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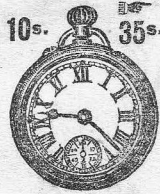


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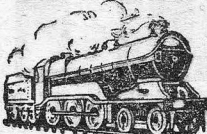
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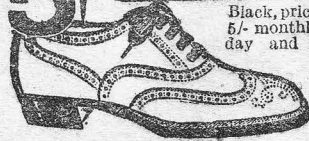
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By FRANK RICHARDS.

**THE FIRST CHAPTER.
The Bermondsey Babe!**

THE day was a beautiful one, clear and sunlit, and Harry Wharton sniffed at the crisp air with keen enjoyment when the Remove came out from dinner.

"Ripping afternoon for scouting!" he said.

"Rather!" said Mark Linley. "We'd better get into our togs immediately. We discussed all the plans for the afternoon's manoeuvres yesterday. I reckon we shall have a fine afternoon's sport!"

Harry Wharton & Co., the chums of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, were keen scouts, and a half-holiday was often spent in manoeuvres in Friardale Wood. In connection with this movement, Harry Wharton & Co. had endeavoured to hire a small shooting-box in the middle of the woods. But the Bounder, otherwise H. Vernon-Smith, of the Remove, had offered Mr. Biggs, the agent, a higher rent.

The Bounder did not use the box for scouting. He used it for gambling and smoking, and he had many friends who were willing to "go the pace" in the shelter of the box in the woods.

In less than half an hour all the juniors who were to take part in the manoeuvres were dressed in the uniform of the scouts, and stood in neat rows in the Close. All the boys carried staffs. Each patrol could be distinguished by its neat little flag, and the Wolves—of which Harry Wharton was patrol-leader—looked the neatest and sprucest of them all.

The Greyfriars Scouts prided themselves that they carried out their scouting programme with a military precision which few Boy Scouts could equal. They certainly were very keen, and this afternoon it looked as though they would spend a really enjoyable time.

The bugles sounded out, and the patrols left the Close and marched out into the road. Vernon-Smith & Co. watched them go, with sneering smiles on their faces.

"Silly kids!" said the Bounder disdainfully.

"Rather!" agreed Stott. "Blessed if I'd be seen out in the road wearing those duds! I've got a little more dignity!"
"I suppose they think they look neat!" sniggered Snoop.

"Well, they do, as a matter of fact!" exclaimed Hazeldene, looking at the departing scouts thoughtfully. "I tell you, Smithy, I'm a silly ass not to go with them! I reckon they'll have a ripping afternoon's sport!"

"Rats!" said the Bounder. "I can give you better sport than running about through damp woods, Hazel!"

"I'm not so sure of that," said Hazel, dene slowly.

But when Vernon-Smith, Stott, Trevor, and Bolsover left the school buildings a few minutes later several juniors noticed that Hazeldene was with them.

Meanwhile, the scouts were busy. They entered into their task heart and soul.

The afternoon wore itself out gradually, and at last the sun disappeared behind the hills over towards Pegg. Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry found themselves together, and both of them were flushed and warm with their recent exertions.

"We've had a first-class afternoon's sport, Bob!" said Harry.

"By Jove, rather! I reckon scouting's a fine thing!" said Bob Cherry enthusiastically. "I suppose we'd better be getting back towards Greyfriars now. Most of the chaps will be wandering back at this time of the afternoon."

"Yes," said Wharton. "What a pity we haven't got that shooting-box! It would be ripping to gather there and have a feed! Of course, I mean Remove chaps. There wouldn't be any room for Temple, Dabney, and their set."

"There's not room for us, either!" growled Bob Cherry. "We've been nicely done over that affair, Harry. There's no mistake that—"

"Good-evening, young gentlemen!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry came to a stop. They had been strolling along one of the paths which led towards

Friardale Wood, which lay about half a mile ahead. There was not a house in sight, although, close to the left, a small spinney hid the roofs of Friardale.

A man had suddenly appeared from behind a hedge—a huge, lumbering fellow, with a villainous-looking face. He was attired in extremely dirty garments, and he did not look at all a pleasant person to come in contact with.

"Good-evenin', young gentlemen!" he repeated.

"Good-evening!" said Harry Wharton, looking at the tramp. "Have you been watching us scouting?"

The big man grinned.

"Can't say as I 'ave," he replied. "I'm a Lunnon chap, you see, an' don't take no interest in that sort o' thing. Bermondsey's where I come from. Mebbe you've heard of it? It's a pretty spot!"

"Bermondsey!" repeated Bob Cherry. "You're a good long way from there now."

"Yus. It ain't a matter o' five minutes' walk, is it?" said the tramp genially. "My name's Bill, though I'm generally known as the Bermondsey Babe."

"My hat!" grinned Bob Cherry. "That's jolly appropriate!"

"Yus, it is, mate, ain't it?" chuckled the tramp. "I was called the Babe, you see, 'cos I was just about the strongest an' biggest chap in the district. I reckon it 'ud need a mighty big feller to git the better o' me!"

"Quite so," said Harry Wharton. "But what's that got to do with us? Good-evening, Mr. Bermondsey Babe! We've got to get back to school."

"Not so fast, young shaver!" exclaimed the Babe quickly. "I was jest goin' to arst you young gentlemen if you'd such a thing as a spare copper or two on you? I ain't got a red cent to me name, strike me pink if I 'ave! You look nice, kind-'earted youngsters—"

Harry Wharton laughed.
"Oh, here you are!" he said, and handed the man a sixpence. "That'll do for both of us."

The Bermondsey Babe looked at the little silver coin and scowled.

"Oh, do for the both of yer, will it? Look 'ere, you can spare more than a tanner, I'll bet a dollar! 'And over 'arf-a-crown, an' don't be so mighty close-fisted!"

Harry Wharton's eyes flashed. "It's all I've got on me," he said. "I'm blessed sorry I gave it to you now, if that's the tone you use!"

"Come on," said Bob Cherry. "We'll leave the chap to himself!"

"You won't afore you've given me somethink more!" said the Bermondsey Babe threateningly. "You little mean rascals, 'andin' out a tanner to a feller wot's got no 'ome! Come on, let's see the colour o' the rest o' yer money!"

Harry Wharton gave his chum a swift glance.

"You ruffian!" he exclaimed angrily. "Do you think we shall give you anything if you use that tone? Come on, Bob, we'll—"

"You ain't goin' yet!" said the tramp, thrusting his unshaven jaw out aggressively. "You'll jest turn yer pockets out, and let me see wot's inside 'em! Come on, no swankin'! I ain't the chap who can be easily played about wiv!"

The two juniors, although possessed of plenty of pluck, could not help feeling rather alarmed at the Bermondsey Babe's attitude. They were no match for this hulking great ruffian, and, although it was certainly undignified, they both decided to make a bolt for it.

But the tramp divined their intention, and, with an oath, he thrust out a grimy hand and grabbed Bob Cherry by the shoulder.

"You ain't a-goin' yet, young shaver!" he said grimly.

"You—you scoundrel!" panted Bob Cherry. "Let me go!"

"Yes, leave him alone!" shouted Harry Wharton. "If you don't, I'll bring this staff across your beastly head!"

The Bermondsey Babe grinned.

"Oh, would yer!" he said. "Well, I don't see as it would matter much. That there blessed broomstick wouldn't do much 'arm! I ain't goin' to 'urt yer. All I want is a little more splosh. 'And it over quietly, an' you can sling yer 'ooks!"

"I tell you I haven't got any more!" said Harry Wharton desperately. "Do you think we carry money about when we're scouting? And if I had a hundred quid on me I shouldn't give it up to you! My hat, this is highway robbery!"

"Yus, something like that," grinned the Babe coolly. "An' if you think I'm a-goin' to believe your yarn you're mistook!"

"What do you mean?"

"Why, that you ain't got any splosh on yer," said the tramp. "I reckon we've 'ad about enough o' this 'ere. I've kep' me temper so far, but hif you don't dub up mighty quick, you'll wish you 'adn't never bin born!"

Harry Wharton thought quickly, and glanced round into the gathering darkness. Not a soul was within sight, and even if Wharton escaped, it was practically impossible for Bob Cherry to escape the ruffian's clutches.

Harry decided upon a desperate course.

Suddenly, without warning, he rushed forward and raised his staff into the air. It descended with a terrific crack on the Bermondsey Babe's head, and the ruffian staggered back.

But the blow didn't have the effect Wharton had hoped for. The tramp still retained his hold on Bob Cherry's shoulder. And though Bob struggled, THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

NEXT FRIDAY! "SAVED FROM DISGRACE!"

he could not possibly free himself. The position of the juniors was beginning to look desperate.

"By thunder," gasped the tramp—"by thunder! Try to 'it me, would yer? I'll lay you both hout for this 'ere!"

He grabbed Bob Cherry with his other hand, and Bob felt himself lifted off his feet. The Babe was in a tearing rage, and he hardly knew what he was doing. Bob let out a yell of alarm.

"Oh, you scoundrel!" he roared. "Let me down!"

"Yus, I'll let you down!" snarled the hulking brute savagely. "But it'll be wiv more force than you'll like! By thunder, I'll teach you to hact the fool wiv me!"

Harry Wharton could see that Bob Cherry was in peril; for in his present rage the Babe was hardly responsible for his actions. Wharton's blow had hurt him considerably, and his head still sang painfully.

But the captain of the Remove didn't lose his head. He knew that he was the only person who could render any assistance, and he saw his chance as the Babe lifted Bob Cherry high above his head.

With a cry of alarm Harry Wharton dashed forward and charged into the tramp. His shoulder took the Bermondsey Babe in the pit of the stomach.

The tramp uttered a gasping cry. He staggered back, and seemed to crumple up.

Bob Cherry tumbled down, and landed on all fours. By a sheer piece of luck the Babe tripped on a root, and the next second he rolled over backwards. The juniors heard a frightened gasp; then a terrific splash.

The Bermondsey Babe had crashed through the thin hedge, and alighted in the muddy ditch on the other side. Bob Cherry picked himself up.

"My hat!" he gasped. "He's in the ditch!"

"Yes, come on!"

And, without waiting to make investigations, the Removites turned on their heels, and dashed away towards Friardale Wood, and joined Nugent and Bull.

Then they learned that Vernon-Smith & Co. were gambling in the hut.

"It's too thick!" said Bob Cherry. "They've got Hazeldene with them, too! I vote we wreck 'em!"

The others nodded, and together they went to the hut, and Harry Wharton rapped on the door.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

The Fight!

"NOT a giddy word!" murmured Bob Cherry. "The silly fat-heads are wondering who's knocking 'em up. Hammer again, boys!"

This time the juniors used their scouts' staffs, and the building rattled.

Still there was no answer. Then there was a sound of movement from upstairs, and the light disappeared from the top room. The next minute it appeared in the lower apartment. This was a bare, cheerless sort of place, with a ramshackle old table in the centre. Through the window Harry Wharton & Co. saw Vernon-Smith and Bolsover descend the stairs. The Bouncer set the lamp on the table, and then crossed to the door.

"Who's there?" he inquired. "Wharton!" shouted the captain of the Remove. "Open this door!" "Wharton!" ejaculated the Bouncer. "Do you mean to say it's you who's been kicking up all that din?"

"I kicked up some of it!" said Harry grimly.

"Open the door, Smithy!" shouted Bob Cherry.

"And smash you as well!"

"If you don't, we'll smash it down!"

Vernon-Smith recovered his composure. For an instant he had thought that one of the masters was down below, but now that he found that it was merely Harry Wharton & Co., he was feeling himself again.

"Go away!" he shouted. "I'm not going to open the door!"

"We want Hazel!" called Harry Wharton. "If he won't come of his own accord, we'll jolly well fetch him out!"

"Rather!"

"He's my guest!" shouted the Bouncer.

"Your rotten victim, you mean!" said Wharton indignantly.

"Are you going to open this door?" demanded Bob Cherry.

"No, I'm not!"

And the Bouncer picked up the lamp again, and Harry Wharton & Co. saw him ascend the stairs. They looked at one another in the gloom with determined expressions.

"Well, what's the next move?" asked Nugent.

"Bash the door down!" said Wharton firmly.

"And then what?"

"We'll face Smithy and make him swallow a few home truths!" said Wharton. "And we'll take Hazeldene away with us!"

"If we can," said Bob Cherry.

Without more ado, the Removites commenced the attack upon the door. Three staffs thudded upon the portal with resounding bangs, and the door creaked and shivered. But it was fairly stout, and did not show signs of budging. The din was considerable.

"All make for the lock!" panted Harry Wharton.

The staffs thudded upon that part of the door.

Crash!

The door shook ominously.

"It's giving!" gasped Johnny Bull. "Keep it up!"

The juniors were feeling excited now. They were not at all opposed to a tussle with Vernon-Smith & Co., and felt in the right humour for it.

The window above them was suddenly flung open.

Vernon-Smith and Bolsover major leaned out angrily.

"You destructive rotters!" shouted the Bouncer. "What are you doing?"

"Bashing the door in!"

"My hat! We'll scalp you alive if you come in here!" roared Bolsover.

"We'll take our chance of that!" panted Nugent.

And the trusty staves once more thudded upon the weakening door. Vernon-Smith, up above, looked down with an alarmed expression on his face. He could see that Harry Wharton & Co. were in earnest. But the Bouncer was obstinate, and he determined not to let Hazeldene go. He would rather have the fight with Harry Wharton & Co. than admit himself beaten.

"If you don't stop acting the fool, we'll chuck things at you!" roared the Bouncer.

"Chuck away!"

"We're nearly in now, anyhow!" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

Vernon-Smith withdrew his head, and the window slammed down. A moment later the light reappeared in the lower room, and Bull, through the window, caught a glimpse of the Bouncer and his followers descending the stairs.

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

**THE THIRD CHAPTER.
Hazeldene Departs!**

"GREAT SCOTT!"

"Buck up!" panted Johnny Bull. "If we're not quick they'll barricade the giddy door!"

But the door was on the point of giving, and just as Vernon-Smith set the lamp down on the table, the lock gave.

Harry Wharton & Co. plunged into the little front room, panting and breathless. They were met by Vernon-Smith, Bolsover, Trevor, and Stott. Hazeldene was on the stairs, looking rather white. He was not afraid, but he considered that he hadn't a quarrel with Harry Wharton & Co.. Therefore he hung back and looked on.

"You clear out of here!" shouted the Bounder furiously.

"Not before we've told you what we think of you!" declared Bob Cherry warmly. "And we've come to fetch Hazel out of here. Hazel's not a bad chap, but you're trying to turn him into a rotter like yourself!"

"Don't worry about me!" growled Hazeldene, from the stairs. "I can look after myself!"

"Looks like it, doesn't it?" said Harry Wharton contemptuously. "Do you call it looking after yourself to come here and gamble and make yourself ill by smoking cigarettes? You're coming back with us, Hazel, and—"

"This is my place!" exclaimed Vernon-Smith darkly. "If you're not out in two minutes, Wharton, we'll jolly well chuck you out!"

"You can start the chucking bizney as soon as you like!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

The Bounder glared round him; then, without waste of time, he sprang at Harry Wharton with a cry of rage. Vernon-Smith had imagined that he would be safe from interruption in the shooting-box, but now, on the very first occasion it was used, Harry Wharton & Co. had forced themselves in and created a disturbance. The Bounder was furious, and for once he let himself go.

He hurled himself at Harry Wharton, and in a moment the two were in a deadly embrace.

It was the signal for the others to follow suit. Bolsover hit out at Johnny Bull, and in less than ten seconds the eight juniors were struggling round the little room in a fierce hand-to-hand tussle.

There was not exactly any motive for the fight, for it was impossible for Vernon-Smith & Co. to throw the intruders out—especially without Hazeldene's assistance.

Harry Wharton and Vernon-Smith were struggling in a tight embrace; but suddenly Wharton freed himself and hit out. The blow caught the Bounder on the cheek, and he staggered back with a cry.

Crash!
He collided with the table. For a second the lamp tottered; then, with a splintering crash of glass, it fell clattering to the floor. A huge sheet of flame arose as the paraffin caught fire.

"Look out!" yelled Hazeldene, in alarm.

"Great Scott!"
"The place is on fire!"
"My only hat!"
"Put it out!"
"Good heavens, it'll burn the place down!" shouted Stott, in a frightened voice.

The fight stopped as if by magic. The juniors skipped out of the way of the flames, and for a moment they seemed unable to cope with the situation. The oil burned furiously, and the room was filled with a flickering, ruddy glow.

Vernon-Smith uttered the exclamation, and it broke the spell. In an instant the juniors were all shouting out, all thoughts of their enmity at an end.

"Put it out!" shouted Harry Wharton, recovering himself. "Stamp the fire out!"

"Likely!" muttered Stott, with staring eyes. "Why, we should set ourselves on fire!"

And Stott started blubbering. "Shut up, you kid!" said Vernon-Smith sharply. "Hazel, rush upstairs and get that sack from the corner!"

Hazeldene clattered up the stairs, and in a moment he returned with a big sack. It was hastily thrown on to the flames, which were all confined to one corner of the room. At first the sack had no effect, but by shifting its position and beating it about the flames were extinguished.

The room was plunged into darkness, except for the smouldering woodwork, which had become charred in one or two places. All the juniors breathed with relief, for they had been afraid that the old building would take fire. It was only made of wood, and once the fire caught it would blaze up furiously.

Fortunately the flames had been put out in time. The floor was of brick, and, therefore, could not catch alight. Had the floor been of wood, it would have been practically impossible to stem the flames in time to avert disaster.

"My hat," exclaimed Bob Cherry, "I'm glad it's out!"

"Rather!" agreed Wharton, with a sigh of relief. "For a minute the giddy place looked as though it was going to be burned down!"

