concluded that he had, so to speak, awakened the young passenger, and he decided not to waste any undue civility on the stranger.

"You blithering guys!" the stranger was going on. "What the thunder do you bump into a pilgrim in that way for—eh?"

"Couldn't help it," said Tommy Dodd coolly. "In a hurry, you know; looking for a chap in this train. And not so much of your cheek! We don't allow saucy kids to slang us at Rookwood!"

"Rookwood!" repeated the stranger. "You guys belong to Rookwood?"

Tommy Dodd changed his opinion again. The way the stranger caught at the name of the school was a pretty clear indication that he was going there.

"You going to Rookwood?" asked Tommy, more amicably.

"I guess so."

The "guess" did it. The Moderns knew all about the Head's nephew having lived all his life, so far, in Western America. This was the chap, un-

doubtedly. They would have heard of it if a Yankee had been coming to the school.

The three Tommies exchanged glances, and smiled their sweetest smiles. The young stranger certainly hadn't made a good impression upon them. But they were prepared to take him to their hearts if he was the Head's nephew.

"Your name's Gunter?" asked Tommy Dodd.

"Correct."

"You're our headmaster's nephew?"

"You've got it."

Tommy Dodd held out his hand.

"Give us your fist!" he said. "You're the chap we've come to meet."

"Oh, I am, am I?" said Gunter, somewhat surlily. However, he took Tommy Dodd's hand and gave him a grip.

Tommy Dodd's face wore an extraordinary expression as that grip closed on his hand. It was like the grip of a vice.

"Ow!" he gasped. "How—how do you do?"

"Top of the afternoon to yet!" said Doyle.

"Yow!"

"What's the matter with you?" asked Gunter, still gripping Tommy Dodd's unfortunate hand.

"Ow! Leggo! You're breaking my fingers!" wailed Tommy Dodd.

"You galoots are pretty soft, I should say," replied Gunter, with a snort. "That's how we give a grip in Texas."

He compressed his grip as he spoke, and Tommy Dodd fairly curled up.

"Ow, ow, ow!" Yow Oooooo! Leggo!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the new boy, as he released Tommy's hand at last. He sat down and roared with laughter. Apparently the anguish he had inflicted upon Tommy Dodd was his idea of a joke. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh dear!" Tommy Dodd collapsed upon the seat, and nursed his hands. "Oh my hat! Oh scissors!"

Cook and Doyle did not offer to shake hands with the new junior. They looked as friendly as they could, but they drew the line at that. Tommy Dodd was looking quite pale and worn.

The new boy grinned at them, and took a case from his pocket. The three watched him with interest as he opened it and selected a black-looking cheroot. Evidently the Head's nephew was a smoker. There were giddy goats at Rookwood who smoked cigarettes when they were safe from a master's eye, but even the doggish Smythe of the Shell never ventured upon cigars. Gunter put the cheroot between his teeth, which were considerably yellow in hue, and lighted it. He blew out a cloud of thick and pungent smoke that made the three Tommies cough violently.

"Gerroooh! Goooooh!"

"What's the matter with you now, you galoots?"

"I—I say, fellows, ain't allowed to smoke!" gasped Tommy Dodd.

"Eh? This is a smoking-carriage, ain't it?" demanded Gunter.

"I—I didn't notice it was. Yes, it is. But I mean, Rookwood chaps ain't allowed to smoke."

"I guess I shall start the fashion there, then!" remarked Gunter, still puffing away.

"You—you smoke those things!" murmured Doyle, with an awestricken glance at the black and stropic cheroot.

"Yep. I don't smoke much. This is only the fourth since I left London."

"Only the fourth! My only aunt!"

One of those terrible-looking smokes would have turned Tommy Dodd inside

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"FORESTALLED!"

A SPLENDID TALE OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

out like a glove. The Head's nephew had smoked four of them on his journey! Truly, he had learned marvellous manners on the plains of Texas.

The chums of Rookwood sat and regarded him. This was the Head's nephew—this rough and raucous young ruffian! They had heard that he had lived in a remote district in a Western State, but they had never dreamed of a fellow like this. They were pretty certain that the Head had never dreamed of it, either. Dr. Chisholm had never seen his nephew yet, and he was likely to have an electric-shock when he did see him.

Still, such as he was, he was the Head's nephew, and the Moderns had vowed to bag him from their rivals. After a long and thoughtful hesitation, Tommy Dodd broached the subject. The Head's nephew had astounded them, but they came up smiling, as it were.

