

THE PAPER YOU ARE LOOKING FOR—FREE REAL PHOTO INSIDE!

Week Ending—
November 18th,
1922.

New
Series.

No.
200.

28 Pages.

The POPULAR 2ND

The Story Book for Boys.

Grand
Supplement
Inside.

FREE →

REAL GLOSSY PHOTOS OF
FAMOUS SPORTSMEN
EVERY WEEK

FOUR SCHOOL TALES THIS WEEK!

"COKER'S CAPTURE."

A Grand Story of Greyfriars.
By FRANK RICHARDS.

"IN THE WILD NORTH-WEST."

A Tale of Frank Richards' School days.
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

"TOMMY DODD'S DOUBLE."

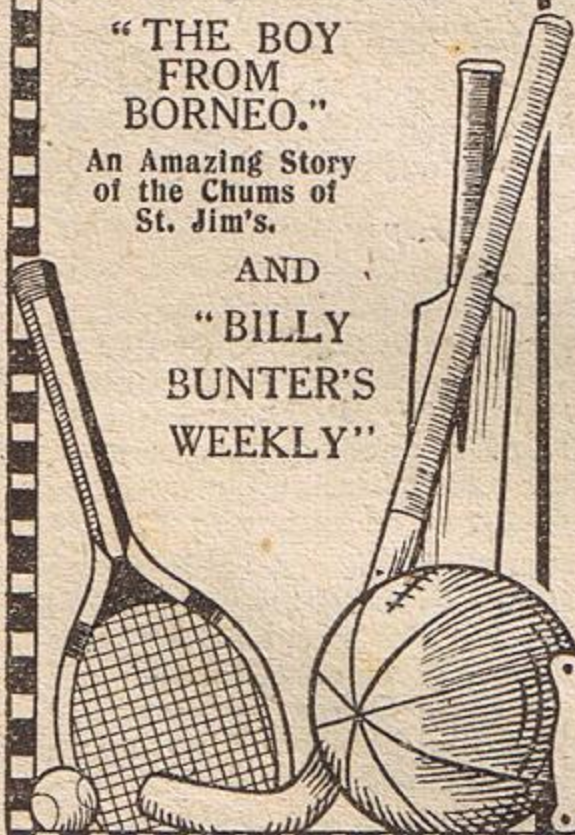
A Fine Story of Rookwood School.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

"THE BOY FROM BORNEO."

An Amazing Story of the Chums of St. Jim's.

AND

"BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY"



SMASHING HIS WAY THROUGH!



COKER CORNERS THE THIEF AT LAST!

(A Thrilling episode from the Grand Greyfriars Story Inside.)

READ ABOUT THE SENSATIONAL MOTOR CYCLE RACE!

(See our Grand Serial, "THE RIVAL SPORTSMEN!" inside.)

2 FREE In Next Week's Issue! Another Real Photo of a Famous Sportsman!

HORACE THE ASS—AND TEC! HORACE COKER OF THE FIFTH DISCOVERS THE TASK OF BRINGING HIS AUNT'S RASCALLY SOLICITOR TO BOOK IS ANYTHING BUT EASY. BUT WITH THE HELP OF THE FAMOUS FIVE HE DOES MAKE, AT LAST, A CAPTURE!



BY FRANK RICHARDS

(Author of the Famous School Tales of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, appearing in The "Magnet" Library.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

A Lesson for the Ragers!

HARRY WHARTON and Frank Nugent were at tea in Study No. 1, when Billy Bunter came in.

Billy Bunter was looking red and wrathful. Nugent reached for a loaf to hurl at the fat junior, and Bunter dodged behind the door.

"I say, you fellows, don't play the giddy goat! I—I've come to tell you—"

"Oh, rats! Get out!" said Wharton.

"They're ragging Coker minor," said Bunter.

"Oh, you can come in," said Wharton, his tone changing. "Now, who's ragging Coker minor, and where are they doing it?"

Bunter rolled in.

Harry Wharton & Co. were particularly interested in Coker minor for the time being. Horace Coker, who was only in the Fifth Form, although he was older, had gone home. His Aunt Judy, a dear lady whose one object in life seemed to be sending fivers and ten-pound notes to her nephews, had been robbed by her rascally solicitor. Horace had gone to soothe her and put his mighty brains to work in trying to do what the police had failed to do—run the rascal to earth.

"You fellows promised Coker to look after his minor," said Bunter, blinking at them. "I say, it's rotten, you know. There's five of them in his study—Shell and Fourth Form chaps—and they're making him beg for them."

Wharton rose to his feet.

"Come on, Franky," he said.

Nugent granted.

"Leave it till after tea," he suggested.

"Well, we promised Coker, you know," said Harry.

THE POPULAR—No. 200.

Nugent rose, with another grunt.

"Oh, all right," he said. "We shall have plenty to do if we're going to look after Coker minor all the time. Still, a promise is a promise. I'm on."

The two chums called in at Bob Cherry's study, for Bob and Hurree Singh and Mark Linley, and Johnny Bull and Tom Brown joined them. Then Wharton called Penfold and Peter Todd. It was just as well to go in strong force. None of the juniors were averse to a row with the Fourth or the Shell, as a matter of fact. Nine Removites proceeded to the Sixth Form passage.

The roars of laughter from Coker minor's study showed that the ragging was proceeding. Wharton opened the door, and the Removites looked in.

An astonishing sight met their eyes.

Hobson & Co. were sitting round the table, roaring with laughter, and on the table was Reggie Coker, essaying to stand upon his head.

He rolled over as the Removites crowded in, and landed on the floor with a bump. There was another yell from the ragers.

"Try again, you clumsy ass!"

Reggie Coker sat dazedly on the floor, and gasped.

"Hold on!" said Harry Wharton quietly. "This is where we come in!"