Vernon-Smith uttered an exclamation. "It was your fault, anyhow!" he said angrily. "If you hadn't have broken in this wouldn't have happened!"

"And if you hadn't played a dirty trick on me, you'd never have been in the place at all!" retorted Harry Wharton quickly. "Hazeldene, I want to know if you're coming with us?" Hazeldene hesitated.

"I'll go, if you like," he said, in a low voice. "I'm a bit fed up with the Bounder, to tell the truth!"

Vernon-Smith started forward in the dark room.

"You blessed turncoat!" he exclaimed. "Do you mean to say you're going away with Harry Wharton?"

"Yes, I am!" said Hazeldene. "Yah! Cad!" yelled Stott.

"I thought you said you could look after yourself!" sneered the Bounder.

"So I can!" replied Hazeldene quickly. "I'm going because I want to go, not because I'm doing as Harry Wharton wishes. If I wanted to remain here I'd remain, whether he wanted me to go or not!"

"But you're going?" the Bounder queried.

"Yes."
"Why?" asked Vernon-Smith.
"Because I didn't bargain for being led into a gambling-den!" said Hazel-



A blow on the cheek caused the Bounder to stagger back with a cry. Crash! He collided with the table, and sent the lamp clattering to the floor. A sheet of flame arose as the paraffin caught fire. "Look out! The place is on fire!" yelled Hazeldene. (See Chapter 2)

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY! "FORCED TO RESIGN!"

dene bluntly. "You told me, Smithy, that we should simply come here to have a cigarette, and read before the fire. I don't see any harm in cigarettes; but I'm blessed if I'm going to gamble!"

"Of course, that's very different to betting on horses, isn't it?" sneered Trevor sarcastically. "It wasn't so very long ago that you were in trouble with Banks, the bookie!"

Hazeldene turned red.

"It's a cad's trick to rake up that old episode now!" he said. "I tell you, Smithy, I don't agree with playing cards for money—especially for the high stakes you've been playing. If I kept it up, I should be in your debt for a big amount before long. I'm clearing out with Wharton!"

"Good for you, Hazel!" said Wharton. "You've got some sense at last!"

"So he has!" agreed Bob Cherry. "If he once got into debt with the Bounder, he'd never have any peace!"

Vernon-Smith laughed cynically.

"All right," he said, "you can go, if you choose. I don't care a jot! I was rather uncertain about you, Hazel. You'd better clear off, Wharton, before you do any more damage!"

"I'm going to clear off," said Harry Wharton. "You can go upstairs again, and continue your precious card-playing."

"We shall," said the Bounder coolly. "We've got three or four candles, so we're all right for light. Just before you came we were going to prepare tea. Like to join in the feed with us?" he asked sarcastically.

"I wouldn't feed at your expense if I hadn't had a remittance for months!" said Harry Wharton coldly. "Come on, chaps!"

Harry Wharton & Co. filed out of the shooting-box, and Hazeldene followed them. The weak-willed youngster was feeling rather ashamed of himself. Harry Wharton had been very generous to Hazeldene on more than one occasion, and he felt that they deserved better

treatment from him. The happenings of the evening had proved to Hazeldene that Harry Wharton & Co. were in earnest, and that it would be best, perhaps, for him to do as his sister requested, and have done with Vernon-Smith & Co. Inwardly, Hazeldene felt that the Bounder was a false friend, and he felt relieved as he walked away with Harry Wharton & Co.

"Glad you've learnt sense at last, Hazel!" said Bob Cherry cheerfully.

"Oh, shut up!" growled Hazeldene. "No need to do the Eric bizney! If you think you're going to stop me having a cigarette now and again, you're jolly well mistaken! But when Vernon-Smith started playing cards for money I felt it was time to ease off. I haven't come with you because I'm reforming. If I want to do a thing you don't like, I shall jolly well do it!"

Harry Wharton smiled. But he didn't say anything. Hazeldene's obstinate nature would not allow him to admit himself in the wrong. They proceeded through the wood slowly, for the darkness prevented them from walking at an ordinary pace.

Meanwhile, Vernon-Smith & Co. had closed the door of the shooting-box, and faked the lock so that it would fasten. Then they ascended to the upper-room, feeling rather breathless and dishevelled.

"The interfering rotters!" said Vernon-Smith savagely. "They might have had the place burnt down! A pretty pickle we should have been in then!"

"Oh, blow that," growled Trevor; "let's get tea ready! There's an hour before locking-up yet, so we've got nice time to have tea, and a cigarette after it. I'm jolly glad, for one, that Hazeldene's buzzed off!"

"And so am I!" said Bolsover, poking the fire, and placing a kettle on it. "Hazel was too glum and miserable for me. The ass doesn't know the meaning of the word sport, if he can't enjoy a game of poker!"

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Harry Wharton & Co.'s Rescue!

BOLSOVER looked up from the fire, and sniffed.

"Those fags of yours are jolly nifty, Smithy!" he said. "My hat, you've filled the room with filthy smoke!"

"Rot!" said Vernon-Smith, looking up from the table where he and Trevor and Stott were having a hand at cards. Some sausages on the fire were sizzling loudly, and the juniors did not notice that a low kind of roar filled the air.

"It is a bit thick in here," said Trevor. "Smells like tar, too!"

"It's jolly warm, somehow or other!" said Stott. "I didn't notice the heat so much a little while ago. What have you been doing to the fire, Bolsover?"

"Nothing, you ass, except poking it up!" said Bolsover major. "I—Great Scott, the smoke's getting thicker!"

The Bounder looked up quickly, then glanced at the door.

"My hat!" he exclaimed. "I wonder what—"

Bolsover pushed his chair back. Then he crossed the room, and flung open the door.

As he did so, a tremendous cloud of thick, choking smoke burst into the room, and a ruddy glow showed on the stairway. Vernon-Smith, with great presence of mind, crashed the door to again, and turned a pale face towards his companions.

"Good heavens!" he panted. "The place is on fire!"

"What?" shouted Bolsover, dropping the frying-pan, and allowing the sausages to roll over the floor. "Is—is this smoke coming—"

"The whole place is on fire!" repeated Vernon-Smith, between set teeth. "We couldn't have put it out, after all!"

"But we did!" stammered Stott fearfully. "There wasn't a single spark left when we came upstairs! Oh, what shall we do?"

"We shall be burned to death!" wailed Trevor, trembling with fright. "Open the window! We'll jump out! We must get out of the place somehow!"

Trevor looked round in horror, then hurried across to the window. The Bounder caught him by the shoulder.

"You fool!" he said sternly. "Don't jump out of there! It may not be very far down, but it's all rough bricks below, and you might kill yourself!"

The juniors looked round them in terrified consternation.

"The—the s-stairs aren't a-alight, are they?" stammered Bolsover nervously. "Perhaps we can dash down, and be outside before the fire gets too big a hold!"

Vernon-Smith pointed to the door.

"Look for yourself!" he said curtly. Bolsover gulped, and then stepped uncertainly towards the door. He opened it, and then uttered a scream of terror.

A lurid flame had curled in almost at his feet, and Bolsover slammed the door to with a crash. He had caught a vision of a white-hot, raging furnace where the stairs should have been, and his hair was singed by the intense heat.

"We're—we're cut off!" he gasped faintly. "Oh, heavens, we shall all be killed! The heat's getting tremendous in here! The floor'll be burnt in no time, and then we shall be chucked into the heart of the f-fire!"

"It's horrible—horrible!" shrieked Trevor, covering his face with his hands.

Stott was lying crouched up in the corner as white as a sheet, and sobbing convulsively. The one of the four who kept his composure was the Bounder. He

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THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

NEXT FRIDAY! **"SAVED FROM DISGRACE!"** A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS. By OWEN CONQUEST.

knew that they were all in imminent peril, but he remained cool and collected.

The smoke in the room was getting thicker and thicker, and Vernon-Smith stopped across to the window, and flung it open. Then he turned, and cast a swift glance round the room. There wasn't a rope to be seen, not a single thing which would serve to lower the boys to the ground.

And to jump would probably mean a broken limb. The height was not so very great; but directly below the window the ground was strewn with huge cobbles, and to drop on these would certainly endanger their lives. If there was any other avenue of escape it would be best to consider it before they took such a jump.

To make matters worse, even as the Bouncer looked downwards the wooden wall beneath him cracked, and the flames shot through.

"That's done it!" murmured Vernon-Smith, white to the lips. "If we drop down there, we should set our clothes alight in no time, and— Great Scott, I wonder if we could climb into that tree over the roof? It's a chance, and we might as well take it!"

Vernon-Smith turned swiftly, and closed the window.

"You rotten set of cowards!" he shouted. "What's the good of wailing there? The only way to save ourselves is to get on the roof! There's a chance we can climb into that elm-tree which hangs over it!"

"B-b-but s-s-suppose w-we can't?" stammered Bolsover. "We shall all be burnt to a cinder before help can come!"

"Shut up, you silly idiot!" snapped Vernon-Smith. "It's no good talking like that. There's a trapdoor just over your head. Bunk up on to my shoulders, and open it! We shall be up on the roof in two ticks, and the cool air will make us feel heaps better. Trevor, Stott, pull yourselves together! You frightened babies!"

So far, the juniors were quite unhurt. The heat in the room was certainly great, but not sufficient to cause any injury. Trevor and Stott, when they realised there was a chance of escape, jumped to their feet, and eagerly assisted in getting the trapdoor open. In two minutes Bolsover was on the roof, and he quickly assisted the others up beside him.

The cool air fanned their cheeks, but from beneath them flames curled up towards the rear of the shooting-box, and caused them to crouch near the front.

And, meanwhile—for the whole incident had not occupied ten minutes so far—Harry Wharton & Co. were making their way to Greyfriars.

"Well, I'm jolly glad we dug you out of that shooting-box, Hazel!" said Harry Wharton. "I don't want to lecture you, old man, but you must admit you've been a bit of an ass! If you take my advice you'll steer clear of Smithy in future."

"When I want your advice I'll ask for it!" growled Hazeldene sulkily.

"Well, that's polite, anyway!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"Jolly nice night to-night!" said Johnny Bull inconsequently, looking round him at the stars. They had nearly arrived at Friardale Lane, and the lights of Greyfriars could just be seen. Johnny Bull looked round, and then his attention became riveted on a certain spot in the direction from which they had come.

"What's that giddy glow?" he asked, in a puzzled voice.

"That which?" asked Bob Cherry.

"That glow over there?" repeated Bull, pointing. "It seems to be in the

direction of the shooting-box. Looks almost like a fire."

Harry Wharton started. "Rot!" he exclaimed quickly. "Don't be an ass, Johnny!"

"Well, it does look like a fire!" repeated Johnny Bull flatly. "I'm not saying it's the shooting-box on fire, because we put that out."

"Did we?" asked Nugent excitedly. "My only hat! Do you think it possible that—"

"It can't be possible!" said Wharton. "It simply can't be!"

They stood in a group, and looked at the ruddy glow in the dark sky. It flickered now and again, plainly showing that it was not far distant.

Hazeldene stirred uneasily.

"It's jolly queer," he said. "Don't you think we'd better buzz back and see, just to make sure? There's a possibility you didn't shove that fire out, and—"

"Come on!" exclaimed Harry Wharton tensely.

The others were quite ready. They raced back along the way they had come, utterly heedless now of the darkness. On the top of a rise they caught a glimpse of the shooting-box through a break in the leafless trees.

And as they did so they gasped. For the little building was wreathed in flames, and smoke poured in volumes from the back portion of it.

"It is the shooting-box!" said Harry Wharton, with drawn lips. "How about Vernon-Smith & Co.?"

"Oh, they're all right!" said Bob Cherry quickly. "They must be!"

Harry Wharton & Co. felt a cold fear grip their hearts. It seemed quite evident that the fire had not really been put out, and that it had burst forth with renewed vigour immediately after their departure. With one accord they tucked their elbows into their sides and raced forward.

Johnny Bull, who carried a long coil of rope, unhitched it from his belt, and was on the point of throwing it down, to enable him to run easier. Then a thought struck him, and he left it where it was.

"If Smithy and the others haven't got out it may come in useful," he thought. "But they must have got out! They couldn't have remained in that upper room without knowing about the giddy fire. Oh, my only topper, what a bust-up!"

Harry Wharton & Co. burst from the wood, and rushed into the clearing. They approached the shooting-box from the front, where there was no sign of flames so far. At present they were confined to the rear of the building, and the light from them lit up the surroundings in a lurid glare.

"Where's Smithy?" panted Wharton.

"I can't see 'em!"

"They must be here!" gasped Bob Cherry in horror.

"Smithy! roared Wharton. "Smithy—Smithy!"

There was an answering shout from the shooting-box.

"Thank Heaven you've come!" shouted Vernon-Smith thankfully. "We can't get down! We're on the roof, and can't possibly get down without killing ourselves!"

"Good heavens!"

"Great Scott!"

Harry Wharton & Co. stared upwards with horrified expressions. Vernon-Smith and his three companions could clearly be seen against the frelit sky. They leaned up against the parapet of the roof in a crouching group, and those below could hear Stott sobbing.

"You'll have to be jolly quick!"

shouted the Bouncer anxiously. "The flames are spreading like wildfire, and the blessed roof'll fall in in about about five minutes!"

"Are you all uninjured?" called Harry Wharton anxiously.

"We're not singed yet!" replied the Bouncer. "These cowards haven't got the pluck to face the thing properly!"

Johnny Bull ran forward.

"I've got a rope here!" he roared. "If we chuck that up to you, Smithy, you'll be able to slip down it!"

Vernon-Smith shock his head vigorously.

"It's no good!" he shouted. "There's nothing to tie it to! The chimney was the only thing, and that's toppled over! You'll have to think of something else! We got up on the roof because we thought we could climb up into this tree. It's miles too far away, though!"

Harry Wharton looked up, and then let out a shout.

"My hat!" he yelled. "I've got an idea! There's a whacking great branch hangs over the roof, and we could—" Wharton broke off, and looked up again. "Sit tight, you chaps!" he roared. "We'll have you safely down in three minutes!"

"How?" panted Bob Cherry. "How?"

"What's the good of telling Smithy that?" added Bull, pale with horror.

"You know it's no good, Harry! We can't possibly get the poor chaps down!"

Harry Wharton looked grim.

"Can't we?" he exclaimed. "Johnny, hand over that rope, and then follow me into this tree! You'd better come as well, Bob! It'll need the three of us to do the trick!"

Without a word Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry followed Harry Wharton's instructions. There was no time to question. The loss of one minute might mean the loss of four lives, so Harry Wharton & Co. worked as they had seldom worked before.

The captain of the Remove grasped the long rope, and hurriedly climbed the big elm-tree. Bob Cherry and Bull followed behind, whilst Frank Nugent and Hazeldene stood below, anxiously waiting to render assistance. They did not know yet what Harry Wharton's plan was.

The three climbers could see quite distinctly in the glow of the fire, and at last they sat astride, one behind the other, the great branch which hung almost directly over the fore part of the shooting-box.

The tree was of huge proportions, and the three Removites were a great distance from the ground. The roof of the cottage was below them, and they could see Vernon-Smith & Co.'s faces upturned.

The heat was considerable, and sparks floated up now and again. But there was fortunately no wind, so the building burnt slower than otherwise would have been the case.

"You see my idea now?" asked Harry Wharton briskly. "We're practically over the roof, and I can swing the rope over this fork here. Smithy can grab hold of it, swing into space, and then we'll lower him to the ground. The others can follow the same road. It's as simple as possible."

"By jingo!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "What a ripping idea!"

Harry Wharton looked down to the Bouncer's upturned face.

"Catch the rope, Smithy!" he roared.

"Right-ho!" shouted Vernon-Smith calmly.

Wharton swung the rope downwards. It was not thick, but of very great strength. It hung down, and the Bouncer made a grab at it as it swung

past. He caught it, and rapidly made a loop.

"I'd better send these chaps down first!" he shouted. "I don't think there's much danger now, Wharton. It's the back part of the building that's like a furnace!"

"Well, there's no time to dawdle!" roared Harry Wharton. "Buck up!"

Vernon-Smith did buck up, and half a minute later Stott, with a frightened cry, leapt from the roof of the burning building and swung into space.

"Lower away!" shouted Vernon-Smith.

Harry Wharton and his two companions up in the tree found it a comparatively easy task to lower Stott to the ground, where he was caught by Nugent and Hazeldene. The rope was untied, and it swung upwards again.

Trevor came next, and meanwhile the flames were making terrific headway. Already the roof on the other side of the building was blazing fiercely, and a deafening crash told that the floor of the upper room had given way. The whole building shook, and even the Bounder looked alarmed. A shower of sparks shot up into the night air.

"Hurry up!" yelled Vernon-Smith. "The place is collapsing!"

Bolsover followed Trevor. Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Johnny Bui were working like niggers up in the tree, their faces red and perspiring from their exertions in the heated atmosphere.

They could scarcely help admiring the Bounder for his coolness in sending his terror-stricken companions down before he went himself. Vernon-Smith could certainly not be accused of being a coward, however many his other faults.

He swung himself out, from the roof, and was lowered hurriedly to the ground. The strain on the rope had been considerable, and as though in protest, it snapped when Vernon-Smith was within four feet of the ground. Those below caught him, and prevented him from falling. But it made them realise that they had only just escaped by the skin of their teeth.

"By Jove!" panted the Bounder. "I

thought it was all up just before you chaps arrived! I can tell you I was jolly glad when I spotted you! These funks here were simply speechless!"

"Rot!" said Bolsover, turning red. "It was enough to startle anybody!"