"Quite new to Rookwood, of course?" remarked Tommy Dodd casually.

"I guess so, as I've never been in this hyer country before. And I guess I don't think much of it now I'm in it!"

"But you are English?" hinted Tommy Dodd.

"I was raised in Texas."

Tommy Dodd guessed that "raised" was American for brought up. The new boy had his native language to learn at Rookwood, among other things.

"I suppose you're glad to see the Old Country—what?"

"Not particularly. Texas could lay over anything I've seen on this side so far."

"Oh! You know, perhaps, that we have two sides at Rookwood—Classical side and Modern side?"

"I didn't know."

"We're Moderns," said Tommy Dodd. Gunter stared at him.

"Are you? Don't say much for the Modern side, does it?"

Tommy Dodd swallowed his wrath with difficulty. He was not there to give the Head's nephew a whopping, but never had he felt so keen a desire to whop a new boy.

"That's why we came to meet you," said Doyle, taking up the tale. "Sure, we want you to join the Modern side."

"Why?"

"Oh, we want you, you know!" said Cook.

"We like you."

"Gammon!"

"Yaroooh!" yelled Tommy Cook, as the new boy, taking the cheroot from his mouth, dropped the lighted end on his hand. "Yow-ow-ow-ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gunter.

"You—you blithering owl!" shrieked Cook, sucking at his scorched hand.

"What did you do that for? Yow!"

"Ha, ha! To make you hop," grinned Gunter. "And, by gum, you hopped! Ha, ha, ha!"

Cook clenched his fist and rose to his feet. The new boy evidently had a peculiar sense of humour, and Cook meant to nip it in the bud.

But Tommy Dodd dragged him back to his seat.

"Chuck it!" he whispered. "Grin!"

"Eh? What is there to grin about?"

"Good joke! Ha, ha, ha!" said Tommy Dodd, keeping hold of the infuriated Cook. "You are a funny chap, Gunter! Ha, ha—Yooop!" he finished, as Gunter tapped him on the neck with the burning end of the cheroot. "Yah—h-h-h-h!"

"You burbling idiot—"

Gunter threw the end of the cheroot out of the window, and curled up with laughter in his corner seat. The three Tommies gazed at him speechlessly.

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They had beaten Jimmy Silver & Co., and secured that railway-journey with the new boy. They were beginning to think it would have been a greater triumph if they had let Jimmy Silver beat them.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Not Wanted!

GUNTER continued to chuckle, and the three juniors of Rookwood continued to stare at him. How they were to be nice to the new boy was a puzzle. Certainly, their tempers were getting into a dangerous state. In less than half an hour the Head's nephew had succeeded in making them detest him and long to scalp him. They had met him with the friendliest intentions in the world, and already they were breathing slaughter. They had caught the highly-prized new boy—and caught a tartar. How on earth were they to stand the fellow if they succeeded in getting him on the Modern side?

Gunter's next proceedings interested them. He opened a huge jack-knife—big enough, as Tommy Dodd said afterwards, to kill a Hun with, and took out a plug of black, strong tobacco from a smelly pouch. They gazed at him as if mesmerised while he cut himself a "quid." The "quid" disappeared into his mouth, and he chewed with evident satisfaction. They wondered whether he had an indiarubber interior.

"You—you—you chew tobacco!" gasped Tommy Dodd at last.

Gunter stared at him.

"Don't you?" he asked.

"Oh, my hat! No! I—I've heard that sailors do sometimes," murmured Tommy. "I—I've never seen a boy do it."

"We all do it out there," grunted Gunter. "I guess I chewed tobacco before I could ride, and I could ride before I could walk."

"Do you—do you like it?"

"I reckon I shouldn't do it if I didn't like it."

"Isn't it bad for the teeth?" asked Cook.

"I guess so. I calculate I can do as I like with my own teeth."

He continued to chew, and the three juniors continued to watch him, fascinated. The local train, stopping at every station, crawled on through the leafy countryside. The four boys had the carriage to themselves, however. Tommy Dodd was glad of it. He would not have liked anybody to see a Rookwood fellow chewing tobacco.

Whoosh!

A stream of tobacco-juice was suddenly ejected from the new boy's mouth. It whizzed across the carriage, and streaked over the cushions at the back of the seat. Tommy Dodd jumped aside in horror. He had had a narrow escape.

"Great pip!" he yelled. "Mind what you're doing, you filthy pig!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Sure, it's a disgusting baste ye are!" shouted Doyle. "And if you come on the Modern side at Rookwood we'll scrag ye!"