Hobson swung round, and looked a little alarmed at the sight of the crowd of Removites at the door. Harry Wharton & Co. crowded into the study. The room was a large one, but it was pretty well filled by the time they were all inside. Bob Cherry closed the door.

Hobson & Co. were all on their feet now.

"What do you chaps want?" demanded Hobson, with an attempt to carry the matter off with a high hand. "You're not wanted here."

"Fags are barred!" said Temple.

"Did you ask these young rotters here, Coker minor?" demanded Hobson.

"Nunno, please!"

"It's all right, Coker minor," said Harry Wharton reassuringly. "We promised old Coker to keep an eye on you while he was away, and to see that you're not ragged. That's what we've come for."

"Th-thank you," faltered Reggie, brightening up. "You're very good. Those beasts would not be here if my brother hadn't gone away."

"Just so! And they're not coming again," said Harry.

"Ain't we?" roared Hobson truculently. "We'll come here as often as we like, Mr. Cheeky Wharton, and we'll rag that snivelling little beast as much as we please."

"Oh, rather!"

"Well, if ragging is the order of the day, we may as well start," said Harry. "Collar those rotters, you chaps!"

"Hands off!"

"I'll—I'll—I'll—"

"Yaroo! Leggo!"

The Removites piled in with energy. There were nine of them against five of the ragers, and the latter did not have a look in.

They put up a good fight, however, and there was a terrific struggle in Coker minor's study for a few minutes.

In the course of it, probably more damage was done to the study than would have been done if the ragers had been left alone; but that, of course, could not be helped. Reggie Coker was knocked out of the way, and he sat palpitating in a corner while the tussle went on. The table was knocked over, the chairs hurled right and left. Books and crockery strewed the floor, and were trampled on. The fender was kicked out of place, and the clock swept off the mantelpiece. It was a battle royal while it lasted, and

when it ended, the raggers were on the floor, and the victorious Removites were sitting on them.

"Remove wins!" chuckled Bob Cherry, as he ensconced himself comfortably on Hobson's chest. "This is where we smile."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, my nose!" groaned Tom Brown. "Some silly ass has shoved his elbow on my nose. Ow—ow!"

"Never mind," said Bob. "It's all in the day's work."

"Oh—ow! It's not your nose! Ow!"

"Well, we've got 'em," said Harry Wharton, rising. "Blessed if I know why the prefects haven't come in! We've been making rather a row."

"Ha, ha! We have!"

"They won't come in," grinned Mark Linley. "They think we're ragging Coker minor, you see, and you bet they won't interfere."

"And Wingate's out," said Nugent.

"Lemme gerrup!" roared Hobson. "I'll smash you, Bob Cherry! I'll pulverise you! I'll slaughter you! Lemme gerrup!"

"Sit on him, Bob!"

"I'm sitting on him," said Bob calmly. "Are you quite comfy, Hobson?"

"Yow—ow—ow! I—I—I'll—"

"Coker minor! Where's Coker minor?"

"Here I am, Wharton, please," said Reggie feebly.

"Have you got a cricket-stump in the study?"

"N-n-no."

"Well, a ruler, then?"

NEXT WEEK

"Yes, I've got a ruler, Wharton," said Reggie, in surprise. "Do you want a ruler?"

"No. Hobson does. Sit on the bounders, you fellows, and we'll deal with them one at a time. Turn Hobson over."

Hobson struggled fiercely, but he was turned successfully over, and his nose ground into the carpet, as Bob Cherry sat on his back. Penfold stood on his legs.

"Get that ruler, Coker minor!" commanded Wharton.

"Here it is, Wharton, please."

"Now thrash Hobson."

Reggie jumped.

"Wha-a-at!" he stammered.

"You let me alone!" bellowed Hobson. "If you touch me, young Coker, I'll skin you alive! I'll slaughter you! I'll—I'll—"

"Shurrup!" said Bob Cherry, pressing Hobson's features a little deeper into the carpet. "You're dead in this act! Shurrup!"

"Groooogh!"

"Each of these rotters is going to promise, honour bright, not to rag Coker minor any more till his major comes back," said Wharton. "After that, Coker major can take them in hand. Now, Hobson, are you going to promise?"

"No!" roared Hobson. "I'm going to smash the little beast!"

"Then you'll be licked till you do promise. Coker minor, lay into him with the ruler."

"Oh dear! I—I'd rather not, Wharton, please."

"This isn't a question of what you'd rather do, but of what you've got to do," Wharton explained. "You've got to lick him, or I'm going to lick you. Savvy?"

"Oh dear!"

"Now pile in!"

Reggie Coker piled in. As a matter of fact, he was not sorry to pay some of his score against Hobson in that way. The ruler rose and fell, and the dust came in little clouds from the Shell fellow's lower garments.

Hobson of the Shell roared and squirmed.

But, with Bob Cherry sitting on his back, and Penfold standing on his legs, he had no chance of escaping the punishment; he had to take it, and he took it.

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

Hobson roared with pain and fury.

"Now, then, what about that promise?" demanded Wharton.

"Yah! Ow! Go and eat coke! Ow!"

Whack, whack, whack, whack, whack!

"Oh crumbs! Stop it! Yow! I promise, honour bright, I won't rag the snivelling little rotter! Ow! Leave off! Chuck it! Ow!"

Wharton chuckled.

"That settles Hobson!" he said.

"Now for Temple!"

"Here, you let me alone!" said Temple, in alarm. "I— Oh! Ah! Ow! Yah!"

Whack, whack, whack!

"I promise!" shrieked Temple. "Oh, my hat! Yah! Yaroo! I promise—anything you like! Stop him! Yah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And Dabney and Colmore and Price yelled out that they would promise, too, without waiting for the ruler. Wharton shook his head.

"Better give 'em half a dozen each!" he said. "It will be a warning to them."

And Reggie Coker, who was warming to his work now, whacked away with great energy at the squirming prisoners.