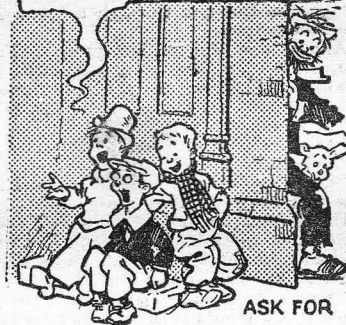
Bolsover, Trevor, and Stott had rapidly recovered their composure now that they were safe and sound and unharmed. Except for being a trifle pale and trembling, they were all right. The Bounder, too, was quite unhurt.

Harry Wharton and his two chums dropped down from the elm-tree.

"Jolly glad we got you down, Smitty!" panted Wharton gravely.

"So am I!" said the Bounder dryly. "That was a ripping idea of yours, Wharton, I must say! If it hadn't been for you, we should have been left to jump down—at the risk of breaking our necks!"

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The rescuers had thought that Vernon-Smith & Co. would shake them by the hand and thank them warmly for their timely assistance. But Vernon-Smith and his cronies did no such thing. In fact, Stott looked at Wharton very aggressively.

"It was all your rotten fault, in the first place!" he growled unsteadily. "If you hadn't knocked that beastly lamp over we shouldn't have been placed in such a rotten hole!"

Harry Wharton did not reply. Even Vernon-Smith did not agree with Stott's tone just at that moment. Even if Harry Wharton & Co. had not saved their lives, they had, at least, saved them from serious injury. Whatever the cause of the fire, there was no doubt that Harry Wharton & Co. had acted the part of real heroes.

When, a day or so later, the Bermondsey Babe was caught by the police in an effort to rob a mansion in the district, much to their surprise, he admitted having set the shooting-box on fire. The admission, however, was more or less drawn from him when Inspector Small, by an astute question, suggested that the fire had been started by the burly man from London. The Babe had immediately thought he had been seen by Harry Wharton & Co. and reported to the police, and evidently thought confession might lighten his sentence.

But even when the Bounder learned the true state of affairs, he thought none the more of Harry Wharton & Co. In fact, he was still half inclined to think that Harry Wharton & Co. had burned him and his friends out of the shooting-box.

Of course, Mr. Biggs did not lose over the burning of the box. It was insured at considerably more than its value, and he had no cause to regret ever having rented the box to the Greyfriars fellows.

THE END.

(Another grand long complete school story of Greyfriars next Friday, entitled "Forced to Resign!" By Frank Richards.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

READERS' NOTICES.

(These notices are inserted free of charge, when space permits.)

Neville Fay, Provincial Road, Lindfield, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 18-20 and upwards, in the British Isles, or anywhere else outside America.

Hampstead Belgrave F.C. requires matches for next season; ages, 14-16; home and away; distance no object. E. Rogers, 67, New End, Hampstead, N.W.3.

Players wanted for football team; average age, 15-17. G. Collins, 18, Ridley Avenue, Ealing, W.13.

J. Clegg, Railway Hotel, Lydgate, Todmorden, Lancs, wishes to hear from editors of amateur magazines, and to see copies, with a view of sending contributions.

F. Bottomley, 48, Downills Park Road, Tottenham, London, N., wishes to hear from readers willing to help the Football Favourites' Athletic and Winter Sports Club. F. B. is the editor of a bright little amateur magazine, the "Boys' World," and can supply printed copies of the first edition.

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

Arthur Sapwell, c.o. 29, Evelyn Gardens, South Kensington, London, S.W.7., asks for members for the Universal Friendly Club, which he hopes to make the largest of its kind in the world. The club has a magazine made out twice a year.

J. Savidge, 17, Dingwall Gardens, Golders Green, London, N.W. 11, wishes to hear from readers interested in his magazine.

Walter F. Standen, 21, Day Street, Old Swan, Liverpool, wishes to hear from readers anywhere.

Joseph McDonald, Severn Villa, Cogill Road, Wynberg, near Cape Town, Transvaal, South Africa, wishes to hear from readers.

F. Johnstone, 40, Newington Road, Port Elizabeth, South Africa, wishes to hear from readers who would care to join his Pigeon Club. There is a representative in England.

F. E. Hope, 2, Cage Lane, Chatham, wishes to hear from readers. All letters answered. Subjects: Stamp-collecting, journalism, etc.

William Claxton, jun., 476, Gloucester Street, Christchurch, New Zealand, wishes to hear from readers anywhere.

Miss Lilian Hickson, 2, Suffolk Street, Newton Road, Auckland, New Zealand, wishes to hear from readers, ages 15-20.

C. L. Banyard, Redcott, Horse Shoe Road, Pangbourne, Berks, wishes to correspond with readers of the "Boys'

Friend" or any of the Companion Papers.

Lester B. Porter, Box 175, Grand Falls, Newfoundland, Canada, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere, interested in stamps and amateur journalism.

Miss Mona Grey, 42, Clinton Street, Orange, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in America and Scotland, or anywhere, ages 12-14.

Walter Nannes, 125, Rundle Street, Kent Town, Adelaide, South Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere outside Australia, ages 12-15.

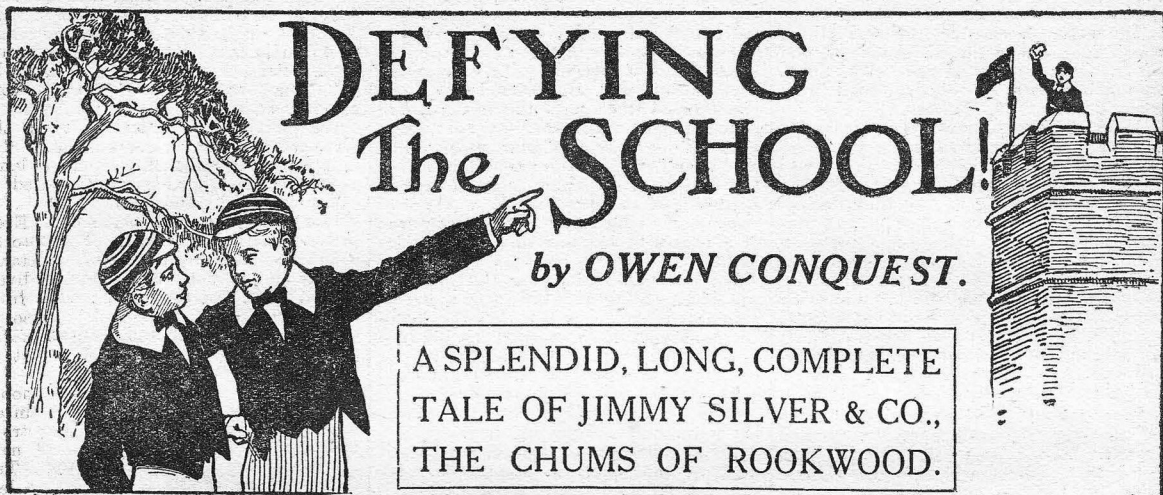
Patrick S. McInerney, 449, Dryburgh Street, North Melbourne, Victoria, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers in England interested in boxing, stamps, and music. All letters answered.

Ronald Walters, 50, Forsyth Street, Glebe Point, Sydney, N.S.W., Australia, wishes to correspond with readers overseas.

Miss Mollie Kelly, Wenvoe Street, Devonport West, Tasmania, Australia, wishes to correspond with readers anywhere.

J. Clegg, 5, Back Brook Street, Todmorden, Yorks, would like to hear from all readers interested in amateur magazines, as he is starting a periodical called "The Bluebird."

Miss Peggy Humfrey, Seaton Lodge, Southbury Road, Enfield, Middlesex, wishes to correspond with readers, ages 15-17.



THE FIRST CHAPTER.
The Order of the Sack!

SACKED!"

"And serve him right!"

"Hear, hear!"

There was a buzz of animated talk in the Common-room at Rookwood on the Classical side. That evening at Rookwood there was only one topic—and nearly every fellow was exercising his voice upon it.

Jimmy Silver of the Fourth, for once in a way, sat silent. Jimmy Silver generally had plenty to say for himself; indeed, he was accustomed to laying down the law in the Classical Fourth.

But just now Jimmy Silver was silent. His chums, Lovell and Raby and Newcome, were as eloquent as anybody. They fully agreed that the fellow who had been "sacked" deserved what he had got, and a good deal more, too. Jimmy Silver could not deny it; but he was looking very thoughtful.

It was really an unprecedented happening. For the "sacked" junior was Gunter, the Head's nephew, who had only lately come to the school. For the Head to expel his own nephew, who had come from America to Rookwood, was decidedly unlooked-for.

Hence the keen interest with which the matter was discussed, while Jimmy Silver sat and listened, and said nothing.

"The Head couldn't do anythin' else, by gad," said Smythe of the Shell. "The fellow was really the limit, don't you know!"

"Smoking!" said Flynn. "And drinking, bejabbers!"

"A regular ruffian!" said Lovell. "And he had the cheek to stick himself in our study! That was the worst of it all!"

"That must be why he got the sack!" remarked Hooker. And there was a laugh.

"Well, we're well rid of him!" remarked Raby. "Can't help feeling rather sorry for the beast. He must have had an awfully rough upbringing out there in Arizona—"

"Texas," said Newcome.

"What's the difference?" said Raby. Raby was not well up in Transatlantic geography. "Some place out there in the wilds, anyway. But he couldn't expect to bring his Texas habits to Rookwood."

Bulkeley of the Sixth looked into the Common-room. In their eager discussion of the expulsion of the Head's nephew, the juniors had forgotten bedtime.

"Bed!" said the captain of Rookwood. "Clear off!"

Lovell shook Jimmy Silver by the shoulder.

"Wake up, fathead!" he said. "It's bedtime. What are you mooning about?"

Jimmy Silver came out of his reverie with a start.

"Thinking about that chap," he said. "Everybody seems to be down on him."

"So are you," said Lovell.

Jimmy Silver nodded assent.

"Of course. Can't help being down on him, as he's a rotten blackguard, and a sweep, and a rank outsider!" he said. "But—"

"There isn't any but," said Lovell. "We're jolly lucky to be rid of him, especially as he was stuck in our study."

"True, O King. But, all the same, I'm a bit sorry for the brute," said Jimmy Silver. "He's shut up in the punishment-room now, and he's going to be turned out in the morning. He was an awful rotter, I know, but there's no harm in feeling sorry for a chap when the chopper comes down on him. He'll be gone before we come down in the morning. Bootles is going to take him away. Now, as he's going, I think we might bury the hatchet. I'd like to say good-bye to him."

"You can't. He's locked in."

"Could say good-bye through the key-hole," said Jimmy.

"Oh, rats!" said Lovell. "Come up to the dorm, or we shall have Bulkeley on our track. Never mind that outsider!"

Jimmy Silver nodded again, and followed his chum slowly and thoughtfully to the Fourth-Form dormitory.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.
A Surprising Discovery.

CLANG! Clang! Clang!

The rising-bell rang out in the clear, crisp morning. The Classical Fourth turned out at the first clang. Even Townsend and Topham, the slackers of the Form, turned out at once. All the fellows were keen to know about the Head's nephew. There had been a rumour that he was to be taken away from Rookwood before any of the boys were down.

"By gad, I'd like to see him goin'," Townsend remarked, "and I'd like to know that he's gone!"

"Well, he's going right enough," said Jimmy Silver. "The Head can't let him off after what he's done."

"If the Head lets him stay, we'll jolly

well kick him out ourselves!" said Raby. "We're not standing him in our study, anyway!"

"No jolly fear!"

The Classical Fourth crowded downstairs, the Fistical Four being the first down. Jimmy Silver & Co. made their way first to the punishment-room. The door was unlocked, the room was empty.

"He's gone!" said Jimmy.

"Good riddance to bad rubbish!" growled Lovell.

Jimmy Silver glanced round the room curiously. The bed was still made, and had plainly not been slept in. The window was wide open.

"My only chapeau!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver. "Look at that!"

He jumped to the window.

A bar of iron crossed the space of the window, but the bar was out of its place. It had been worked out of the rusty old socket on one side and twisted up. It must have taken time and patience to do that, and there could be only one explanation.

Gunter had left that room by the window!

Jimmy Silver put out his head and looked down. Below was the ivy-covered wall, fifty feet or more down to the quadrangle. Here and there the ivy was torn. Below Jimmy could see that loose leaves were scattered.

He drew a deep breath. It was almost incredible that a fellow could have been reckless enough to climb out of that window and trust himself to the ivy at the dizzy height. But there was little doubt that the junior from Texas had done it.

"He was at the window last night when we came here," said Jimmy. "You remember we heard him shut it, Lovell."

"My hat, it needed a nerve, if he's climbed out!" said Newcome. "What did he do it for? Has the silly ass run away instead of waiting to be turned out?"

"Looks like it."

The Fistical Four left the punishment-room and went down. They caught a glimpse of Bulkeley and Neville of the Sixth speaking in low tones and looking very serious. Mr. Bootles came along the passage, with a portentous expression on his face, and vanished into the Head's study.

"By gad, what's goin' on?" asked Smythe of the Shell. "Some of the fellows are sayin' that the Yankee kid's bolted."

"He's taken his things, too," called out

NEXT FRIDAY!

"FORCED TO RESIGN!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

Jones minor. "I've looked in his study. A lot of his things are gone!"

There was a rush to the end study, which belonged to the Fistical Four, and which Gunter had shared with them. The study was quickly crowded with curious and excited juniors.

Jones minor's news was correct—Gunter's property had certainly been removed. His box in the dormitory was corded up, and was still intact. But he had had a large bag in the study, locked ready to be taken away. The bag was now wide open, and half its contents were gone. Jimmy Silver remembered that there had been a lasso among Gunter's belongings, which he had brought with him from Texas. It was not there now. A spirit-stove and other articles which Jimmy had seen packed into the bag the previous evening were missing. A coat and a rug were gone, too.

"He got out of the punishment-room by the window right enough," remarked Lovell. "Then he must have got into the House and come here for his things. Bet you he was gone before Bootles came down!"

"He can't be sacked now," said Oswald. "But he's gone, anyway!"

The excited juniors crowded downstairs again. Bulkeley was in the hall, and Jimmy Silver ventured to ask the great man of the Sixth a question:

"Has Gunter gone, Bulkeley?"

"Nobody knows what's become of him!" said Bulkeley shortly. "He wasn't in the punishment-room when Mr. Bootles came down. The wonder is he didn't break his neck getting out of the window!"

The Fistical Four sauntered out into the quad. There they found a crowd of juniors from the Modern side, all curious to know what had happened. Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern side were almost as much interested in Gunter as the Classics among whom he had dwelt during his short and surprising career at Rookwood.

"So he's gone!" said Tommy Dodd. "Good riddance, I should say—the blessed young burglar!"

"Burglar!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I suppose it was Gunter. The tuckshop's been burgled!"

"Great Scott!"

There was a rush for the tuckshop. Sergeant Kettle kept that little establishment on the ground floor of the ancient dismantled clock-tower of Rookwood. The new clock-tower—a massive brick erection—was on the Modern side of the school.

The little diamond-paned window was broken. Sergeant Kettle was in the shop, looking very flustered and angry.

"Been burgled, sergeant?" asked Jimmy Silver.

The sergeant snorted.

"Which I'd like to get 'old of the rascal!" he said. "Arf my stock taken away—good 'arf of it, by gum! A whole 'am and no end of tins. I ain't counted 'em yet—but a good 'arf."

"Was it Gunter?" yelled Smythe of the Shell.

"Which I s'pose it was, as he's run away," said the sergeant. "But 'ow he could run away with that 'am and all them tins beats me! Not to mention cakes and tarts and ginger-beer, by gum!"

"Well, this beats the band!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, as they left the school shop. "If he's run away, what did he want the sergeant's stuff for? How the dickens could he carry it off?"

"Must have been done for a lark," said Raby.

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

"Hallo!" ejaculated Jimmy. "What's that?"

He stopped suddenly, and stared up at the clock-tower, the modern clock-tower on the Modern side. From the iron railing that surrounded the little platform at the top of the tower a flag fluttered. Two or three cricket-stumps fastened together formed a pole, which was bound to the railings, and from the top of the improvised flagstaff a flag fluttered in the breeze. It was not a large flag, being evidently manufactured of a couple of handkerchiefs pinned together.

But the colour of it was startling. It was black—black as ink. In fact, it was undoubtedly in black ink that the handkerchiefs had been steeped to produce that colour.

"The black flag!" stammered Lovell.

"Gunter!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

A figure appeared on the top of the tower beside the fluttering flag.

It was the figure of Gunter, the Head's nephew, the rascal of Rookwood. He was not gone!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Holding the Fort.

"GUNTER!"

The amazed exclamations of the Fistical Four drew glances from all sides, and a host of eyes were turned up to the clock-tower.

"Gunter!"

"The Head's giddy nephew!"

"He's not gone!"

There was a roar of excitement in the quadrangle. Fellows rushed from all sides towards the clock-tower.

Gunter, cool and reckless as ever, grinned down at them.

"Gunter," shouted Jimmy Silver, "what are you doing up there?"

"I guess I've been having brekker!"

"Brekker!" yelled the juniors.

"Sure!"

"Brekker on the clock-tower!" gasped Tommy Dodd. "But—but what are you doing there? What's the little game?"

"Holding the fort."

"Wha-a-at?"

"I guess you'll find the door locked down there—and screwed!" chuckled Gunter. "I reckon I was kinder busy last night while you galoots were snoozing. And I reckon they won't get me out of hyer in a hurry—just a few!"

"Oh, my hat!"

"You can wade in, and try if you like," said Gunter. "I've got my lasso hyer, and if you get in reach of it, I pity you. I've got tins of sardines, and tins of pineapple, and tins of salmon, and tins of goodness knows what, and I can spare a few for your nappers if necessary!"

"By gad!"