Whoosh!

"Groo! Mind what you're at!" shrieked Cook, dodging aside.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The peculiar new boy roared.

"I guess you've no call to get on your hind legs," he chuckled. "I wasn't going to spot you. Bless your little hearts, I can aim to a fraction of an inch. I meant to miss you."

"You—you—you"—stuttered Tommy Dodd, utterly aghast—"you—you've practised squirting tobacco-juice?"

"Sure!"

"W-w-whhat for?"

"Why, it's a regular game out there," said Gunter. "I've seen a man on our ranch doing it, making rings round a galoot without touching him. I could catch you in the eye across the carriage if you'd like to see it done."

"No, thanks," said Tommy Dodd hastily.

The three Tommies drew to the farthest side of the carriage. Gunter was not an agreeable person to be near. Tommy Dodd's eyes were gleaming.

"If that filthy cad comes on the Modern side," murmured Cook, "we'll scrag him and boil him in oil!"

"We couldn't stand him," gasped Doyle. "Tare and 'ounds! I could stand almost anything to beat the Classical spalpeens—but not that! It can't be did."

Tommy Dodd nodded, his eyes glimmering. He had come to the same conclusion as his chums.

"I've been thinking of that," he whispered. "We couldn't have that horrible rotter on our side, if he were a dozen times the Head's nephew. Silver wouldn't want him, if he knew."

"No jolly fear!"

"I've got an idea. Those Classical cads will be at Coombe, ready to get him away if they can."

"Our fellows will be there, too, and we'll beat them hollow."

"No, we won't. We'll let them beat us," whispered Tommy Dodd, grinning. "Don't you see? Let them bag him. Then the filthy cad will be planted on them, and we shan't have the horrid worm stuck on our side. He'll be a howling disgrace to whichever side he joins. We don't want him at any price. We'll put up a show of trying to keep him, and let them run him off."

Cook and Doyle burst into a chuckle at the idea.

They had planned and schemed to bag the Head's nephew, and they had him in their hands. But their feelings had changed right round. Now that they knew Gunter, they were only anxious about one thing—to make absolutely certain that he wouldn't be put into the Modern side at Rookwood. To get that raucous, unpleasant blackguard planted on Jimmy Silver & Co. would be the joke of the season. The Fistical Four were welcome to the Head's nephew.

"What's the cackle about?" broke in the raucous voice of the new boy.

"Little boys shouldn't ask questions," said Tommy Dodd blandly. "Why—ah!—oh!—you horrid rotter!"

Whoosh!

A stream of tobacco-juice caught Tommy Dodd fairly on the chin. It splashed brown all over his face.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Gunter. "Take that for your sauce!"

His laughter was cut suddenly short. Tommy Dodd was upon him with the spring of a tiger.

There was no farther need to conciliate the Head's nephew. The three Tommies had quite changed their minds about that. Tommy Dodd's long, pent-up wrath found full vent now.

He clutched the young rascal and dragged him from his seat, and got his head into chancery, and pommelled him furiously.

"There, you cad! There, you benighted heathen!" roared Tommy Dodd. "You disgusting Prussian, take that! You—you Hun, take that! There, you worm!"

"Yow—wow—ow! I guess—Yop! Yah! Oh!"

Disgusting the new boy certainly was, but he had plenty of pluck. He grappled with Tommy Dodd, and hit out

furiously. They rolled on the floor of the carriage, collecting up dust, and struggling and hitting ferociously.

Doyle and Cook looked on. They had full confidence in their leader—and fair play was a jewel.

"Go it, Tommy!"
Bump—crash—yell! It was a terrific struggle, and Tommy Dodd found that he had his hands full with the new boy.

The whistle shrieked, and the train slowed down once more.

"Coombe!" shouted Tommy Cook. "Chuck it, you cripples! We're there!" The train stopped. Tommy Dodd and Gunter separated, and staggered up. They were both dusty and panting and rumped. Which of them had had the best of it was a puzzle. They both looked as if they had had the worst of it.

"Is this the station?" gasped Gunter, grabbing down his bag from the rack.

"Yes, you get out here for Rookwood, and then you can go and eat coke!"

And the three Tommies jumped from the train, without bestowing any further attention upon the Head's nephew, whom they had travelled so far to capture.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER. Victory?

JIMMY SILVER & CO. were riding hard that afternoon.

To beat the local train they needed to ride hard. They knew that it was a slow train, and stopped at half a dozen stations before it reached Coombe. There was a chance of beating it, and they did their best.