There were roars of fury and anguish in Coker minor's study; and Loder, the prefect, who could hear the din in his room, chuckled. He thought that the obnoxious Coker minor was having a warm time indeed.

"That will do!" said Wharton at last. "Now, it's understood that all you fellows have given your word, honour bright, not to rag Coker minor again before his major comes back?"

"Ow, ow! Yes! Ow, ow!"

"Then kick 'em out!" said Wharton.

And one after another the hapless raggers were ejected from the study.

They crawled away, feeling that life was hardly worth living.

Reggie Coker was grinning cheerfully now. After that severe lesson, he was likely to be safe from the raggers.

"Thank you so much, you fellows!" he exclaimed. "I'm really very grateful! I don't think they'll come back any more!"

"If you're ragged again, you let us know," said Harry Wharton; "we'll come along and pile in. We promised old Coker to stand by you, and we're going to do it!"

And Harry Wharton & Co. marched off, very well satisfied. Coker minor spent the next hour or two trying to get his study into something like order. And that day, at all events, he was not ragged again.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. Wharton's Discovery!

"MY only hat!"

Harry Wharton uttered that exclamation suddenly.

It was Saturday—the day after Coker's departure. Morning lessons were over, but the chums of the Remove were not thinking of football. The ground was something like a bog, and the game had to be given up for that afternoon. But Harry Wharton & Co. had another matter to occupy their minds.

Wharton was sitting at the table in Study No. 1, with the newspaper before him in which was the photograph of Rooke, the absconding solicitor.

The chums of the Remove had stared at that photograph off and on incessantly, trying to figure in their minds where they had seen that face before.

They were more certain than ever that they had seen it—especially the deep-set eyes were familiar to their minds—and yet, so far, they had not succeeded in "placing" it.

But Wharton's sudden exclamation, as he scanned the photograph with knitted brows, showed that something had flashed into his mind.

His chums gathered round him eagerly.

"Got it at last?" asked Bob Cherry.

Wharton raised his face, flushed and excited, from the paper.

"I'm not sure, but I think so!" he said.

"Good egg!"

"The good-eggfulness is terrific, my esteemed chum," said Hurree Singh.

—ANOTHER REAL GLOSSY PHOTO!

"Where have you beheld the honourable and ludicrous rascal?"

"Get your colour-box, Franky!"

Nugent stared.

"My colour-box?" he repeated.

"Yes—quick!"

Nugent obeyed in wonder. What on earth his colour-box had to do with the photograph of the missing swindler was more than he could fathom. But he placed the colour-box on the table, and Wharton opened it eagerly.

He selected a brush, and dipped it in Chinese white.

Johnny Bull tapped his forehead, as if to hint some doubts of his leader's sanity. But Wharton heeded not.

With the brush he traced round the bearded, whiskered face in the photograph, carefully obliterating all the hirsute adornments of the face.

The juniors watched him with deep intentness.

They understood his object now.

When the beard and side-whiskers were painted out, the face was turned into a clean-shaven one, altering its appearance amazingly.

The sharp features, the close-set eyes, were the same, but the aspect of the countenance was strangely different without the whiskers and the beard.

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

4 Have a Shot at our Grand Football Competition! Money Prizes to be Won!

And an exclamation broke from Nugent and Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry at once.

"I know him now!"

Wharton's eyes were blazing with excitement.

"You know him, chaps?"

"Yes, rather!"

"It's the Johnny at Spindrift Cottage!"

"The beast who wanted to keep us out in the snow!"

Wharton nodded.

"It flashed into my mind all of a sudden," he said. "I knew I'd seen him before, and yet the face didn't seem the same. All of a sudden it came on me that when I'd seen him, he hadn't those whiskers!"

"My hat!"

"The man at Spindrift Cottage was clean-shaven, you remember. He had the same features, the same bald roof!"

"And he shaved off his beard and whiskers when he did a guy, of course," exclaimed Bob Cherry excitedly.

"Of course he would!"

"And he had that cottage taken, all ready to hide himself in!" exclaimed Frank. "And that's why he didn't want to be seen!"

"Well, this beats it!" said Johnny Bull. "We've stumbled on the rotter quite by accident, while the police are hunting for him up and down the country. Of course, they'd never think of looking for him there—why, even in this neighbourhood hardly anybody even knows the cottage is there, and nobody ever goes there; nobody knows it's let! And if the agent saw his photograph in the papers, he wouldn't think of Joseph Smith, as he calls himself—Joseph Smith is clean-shaven!"

"It took me a long time to tumble to it," said Wharton, "and I shouldn't have guessed, only we were trying to think it out to help old Coker!"

"I remember the way he planked his name on us, too!" said Nugent thoughtfully. "We never asked him his name—he told us, as if he wanted us to know!"

"So that if we thought of him afterwards, we should think of him as Joseph Smith," said Wharton, with a nod.

The chums of the Remove were greatly excited.

It seemed too good to be true.

They had thought several times about that strange recluse of Spindrift Cottage; but the matter had been fading from their minds. It was no business of theirs what the man chose to do, and how he chose to live, and, in a short time, they would have forgotten him. But now—

"I suppose there can't be a mistake?" Johnny Bull said soberly. "You see, it might only be a resemblance—he might even be a relation!"

"Of course, we can't be quite sure," assented Harry; "we don't want to act in a hurry, and put our foot into it. The man may be only an eccentric chap who likes a lonely life—a giddy poet or something—or even an invalid, as he says, who has been ordered to have sea-air, and plenty of it. It's possible. But he's so like Rooke—Rooke without his whiskers—that I really think he's the man. Before we say anything, we've got to make sure, of course!"

"That's the idea. How are we going to make sure?"

"We've got to decide!"