"You can go and tell Bootles I'm holding the fort!" grinned Gunter. "I've hoisted the 'Jolly Roger'!"

"The—the what?"

"The black flag, you galoots! I guess I'm going to have a high old time!"

"Oh crumbs!"

"He's potty!" gasped Townsend. "He must be potty. The Head will simply skin him for this before he's sacked!"

"The Head's got to get hold of me first!" grinned Gunter. "I guess I'm sticking it. Will you take him a message from me?"

"What's the message?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Tell him he's an old mugwump, and that he can go and eat coke, with kind regards from his loving nephew!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yes, I'm likely to take him that message, I don't think!" said Jimmy Silver. "You had better chuck this, Gunter! It will only make things worse for you!"

"I guess not!"

"Look here, you're not on our side!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd indignantly. "We don't allow Classical rotters on our side. If you don't clear off that tower, Gunter, we'll come and fetch you!"

"Come on, then!" chuckled Gunter. Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle rushed to the door of the tower. But it was fast. The massive oaken door had been screwed, as well as locked and bolted. The three Tommies kicked at it, but they could do nothing else.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gunter. "Are you coming in, you galoots?"

"Here comes Knowles!"

Knowles of the Sixth, the head prefect of the Modern side, strode upon the scene. He stared up angrily at Gunter and the black flag.

"What are you doing up there, Gunter?" he shouted.

"Looking down at a silly idiot!" replied Gunter cheerfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stop your silly cackling, you young rascals!" exclaimed Knowles. "Gunter, come down at once!"

"Rats!"

"You young scoundrel! Oh, my-hat! Yarooop!"

Gunter had reached behind him, and a tin of sardines dropped from his hand fairly upon Knowles' head. It was fortunate for the Modern prefect that he was wearing a hat, for the tin hit him fair and square. In spite of the hat, it was a hard knock.

"Yaroooh! Oh—ah!" stuttered Knowles, backing away with remarkable suddenness. "You—you dangerous young scoundrel!"

"Here's another!" yelled Gunter.

Whiz!

Knowles jumped out of the way, and the whizzing tin passed him, and caught Jimmy Silver on the side of the head. Jimmy gave a roar.

"Get back!" said Lovell hastily. "The beast's dangerous! He might brain a chap with one of those tins!"

The juniors crowded back, angry now. Sardine-tins hurled from a height were decidedly dangerous, and that specimen of Gunter's utter and ruffianly recklessness did not please them.

"Oh, my napper!" murmured Jimmy.

He rubbed his head tenderly. A big bump was already forming there.

"The ruffianly beast!" said Raby. "He ought to be scragged! Hallo! Knowles has had enough!"

Knowles of the Sixth was striding away towards the School House. He went to carry the news that Gunter was not gone. The crowd in the quadrangle thickened. All faces were upturned, all eyes were fixed upon the figure on the top of the clock-tower.

The excitement that reigned was breathless. Gunter evidently enjoyed the sensation he was causing, and equally evidently he was completely reckless as to consequences.

Time had been of a barring-out at Rookwood—when Jimmy Silver & Co. had barred themselves in the tuckshop and held the fort against Mr. Manders. But that had happened during the absence of the Head, and because the Classical heroes were tyrannised over by a Modern master. That, as Lovell remarked now, had been a different matter altogether—very different from a young blackguard, who had been expelled for rascally conduct, fortifying himself in

(Continued on page 13.)

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.

AUCTIONEER'S ANNOUNCEMENT!

NOTICE!

A SALE OF STUDY FURNITURE AND EFFECTS will take place in the Remove Auction Rooms (The Rag) On Wednesday Evening next at 8 sharp (by instructions of P. Todd, Esq., the present occupier of Study No. 7, who is desirous of selling up and going into somebody else's study, being fed up with the society of W. G. Bunter, Esq.).

The Various Lots will include
A HANDSOME REVOLVING BOOK-CASE with glass panels (only three broken),
A COMPLETE SET OF THE WORKS OF MR. W. SHAKESPEARE (bound in Morocco and published in Great Britain),

A SOLID IRON POKER (very effective for ejecting unwelcome guests),

A MAGNIFICENT DEAL TABLE (supported by one and a half splendid legs),

FOUR WINDSOR CHAIRS (which came direct from Windsor Castle),

A WONDERFUL PERSIAN RUG (slightly scorched through contact with fire),

A SWISS ALARM CLOCK (of best German manufacture),

Cups, Saucers, Plates, Knives, Mouth-organs, Tin-whistles, Footballs, and other articles of crockeryware, etc., etc., etc.

EACH LOT KNOCKED DOWN TO THE HIGHEST BIDDER.

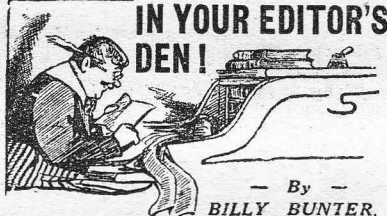
NO BUNKUM! NO BOUNCE!

NO BLUFF!

Catalogues may be obtained of the Auctioneer, Mr. F. T. Fish, at the Remove Auction Rooms.

ROLL UP IN YOUR THOUSANDS!

Supplement I.]



IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By **BILLY BUNTER.**

My Dear Readers,—This is our Special Study Number. It has nothing to do with swotting. By "study" is meant the apartment which every fellow in a Form higher than the Third possesses.

(What do you think of this? I've written the first paragraph of my editorial without a single spelling mistake!)

It was one of my readers who put the idea of this issue into my head. He wrote to me and said, "We never hear anything about Study No. 7 now, Billy, and it is an eternal puzzle to us how you manage to produce your 'Weekly' without getting in the way of your study-mates, Peter and Alonzo Todd, and Tom Dutton. Do they ever rise up in their wrath and bump you? Do they scatter your manuscripts over the floor, pour ink down the back of your neck, and turn your wastepaper-basket upside down and jump on it? Do tell us all about your study experiences, Billy, with some of those delightful personal touches of yours!"

After proozing this letter (or is it "perusing"? I thought what a ripping idea it would be to have a special number dealing eggslusively with studies and their occupants. This wonderful feast of reading matter is now before you, and I hope you will gobble it up with relish.

In reply to my korrespondent, I never get in the way of my study-mates. A slim fellow like me could never get in anybody's way! As for their rising up in wrath and bumping me, they'd know what to eggspert if they tried it on! I am a fighting-man of no mean merit. My study-mates know this, and they respect me accordingly. It doesn't pay to get W. G. B.'s back up! If any trouble arose in my editorial sanctum (Study No. 7) I should kick the two Todds and Dutton out into the passidge without hezzitation.

The weeks are racing along, and Christmas will soon be here—the season of unlimited tuck and heaps of good cheer!

I mean to publish a Christmas Number of my "Weekly" which will break all records in boys' jernalism. Some of you may laugh, and say "Bunter's shouting from the house-tops again!" But weight and sea!

Hoping you are in the pink, dear readers, and that you are not looking white or feeling blue,

Ever your pal,

Your Editor.

BILLY BUNTER'S SANCTUM!

By **MARK LINLEY.**

See the porpoise at his desk,
 Writing drama and burlesque;
 Slogging all the merry day,
 Scribbling golden hours away;
 Grinding out his verse and prose,
 While the wind of winter blows;
 Making all the study panes
 Rattle like a ghost in chains.
 In the grate a fire is blazing,
 On the sofa Dutton's lazing,
 Deaf to all the din around him,
 Cushions soft and snug surround him.
 Then up rises Peter Todd,
 Gives the fire a savage prod,
 Turns to Bunter with a scowl.
 "See the mess you're making, Owl!
 Everywhere a fellow goes
 Manuscripts are 'neath his toes!
 Every time he sits him down,
 Up he scrambles, with a frown,
 For he finds upon his chair
 Pins and clips reposing there?
 When he tries to find his book
 He finds it's on the fire to cook!
 When he wants his football shoes
 He finds them mixed with 'Greyfriars
 News'!

And when he wants his cycling map,
 It's on the door—a booby-trap
 To scare away unwelcome guests
 And other precious kinds of pests!"
 Thus Toddy raves from morn till night;
 The porpoise he would like to bite,
 And bump, and biff, and cuff, and kick,
 For Bunter's methods make him sick.
 The study, once so spick-and-span,
 Is now no place for any man
 Or youth to have his habitation.
 It is a den of desolation,
 A place of chaos and confusion,
 Where none may dwell in sweet seclusion.
 And may it never be my lot
 To write my odes in such a spot!

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.



TALBOT and Gore were beasts. A long period of alleged ill-treatment at their hands brought Skimpole to this conclusion.

"Talbot can be a very decent fellow when he likes," remarked Skimmy, "but if I should happen to state my views on Determinism, or any other vital subject, he makes a most unreasonable fuss. And so does Gore."

The climax came a few days ago.

Skimpole, in the middle of prep, delivered a voluntary lecture on "The Necessity of Socialism." At least, he started to deliver it. But he didn't get very far.

Talbot and Gore jumped to their feet.

"Skimpole," said Talbot, in measured tones, "I'm tired of telling you to turn the tap off, and stop spouting all that rot! I can see that drastic action will have to be taken."

"Yes, rather!" said Gore. "Put him across the table, and give him a round dozen with a cricket-stump!"

"I don't know about a dozen," said Talbot. "But two or three whacks ought to cure him."

Skimpole backed away in alarm.

"My dear fellows—" he began.

The "dear fellows" promptly seized their learned study-mate, and slung him across the table as if he were a sack of coals.

Then Talbot proceeded with the execution. Of course, the victim made no sound. Ever since Sir Roger de Skimpole drank a basin of soup before going into action at the Battle of Flodden Field the Skimpoles have always been able to take their gruel without a murmur!

When the ordeal was over, Skimmy slipped down from the table, and addressed his study-mates with an unusual display of spirit.

"You are tyrants!" he exclaimed. "I refuse to tolerate your society a moment longer! I shall leave this study, and find fresh quarters."

"Hooray!" said Gore.

"Best news we've had for a long time!" said Talbot.

"I shall get a study of my own!" declared Skimpole.

"Impossible, you ass!" said Gore. "There are no empty studies in the Shell passage. And nobody's going to turn out, and hand their study over to you."

"I shall construct my own study," was Skimpole's startling declaration. "I shall build it with my own hands. There is a plot of ground near the wood-shed which will serve as a site. I am a capable workman, and shall experience no difficulty."

Talbot and Gore were too astonished to reply. They simply stood and gaped, while Skimpole walked out of the study in high dudgeon.

The genius of the Shell went in search of Mr. Railton. He found him in Kildare's study, chatting to the captain of St. Jim's.

"Well, Skimpole?" said the Housemaster kindly. "You wish to speak to me?"

"Yes, sir. The fact is I require your permission to erect a small hut close to the wood-shed. Quite a small hut, sir—of sufficient size to accommodate just one person."

Mr. Railton stared. So did Kildare.

"Really, Skimpole," said the Housemaster at length, "this is a most singular request. Why do you wish to construct a building of that description?"

"I shall use it as a study, sir. I badly need a place of my own, where I can study the doctrines of Determinism without fear of interruption."

Mr. Railton laughed.

"There is a piece of waste ground in the vicinity of the wood-shed, and there is nothing to prevent your erecting a small hut thereon. Skimpole, provided you are willing to pay for the cost of the materials, and so on. But—"

"Thank you, sir—thank you very much!" said Skimpole.

And he hurried away before the Housemaster had time to change his mind.

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

Skimpole was in deadly earnest. There could be no question about that.

Next day he went over to the timber merchants in Wayland, and ordered a number of wooden planks.

He also obtained from an unknown source a large sheet of corrugated tin. Presumably this was to be the roof.

Then Skimpole, with the aid of a number of implements which he found in the woodshed, commenced his self-imposed task.

It was a long job and an arduous one.

For three days Skimpole toiled by the sweat of his brow, and he had to put up with no end of chipping and ragging from his schoolfellows. But he stuck to his task, and on the morning of the fourth day he announced that his "study" was completed, and ready for occupation.

"Fearful-looking shanty," observed Monty Lowther. "Skimmy hasn't even made a hole for a window. He evidently means to suffocate himself."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"How long do you suppose that clumsy hut will weather the winter storms, Skinny?" asked Manners.

"It will stand erect for years!" said Skimpole confidently.

Tom Merry grinned.

"I give it twelve hours," he said. "There's some bad weather coming along, and I expect we shall have a big storm to-night. Your



As Skimpole dashed across the Close, the wooden shanty gave way and came crashing to the ground.

hut, Skimmy, is exposed to every wind that ever blows. The first really big gale will bring it crashing down. Let's hope you're not inside!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Skimpole paid no heed to the laughter and to the warnings he received. He was quite convinced, in his own mind, that his structure would successfully weather the fiercest storm that ever raged.

That evening, however, when he went into his "study" to swot by the light of a bicycle-lamp, his confidence began to diminish.

A fierce gale had sprung up, and the roof of the hut was wobbling ominously.

Skimpole, seated on the crude bench which served the double purpose of table and chair, tried to settle down to work. But in vain.

The gale increased in fury, and presently an amazing thing happened.

The roof of corrugated tin was carried clean away!

Skimmy gazed upwards into space, and huge raindrops splashed down upon him.

He did not wait for further developments, which was decidedly fortunate. For, five minutes later, the whole structure gave way, and came crashing to the ground.

St. Jim's examined the wreckage in the morning light, and laughed loudly and long.

Skimpole's self-made study was no more. And he didn't attempt to reconstruct it. He went back—much against his will—to the society of Talbot and Gore!

SHOULD FAGS HAVE STUDIES?

Some Rookwood Personalities State Their Opinions.

GEORGE BULKELEY (captain of Rookwood).

My answer is "No"—most decidedly "No!" I believe in fags having a fair amount of freedom and privilege, but it would be a fatal move to give them studies—rooms, I mean. They can have as much of the other sort of studies as the beaks see fit! Of course, there are ample reasons why fags should not have studies of their own, but I'm too busy to enter into them here.

JIMMY SILVER.

Fags have studies? Great pip! What next? They'll be soon suggesting that the page-boy and the school porter and the gardener should have studies. Or there will be a movement on foot to provide the kitchen cat with a study of its own! Of course, fags shouldn't have studies! They wouldn't know what to do with them if they had them. They'd never beat their carpets, or dust their furniture, or do any of the hundred and one essential jobs to be done in studies. Result—the studies would become unfit for human habitation. No! Let the members of the fag fraternity continue to pig it in their own Common-room.

TOMMY DODD.

The doddering imbecile who ever raised the suggestion that fags should have studies deserves to be put in irons! Fags have studies, forsooth! Before such an extreme step is taken, let the powers that be improve the studies that already exist!

ALGY SILVER.

I feel very heated on this subject. I consider that a fag's comfort should reeve just as much consideration as the comfort of a fellow in a higher Form. Why should we be herded together in one big room, like so much driven cattle? Why can't we have a bit of privacy when we want it? The sooner the skool orthorities get bizzy, and konstrukt a new wing at Rookwood, with about fifty studdies for fags, the better it will be for all konserned!

LOVELL MINOR.

It isn't often that I see eye to eye with Algy Silver, but I am with him hart and sole in his kampaign in favor of fags having studdies. Of course, we should have studdies! And, what's more, the fellows in higher Forms should be made to fag for us. If this duzzent come about soon, we'll get up a petition to the guvverners!

MARK CARTHEW.

I don't know about fags having studies, but I certainly think that studies should have fags! I've been fagless for weeks! For some mysterious reason, I don't appear to be very popular.



By Tom Redwing.

"I'M fed up to the hilt!" Peter Todd spoke with emphasis. He had just come into Study No. 7—the apartment that he shared with Billy Bunter and Alonzo and Tom Dutton.

Once upon a time No. 7 had held the reputation of being the neatest and cleanest study in the Remove passage. That was before Billy Bunter launched his famous—or should I say notorious?—"Weekly."

But times had changed. No longer was Study No. 7 an orderly and tidy apartment. Billy Bunter had converted it into an editorial sanctum, and at least a score of muddy-footed contributors called upon him daily.

Peter Todd stood in the doorway, and gazed at the scene of devastation.

The carpet—Peter had paid for that carpet out of his own pocket—was plastered with mud. Manuscripts of all sorts were strewn upon it. A rivulet of ink trickled sluggishly towards the fireplace. All sorts of editorial appliances, such as scissors, paste, and so on, were littered about the floor.

The sight of such chaos stung Peter Todd to anger.

"I'm fed up to the hilt!" he repeated. "Bunter, you'll have to quit!"

Billy Bunter glared at his study-mate through his big spectacles.

"What! Turn out of my own study?" he exclaimed.

"Not exactly. You can still make use of this study for doing your prep, and so forth. But you're not going to run your precious 'Weekly' here any longer. I sha'n't allow it! You've made the place a perfect pigsty!"

"Oh, really, Toddy—"

"I'll give you half an hour to pack up your manuscripts, and all the rest of it, and clear out!"

"But—but where can I go?" gasped Bunter, in dismay.

"You must make your own arrangements."

"Now, look here, Toddy, don't be a beast! Be reasonable. This is my study—partly mine, anyway—and I've a perfect right to do all my literature here."

"Literature!" said Peter scornfully. "Don't call it by a high-flown name like that! Call it drivel! You'll be much nearer the mark!"

"Look here—"

"I give you just half an hour to quit! If you're not out by the end of that time, we'll try a little forcible persuasion!"

"Oh crumbs!"

Peter Todd withdrew, leaving Billy Bunter thoughtfully stroking his double chin.

Half an hour later, when Peter returned, he found Bunter still there. Evidently the fat junior had not thought that he was in earnest.

A grim expression came over Peter Todd's face. He went out into the passage, and whistled loudly.