They had already ridden hard. Now they rode hard again. Only one of the four cracked up on the ride. It was Newcome. He dropped behind, calling out to his chums that he would see them at Rookwood. Silver and Lovell and Raby did not stop. There was not a minute to lose.

They came into Coombe village dusty, perspiring, crimson, and fagged out. But they were in time. When they jumped off their machines outside the little village station their legs almost refused to support them. They held on to their bikes and gasped.

Hooker and Topham and Jones minor were chatting there. Other Classical juniors were inside and outside the station. They had obeyed their instructions; they were on the spot. It was close on four. They stared blankly at the Classical trio as they arrived.

"Missed him?" exclaimed Hooker.

"Gang of Moderns at Latcham—done in!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "The local's not in yet."

"Not yet! I say, you must be duffers to—"

"Cheese it! Three Modern cads will be with the Head's nephew when he gets in. He's got to be got away from them!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "Pass the word round—mind they don't get him away."

"Right—ho!"

The trap from Rookwood was already outside the station. Old Mack had disappeared into the Rookwood Arms. Jimmy Silver's eyes gleamed as he noted it.

"Get to the geegee, Lovell, and hold him ready," he muttered. "Mack's gone for a drink, and you know he takes long drinks. We'll borrow the trap, and take the new kid up to the school. Raby can stay here and tip Mack, so that he won't cut up rusty."

"You bet!" said Lovell.

Raby nodded, and strolled across to the Rookwood Arms to be ready to intercept Mack if he came out. He was prepared

to tip Mack, or to trip him up, as occasion demanded. It was no time for half measures.

Jimmy Silver, with a crowd of eager Classics entered the station prepared for anything. Gunter was to be got away from the Moderns—that was all they thought or cared about. And the train had come in.

Jimmy Silver slipped a shilling into the porter's hand, and let his flock on to the platform as the train stopped.

There were several Modern juniors there already, and they gave the Classics hostile looks. Jimmy Silver did not heed them. He looked along the train for the enemy.

"There they are!"

The three Tommies were alighting. After them came a fellow in Etons, evidently the Head's nephew. His looks certainly weren't what Jimmy Silver expected; but he had no doubt of the junior's identity, as he had travelled with the three Moderns.

"Back up, Classics!" shouted Jimmy.

There was a rush towards the carriage. Jimmy Silver shouldered Tommy Dodd aside—with remarkable ease, as he noted afterwards—and caught the new boy by the shoulder.

"You're Gunter?"

Gunter stared at him.

"I guess so."

"We've come to rescue you from these Modern cads," said Jimmy Silver hurriedly. "They're rotters—awful rotters! You stick to us! Come on!"

"But I say—"

"This way!"

Jimmy Silver seized one of Gunter's arms and Hooker the other, and Jones minor relieved him of his bag. The astounded new boy was rushed away to the exit.

"Back up, Moderns!" shouted Tommy Dodd.

"Rally round, Classics!"
The Classics closed round the prize in a crowd, and Gunter was rushed out.

Jimmy Silver rushed Gunter out of the station breathlessly. He was surprised at the ease with which he had robbed the Moderns of him. On the station platform the three Tommies doubled up with laughter as the Classics disappeared with the prize.

Leggett rushed up to Tommy Dodd excitedly.

"They've got him!" he yelled.

"Let 'em keep him!" chuckled Tommy Dodd.

"What!"

"We don't want him! We've found out that he's a low blackguard—a regular disgraceful beast! We couldn't have such a blighter on the Modern side. We're planting him on the Classics! See?"

"Oh, scissors!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. had rushed Gunter to the trap. They tossed his bag in, and helped Gunter in. The Head's nephew hardly knew whether he was on his head or his heels, but in the trap he recovered his breath.

"What's the game?" he asked.

"We're rescuing you from those cads," stuttered Jimmy Silver. "We'll explain afterwards. Hurry up! Look after those bikes, Hooker!"

Jimmy Silver and Lovell jumped in. Jimmy took the reins, and the trap dashed away. The Moderns came streaming out of the station, yelling. Old Mack appeared in the doorway of the inn, shaking his fist. But Jimmy Silver did not heed. He drove on, and

(Continued on page 18.)



Jimmy Silver & Co. rushed Gunter out to the trap. They tossed his bag in and helped the Head's nephew in front. "What's the game?" asked Gunter. "We're rescuing you from those cads—the Moderns," said Jimmy Silver. "We'll explain afterwards!" (See Chapter 5.)

THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!

BY SIDNEY DREW



A Magnificent, New Serial of
:- Adventures in Germany, :-
introducing FERRERS LORD,
PRINCE CHING LUNG, and
RUPERT THURSTON & CO.



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.
GAN WAGA, an Eskimo, who belongs to the crew of the yacht, and who is ever on the look-out to play japes on his shipmates. Greatly attached to Ching Lung.
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.
They are detained, but escape, after many exciting adventures. In the underground passages of the Schloss Schwartzburg, where they have been imprisoned, they discover a great treasure which Von Kreigler has been hiding from the Allies.
Thurston & Co. return to the yacht, where Ferrers Lord has been waiting for them.
The yacht returns to England again, and Ferrers Lord & Co. set about building a new aeroplane.
The new helicopter is built, but fails in the first trial.
Whilst the engineers are lifting her from the water, Gan Waga seizes a ham and keg of butter from the storeroom of the house, but O'Rooney takes the ham from him.

(Now read on.)

Thurston Interrupts!

CHING LUNG had sauntered away. Gan Waga was not ill, but there had been more butter in the keg than he had bargained for, and the Eskimo did not believe in wasting butter. He dropped overboard to have another sleep. Before dusk the helicopter had been raised and placed in her old position on the floating platform. Barry had arranged a little supper with cold boiled ham and salad and tomatoes as the principal dish, and toasted cheese to follow. He had invited Prout, Maddock, and also Joe the carpenter who had come ashore from the yacht.

"Ye'll enjoy ut, Joe!" said Barry. "O' niver see such a foina ham since me swate days of choidhood at Ballybunin. And, bedad, Oi know a ham! Wid a hard-boiled egg or two and a tomato, a bit of lettuce, and a shtay pickle, ye'll say ut's proime. Anyhow, there's only cowlid leg of mutton for supper, and ut's as tough as wan of thim cork mats they use in bath-rooms. Be along at eight to the minute, bhoy, or Maddock and Prout will ate the lot!"

It was nearing eight o'clock when Rupert Thurston came aboard, and discovered Ching Lung sitting smoking in the conning-tower.

"I've been up to the house, Ching," said Rupert Thurston. "I know it's nothing serious, but the cook has been complaining to the butler, and the butler has been complaining to me. If it had been anyone but Gan Waga it might had been serious. He has stolen a keg of butter and a ham from the larder."

"Why did the chap worry you?" asked Ching Lung. "If he has any complaints, why doesn't he go up to headquarters and make his grouse to the Chief?"

"I don't know, but I do know they don't like it. Can't you persuade Gan to take the stuff back and apologise?"

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Ching Lung switched on an extra light so that he could obtain a better view of Rupert.

"I was afraid you were sickening for mumps or the jimjams, but you look fit and healthy," he said. "Surely that bit of a douche you got this morning can't have upset your mental balance, my poor lad, so you must have a slight touch of liver. Don't you say in English when you mean that something is practically impossible that it's as easy as getting butter out of a cat's mouth? And knowing your plump and genial Gan, you ought to know also that it is a jolly sight more difficult to get butter out of him. He might return the empty keg if you bribe him to. As for making him apologise—well, I give that up. About the butter, if a big chunk of that has wandered, I don't mind pleading guilty for my Eskimo, but I dispute the ham. I don't think he has it."

"Oh, bother the ham, and the butter, too!" said Thurston, with a laugh. "What nettled me was that the butler should groan to me about it!"

"But why accuse the simple-hearted, honest Eskimo?" grinned Ching Lung. "Look here, old warrior, I'll tell you something! Gan did pinch that ham, but, because he couldn't help it, he went half-shares with Barry O'Rooney, who was well aware that the hambone was a snatched one. The receiver is always worse than the actual thief. With the aid of those other blackguards, Prout, Maddock, and the carpenter, they are going to eat that ham with trimmings. There may still be time to rescue it. If you have any sense of justice, now is the time to put both feet down!"

Thurston's eyes twinkled.

"So those rascals are dividing the loot, are they? By Jove, I'd like to teach them a lesson, Ching!"

"From information received, the aforesaid rascals will divide their ill-gotten gains in the smaller galley at eight o'clock sharp, sonny," said the prince, consulting his watch, "so you have still ten minutes to teach them

a lesson and make virtue and justice triumphant."