And the chums of the Remove discussed the matter earnestly. There was a doubt in the matter, of course. But in their hearts they felt sure that the self-styled Joseph Smith was the man for

whom the police were searching—the rascal who had absconded with Miss Judith Coker's entire fortune.

All the circumstances of the case strengthened their belief. A safer hiding-place than the lonely cottage by the cliffs could hardly have been found. Once safely ensconced there, the hunted man disappeared from the sight of all human eyes.

If he had no secret to keep, why had he attempted to keep the storm-caught schoolboys out of the house, in the driving snow—and when they had forced an entrance, why had he locked himself in a room to avoid their sight?

But for the chance that Bob Cherry had turned the electric pocket-lamp upon him in surprise, they would never have seen his face. Then they would have suspected nothing.

The juniors were bubbling over with suppressed excitement.

To be the means of running down the rascal and recovering the money of which he had robbed Coker's aunt—the thought of it naturally excited them.

And the more they discussed the matter, and reflected upon it, the more certain they were that he was the right man.

"We'll make some inquiries first," was Wharton's final decision. "We can see the house-agent in Friardale who let the cottage. We'll pump him without letting him know what we are after. We'll find out what he knows about the man. If he knows him, or knows that his name is Smith, that settles it. If he doesn't know anything about him, it's another point against the rotter. Suppose we send a wire to Coker, and tell him we're on the track, and then start? We've got nothing to do this afternoon. Footer's off."

"Right-ho!" said the rest.

And the juniors put on their coats and left the school, eager to get to work.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Coker is Pleased!

HARRY WHARTON & CO. stopped at the post-office in Friardale to send the telegram to Horace Coker. It was a brief message, but very much to the point:

"On the track. Come at once to Anchor, Pegg."

"WHARTON."

"That'll bring old Coker down!" said Harry, as they left the post-office. "By the time we meet him at the Anchor, in Pegg, we'll know all the agent can tell us about the tenant of Spindrift Cottage."

"Good egg!"

And the juniors made their way to the agent's office.

Making inquiries after the manner of detectives was a rather new experience to Harry Wharton & Co., and it was somewhat doubtful if they would be able to pump the house-agent without betraying the fact that they had a very keen interest in the mysterious tenant of Spindrift Cottage.

They found Mr. Smart, the house-agent, in his office. He was smoking a cigarette, and did not seem to be overburdened with business. His look showed that he was wondering what the schoolboys could possibly want with him, but he was very polite.

"You've got a cottage to let about a mile from Pegg, I think, Mr. Smart?" Harry Wharton asked, by way of a beginning.

"The bungalows?" asked Mr. Smart,

with a look of surprise. "Yes, they don't let until the summer. You don't want a bungalow, eh?"

"I don't mean the bungalows, but a cottage on the other side of the village, called Spindrift Cottage," explained Harry.

"Oh, that's let."

"Let!" said Harry.

"Yes. Let about a month ago," said the agent carelessly.

The juniors looked a little disappointed. If the cottage had been let a month ago, and the absconding solicitor had only disappeared four or five days ago, the matter did not seem to fit together.

"Has the tenant taken possession?" asked Harry.

"Yes."

"Would you mind telling us how long ago?"

"Only a few days, I think. The furniture was sent in about a fortnight ago, and there were orders to the tradespeople about the same time."

Wharton paused. Mr. Smart's manner showed that he had answered enough questions, which, to him, seemed only dictated by idle curiosity.

"Look here! We—we want to know something about that tenant," said Wharton directly. "We fancy we know him. I suppose there's no objection to telling us?"

"Not that I know of," said Mr. Smart.

"His name is Smith, isn't it?"

"Yes—Joseph Smith."

"You've seen him?"

The agent nodded.

"A clean-shaven man, isn't he?"

"No. Grey beard and moustache," said Mr. Smart. "I see you don't know him. Can't be a friend of yours at all."

"But—but he had a bald head?" asked Wharton, somewhat taken aback.

"No. Thick head of dark hair," said Mr. Smart.

"Oh crumbs!" said Bob Cherry.

"Excuse me, young gentlemen, my time is valuable!" said Mr. Smart, though, as a matter of fact, he did not seem to have anything to do. "If I can do anything for you—"

"Well, we wanted to know about that chap," said Harry Wharton. "We thought he might be someone we wanted to meet. Is he an invalid?"

"Yes. A dipsomaniac, I understand, trying a cure for drink," said Mr. Smart. "Rather a queer chap. I should advise you not to visit him. I understand that he wants to be let alone, and he took Spindrift Cottage to be quiet. Good-afternoon!"

Wharton would have liked to ask some more questions, but it was clearly useless, so the juniors quitted the house-agent's office.

In the street, Bob Cherry whistled dolefully.

"Rather a set-back!" he remarked.

"Some giddy slave to drink, you see, ordered by the doctor to stick himself there for a cure. I remember we heard him guzzling, though, so he must have taken some of the enemy with him."

Harry Wharton shook his head.

"I'm quite certain now," he said quietly. "The agent says he's a man with a thick head of hair and a grey beard and moustache. The man we saw at Spindrift Cottage was clean-shaven. Yet he's the same man."

"No law against shaving," Johnny Bull suggested.

"But he couldn't go bald in a few weeks."

"Well, no."

"Just think a minute. Rooke—if it's Rooke—must have taken that cottage before he bolted, to have it all ready to hide in. He came down here to see

about it. If he had come here looking the same as usual, the agent would remember afterwards that he'd let the cottage to a man answering Rooke's description. He'd see the description published in all the newspapers.

"Now, Rooke couldn't shave clean to see the agent. It was before the time he was ready to bolt. But he wouldn't want to look like himself, so he wore a wig, and he either dyed his whiskers and beard, or wore a large false beard over them when he saw the agent.

"Very likely he wore a big muffler, or something like that, in this weather which would make it easier. So the agent only knows him as a man with a grey beard and plenty of hair.