There was a patter of feet, and Harry Wharton, Bob Cherry, and Frank Nugent appeared on the scene.

"Give me a hand, you fellows!" said Peter Todd. "It's moving day for Bunter!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's not going to run his 'Weekly' in my study any longer. I've already given him notice to quit, and he's ignored it. So now he's going out on his neck!"

Billy Bunter raised his voice in loud expostulation, but in vain. Willing hands seized him, and he was sent whirling forth into the passage. His manuscripts, pens, ink, paste, and other office requisites were thrown out after him.

The fat junior sat up on the linoleum, and roared.

"Yow-ow-ow! I'll make you sit up for this, you beasts! You've no right to chuck me out of my study. Where do you think I'm going to run my 'Weekly'?"

"I suggest the wood-shed," said Bob Cherry. "Or you might take up your quarters in one of the bath-rooms. You'd have an opportunity of being clean then."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"All right, you cackling beasts!" yelled Bunter. "You'll be sorry you ever lifted a finger against me!"

"Rats!"

"Buzz off, Bunter!"

"Go and find a fresh kennel!"

Now, the task of finding a fresh kennel was anything but easy.

There was not a single Remove study in which Billy Bunter would have been welcome. And nobody in the Upper Fourth or the Shell would dream of giving the fat junior standing-room.

Bunter therefore had to look farther afield. He went round to the bicycle-shed, borrowed the best-looking machine—which happened to be Lord Mauleverer's—and cycled over to Courtfield.

He dismounted when he came to the estate agent's offices. Then, assuming an air of importance, he strutted inside.

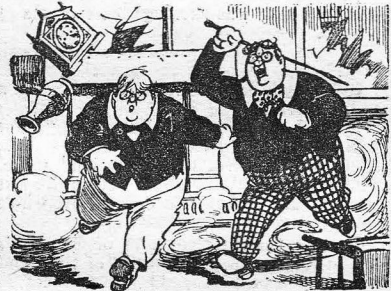
"Mr. Letts in?" he inquired of an elderly-looking gentleman.

"I am Mr. Letts."

"Oh, good! My name's Bunter, and I'm from Greyfriars, you know. I'm looking for a nicely-furnished room in Courtfield, suitable for being made into an editorial office. Have you got such a room on your books?"

Mr. Letts puckered his brows in thought.

"Yes," he said. "There is a room at the top of the 'Courtfield Gazette' office. It is a spacious room, excellently furnished. The greatest care would have to be taken—"



Fuming with wrath, Billy Bunter chased his minor round the room with the poker, laying about him lustily as he went.

"Oh, I'm a good tenant," said Bunter. "You can set your fears at rest. I sha'n't go round with a coke-hammer and smash up all the giddy furniture. Can I have possession at once?"

"Yes, certainly!" said Mr. Letts. "The rent is ten shillings a week—er—payable in advance."

"That's all right," said Bunter confidentially. "I'll get my pater to send you a cheque. My pater's simply stuffed with money, you know. He's a sort of modern Croesus!"

What Bunter really intended to say was "Cresus," but his knowledge was shaky in all departments.

Mr. Letts appeared satisfied. He did not know Bunter! He handed the fat junior a key, and told him he could take immediate possession of the room which was situated above the 'Courtfield Gazette' office.

Billy Bunter lost no time in getting fixed up in his new quarters. He and Sammy tramped over to Courtfield later in the day, carrying all their office impedimenta between them. And on the outside of the door of Study No. 7 appeared the following:

"NOTICE!
CHANGE OF I's.

Owing to the growth of his bizzness, and the increasing popularity of his weekly jernal, W. G. Bunter has been compelled to move into more kommodious premisses.

All future communications should be addressed to W. G. B., Top Floor Back, 99, High Street, Courtfield."

From that time onwards, a constant stream of humanity flowed into Billy Bunter's new sanctum.

The majority of the fellows were consumed with curiosity as to what it was like. They went to investigate, bringing with them into the office some choice samples of Courtfield mud, and shedding it on the handsome Mirzapore carpet. Some of them, who brought contributions, had occasion to quarrel with the editor, and in the course of the argument, showers of ink—red and black—would descend upon the magnificently-upholstered sofa.

The room, originally, had been a dream and a delight. It had been an office fit for a Prime Minister.

But it did not remain so long.

There came a day when Sammy Bunter happened to annoy his big brother intensely.

Fuming with wrath, Billy chased his minor round the room with the poker, laying about him lustily as he went.

The result, though not disastrous to Sammy, was highly injurious to the furniture.

The glass panels of the bookcase were shivered to atoms, and the mantelpiece was swept clear of ornaments.

Chairs were overturned; the coal-scuttle emptied its contents upon the Persian rug; and all was chaos and confusion.

The disorder was at its height when a portly-looking person, carrying a riding-whip, came into the room. This was Mr. Josiah Stubbs, a local profiteer, and the owner of the room.

Mr. Stubbs stopped short, scarcely able to believe his eyes.

Although he did not make use of the room himself—preferring to let it to others—he was very fond of it and very proud of it. He knew that the furniture was of the best. He always said that he had no use for cheap, shoddy stuff.

Mr. Letts had informed Mr. Stubbs that the room had been rented to a Greyfriars fellow, and Mr. Stubbs thought he had better come along, to satisfy himself that everything was in order.

On the contrary, he found everything in disorder—the most appalling disorder. The state of the room almost beggared description.

Billy Bunter ceased chasing his minor, and blinked apprehensively at Mr. Stubbs.

"Gug-gug-good-afternoon, sir!" he stutted. "C-c-come right in!"

The owner of the room fairly exploded.

"You young Goth! You vandal! How dare you come here and wreck my room in this manner? Just look at the damage you've done! You've ruined the rug, you've ruined the carpet, you've ruined everything! I shall see your headmaster about this! Meanwhile—"

Mr. Stubbs raised his riding-whip aggressively, and the brothers Bunter scuttled with one accord towards the door.

But there was no escape for them.

The riding-whip rose and fell, lashing the shoulders of Billy and Sammy until they howled for mercy in a doleful duet.

Mr. Stubbs did not desist until he was breathless. Then, and not till then, were the amateur journalists allowed to depart.

There was an awful row about it, of course.

The damage that had been done was colossal, and it was Mr. William Samuel Bunter, the parent of the offenders, who had to foot the bill.

Billy Bunter's tenancy of the room in Courtfield ended almost as soon as it began. He went back to Study No. 7 in the Remove passage; and Peter Todd, realising that Bunter had received heavy punishment, took compassion on him and allowed him to remain.

Whether Billy Bunter will be allowed to stay there permanently remains to be seen!

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

THE VALUE OF A STUDY!

By Tubby Muffin.

"How nice to come in wet and muddy
To the warm comfort of a study!"

Thus sings the poet, and I agree with him entirely.

What a wonderful place a study is, to be sure! It would be almost impossible to get along without one.

Supposing for a moment that Fourth-Formers were not allowed studies. It would be awful!

There would be no study feeds. You would see fellows walking in the quad with a loaf of bread in one hand and a tin of sardines in the other, making what they call an Alf Fresco meal. I don't know who Alf Fresco is, and I don't care. But I know that if we didn't have studies we should find ourselves in Queer Street.

How nice it is to come in after a strenuous game of footer, feeling fagged out—I never play footer myself, but I know the feeling!—and to step into a cheery study, with the fire roaring up the chimney and the table laid for tea. How ripping it is to sink on to the couch and close our eyes and forget all life's little troubles!

The fellow who invented studies deserves a knighthood. His name should go down to posterity—or is it posterity? I'm rather shaky on history.

On a cold winter night, when the snow falls in great lumps—when the sleet sleet and the hail hails and the storm storms—how delightful it is to sit at ease in one's study and hear the tempest howl without!

As the poet goes on to sing:

"How nice to lie and have a nap,
Deaf to the booming thunderclap;
And heeding not the heavy rain
Which rattles on the window-pane!"

Many a time have I sat baking chest-nuts at the study fire, and listened to the wailing of the tempest, the sobbing of the wind, and the weeping of the rain. And on these occasions I have said to myself: "Thank goodness I've got a study!"

Of course, other studies are interesting, as well as one's own. They are well worth exploring—especially when the tenants are absent!

I have had many a fine feed in other fellows' studies, without their knowledge. And if there were no studies there would be no feeds—so you can see where the value of a study comes in.

There is just one drawback to a study. You have to share it with another fellow—possibly two—sometimes three. And then you have to divide all the grub by two, or three, or four, as the case may be. Consequently, you don't get enough to feed a small-sized sparrow!

Still, as I said before, you can always go elsewhere for your grub, so long as fellows are stupid enough to leave their study cupboards unlocked!

One of these days I may be lucky enough to possess a study of my own, and then I shall be in my element. I shall furnish it according to my own taste—and I've a jolly good "taste," as the keeper of the tuckshop will tell you!

Here's to the happy day when Reginald Muffin, the most prominent and popular fellow at Rookwood, will have a study all to himself!

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

THE IDEAL STUDY!

By Fatty Wynn.

The majority of the studies at St. Jim's fall far short of being ideal ones.

You will very often come across a cosy and a cheery study; but cosiness and cheeriness isn't enough.

How should a study's value be estimated? By the quality of its furniture? No. By the number of pictures on its walls? No again. By the fellows who occupy it? Certainly not.

Then, how on earth, you will ask, are we to distinguish a good study from a common or garden one?

I will tell you. YOU SHOULD JUDGE A STUDY BY ITS COOKING FACILITIES. (Capital letters, please, printer! This is a vital and important point, which must not be missed.)

The other day I received an invitation from Arthur Augustus D'Arcy (you may possibly have heard of the gent) to a feed in his study. Gussy's study is No. 6 in the Fourth Form passage, School House. The colour scheme of the apartment is excellent. The furniture is all that can be desired.

But the most important thing of all was lacking. Apart from the fire in the grate, there were no facilities for cooking, roasting, or boiling anything.

It was really pathetic to see Arthur Augustus trying to cook a rabbit. It took him hours and hours, and then the beastly thing was as tough as the sole of a shoe.

"I weally can't undahstand it, deah boy!" said Gussy, in great distress. "I've nevah had so much twouble with a wabbit befoah!"

"My dear old bean," I replied, "what you want is a jolly good oven. You could also do with a 'Perfection' stove. The outlay would be about fifty quid, but that's a mere bagatelle to a fellow who's rolling in money, like yourself."

If only the study-owners of St. Jim's would realise this, what a lot of time and trouble would be saved! What a lot of really fine feeds we should enjoy! Tip-top meals could be prepared at half an hour's notice, and everything in the garden—or, rather, in the oven—would be lovely.

When are we going to wake up? When are we going to realise that the excellence of a study doesn't depend on a handsome bookcase, or a good-looking carpet?

It doesn't matter if a study is as bare as the elm-trees in the quad, so long as it has proper cooking facilities installed.

Of course, it isn't everybody who can afford an oven-range or a 'Perfection' stove. But for those who can afford it there is no excuse.

I look forward to the time when every study at St. Jim's will be properly equipped—when even the most intricate dishes can be prepared without fuss or trouble.

Until that time comes, study feeds will never be really successful.

"But what's the use of getting an oven or a stove," you will say, "if I can't cook?"

We can soon overcome that little difficulty.

The writer of this article is prepared to give lessons in cookery to all and sundry. His terms are not a guinea a lesson. Just a modest tanner.

Trot round to the New House without delay, and obtain my valuable tuition.

Rules For the Guidance of Study Owners!

Compiled by . . .
Val Mornington.

A study is not a place where you study. Don't run away with this idea. If a fellow wants to work, he should apply to the workhouse! The study is merely a romping-ground for recreation.

* * *

No card games should be played in your study. But there is no objection to a "poker" amongst your furniture, and, if you so desire, you may have a "nap"—not in your "crib," but on the sofa!

* * *

Always exercise caution in selecting your study-mates. Don't have a clumsy fellow, who puts his boot through the glass panel of your bookcase, or who carries live coals from your study to somebody else's, and burns your carpet to a cinder in so doing. Don't have a swot, or you won't be able to move for books! Don't have a glutton like Tubby Muffin, or your study cupboard will empty itself automatically. Don't have a fellow with a craze for writing poetry, or you'll find your wonderful wall-paper (two guineas a square foot) smothered with odes to the expiring cockroaches or elegies on the death of poor Cock Robin! Choose your study-mates carefully, and with great discretion.

* * *

Never, under any circumstances have a fag. Fags are a beastly nuisance. Their one mission in life is to damage and destroy. They won't leave a single cup or saucer intact. If you don't do all the donkey-work yourself, you'll be an ass.

* * *

Always keep a gramophone in your study. It will effectively scare away unwelcome guests. If you can get a cheap German piano, and thump on it all day long, so much the better!

* * *

See that your study is a small one—about the size of the average packing-case. Then you won't be under the necessity of inviting people to study feeds. There won't be room!

* * *

Don't forget to plug the keyhole of your study door with cotton-wool, or some other substance. This precaution will safeguard you from the prying eyes of Tubby Muffin.

* * *

Never leave money lying about in your study. Although coins do not possess legs, or other means of locomotion, they have often been known to "walk"!

* * *

Whatever you do, don't become the tenant of a study that's No. 13, or you'll be dashed unlucky!

[Supplement IV.]

DEFYING THE SCHOOL!

(Continued from page 8.)

the clock-tower, and defying the Head himself.

Mr. Bootles came out of the School House with Knowles, looking like a man in a dream. The surprising happenings of that morning had completely thrown Mr. Bootles off his balance.

The Fourth Form master swept towards the clock-tower, and stopped, and blinked up at Gunter. The crowd watched him breathlessly.

"Gunter!" gasped Mr. Bootles.

"Hallo, cocky!"

"I—I thought you had, in fact, departed," said Mr. Bootles. "I am glad that you have not been guilty of the disrespect of running away, Gunter. Kindly come down at once, and follow me into the House!"

"Cut it out!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Here's one for you!"

Whiz!

Jimmy Silver sprang forward and caught his Form-master by the arm, and dragged him aside just in time. A sardine-tin crashed on the ground at Mr. Bootles' feet. The master stared at it dazedly.

"What—what!" he stammered.

"Come back, sir!" shouted Jimmy.

Gunter was taking aim again with another tin. Jimmy Silver forcibly dragged the astounded and confused Form-master back, and the tin crashed down within a foot of him.

"G-g-good heavens!" gasped Mr. Bootles. "The—the reckless young ruffian! He—he—he might have caused me s-s-serious injury! Bless my soul! Thank you, Silver! I—I—I must go and report this to the Head! Bless my soul! What a very dreadful young reprobate!"

Mr. Bootles, in a state almost of collapse, hurried into the house. There was a yell of derisive laughter from Gunter.

"Who's the next? You coming next, Jimmy Silver?"

Jimmy Silver did not accept the invitation. He would have been very glad to get within hitting distance of Gunter; but at long range Gunter had the advantage, and the Rookwood juniors carefully kept out of range.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Still Defiant!

"THE Head!"

Silence and awe fell upon the Rookwood crowd as the majestic figure of the Head swept upon the scene.

Dr. Chisholm's face, always severe, seemed like iron now.

Some of the fellows knew that he had been kind enough to his strange nephew when the latter arrived at Rookwood from the far-off plains of Texas.

He had been patient with him, and had pardoned him much. It could not be said that the doctor had erred on the side of severity in expelling his sister's son, for any other fellow who had done half as much as Gunter had done would have found the "chopper" come down much earlier. Without the rankest favouritism, the Head could not overlook the conduct of his nephew. It had been a blow to him; he had concealed the fact under a cold and contained exterior.

Certainly there was no mercy or kindness in Dr. Chisholm's face now. The time for pardon was past.

NEXT FRIDAY!

"FORCED TO

Under the stern, searching look of the headmaster, even the young rascal on the summit of the clock-tower showed some sign of being abashed.

But he did not retreat from view. He stood leaning on the railing beside the fluttering black flag, and stared down.

Dr. Chisholm raised his hand.

"Gunter!"

"Yes, sir!"

It was not "Hallo!" this time.

"Come down immediately!"

Gunter grinned.

"I guess I'm sticking here!"

"It is past the time arranged for you to leave Rookwood."

"Correct."

"Mr. Bootles is prepared to take you to the station."

"Good old Bootles!"

"You will leave this school, which you have disgraced, at once. Nephew of mine as you are, I should be guilty of wrong against the boys of Rookwood if I allowed you to stay here. Your parents have been communicated with. You will be placed in charge of a trustworthy person to be taken back to your home. I do not desire to inflict further punishment upon you before you go. I command you, Gunter, to come down at once, and cease this absurd and insolent conduct!"

The Head's voice was deep and commanding.

The crowd watched Gunter. Would he obey, or would he defy the Head—the reverend and respected Head of Rookwood, at whose frown the juniors were accustomed to tremble?

There was an awful pause.

But the Head had to break it, for Gunter did not speak.

"Boy, do you hear me?"

"Yep!"

"Will you obey me?"

"Nope!"

The Head's lips came tightly together. It was a distinct defiance. The crowd looked on in silence and awe.

"Gunter, you have heard my commands. If you do not obey, I shall have you fetched down by force. In that case, I shall flog you before you leave!"

"Get on with the fetching, uncle." All Gunter's cheek had come back; he had been abashed only for a moment. "I guess I'm planted hyer!"

Dr. Chisholm flushed.

"Gunter, what is your object in this absurd conduct? You are aware, surely, that you must leave the school?"

"I guess I'm fed up with Rookwood, anyway, uncle dear. I guess the game is up, too, expelled or not, though you don't know it yet. And I reckon I'm going to have a regular jamboree before I get the boot. I'm going to paint the school red, you bet. I've got grub here—heaps—all I want—and I'm holding out. I'm goin' to give Rookwood something to remember—just a few. Get on with the washing!"