Rupert Thurston's eyes twinkled again, but he assumed a look of pained gravity as he approached the door of the smaller galley. Mr. Barry O'Rooney was boiling eggs, and his friend Mr. Benjamin Maddock was cutting cheese into slabs to toast under the grill later on. The galley table was laid for four. There was the glorious ham decorated with parsley and a rosette of pink-crinkled paper. Beside it was a dish of salad and a jar of pickles and a loaf. When Rupert Thurston stepped in the eggs were cooked, and Barry was fishing them out of the saucepan and dropping them into a basin of cold water.

"By the way, O'Rooney," said Rupert, taking care not to look at the ham, "though, believe me, I am not accusing anyone, something very unpleasant has happened. The Chief's butler has complained to me that articles of food have been stolen from the house. In particular, he mentioned a York ham. Of course, if any of you fellows have taken it, it must have been done in the way of a joke. The butler, unfortunately, does not look upon it in the light of a joke, for he is one of those people devoid of a sense of humour. He tells me that all his accounts are carefully checked every month, and that York hams are very expensive. He is willing to say nothing more about it if the ham is returned. If any of your chums know anything about this, O'Rooney, I beg you for the honour of the ship to send the thing back to the butler, and thus avoid a great deal of unpleasantness!"

Then Rupert Thurston went out and closed the door behind him. Barry staggered as if an invisible hand had struck him a hard blow on the nose. Rupert had politely begged that the ham should be returned, but his words amounted to a positive order. The bo'sun sat speechless, glaring at Barry. Without a word, though his mouth was working, Barry O'Rooney took a sheet of brown paper out

NEXT
FRIDAY!

"THE AMAZING NEW BOY!"

A GRAND YARN OF THE BUCKWOOD CHUMS.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

of a drawer, and lifted the beautiful ham from the dish. He gazed at it almost tearfully, for it was heart-breaking to have to part with it. With shaking hands he folded the paper round it and tied the string.

"It's murder, Ben!" he said, in a voice that trembled with emotion. "It's pillage, but it must be done. Ooh, bad luck to the day Oi lift swate Ballybunion, home of me childhood's joys, to be a sailor! Fury and foire-irons! Oi could sit down and croy me oies out wid grafe and despair! Oh, lovely ham—farewell!"

The galley clock struck eight. As if starting out of some frightful dream, Barry seized the ham and fled. Footfalls sounded in the

galleyway. The other invited guests, Prout and the carpenter, came in smiling, and very hungry for their supper. At their heels waddled Gan Waga.

"Where old Barry Lunatics, hunk?" asked the Eskimo. "I want my hamses, the fatness halves!"

"There ain't going to be no 'am, souse me, and no fatness half, neither!" said the bo'sun.

"What!" roared Prout and Joe. "No ham?"

"No hamses, hunk!" cried Gan Waga, aghast.

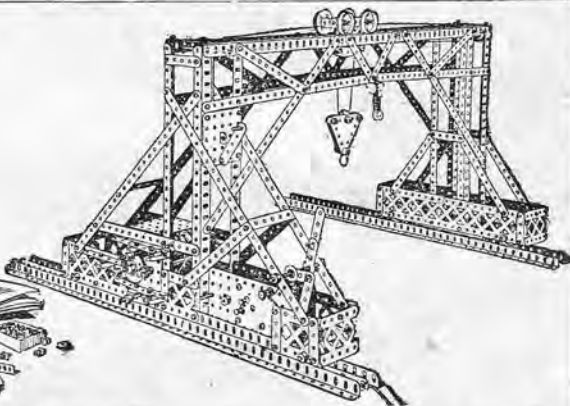
"There ain't, souse me!" said Maddock, making for the door. "Let me get out of this 'ere den of thieves! I'm honest, I am,

and if I'd knowed the thing was phished I'd never have come near the place. If you want to know, you convicts, the Chief's butler has lodged a complaint, and the 'am has gone back. Mr. Thurston came and practically ordered us to return it. Barry's gone with it to the house. Oh, what a tremendous loss!"

Tom Prout's angry hand clutched at the salad, and as Ben Maddock made a bolt for it, a well-aimed tomato broke with a juicy squeal against the back of his head.

(There will be another long, thrilling instalment of our grand adventure serial next week.)

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THE POPULAR.—No. 148.



THE SCHOOLBOY DOMESTICS!

(Continued from page 6.)

darkening angrily. "Pray explain yourself, Wharton!"

Harry Wharton rapidly told the Head how Trotter had come to the school the previous night to tell him of his suspicions, and how they had laid the trap for Bunter. The Head was very angry, but, at the same time, a feeling of infinite relief instantly took possession of him.