"But when he's at home in the cottage, not expecting anybody to see him, he wouldn't take the trouble to rig himself up like that every day. We took him by surprise, and that's how we found him clean-shaven and with a bald head."

"I see," said Bob slowly. "And if he ever goes out of doors he goes out got up as he was when the agent saw him?"

"That's my idea."

"Anyway, there's something fishy about him, because he can't be bald and have plenty of hair, too," said Nugent. "Smart says he had plenty of hair. When we saw him he was bald. Yet he's the same man—Joseph Smith. That proves that he was wearing a wig—at least, when he saw the agent."

"And an honest man wouldn't want to disguise himself for such a simple matter as hiring a cottage from a house-agent," said Johnny Bull.

"Exactly!"

"It's a dead cert!" said Bob Cherry. "Only—"

"Only what?"

"Blessed if I care about the idea of going to the police station with a yarn like that. You see, they'd think we're only kids, and—and—"

"We're not going to the police," said Wharton. "If he's the man that's wanted, we can nail him ourselves."

"Phew!"

"If it turns out to be a mistake—"

murmured Nugent uneasily. "We shall have to be careful, of course. We'll wait till Coker comes down, and then all go to the cottage together. I don't know whether Coker's ever seen the man, but if he has he will be able to say for certain if Joseph Smith is Rooke or not."

"Well, that's so."

"We'll wait for Coker," said Harry.

The juniors rambled along the shore to the fishing village. They knew the train that Horace Coker would come by if he came, so they knew when to expect him. And they had no doubt that he would come. It was pretty certain that Coker had not succeeded in discovering any clues himself, and so he was not likely to be busy.

They waited outside the Anchor Inn when the time came for Coker's arrival. And Coker was on time.

The burly form of the Fifth-Former came striding down the village street, and the Removites hurried to meet him.

Coker was looking flushed and eager.

"What's the news?" he asked immediately, as he met the juniors.

"We've remembered where we've seen him," said Wharton. "He's near this place, in a lonely cottage. Have you ever seen Rooke, Coker?"

Coker nodded.

"Yes. I saw him once or twice, and never noticed him specially, of course. So



RAGGING THE RAGGERS!—"If ragging is the order of the day, we may as well start," said Harry Wharton. "Collar these rotters, you chaps!" The Removites piled in with energy. There were nine of them against five of the raggars, and the latter did not have a look in. (See Chapter 2.)

far as I remember, he's just like his photograph in the papers."

"But if you saw him you'd know him again, even if he made some change in his appearance?"

"Oh, yes, I'd know him," said Coker. "I remember he had very sharp eyes. I remember telling Reggie once that Aunt Judy's solicitor looked a good deal like a ferret. I'd know the rotter if I spotted him. Let's go after him. I haven't found anything out myself yet. I was trying to make some plans when your telegram came, but somehow or other I couldn't quite decide how to begin."

The juniors grinned. It was not likely that Horace Coker, unaided, would ever have been able quite to decide how to begin.

"But tell me what you know about the man, and I'll see what I think of it," said Coker.

Wharton concisely explained, telling the story in a few words of the adventure in the snow at the lonely cottage by the cliff.

Coker of the Fifth listened open-mouthed, so intense was his interest.

"What do you think?" asked Wharton in conclusion.

Coker's eyes gleamed.

"Think!" he exclaimed. "I think we've got him! It's the man, of course. I knew I'd get on the track if I took the matter in hand!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob Cherry.

That was certainly rather cool of Coker. The hero of the Fifth was going to take all the credit of the capture to himself, if the recluse really turned out to be Rooke, and if he was captured. That was Coker of the Fifth all over.

But Wharton only smiled. He did not mind from what point of view Coker regarded the matter, so long as the affair was a success. That was the chief point.

"I'm anxious to get at the scoundrel!" said Coker, clenching his big fists. "I want to give him a really good one—right in the eye! I told Aunt Judy before I left that I was on the track, and left her awfully excited. She's a jolly cute old girl—she had an idea all along that I could handle this matter. It will make the police look rather sick when they find that a Fifth Form chap from Greyfriars has done what they've been trying to do for a week—what?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Coker stared.

"What are you cackling at?" he demanded.

"Well, I must say it seems to me that it's the Remove chaps, and not a Fifth Form chap at all, who've done anything so far!" said Johnny Bull indignantly.

"Oh, that's all right!" said Coker. "Don't you be afraid—I'll let you have plenty of credit for having helped me. Let's get along to Spindrifft Cottage before dark, and we'll interview Mr. Joseph Smith—and if he's Rooke, I'll rook him!"

And they started off together for Spindrifft Cottage.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

Coker's Capture!

LOVELY and silent the little cottage looked, as the Greyfriars fellows came in sight of it. There were still piles of snow banked up in the garden, and all the

6 You Must Add the "Magnet's" Free Real Football Photo to Your Collection!

shutters of the lower windows were closed.

The shadows were lengthening on the cliffs and the shingle, but as yet no light gleamed from the windows.

"Jolly safe place to hide," Coker remarked, looking round, with a shiver. "But I should think a chap would soon get fed up with it."

"Better than Portland Prison," Nugent remarked.

"Yes; and when the hue-and-cry's over, he's in a convenient place to take a coasting vessel over to Holland," said Coker. "Jolly deep of him to sneak into an out-of-the-way place like this. I dare say he's got a bottle for company. My aunt says that it's come out that he had taken to drink, and that was very likely one cause why he embezzled her cash, and then bolted with the rest. But he'll soon be in a place where they're all total abstainers."

And Coker chuckled gleefully. "Doesn't look as if there's anybody there," Nugent remarked, as they drew nearer to the cottage. "He may be out."

"We'll soon see." Coker strode up to the door, and knocked a thunderous knock. The crash of the knocker rang through the house. He tried the door, but it was fast. The damage the juniors had done on their previous visit had been repaired.