Dr. Chisholm turned away. Then Gunter's impudence reached the climax. A chunk of cake whistled through the air. It struck the Head's mortar-board, and knocked it from his august head.

Dr. Chisholm was rooted to the ground for a moment.

He gazed almost dazedly at the fallen mortar-board.

Bulkeley of the Sixth sprang forward and picked it up.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head.

His face was crimson now.

He took the cap from Bulkeley's hand and passed away to the house, his gown rustling.

He left a frozen silence behind him.

To the awed and astounded juniors it seemed that an earthquake ought to have happened next, or that lightning should have flashed from the blue morning sky to smite Gunter.

The Head's mortar-board knocked off by a chunk of cake! It was like unto the end of all things!

Their breath was taken away.

"Oh, my word!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "The young scoundrel!"

Bulkeley looked up at the tower. His look was grim. Gunter grinned down at him impudently.

Evidently the junior from Texas had no knowledge whatever of the fitness of things. The enormity of his action was quite lost upon him.

A bell rang, and the Rookwood crowd went in to breakfast. They went in in an awed mood. After what had happened, nothing could have surprised them. Gunter had cheeked the Head—had knocked off his mortar-board. It required some getting used to.

After breakfast there was a crowd round the clock-tower again. That some step would be taken to fetch Gunter down was certain; he would assuredly not be allowed to defy authority for long.

The juniors were anxious to see the attack begin. Nobody had any sympathy to waste on Gunter. His reckless daring might have earned a little admiration had he not spoiled his own case by his effrontery. But the insult to the Head put the lid on, as Lovell expressed it. The fellow was an cut-and-out cad.

"Just look at him," said Lovell. "What a giddy sight for Rookwood!"

It was indeed a sight for gods and men. Gunter was sitting on the rail at the top of the tower, quite careless of the fact that it was a dangerous position, and smoking. He was blowing out great clouds of smoke from a big black cheroot.

It was the last word in impudence.

Bulkeley and Neville, and Knowles and Frampton and Catesby, all prefects of the Sixth, came up to the tower, and the crowd looked on breathlessly. Was the band about to begin to play? they wondered.

The Sixth-Formers tried the oaken door, and found it immovable. They looked at the window; but that was out of reach, and it was fast, too. Then they retired into the School House.

Gunter dropped some ash from his cigar upon Knowles while he was busy at the foot of the tower, and Knowles brushed it off with a savage look.

The bell for classes went a little later, and the juniors reluctantly enough went into their Form-room. If the band was going to play, they were not going to see the fun.

"Rotten hard lines!" growled Raby. "We want to see it! There ought to be a whole holiday to-day!"

"Better ask the Head for one!" grinned Jimmy Silver.

But Raby did not take his advice. The Fourth Form went into their class-room.

After first lesson, the Modern portion of the Form cleared off for their instruction in "stinks," otherwise the chemistry lesson, on the Modern side. Tommy Dodd & Co. looked eagerly towards the tower as they came out into the quadrangle.

THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. By FRANK RICHARDS.

ANSWERS
EVERY MONDAY...PRICE 2:

"FORCED TO RESIGN!"

But there was nothing doing. Gunter was yawning there, and there was no attack going on. The junior who had defied the school was being left to himself for the present. Tommy Dodd & Co. gave him a yell, to which Gunter replied with a jeering laugh, and the Moderns went on to the laboratories.

Morning lessons finished, and the Rookwooders came eagerly out. Gunter was not to be seen; doubtless, he was inside the tower somewhere.

"They haven't fetched him down yet," remarked Jimmy Silver, in disgust. "By George, if the Head left it to us, we'd jolly soon have him out!"

"We jolly well would!" agreed Lovell. "The prefects don't seem to be able to do anything. I suppose they're leaving him to get tired of it!"

"He won't give in unless they make him!" said Jimmy Silver sagely. "He's got plenty of nerve, and plenty of cheek. And the Head can't leave him there much longer; there's such a thing as discipline."

After dinner the Fistical Four were free for the afternoon, as it was a half-holiday. They had arranged a "rag" on the Bagshot fellows for that afternoon, but with one accord they abandoned the idea now. They wanted to see how the Gunter affair progressed.

They put in the time at footer practice; but a whistle from Jones minor warned them when a move was made against the rebel.

They rushed off the field at once. Mr. Bootles was bearing down upon the clock-tower, seemingly unconscious of the excited mob that followed him.

"Gunter!" he called out.

Gunter's head appeared over the parapet of the tower. He grinned down at his Form-master.

"Hallo, old cock!"

Mr. Bootles breathed hard.

"Gunter, you have been given time to consider the absurdity and rascality of your conduct!"

"Cut it out!"

"Will you come down?"

"I guess not!"

"Then force will be used!" said Mr. Bootles.

Gunter disappeared for a moment. He came into sight again, with a coil of rope in his hand. It was his lasso. He swung it round his head.

"Loud out!" said Jimmy Silver. "He could rope one of us in at this distance!"

Whiz!

The lasso flew through the air, uncoiling as it flew. The juniors knew Gunter's skill with that peculiar weapon, and they crowded back.

But it was not at a junior that the lasso was aimed.

Mr. Bootles, greatly to his astonishment and alarm, felt the loose noose settle over his head and slip over his shoulders.

"Goodness gracious!" he ejaculated.

He caught at the rope, but before he could deal with it, or, indeed, realise what was happening, it tightened, and the noose was like a band of iron round his body under the arms. A sharp jerk on the rope, and the Form-master was dragged off his feet.

"Help!" shrieked Mr. Bootles.

It seemed to the unfortunate master that the quadrangle rose up and smote him. His cap went flying, his gown was tangled in his legs, his arms beat the air. Heels over head he was dragged towards the tower.

"Rescue!" yelled Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four rushed forward. Mr. Bootles had bumped against the wall THE POPULAR.—No. 150.

of the tower, and Gunter had taken a turn of the rope over the railing on the parapet. The four juniors seized hold of their Form-master, and held to him.

"We've got you, sir!" panted Lovell.

Whiz! Crash!

"Yaroooh!"

Sardine-tins from above crashed on the Classical four. Jimmy Silver, half stunned by a blow on the head, fell to the ground. Lovell roared as he caught a tin with his neck.

Other fellows were rushing forward to their aid, but they backed away from that shower of dangerous missiles. The Fistical Four let go—they could not help it.

They dodged the missiles from above, not with much success, for Gunter's aim was good, and he had an unlimited supply of ammunition. Half stunned and severely hurt, the Fistical Four dodged away from the whizzing tins.

Then Gunter dragged on the lasso. The rope whirled up over the rail of the parapet, and Mr. Bootles was dragged from the ground.

Up he went, dazed and dizzy, the rope grinding on his ribs till he was six or seven feet from the ground. Then Gunter made the rope fast, and left him hanging.

"Help!" panted Mr. Bootles feebly.

Gunter roared.

"Ha, ha, ha! Who's the next?"

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Up to Jimmy Silver!

"HELP!"

Mr. Bootles called out in faint and quavering tones.

Jimmy Silver rubbed his head and gritted his teeth. He had had three or four hard knocks.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Lovell. "Poor old Bootles! Look at him!"

"Help!"

Mr. Bootles hung at the end of the lasso like a fish on a line. The rope was too tight about his body for him to have a chance of loosening it. His heels beat against the brick wall as he hung.

He had caught at the rope above his head with both hands, and hung on to ease the strain on his ribs. Mr. Bootles was not in a fit condition for exercises of this kind—his gymnastic days were long past. The quadrangle swam about him as he swung.

Gunter was roaring with laughter. He had missiles in both hands, ready for anyone who attempted the rescue of the Form-master.

Mr. Bootles hung, like Mahomet's coffin, between heaven and earth. The look upon his face was extraordinary.

"Roped in, by thunder!" chortled Gunter. "I guess I'll keep him hanging there all the afternoon, by gum, as an example! Why don't you rescue him, Jimmy Silver, you funk?"

"I'm going to you, cad!" shouted Jimmy. "Get a ladder, someone!"

Two or three juniors rushed off, and returned with a ladder, which they jammed up against the wall of the tower, in spite of a shower of missiles.

"Come on!"

"Hold on, Jimmy! He'll brain you if—"

"We've got to chance it," said Jimmy Silver. "Back up, Classics!"

"And Moderns," grinned Tommy Dodd. "He's our Form-master, too, ain't he? Shoulder to shoulder!"

Tommy Dodd and Jimmy made a rush for the ladder, and a dozen juniors followed them. Classics and Moderns rushed on, shoulder to shoulder. The ladder was planted against the wall close to the wriggling and gasping Mr. Bootles.

Whiz, whiz! Crash, thump, thump!

Gunter hurled the tins with reckless hands and good aim. It was a deadly fire that the Fourth-Formers had to face.

But the Fistical Four and the three Tommies did not falter. They had to rescue their Form-master.

Jimmy Silver was first up the ladder, his open pocket-knife in his hand.

He slashed at the rope over Mr. Bootles' head.

The keen edge of the blade cut through it quickly.

Whiz, whiz, whiz!

Jimmy Silver was getting all the fire now. Tin after tin struck him, but he set his teeth, and kept on.

The rope suddenly parted with a twang.

Mr. Bootles shot downwards, into the arms of the juniors below, and they collared him at once, and rushed him back from the tower.

Jimmy Silver bounded off the ladder, and followed.

He was dazed with the blows he had received, and there was crimson streaming down his forehead and his cheeks. His head had been badly cut.

Mr. Bootles lay gasping on the ground. It was several minutes before he was able to sit up.

"Thank you, my boys!" he panted at last. "Silver!" He uttered an exclamation of horror as he looked at Jimmy's face. "Silver! Good heavens! My brave lad, you are hurt!"

"Only a few cuts, sir," said Jimmy, as cheerfully as he could.

"Bless my soul! Boys, keep back from the tower—keep out of the reach of that young desperado! Silver, come into the house at once!"

Jimmy Silver was glad to have his hurts attended to. There were several bad cuts, and when Jimmy appeared in public again he had a bandage round his forehead. Several other fellows had been hard hit, though not so severely as Jimmy. Rookwood was buzzing with excitement; but the fellows were giving the clock-tower a wide berth. The attack had stopped—for good apparently.

Gunter could be seen smoking on the tower, and occasionally he yelled to the fellows in the quadrangle. They yelled back, but they did not go near him.

Smythe of the Shell advocated telephoning for the police. But Smythe did not suggest how Police-constable Boggs of Coombe was to get at Gunter—unless he brought an aeroplane with him.

It was a damaged-looking quartette that gathered in the end study for tea. Jimmy Silver was bruised and cut and bandaged. Lovell had a cut cheek, and Newcome a black eye, and Raby several bumps on his head. And the Fistical Four were breathing fury.

"They're letting him alone," said Lovell savagely—"letting the cad defy us all! They can't touch him!"

"Blest if I quite see how he's to be touched," said Raby, feeling his head tenderly. "I've got four bumps—big ones!"

Jimmy Silver set his teeth.

"Keep smiling!" he said. That was Jimmy Silver's usual advice, under all circumstances. "We're going to deal with the cad. Look at my chivvy! I shall be a sight for a week or more. The chap who makes my chivvy look like that is going to pay for it! Ow!"

"The Head seems to have chucked it up," said Newcome. "The rotter will have to be left there till he comes out of his own accord. Blest if I see how he's to be stopped from sticking it out for the whole term, if he chooses."

"We're going to stop him!"

"I'm game!" said Lovell. "But how?"

"It's up to us!" said Jimmy.
 "I've had enough of his blessed sardine-tins on my napper!" said Raby. "The beast don't play the game! He doesn't care if he injures a chap! Might get your teeth knocked out!"

"He's a blessed desperado, and no mistake!" said Jimmy.

"And he's the Head's nephew!" grunted Lovell.

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows.
 "I'm not so jolly sure about that!" he said. "There's something fishy about the fellow. You remember how alarmed he was when he got a letter from America the other day. He said something about the game here being up, and then he seemed to ask for the sack—he got quite reckless. He knew he had to go, anyway. It looks to me as if there's something shady about his coming here."

Lovell opened his eyes wide.

"You mean he's an impostor!" he ejaculated.

"I wouldn't say so; but it looks jolly like it from the things he's let drop and the way he's acted," said Jimmy. "I know it seems a bit thick, but such things have happened. After he'd had that Yankee letter, he said that the game was up, and a fellow he'd made an arrangement with had gone back on him, and was coming here. Then he shut up like an oyster—he'd said too much. What does that look like?"

"My hat!" said Lovell, with a deep breath.

"I know it sounds rather thick," said Jimmy, "but it's a bit thick to think that that ruffianly brute is Dr. Chisholm's nephew. But that isn't the question before the giddy meeting, anyway. The bizney is to yank him out of the clock-tower by his short hairs."

"And how?"

"There's the little window half-way up the tower. Gunter's barred it up, but we could bust it in!"

"We can't get near it," said Raby. "We don't want to be brained."

"He won't be able to aim so jolly well after dark," said Jimmy.

"After dark!"

"Exactly! A giddy night attack," said Jimmy Silver. "Us four, and we'll take the Head by surprise. The ladder's still here, and I've got an idea. They can't expect to handle him as this study would, you know."

"Ahem!"

"Leave it to me, and pass the muffins," said Jimmy Silver. "If we don't collar that cad this evening you can call me a Modern."

After which there was evidently nothing to be said.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

The End Study Does It!

A RED spot gleamed from the top of the clock-tower through the shadows of the old quadrangle of Rookwood.

It was the glowing end of a cigar. Four juniors who slipped quietly out of the School House and approached the clock-tower in the deep dusk, noted that red glimmer, and grinned.

"He's there!" muttered Lovell.
 "On the watch," agreed Jimmy Silver. "But he isn't a blessed cat—he can't see in the dark. Silence, my infants!"

The Fistical four almost tiptoed towards the tower. In the Common-room and the studies there was a buzz of excited talk; the sensation was still at its height. The Classical Four had



Gunter pulled at the lasso, and Mr. Bootles, at the other end, was dragged from the ground. Up he went, the rope grinding on his ribs. "My hat!" yelled Lovell. "Poor old Bootles!" (See Chapter 5.)

slipped out quietly—on their own. They were going to prove to all Rookwood that Jimmy Silver & Co. were equal to the emergency, unless Gunter proved too much for them.

Silently as ghosts, the four juniors arrived under the black shadow of the clock-tower. Nine strokes boomed out above their heads.

The ladder was still there, leaning against the brick wall. Four pairs of hands grasped it, and drew it quietly away.

With the ladder in their grasp, Jimmy Silver & Co. trod cautiously along to the closely-shuttered window in the wall of the tower.

"Now, then, all together!" whispered Jimmy Silver. "One good shove ought to do it, and when it's once open a dozen Gunters couldn't stop us!"

"What-ho!"

It was Jimmy Silver's idea to use the heavy ladder as a battering-ram, and burst in the shutter with a terrific charge at it. And, until the crash made Gunter aware of their presence, they would not be under fire.

They retreated a little distance, and then, at the word from Jimmy Silver, rushed forward.

Crash!

The head of the ladder smote the window-shutter with a thundering concussion. There was a loud splintering. The charge had succeeded better than the juniors had expected. For the end of the ladder, not only shattered the shutter and burst it open, but it shot through the now open window, and the four juniors tumbled forward as the resistance gave way.

There was a roar from Lovell as his head came in violent contact with Newcome's. The ladder had slipped from

their grasp, but Jimmy seized it again instantly, and set it straight by the window.

"Follow your leader!" he panted. There was a yell above, and a whizzing of missiles. Heavy tins crashed on the ground around them.

Gunter was on the defensive at once. Crash, crash! A wild yell from Newcome, a howl of pain from Raby. But Jimmy Silver was head and shoulders through the window.

He pitched recklessly in, and Lovell was after him in a flash.

They picked themselves up on the dark stairs, and rushed upward.

Crash, crash on the narrow spiral stair! Gunter had realised what had happened, and that foes were within the tower. He was hurling his missiles down the stairs with reckless hands.

But a Maxim gun would hardly have stopped the Classical chums at that moment.

Raby and Newcome had scrambled in after them, hurt and furious. The four of them raced up the stairs.

Crash! Bang! Grash! Bump! Jimmy Silver reeled as a heavy object smote him on the chest, but he kept on. He came out panting at the top of the stair.

"Gunter, you cad!"
 "Silver, you fool! Take that!"

"That" was a whizzing tin of several pounds weight, which would have felled Jimmy Silver if he had "taken" it. But Jimmy Silver dodged it swiftly, and it passed him, and the next moment he was upon Gunter.

"Now, you cad!" panted Jimmy. His grasp fastened on Gunter and bore him backwards.

(Concluded on page 20.)

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A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS. BY FRANK RICHARDS.

NEXT FRIDAY! "FORCED TO RESIGN!"

A Splendid, Extra-Long Instalment of Sidney Drew's Greatest Story!

THE INVISIBLE RAIDER!

BY SIDNEY DREW

A Magnificent New
Serial of Adventure,
introducing FERRERS
LORD and PRINCE
CHING LUNG.



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.

Whilst out cruising in the submarine Ching Lung & Co. sight a small motor-boat near the secret cavern. "There's one of Von Kreigler's spies on board!" says Ching Lung, looking through his binoculars.

(Now read on.)

Ching Lung Receives the Order of the Biscuit

"AND, by honey, he's going to get a nasty jar!" grinned the steersman.

"Where's Ben?"

"Aho!" growled the bosun, from the conning-tower. "Want me, Tom?"
"Slip down and get a couple of automatics, mate!" said Prout. "You might have a wash on the way back and make yourself look a bit respectable."