"Good gracious!" he exclaimed at last. "It is through this wretched boy, then, that the whole misunderstanding has arisen? It was you, Bunter, who went into the store-room on Tuesday night. You imitated Dibbs' voice to escape the consequences of your own dishonourable act?"

"I—I didn't, sir!" faltered Bunter. "I—I wasn't in the store-room at all! I only went there to look for my handkerchief. I mean, I didn't go there—"

"Silence!" said the Head wrathfully. "You are contradicting yourself at every point, Bunter. I think it is fairly positive that you are the culprit. In fact, there is no doubt whatever on the matter. You deliberately pilfered food from the store-room, and then laid the blame on to Dibbs! Wretched child, I have half a mind to expel you immediately!"

Billy Bunter nearly fainted.

"Oh, sir," he gasped wildly, "you won't do that! I confess everything, sir! It was I who was in the store-room, and I did imitate Dibbs' voice! I only did it, sir, because I was afraid of what would happen! I never dreamed that Dibbs would get into trouble, and that it would end in the servants backing him up! I—I'd made up my mind to come to you, sir, and confess it all this morning!"

"Lies will not help you, Bunter!" said the Head sternly.

"But you're not going to expel me, sir?" panted Bunter breathlessly.

"No, Bunter; I shall not do that," said the Head thoughtfully. "But I shall give you one of the soundest floggings you ever received in your life! I am of opinion that it will do you more good than expulsion! I know your character, and to a boy who has such a fondness for food as you have the offence is not so serious. I have no doubt that having found the trapdoor, it proved too great an attraction for you. You had not sufficient will-power to resist the temptation."

As a matter of fact, the Head was so relieved at finding the trying situation at a sudden end that he took a more lenient view of the case than he otherwise would have done.

"My boys," he said to Harry Wharton & Co., "I have to thank you for bringing the truth to light. Needless to say, I am intensely grieved that I have been, indirectly, the cause of the servants striking! They may have been insulting in their excitement; but, under the circumstances, I am prepared to overlook that. It is a great relief to know that everything is all right!"

"Rather, sir!" agreed the juniors. "But it was Trotter who found out the truth!"

"So it was," said the Head—"so it was! Trotter, my boy, I am very pleased with you—so pleased, in fact, that I shall give you double wages at the end of this week!"

Exactly an hour later all the servants trooped in at the gates of Greyfriars.

"Here they are!" shouted Bulstrode, as a crowd of Removites rushed across the Close.

"How do you feel, Gossy?"

"Wot I says is this 'ere!" said Gosling. "I knowed hall along that Dibbs was innocent! Still, the 'ead's a gent! I slanged 'im suthin' cruel, an' 'e's a real good 'un to let matters slip into their usual places agin. It's glad enough I am to be back 'ere, an' I reckon heverbody else his of the same opinion!"

And everybody else was. In two days' time the servants had quite settled down again, as though nothing had happened. Mrs. Mimble had reopened her little tuckshop, and the ordinary routine of work was resumed at Greyfriars. And the occasion is never likely to arise again when the Head will find it necessary to enlist the services of the schoolboy domestics!

THE END.

(There will be another long complete tale of Harry Wharton & Co. next week.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 148.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"THE AMAZING NEW BOY!"

A Bone of Contention!

(Continued from page 15.)

the trap fairly whizzed through the old High Street of Coombe.

Jimmy Silver slacked down when they reached the lane.

"Safe as houses!" he said breathlessly. "All serene, Gunter, old chap! We've only rescued you, you know. Like to drive?"

"Sure."

Gunter took the ribbons. He gave the horse a lash with the whip. It was a cruel lash, and it made the Rookwood juniors stare. The horse leaped forward as if he had been electrified.

"Here, draw it mild!" said Lovell, aghast.

"I guess I know how to handle a gee!"

"Look out! You'll have the trap over!" roared Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

It was the new boy's peculiar sense of humour again—Jimmy's first experience of it. He lashed the horse, and cracked the whip, and they raced down the lane at a speed that was dangerous, especially to anyone they might chance to meet.

The trap dashed on furiously. Rookwood appeared in sight in an incredibly short space of time. Gunter turned the horse in at the gates, and brought it, foaming, to a halt before the porter's lodge, and jumped down.

Jimmy Silver and Lovell followed him, panting. Their hearts had been in their mouths. They stared at the new boy. The Head's nephew was a surprise to them.