There was no reply to the knock, loud as it was.

Wharton rapped on the window-shutters with his knuckles.

"Mr. Smith!" he called out.

No reply.

"We want to see you, and we're going to!" called out Wharton. "If you don't open the door, we're going to bust it in!"

"And jolly quick!" said Coker.

A voice shaking with passionate anger replied from behind the window-shutters.

"Go away! How dare you trespass in my garden! I will have you prosecuted if you do not go away instantly, you young scoundrels!"

Coker set his teeth.

"I know that voice," he said, in a low tone. "I've heard the villain talking to my aunt, you know. That's Rooke."

"Sure, Coker?"

"Bet you my Sunday topper."

Wharton drew a deep breath.

"Then if you know he's the man, we're justified in collaring him," he said.

"What-ho!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"We'll swear each other in as special constables, and uphold law and order."

"Lend me a hand with that rock!" said Coker.

Crash!

Crash!

The huge, heavy rock thundered on the door, and at the second concussion it burst open. The door flew violently back, and the juniors rushed into the little, gloomy hall. There was no one to be seen—and the door of the little parlour was locked. The recluse of Spindrift Cottage had evidently locked himself in the room, as he had done before. Coker hammered on the door.

"Let us in, you scoundrel!" he roared.

"Get out of my house!" came the rasping voice in reply. "I shall have you prosecuted for burglary!"

"Can't prosecute a chap for burglary when you're in gaol!" retorted Coker.

"We know who you are, Rooke, you thief!"

There was a startled gasp in the room.

"What—what! My name's Smith—Joseph Smith!"

"If your name's Joseph Smith, we'll pay for the damage," said Coker. "But

if your name's Rooke, we're going to take you to the police-station, and my aunt's money with you!"

"What! Who—who are you?"

"I'm Coker of Greyfriars, you villain—Miss Coker's nephew!"

"Oh!"

"Will you open this door?"

There was no reply, and Coker, quite reckless now, seized the rock again, and crashed it upon the flimsy door of the parlour. The door flew open, and Coker sprang into the room.

A man with a grey beard and moustaches, and a dark head of hair, stood facing him as he sprang in—panting with rage and fear at the sight of the Greyfriars fellows. It was the man the boys had seen before—but he was undoubtedly wearing his disguise now. He had undoubtedly donned it while the knocking was going on at the door.

"Here he is!" roared Coker. "We've got you, Rooke!"

The man panted spasmodically.

"You young ruffian! Leave my house instantly!"

Coker laughed mockingly.

"Rats! We've got you! Where's my aunt's cash?"

"Will you go?" the man shrieked, and he caught up a heavy chair and swung it above his head. "Another step, and I will brain you—"

"Put that chair down, you ass!" said Coker contemptuously. "You can't brain six of us. I tell you we've got you. I know who you are. You're Rooke, my aunt's solicitor! Haven't I seen you at her house, you rascal?"

"My name is Smith—"

"You've grown a beard jolly quick since Wednesday, Mr. Smith!" grinned Bob Cherry.

"And you were bald four days ago," remarked Nugent.

The man's eyes glittered at them. He recognised the juniors now.

He made a movement as if to rush upon them. But Coker was springing on him like a tiger. Coker might not be overburdened with brains, but he had heaps of pluck. The desperate man lashed at him with the chair, but Harry Wharton snatched up a cushion and hurled it, and it caught the rascal full in the face. He staggered back as he struck, and Coker eluded the descending chair, and closed with him.

"Now, then!" said Coker, between his teeth.

In the grip of the powerful Fifth-Former of Greyfriars the man had little chance. He dropped the chair, and struggled desperately, but Coker hurled him to the floor, and planted a knee on his chest.

"Now give him a clean shave," said Bob Cherry, with a breathless chuckle.

Coker dragged at the beard and the hair. They came off in his grasp. The bald head and the clean-shaven face the juniors knew so well were revealed.

"Get a rope from somewhere, and tie him up," said Coker. "Mustn't run any risk of his bolting, in case he's hidden the money."

The hard face beneath him went pale.

"Let me up—let me up!"

"Rats!"

"I—I confess!" panted Rooke. "Let me up! Let me go, and I will hand back the money—every penny of it!"

"You'll hand it back and go to chokey too," said Coker coolly. "Get something to tie him up with, you fellows!"

Bob Cherry cheerfully tore a cushion-cover into strips, and the man's wrists were bound together, and then his ankles.

Then he was allowed to rise and sit down.

"Now, one of you kids run off and

fetch the police!" said Coker. "Get Inspector Grimes from Courtfield. He'll be glad to come when you tell him what's happened. He can search the house for the cash, too, and take this rotter to the station. Get a trap from Pegg. I'll pay the damage."

"I'll go," said Wharton. "You chaps take care that rotter doesn't get away."

"What-ho!" said the juniors.

"I'm going to watch him," said Coker. "I won't take half an eye off the beast till he's got the handcuffs on. Hurry up!"

And Wharton departed.

It was a couple of hours later, and darkness had fallen when the Removite returned with Inspector Grimes, of Courtfield, and a constable.

The inspector came fussily in.

Probably he was not over-pleased by the fact that a set of schoolboys had succeeded in capturing the criminal for whom the police of the kingdom had been hunting in vain for the past week. But he was glad enough of the opportunity of clapping the handcuffs upon the wrists of Mr. Rooke.

"Where's the man?" he asked.

"Here he is, inspector."

The handcuffs clinked on Rooke's wrists.

Then the inspector and the constable searched the cottage, and under a loose board in the floor a valise was discovered.

"Here's the plunder!" said Inspector Grimes quietly.

And Rooke left the house with the handcuffs upon his wrists and the constable's hand upon his arm, and the inspector followed with the valise.