Prout put on his jacket and yachting cap and gave himself a brush down, and the submarine nosed up the tide and suddenly rose to the surface. The startled man with the binoculars heard a sound as Prout flung open the door of the conning-tower, started to his feet, and turned round. The steersman had an automatic pistol in his right hand, so he saluted with his left.

"Mr. Ferrers Lord's compliments to you, sir," said Prout, "and will you kindly do him the honour of coming ashore and breakfasting with him?"

The man recovered his wits and made a dash aft to his engine, but the bosun neatly hooked the launch with a grapple, and four of the crew of the submarine jumped into her. The spy protested violently against the outrage, and threatened Prout with all the terrors of the law. Prout was politeness itself.

"I'm extremely sorry, sir," he said, "but kindly step aboard. You may have breakfast, but we haven't!"

"Would you use force? Would you use violence?" cried the man, who was working himself into a violent passion. "Would you kidnap me? Do you know who I am? I am Sir Marmaduke Tallis, of Crayle Hall! What is your object? How dare you interfere with me? Are you pirates, or what are you?"

He did not look like a German, and he did not speak like a German. Prout knew that Crayle Hall was somewhere in the neighbourhood, and that it was owned by a Sir Marmaduke Tallis. He began to think that he had blundered. Rupert Thurston was beginning to think the same thing. After all, any person may look through a pair of binoculars without being a spy. So far, he and Ching Lung had kept out of sight.

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"SAVED FROM DISGRACE!"

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

Tom. It's rather a pity, for you'd look quite nice hanging in chains!"

Two of the crew took charge of the launch. As the submarine submerged, Thurston went down to the saloon where the prisoner was under guard. He was a clean-shaven man of about thirty, with sleek, brown hair, not in the least resembling the upstanding, closely-cropped bristles of the typical Hun.

"How in the name of all that's staggering and amazing did you manage to get out of Schloss Schwartzburg, Mr. Thurston?" asked the spy.

"Oh, we managed to find a hole, and crawled through," said Rupert, offering him a cigarette. "Didn't you hear anything about a lost motor-car, and some men having swam the river at Gundenburg? They turned their searchlights on us; your side of the river, and must have seen us."

"No, I heard nothing. Missing cars are pretty common in Germany, as they are here," answered the German. "For men to swim the river at Gundenburg after dark is nothing unusual. The French have a heavy duty on goods that come from our side, and that causes a lot of smuggling. It was too ordinary a thing to be reported."

"At Schloss Schwartzburg," said Thurston, smiling, "they were not too hospitable to us, but I like to forget such things. I don't think your imprisonment will be a long one, or that you will find it very unpleasant. Will you please turn out your pockets. It is a more comfortable method than being forcibly searched, like I was."

"With pleasure, Mr. Thurston," said the Hun. "On business of this kind, I don't carry anything incriminating or helpful to the other side."

There was one thing about Herr von Kreigler's carefully selected spies—when they were beaten they took their beating with a very good grace. The Hun had the usual articles an average man carries with him—keys, cigarette-case, matches, and wallet. Possibly he had some secret pocket, but Rupert Thurston did not suggest it. He left anything further for the millionaire to discover. As a bell clanged and the submarine came to rest, he put a last question: "Did you come over in your launch all alone from the other side?"

"As a matter of fact, I didn't," said the spy. "As a matter of fact, I hired her, and left a deposit of a hundred pounds on her. I've been hanging about for days, waiting for Mr. Ferrers Lord's yacht to clear out of the way. The yacht was bad enough, but I never expected you to spring a submarine on me. It was a surprise, but I think I could have got out of that. Your man was beginning to get nervous. The sudden appearance of Prince Ching Lung took all the bluff out of me. If you're ever confronted by a man you thought dead and buried, you'll understand how I felt."

"Yes, I can understand that," said Rupert. "I was getting a bit dubious myself, but you gave yourself away completely."

Thurston drew the blinds over the closed portals, and warned the sentry in a low tone to take care to see that the prisoner did not look out and learn any of the secrets of the cavern. Ferrers Lord was above at the house, and Ching Lung telephoned to him. The millionaire was not at all impressed.

"I've talked to the Chief, Tom," he said, on his return to the submarine. "My poor chap, I don't think you're going to get many gold medals for this. Though he didn't say so, I'm sure, in my own mind, the Chief knew all about it. He shifted the yacht on purpose, just to test your intelligence. That's what it looks like. Anyhow, he's wireless the Lord of the Deep to come back to her moorings, and you've to take your prisoner aboard her to keep company with the actor Johnnie."

Hal Honour was still sleeping the sleep of the just, quite unaware that the submarine had been out to sea. His work was done, and he could take his rest with an easy mind. Ching Lung carried him down some lunch. He entered the cabin very quietly, for he did not wish to waken the engineer. Sleep was more important than food after Honour's herculean labours. As he seemed to be sleeping placidly the prince tiptoed out. Then Honour spoke, and Ching Lung went back.

"Rotten upholsterers!" growled the engineer.

"I beg your pardon," said Ching Lung, "but what was that remark you made? I

didn't hear it quite distinctly, but did you allude to me as a rotten poultterer?"

The big man sat up, and Ching Lung lifted the cover from the tray. With a snort of indignation at the very thought of taking a meal in bed, Honour got up.

"So after all my trouble and thoughtfulness, you won't have it," said Ching Lung. "You're an ungrateful and surly old bear! Here's a brace of grouse, cooked to a turn, and you call me a rotten poultterer! You must have been educated at a very high-class school. A rotten poultterer! You are a nice man to know!"

"Upholsterer," corrected the engineer. "So that's what's ruffling your back hair, is it?" said the prince. "You're uncivilised, my boy, and that great thick head of yours has got machinery on the brain, and nothing but machinery. I've had a look round your dirty helicopter. You left her dirty—a regular pig-pen! You'll cheer when you see her now, Hal. Blue and gold carpets and easy-chairs. Silver electroliers and mahogany doors. There's a marble bath, with hot and cold water and a shower that squirts eau-de-Cologne or rose-water, whichever you prefer. They're just putting in a grand piano, and when they've finished there'll be a garage for two Rolls-Royce's, with inspection pits and chauffeur's room, and stabling for six horses. A billiards-table will be fixed later on. And instead of all these beautiful things, you—if you were allowed to have your cantankerous old way—would keep the helicopter a box of greasy machinery. Eat your lunch, or I'll slap you hard!"

The engineer laughed at Ching Lung's wild exaggerations and terrifying threat, and sat down to his meal with a hearty appetite. It was perfectly true, although the prince had drawn the long-bow to its fullest extent, that the interior of the helicopter had been transformed from its blackness and discomfort and ugliness into a place of artistic luxury.

"A flying drawing-room!" growled the engineer, but he went on eating his lunch like a man who enjoyed it.

"And do you know why the Chief has had the thing fitted up regardless of expense?" asked the prince.

The engineer poured himself out a glass of claret, and shook his head.

"Because you're so crazy on building fresh ones. He knew you'd either burn it or wreck it if he'd left it in the rough," said Ching Lung. "You're never satisfied unless you're working at something bigger and more expensive. He thinks, when you see how pretty she is, you won't have the heart to smash her."

Hal Honour put down his glass, and stretched out his hand to Ching Lung. Between his thumb and forefinger he held a cheese-biscuit.

"For your Imperial Highness!" said the engineer, his blue eyes twinkling.

It was not easy even for Ching Lung to pull Hal Honour's leg!

The Shadow at the Door!

SUMMER was waning, but the night was warm. General Goltzheimer's beautiful grounds twinkled with coloured electric lamps. There were marquees on his lawns, that ran down to the verge of the river. Berlin's most famous band was playing. Germany, of course, according to her rulers, was a bankrupt and broken country, but from her capital city, seven miles away, luxurious motor-cars had arrived in scores and dozens.

The general was a resplendent figure. Clad in a new uniform, covered with decorations, and with a great, gold-hilted sword at his hip, he stood at the head of the staircase to welcome his guests. Beside him was his wife, a fair-haired, plump lady, who sparkled with jewels. The general was magnificent. He felt his power, and he growled the same gruff welcome to princes of the blood as he did to a wealthy tradesman. And the princes of the blood of the once all-magnificent House of Hohenzollern fawned on him, though they despised him as an upstart and a bully.

All over Germany it was whispered that General Goltzheimer was a royalist at heart, and ready and eager to restore the runaway Kaiser when the opportune moment came. He had the true martial spirit. Though he was merely giving a ball, the house and grounds were surrounded by troops, and cavalry patrolled the roads in the old pre-war fashion that his carefully-selected guests loved and admired. To some of them,

Goltzheimer was a second Hindenburg, once the idol of all Germany. In this fat, heavy-featured man with the coarse, red moustache they thought they had found another Bismarck.

The general, heavy and clumsy-footed, opened the ball. He danced with his wife, ignoring a princess of the Royal house. When the second dance began he strode out of the ball-room, clanking his spurs, and cooled himself with a pot of lager-beer. Then he went up the staircase, mopping his hot face.

At the door of a room two flights above the ball-room a sentry with a rifle and fixed bayonet stood on guard. The sentry's heels came together with a click as he saluted the man whom he imagined to be the uncrowned King of Germany. The general opened the door, and closed it behind him.

"Ach," said a gentle, lazy voice, "now we are five! We were waiting for you, general. At last we shall do some business!"

As leader of the Supreme Council, Professor Karl von Kreigler sat at the head of the square oak table, his open snuff-box within easy reach. He looked shabby and dirty. Behind him, at a smaller table, was his secretary. The other members of the council were Rolf Obengarp, the millionaire manufacturer of drugs and chemicals; Paul Kauffmann, Germany's richest brewer; Max Brusner, director-in-chief of the State railways, and the magnificent General Goltzheimer himself. And pitted against men of these brains and experience, Goltzheimer was the fool and dupe.

"Though we have a minute of it, gentlemen," said Von Kreigler, blinking through his spectacles, "the gallant general will say a few words to you."

"Why should I go through all that rigmarole again?" growled Goltzheimer. "I've told you what happened to me in Paris. I'm no speaker. The French swine-hounds listened to the words you put into my mouth. I wished I had the whole pack of them in the open, and my Uhlan's behind me!"

Paul Kauffmann, a little, bearded man with a pronounced Jewish nose, stood up.

"Gentlemen," he said, "I do not think it necessary to ask the general to make a speech. We are all aware what happened in Paris. Personally, I don't care a fig what happened in Paris. Paris blusters, and sends troops. She has blustered so much that France is getting out of our coal. We are not afraid of France. Even after the shock of the war, I am confident we could fight France again within a twelvemonth, and eat her as Bismarck ate her, if she stood single-handed. For a moment we will let that rest. My friends and comrades Herren Obengarp and Brusner, have asked me to put a question to our president. For what purpose was this ball arranged, and why should we be called here, and be warned to arrive early and in complete secrecy?"

Professor Karl von Kreigler did not rise. He put his elbows on the table, and peered from face to face.

"It is ridiculous," he said: "but I beg of you, gentlemen, not to deceive yourselves. It is ridiculous that the Supreme Council of Germany should be held in secret, when we can hear faintly the music of the ball-room and the laughter of the revellers. It is ludicrous, perhaps, when we stand weaponless with our backs to the wall, facing savage and greedy nations who have humiliated us, and now would steal the last crust from the lips of our starving children!"

"Excuse me, Excellency," said Kauffmann, "but is this sort of stuff intended for us, or for a street-corner crowd in Berlin?"

"Some of it. The latter part, Herr Kauffmann," said the professor—"is an extract from one of your own speeches. It came into my mind, and I thought it was to the point. Now, listen to me. It seems ridiculous, I repeat, that we should have to meet here, but it is necessary. I myself, though I am nervous of such things, flew yesterday from Berlin to Landsburg by aeroplane and back again here in the darkness—for me, a terrifying ordeal. I am not afraid of France or England or Belgium, for we have our brains. They are three, and we are one. We are united; but when the leaders of three nations meet to divide the fancied spoils, there are sure to be disagreements, out of which we must profit. Herr Secretary, read the report I marked with the double crosses."

The secretary bowed, and read in a thin voice:

"From the Chief of the Secret Police,—

Following up my previous communication to your Excellency, I am more than confident that to the very elaborate spy system of the Allies another has been added, a system quite independent of that of the Allies, and though much smaller, better organised and more dangerous. Some mysterious person is spending money like water. Your Excellency is constantly being shadowed, and also others whom I refrain to name, but leave your Excellency to guess. We have made several arrests, five in all. Three of the men were British subjects, the others two Alsatians, who claimed to be French subjects. All had passports, and were well supplied with money. I was compelled to release them and to offer apologies, as they threatened to appeal to the Allies.

"I have discovered that these spies do not attend the meetings of the royalist or extreme Socialist parties, or seem to be concerned in the least about the trend of any political movement in Germany; though the spies of the Allies are rarely absent from these meetings. Where their news goes to, and how it is sent, or what it is, I have as yet, with all my diligence, been unable to discover, but am hoping to do so. I remain, your Excellency's humble and obedient servant,

"HILDBRAND VON SAARL."

There was a postscript, but the professor had warned his secretary not to read that. It was to the effect that although his Excellency and the others whose names he could guess—Obengarp, Kauffmann, and Max Brusner—were being constantly watched and followed, these mysterious and persevering spies appeared to be ignoring General Goltzheimer. Probably they did not consider the blustering, red-faced Prussian who thought himself so important worth powder and shot.

There was a silence as the secretary bowed to the members of the Supreme Council, and sat down again.

"Now here is money being spent like water, as Von Saarl tells us," said Von Kreigler. "There is a spy system confined to ourselves. Do not let us attempt any foolish deception. These spies are in the pay of our enemy Ferrers Lord. With all their wealth and power, with all their police and secret services, we held the secret of Schloss Schwartzburg against the Allies, and could have held it. One man guessed it, and it was discovered."

"Pah! His hirelings discovered it, but we knew how to deal with them, how to settle with such swine-curs!" said the general.

"Schloss Schwartzburg is a fine tombstone. Once under that, the fend himself would never get out. I settled that, Excellency, almost in spite of you. Give me credit for that!"

Von Kreigler smiled and nodded as he took a pinch of snuff.

"Ach, yes; much credit is due to you there!" he said, in his soft voice. "I am not a man of the sword, but a man of the pen. It was necessary for those three to die! Gentlemen, you have seen copies of the report of their death as sent to the British officer in command?"

"We have, Excellency, and we all congratulate you on it," said Brusner. "I was once in the law, and if you can rely upon your witnesses, you have a complete case. We should like to know, however, why the inquiry has been delayed?"

"It is through no fault of mine, gentlemen," said the professor. "The man who is delaying the inquiry is Ferrers Lord."

General Goltzheimer puffed out his highly-decorated chest with contempt, but three other members of the Supreme Council exchanged uneasy glances.

"Do not let us deceive ourselves, gentlemen," went on the professor, beginning with his favourite expression. "Accident, deplorable necessity, or murder—call the deaths of those three men which you choose—even if we are acquitted at the inquiry, what then? Ferrers Lord knows that the inquiry must end in an acquittal. I tell you with modesty that he knows I am too clever to leave any loophole in an affair of such tremendous gravity to ourselves. That is why he is delaying the inquiry, that is why he is surrounding us with spies. If we can evade his private vengeance for a week, he will have struck too late. Even Ferrers Lord, after we have met the representatives of the Allies in Paris and gained our point, as we always gain it, will not be able to persuade those wisheads that they have

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NEXT FRIDAY!

"FORCED TO RESIGN!"

A SPLENDID STORY OF THE JUNIORS OF GREYFRIARS.

By FRANK RICHARDS.

been bluffed and fooled, for even Ferrers Lord does not know the secret of ruined Schloss Schwartzburg."

"Ach, his Excellency makes a nightmare of this mad swine-cur of an English millionaire!" said Goltzheimer. "I will go to my guests and dance with them."

"And drink!" said Professor Karl von Kreigler, but not aloud.

The faint strains of the band grew louder as the general opened the door, and fainter as he closed it and strode away.

"Now, gentlemen, we can understand each other better," said the president of the Supreme Council. "As things are, Goltzheimer is a useful man to us, and we must put up with him, for many misguided people think he is a great man. We are not royalists, but the royalist party is very strong, and their hopes lie in General Goltzheimer. I persuaded him to give this ball for certain reasons. The chief reason was that I felt that we could meet here in safety. General Goltzheimer is not being shadowed. The chief of the secret police informed me so in his letter. With the general here, my secretary diplomatically left that part out."

"Ferrers Lord thinks him too insignificant to waste his time on, then?" asked Brusner.

"Oh, yes; that is how I take it! He is magnificent, but he is a man of straw. He thinks only of armies, and—of beer!" The professor took a pinch of snuff, and chuckled. "I will give him credit for this, that he has visions. He would rebuild a new empire on the ruins of the old one with the treasure of Schloss Schwartzburg. It would be a military empire, and Goltzheimer would be the new Kaiser. Doubtless you have read the newspapers, which he never reads?"

The three men nodded. All the Socialist and Republican newspapers had discussed the ball to be given by General Goltzheimer, and had given lists of the names of the invited guests. Nearly all of them were fanatical royalists, eager for the return of the exiled Kaiser, and nearly all were people of wealth. The papers had made savage attacks on the general, calling him a traitor and a renegade. They demanded his immediate expulsion from the Supreme Council.

"I thought, Excellency, that this was some plan of yours to get rid of Goltzheimer," said Herr Obengarp.

"Do not deceive yourselves, gentlemen. I had another motive," said the president. "I wanted it to be thought that I had broken away from the general. It is well known that we are not royalists. We work for Germany, but we also work for ourselves!"