"I guess I scared you—what!" chuckled Gunter.

"You didn't scare us, and you were a brute to hit the horse like that!" said Lovell indignantly.

Jimmy squeezed his chum's arm warningly.

"Come in with us, dear boy," he said.

"Nearly tea-time. Come on!" And Gunter was marched triumphantly into the School House.

Jimmy Silver & Co. had won the prize. They rejoiced at first.

But the hilarity and apparent contentment with which the Moderns took their defeat made them suspicious a little later.

Gunter had promised them to become a Classical over tea, and that promise made them indulgent to the fact that he spat on the floor and picked his teeth with a fork.

They had succeeded; the Moderns were beaten to the wide. It was later that it dawned upon Jimmy Silver & Co. that that easy victory at Coombe had been "planted" on them, and that Tommy Dodd had been only too anxious to see them bag the Head's nephew.

They had bagged him! When they came into the end study again, and found the new boy there, with his feet on the table, a cigar in his mouth, and the study walls newly decorated with tobacco-juice, they gave each other sickly looks. They had done Tommy Dodd, but not quite so much as Tommy Dodd had done them.

The Head's nephew was a Classical! The Classics had succeeded in catching a Tartar!

THE END.

(There will be another grand tale of Rookwood next week.)

A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR.

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. Address: The Editor, The "Popular," The Fleetway House, Farringdon St., London, E.C.4.

FOR NEXT FRIDAY!

There will be another long complete story of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, entitled

"FORESTALLED!"

By Frank Richards,

and a grand tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., under the title of

"THE AMAZING NEW BOY!"

By Owen Conquest,

which will deal with further exploits of the Head's nephew from the far-off, rocky land of Texas. To follow this will be the usual four-page Supplement, "Billy Bunter's Weekly," which will be a Special "Sanny" Number.

A further instalment of our splendid adventure serial, "The Invisible Raider," will also be included in the programme, and last, though not least, will be "Poplets" Competition No. 43, in which I am again offering a Grand Match Football and Ten Five-Shilling Prizes.

"POPLETS" COMPETITION NO. 42.

FIRST PRIZE: Grand Match Football.

TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH.

Examples for this week:

Getting rid of.	In Borrowed Plumes.
A Sudden End.	Townsend's Little
Catching a Tartar.	Game.
Waiting for Friday.	Studying for Exam.
Winter.	A Humorous
Football in Snow.	Situation.
Putting Up With.	Not Always There.

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. 42, 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 November 24th.

RESULT OF "POPLETS" COMPETITION NO. 34.

The Grand Match Football has been awarded to:

Arthur Kimber,

13, Harford Street,

St. James, Bristol,

and the ten prizes of five shillings each have been sent to the following readers:

Arthur Williams, 11, Portland Street, Leamington Spa; George Mitofsky, 25, Heytesbury Street, Dublin; H. Knighton, 46, Wellingborough Road, Northampton; L. M. E. Nash, 22, Farnsby Street, Swindon, Wilts; Edward Mitchell, 5, North Shore Street, Cambeltown, N.B.; E. Arthur, 20, High Street, Dorking, Surrey; Albert Head, Victoria Road, Colford; Ernest W. Huntington, 47, Southfield Road, Rotton Park, Birmingham; Stanley Huntley, Glenholme, 41, Severn Avenue, Weston-Super-Mare, Somerset; W. Purvis, 23 Warton Street, Bootle, Liverpool.

Your Editor.

A GRAND YARN OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. BY OWEN CONQUEST.



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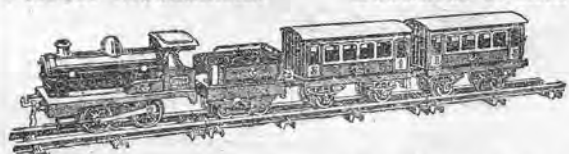
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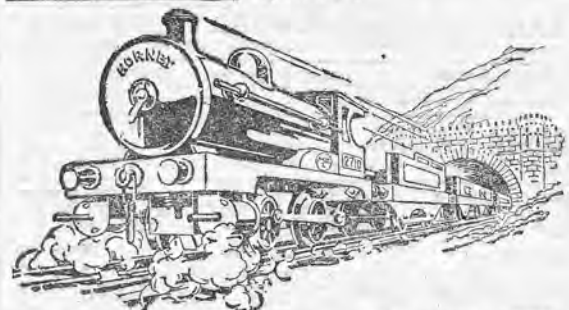
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