The Greyfriars fellows accompanied them to Pegg, where the inspector took a trap for Courtfield with his prisoner, and Wharton & Co. returned to Greyfriars.

Coker's aunt, needless to say, was overjoyed by that telegram from her dear nephew informing her that the absconder was under lock and key and the money recovered. Miss Coker's opinion of her nephew's marvellous abilities was more than confirmed.

Horace Coker had taken up the matter, and the very next day the criminal was arrested. The facts spoke for themselves, as Miss Coker was never tired of saying. True, Coker loyally explained to her that some junior kids had helped him, but Miss Coker brushed that trifling circumstance aside as of no importance. Her Horace had done it, and her Horace was evidently, as she had always believed, the finest and cleverest fellow in the wide world.

But Coker, even if he was very Cokerish, as Nugent described it, was really grateful to the chums of the Remove, especially for the way they had stood up for Reggie in his absence.

Coker minor told his major all about that, and one of Coker's first proceedings was to administer a terrific licking apiece to Hobson of the Shell and Temple of the Fourth.

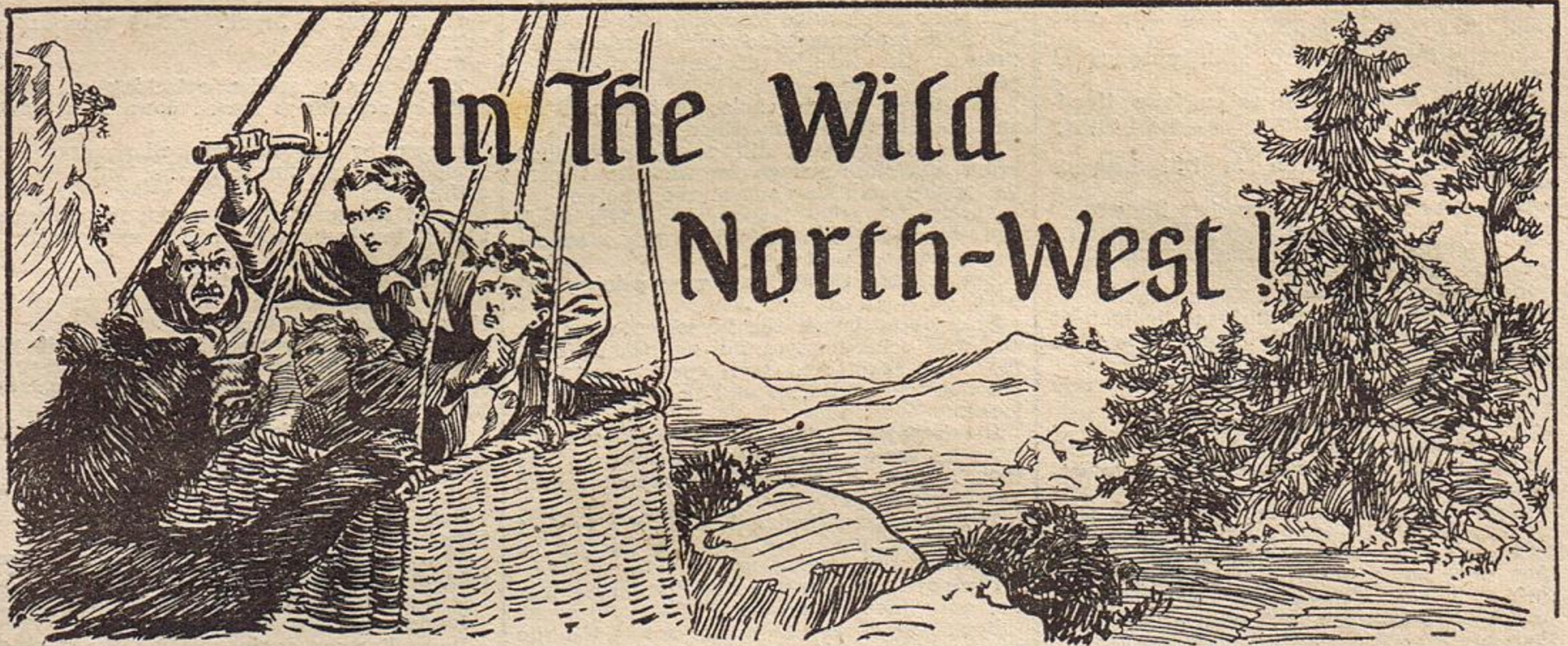
And the "tenner" from Aunt Judy came, after all, and there was a tremendous feed in Coker's study, and Harry Wharton & Co. were honoured guests.

And for a time, at least, the hatchet was buried between Coker of the Fifth and the Famous Five, and all was peace and friendship and smiles, and the Removites cheered heartily when Harry Wharton stood up at that great feed to propose the health of "Good old Coker!"

THE END.

(There will be another gripping story of the Famous Chums of Greyfriars in next week's issue, entitled, "In Lawless Hands!" By Frank Richards, the finest writer of school tales in the world.)

A TALE WITH A THRILL IN EVERY LINE! BEING THE FURTHER ADVENTURES OF THE CHUMS OF CEDAR CREEK ADRIFT IN THE RUNAWAY BALLOON ACROSS THE WILDS OF NORTH-WEST CANADA!



A Splendid Long Complete Tale, dealing with the Schooldays in the Backwoods of Canada of

FRANK RICHARDS.

(Author of the Famous School Tales of Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Hunted Down!