Brusner, the director of the State railways, was the first to really grasp what the little spectacled professor was driving at.

"Do you really mean, Excellency," he asked, with astonishment, "that you took elaborate trouble to arrange a royalist ball and to fill the popular newspapers with attacks on Goltzheimer, that the Council might meet under his roof in safety? Is all this intended to deceive one man, this Ferrers Lord?"

"It was to deceive his spies, Herr Brusner. Is it not plainly stated in the papers that the other members of the Supreme Council refused invitations to the ball?"

"And Ferrers Lord will be told that?"

"From the time the ball was first mentioned these mysterious spies ceased to shadow the general," said Von Kreigler.

"That in itself is convincing. Gentlemen, you do not know this man, Ferrers Lord, as I know him. Until the Paris Conference is over, and we have gained our point, I shall be uneasy. When we have finished with that, and won easier terms from the Allies, I shall rest, and take a trip to America. After that, gentlemen, to rebuild Schloss Schwartzburg, and our reward."

Professor von Kreigler beamed through his spectacles, chuckled softly, and rubbed his hands. Then he spoke to his secretary, who gave him another paper. He read it aloud. It was the same old whine, the same plea that Germany was beggared and bankrupt. The German people had never wished for the war, but had been forced into it by the Kaiser and his sabre-rattling military advisers. The people were working like slaves, and poverty was rampant. The Allies could not extract blood out of a stone. She was ridden with Bolshevism. If the Allies persisted in their enormous demands, there would be a revolution, and if a revolution came they would get nothing. With easier

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NEXT

FRIDAY!

"SAVED FROM DISGRACE!"

A GRAND TALE OF THE ROOKWOOD CHUMS.

By OWEN CONQUEST.

terms spread over a long period of years, the indemnities would be paid in full, et cetera, et cetera.

"I do not think any of us can suggest anything better," said Kauffmann. "If they refuse, the worst they can do is to send more troops. Great Britain is getting tired of that, and the French cannot afford it. But we are growing older every day. I want my share of the treasure of Schloss Schwartzburg, and to enjoy it. It is impossible to raise money to rebuild the place—I mean public money. We dare not approach the Treasury with such a demand, I presume, Excellency."

"Ach, no, it is impossible, as you say—impossible," said Von Kreigler. "It was the Kaiser's favourite Schloss. If we attempted that, the Socialist newspapers would denounce us. They would scent a royalist plot, and swear we were rebuilding it for the ex-Kaiser, whom we intended to restore. True, I am as eager as yourselves to take my share, for I am growing old and tired. But do not deceive yourselves; there is another way. The Schloss is State property, and money is of more need to the State than a rock with a charred ruin on the top of it. The Supreme Council will sell the rock. It must be at a high price—twice its value, at least. Let us find a buyer, gentlemen; let us discover some romantic American gentlemen who will purchase one of the most historic spots in Europe. But the figure must be high. We must be able to boast that we have made a great bargain and obtained a vast profit. And at a thousand times, at a million times the price we accept, Schloss Schwartzburg would be as cheap as dirt."

Kauffmann, Brusner, and Obengarp laughed.

"Leave it to me to find this romantic millionaire," said Kauffmann. "It is an excellent idea. I suppose the general cannot be left out. Let us form a little syndicate of five, and put up the money in equal shares. I am afraid it will be very expensive, but there was never such a gold-mine in the world as Schloss Schwartzburg. If the galleries have fallen in it will be an enormous task to bore through to the treasure vault."

"Ach, no!" said the professor, shaking his head. "Believe me, I understand these things. True, the upper galleries and the long staircase to the cells are choked, but beyond that to the treasure vault it is solid rock. On the right there is sandstone, and that may have caved in. Do not deceive yourselves, gentlemen. The cost will be far less than you think. Produce your imaginary millionaire then, Herr Kauffmann, let the State valuer value Schloss Schwartzburg, and let your millionaire offer three times his figure of the rock and its ruins. When the offer has been debated in the Reichstag, and agreed to, my cheque-book will be at your service."

Once more the sentry in the corridor saluted, and General Goltzheimer entered the council chamber, bringing with him a box of cigars.

"How is the ball going, general?" asked Kauffmann, wrinking up his Jewish nose.

"Ach, as all balls go," growled the general, who looked flushed and hot. "Some are dancing, some are eating, some are drinking, and some are plotting in corners. And I am told those swine-pig Socialist papers are cursing me, and calling me a royalist. Some day I'll decorate the lamp-posts of Berlin with their editors. Is the business over?"

"Unless you can propose anything further, my dear general," said the professor.

"I have nothing to propose except a drink. Let us have some wine up. Send down for champagne, Mr. Secretary. I have danced, and I am as thirsty as a fish. And open the window. Thunder and lightning! It is like an oven in this room. What weather for the time of year! Puff! What a fool I was to dance!"

Champagne was brought and uncorked, and the members of the Supreme Council filled their glasses and lighted their cigars. Through the open windows the music of the band floated in. On the lawns gaily-dressed women and men in evening dress suits walked to and fro, chatting and laughing.

"A toast, gentleman!" said Herr Brusner, raising his glass. "To Schloss Schwartzburg!"

As he spoke the door opened. The startled members of the Supreme Council saw the sentry lying prone across the threshold and a dim, shadowy human form.

The Round-Up!

HERR BRUSNER'S glass fell from his hand with a faint crash. All stood staring and spellbound. The shadow advanced, and another shadow appeared behind him, and dragged the sentry into the room and shut the door. Beneath the windows a woman with a clear, pure voice began to sing an old German ballad.

"Good-evening, gentlemen of the Supreme Council!"

The shadow was a shadow no longer. The intruder had thrown off the long cloak and hood that had covered him from head to foot.

"Ferrers Lord!" gasped Professor Karl von Kreigler, in a choked voice. "Ruined!"

The millionaire smiled. The big shadow behind him also became a man, but a black mask concealed his face. He had gagged the sentry, and now he stood erect, taller and burlier than General Goltzheimer, but with none of the general's unhealthy fat. It was Hal Honour. From his pocket the engineer drew an automatic pistol. Letting the weapon dangle on his little finger by the trigger-guard, Honour struck a match and lighted his pipe. Then he leaned back against the wall in an attitude of lazy concern.

"Good-evening, gentlemen of the Supreme Council!" repeated the millionaire, in his deep, quiet voice. "I hope it is needless to warn you to make no outcry. On such a pleasant occasion it would be a pity to alarm your guests and interfere with their enjoyment, general. It would also be unfortunate for you."

The five Germans still remained speechless and staring. Three quick taps sounded at the door, and as the engineer opened it, two more shadowy figures glided in. The general's bull throat swelled, and he gave a noisy gulp. He opened his mouth. The engineer's arm straightened, and the automatic pistol was levelled at the general's head.

"Take care!" said Hal Honour gruffly.

Goltzheimer gave another gulp. He felt dazed—mystified. The house, except the river frontage, was surrounded by troops. At the two entrance gates there were police. On the staircase, in the corridors, on the lawns, crowds of people were moving to and fro. Yet these men had passed every barrier, these strange shadows that could turn themselves into men. He looked round dazedly, and saw Kauffmann, Brusner, and Obengarp, holding their hands above their heads. The professor had sunk into a chair, a shabby, shrunken figure. His hands were gripping the table, and behind his spectacles his pale eyes filled with terror, were fixed on Ferrers Lord.

"Well, you murderers!" said the millionaire in German. "Have you nothing to say to me?"

It was Kauffmann who answered him. The man with the Jewish nose was a rank coward, and was perspiring and shaking.

"I do not know you," he said. "I have heard of you, it is true, but I do not know you. If I do not know you, I cannot have wronged you. I am not a murderer, so I do not understand. If you speak of Schloss Schwartzburg, and what happened there, I am innocent. So are my friends Brusner and Obengarp. We were not at the Schloss, but in Berlin. If we had been there we would have forbidden it. We—"

General Goltzheimer gave a guttural roar of rage. It had just entered his dazed brain that Brusner was betraying them, accusing them of a diabolical crime that they could have proved at the court of inquiry was no crime at all, but a deplorable accident. He drove his clenched fist into Brusner's face, and sent him sprawling backwards, stunned and bleeding, into the arms of the shivering secretary.

"Please do not be so vigorous, general!" said Ferrers Lord. "Keep your hands down and hold your tongue. What have you to say, Herr Kauffmann?"

"I have seen a written copy of his Excellency's version of the affair, as submitted to the British officer in command," answered Kauffmann. "I know nothing more."

"And you, Herr Obengarp?"

"Nothing, except that I have also read the copy."

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

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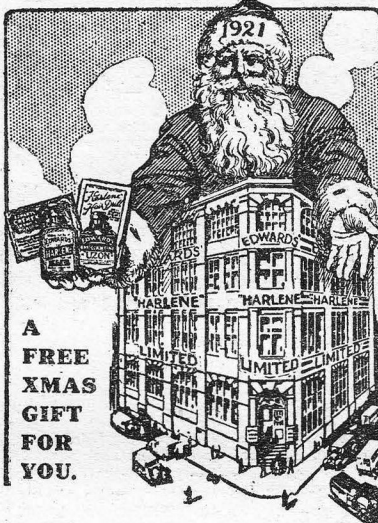
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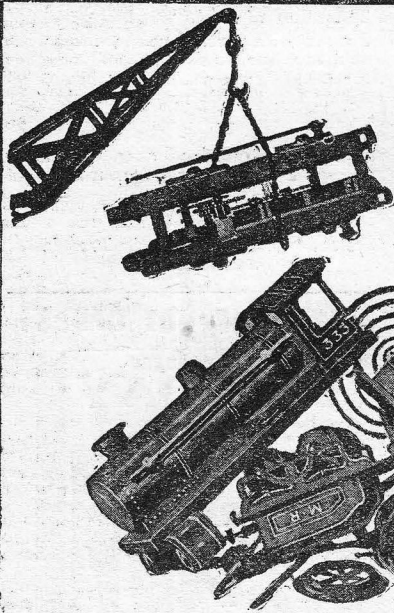
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Write your FULL name and address clearly on a plain piece of paper, pin this coupon to it, and post as directed above. (Mark envelope "Gift Dept.")
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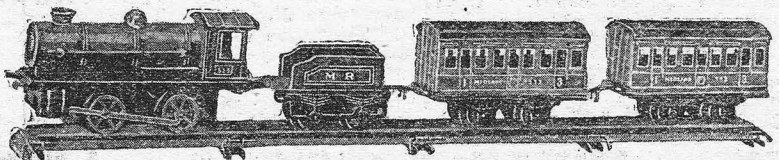


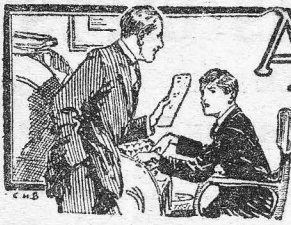
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A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR

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FOR NEXT FRIDAY!

Included in the splendid programme of stories for next week there will be another long complete story dealing with the early adventures of Harry Wharton & Co. at Greyfriars, entitled:

"FORCED TO RESIGN!" By Frank Richards.

George Wingate, of the Sixth Form, plays a very prominent part in the story. It is not all roses being the head prefect of the school, as Wingate finds out. There is a split among the prefects, and through no fault of his own he is

FORCED TO RESIGN

from the captaincy. This is a grand story, and one which you must not miss.

To follow there will be a long complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., the chums of Rookwood School, which is entitled:

"SAVED FROM DISGRACE!" By Owen Conquest.

Jimmy Silver hears that Gunter, the Head's nephew who has been sacked from the school, has been seen in the neighbourhood, in the company of some of the "Giddy Goats" from Rookwood. Jimmy is wild, and

DEFYING THE SCHOOL!

(Continued from page 15.)

They went down together with a crash, Gunter fighting like a wild cat. But he had found his match in Jimmy Silver, and a little more than his match.

Jimmy's knee was planted on his chest. "Got him!" he shouted. "This way!"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome piled in breathlessly. They seized Gunter on all sides, grasping him where they could. Raby had one arm, Newcome the other, and Lovell fixed a strangle-hold round his neck.

"Grooh! Let up!" screamed Gunter.

"Do you give in, you cad!"

"Nope! Grooh! Never! Oh! Ow!"

"We've got him!"

Certainly they had got him. Gunter was struggling still, but he had no chance. With a rush the Fistical Four brought him hurtling down the stairs. Gunter, struggling, bumped from step to step, and his yells showed that he did not find that mode of descent grateful or comforting.

There was a shout in the quadrangle. The crashing had been heard, and the fellows were streaming out of the House. A roar of voices rose round the clock-tower. The Fistical Four reached the lower window with their prisoner.

"This way!" panted Jimmy. "Can't open the door; it's screwed! Shove him through the window! Hallo! Is that you, Bulkeley?"

Bulkeley of the Sixth blinked in at them in the gloom.

"Jimmy Silver! What-how—"

with the help of his chums, he sets out to save Smythe & Co. from Gunter's clutches. Whether he succeeds in his self-set task or not you will discover next week.

There will be another long, thrilling instalment of our magnificent adventure serial, "The Invisible Raider," and also another chance for my chums to win one of our Grand Footballs in "Poplets" Competition No. 46, or one of the ten money prizes.

Billy Bunter has informed me that his next supplement, "Billy Bunter's Weekly," will be a Special Shopping Number, which will contain articles and stories from the juniors of the three famous schools. Do not miss reading this.

"POPLETS" COMPETITION No. 45.

Examples for this week:

- | | |
|---------------------|--------------------------|
| Captain Coker. | Never Too Late. |
| Taking Him Off. | Ever Open Door. |
| Bunter Explains. | Discovering the Culprit. |
| A Sporting Pastime. | Bird in Hand. |
| Beating the Record. | New Boy Arrives. |
| Worth Asking For. | Quite Used To. |

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.

"Here he is!"
"Oh, my hat!" said Bulkeley.

Gunter, kicking and yelling, was thrust through the window. Bulkeley's powerful grasp closed on him grimly. Then Gunter's struggles ceased. He was an infant in the grip of the captain of Rookwood.

"Thank you, Jimmy Silver!" said Bulkeley. "You were a cheeky young rascal to do this without permission. But—"

"It was up to our study, you know," said Jimmy cheerfully.

Bulkeley laughed. He strode away towards the School House with an iron grasp on Gunter. Jimmy Silver & Co. slipped through the window one after another, and found themselves in the midst of a crowd.

"By gad, they've done it!" said Smythe of the Shell. "Cheeky young rotters to chip in, by gad!"

"You wouldn't have done it, would you, Smythey?" grinned Tommy Dodd.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Three cheers for us!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "Hip, hip, hurray!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hurray!"

The Fistical Four marched back to the School House in the midst of a cheering crowd, Jimmy Silver waving high the black flag, which had been hoisted on the clock-tower by the rebel, and captured by the Fistical Four. At that moment there was no doubt that the Fistical Four were, to use Jimmy Silver's expression—it. They were absolutely, indubitably, and undoubtedly—IT.

An hour later the Head's car rolled out

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. 45, 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 December 8th.

Result of "Poplets" Competition No. 36.

The First Prize of a Grand Match Football has been awarded to

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The Ten Prizes of Five Shillings each have been sent to the following readers:

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Your Editor.

of the gates of Rookwood with Gunter sitting in it, and Mr. Bootles one one side of him, and Bulkeley on the other.

The rascal of Rookwood had gone.


Jimmy Silver wondered whether he would ever see him again, and whether the strange suspicions he had formed regarding the Head's nephew would ever be cleared up. The night express had carried Gunter away—far from Rookwood. Was Rookwood done with him? That was a question only the future could answer.

THE END.

(See the "Chat" for particulars of next week's story.)

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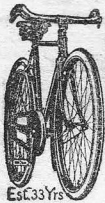


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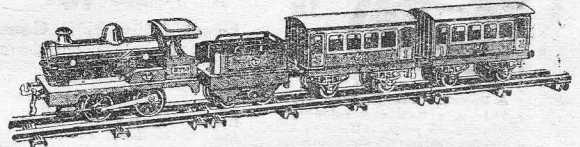
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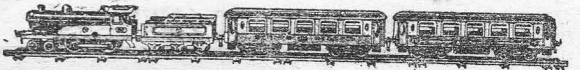
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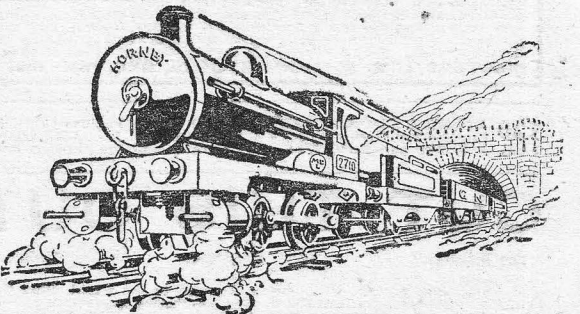
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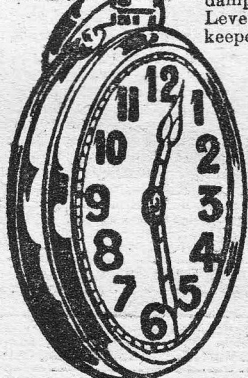
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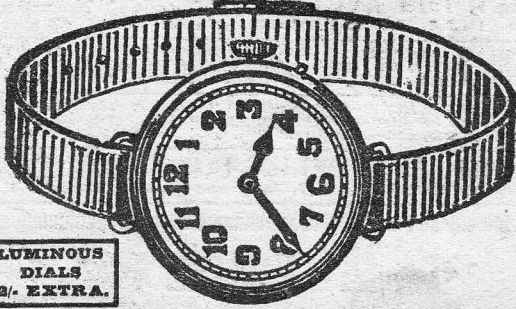
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