CRACK, crack!
The rifle-shots rang out sharply on the sunlit prairie.
Frank Richards, his heart thumping, looked over the rim of the car as the balloon shot up from the plain.
The last bag of sand had been thrown out, and the balloon rose fast. The gang of rustlers riding below fired furiously after it as it sped upward.
Whizzzzz!
"That's through the balloon!" said Bob Lawless, looking up at the swelling gas-envelope overhead.
Crack, crack!
Two or three of the hurried bullets struck the car and glanced away.
But in a couple of minutes the balloon was out of effective range.
Frank Richards, looking downwards, could see Handsome Alf and his gang riding in pursuit as the balloon rolled westward on the wind.
A clump of timber hid them from sight at last.
Frank turned to his companions.
"We're well out of that!" he exclaimed.
"I guess so!" said Bob Lawless grimly.
"What do you think, Cherub?"
Vere Beauclerc smiled.
"It was a narrow escape!" he said. "But we could have put up a fight, all the same!"
Frank regarded the swelling envelope above with an anxious eye.
At least one of the flying bullets had gone through it, and it was certain that the gas was escaping from the slit, slowly but surely.
So far, however, it had no effect on the balloon, which showed no sign of sinking.
In fact, it was still rising.
High over plain and forest it floated on westward, towards the rocky spurs of the Cascade Mountains.
"Not much more danger from that gang!" remarked Bob. "They'll never keep up with us, I guess!"
"They're out of sight, anyway!"
"Good!"
Bob Lawless was attending to Bill Lomax, the prospector, who was lying on the rugs in the bottom of the car.
His bronzed face was pale.

His wound had begun to bleed again, and Bob Lawless was washing it carefully, preparatory to replacing the bandages.
"How do you feel now, Mr. Lomax?" he asked at last.
The man smiled faintly.
"I guess I shall pull through O.K.!" he replied. "But it would have been all up with me if that gang had roped me in, sonny! And I reckon Handsome Alf was surprised to see me vamoose in this hyer way! What beats me is how you kids came hyer in the North-West in such a contraption as this! I've never seen the like in Western Canada before!"
"Same here!" answered Bob, laughing. "This isn't a holiday trip! We belong to Cedar Creek School, in the Thompson Valley, and a sneaking coyote cut us adrift in the balloon yesterday! It's a runaway balloon, and it belongs to an American, who is still hunting for it on the other side of the Fraser River!"
"By gum!" said Lomax.
"The galoot was blown north in a wind-storm, after an ascent down in the States," explained Bob. "The balloon came down near our school, and we caught it for him. And then a skunk named Gunten cut us adrift in it. And where we shall land is a rather interesting question—if we don't come down to rest in the Pacific Ocean!"
"I reckon it was lucky for me you came down in this section!" said Lomax. "They would have had me, sure!" He touched the wound. "I've got somethin' hyer to remind me of Handsome Alf Carson! I guess I'll let him have it back some day! That gang are after my strike in the Cascade Range, but I reckon they'll have to let up on it now!"
"A big strike?" asked Bob curiously.
The prospector's eyes gleamed.
"A regular bonanza!" he said. "There's been some big strikes in the Cascade Range, but I guess my bonanza lays over them!"
"What on earth is a bonanza, Bob?" murmured Frank Richards.
Bob laughed.
"A rich gold-strike," he answered. "You've still got some of our language to learn, Franky!"
"It's a regular sockdologer!" said Bill Lomax. "And if that gang had roped me in before I could stake out the claim, I

guess that claim would have been staked by Alf Carson & Co.!"
"But they can't find it without you?" asked Beauclerc.
"Not without the map I've got inside my rags!" said the miner. "And I guess Handsome Alf won't touch that now! Can you see anything of them, sonny?"
Frank Richards looked down from the car again.
Far away on the plain beneath he could discern a number of moving dots.
It was impossible to make out their form, but he did not need telling that they were horsemen in motion.
Handsome Alf and his followers were still on the trail of the balloon.
The huge, swelling balloon was easily visible to them at the distance, small as they looked to the schoolboys in the car.
"I can see them, Mr. Lomax," said Frank. "But they're almost out of sight."
"I guess they'll follow so long as they can see the contraption," said Lomax. "But they can't reach us! Can this thing go higher?"
"I think so."
"All O.K. so long as it don't go down!"
Frank Richards did not reply to that.
For by this time the balloon was showing signs of settling.
The gas that had been lost in making a descent was compensated for by the throwing out of ballast.
But in the great gas-envelope was the slit of a bullet, through which the gas slowly oozed and escaped.
The loss told upon the balloon, slowly but surely.
Frank would hardly have noticed the descent, so gradual was it; but he could not help observing that the earth was drawing nearer.
Plains and woods and creeks had been spread out like a map below, but already he was able to distinguish them more clearly.
He exchanged a glance with his companions.
"She's settling!" muttered Bob.
"And if those scoundrels come up——"
"It will be a fight," said Vere Beauclerc quietly.
"Better look to the guns!"
The schoolboys' hearts were beating.

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"THE RED RAIDER!"

A MAGNIFICENT STORY OF FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOLDAYS. :: By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

8 You simply Must Not miss next week's GRAND BUMPER NUMBER!

But they were quite cool. If the balloon settled down, and was overtaken by the gang of rustlers, Frank Richards & Co. realised what was before them—a fight for their lives.

Life itself was at stake, and they were prepared to defend themselves. Quietly they examined such weapons as they had.

The rifle and revolver taken from Handsome Alf were in the car, with a good supply of cartridges.

There was a revolver in Bill Lomax's belt.

They were all the weapons, but the schoolboys were thankful that they had so much. Bob Lawless took the rifle, examined it carefully, and loaded it.

His sunburnt face was a little pale. It was the first time he had thought of pulling trigger against a human being, but he did not shrink from it.

In the wild North-West their lives were in their own hands.

The wounded miner watched them. "We're going down?" he asked. "I'm afraid so," answered Frank reluctantly.

"And they're coming on?" "Yes."

"I guess—" Bill Lomax hesitated, and then went on, with a quick breath: "Boys, this ain't your funeral! I ain't no right to drag you into this! They're a bad gang, that lot! You'd better put me down as soon as your contraption is low enough, an' leave me to take my chance!"

"Rot!" said Bob Lawless tersely. "Youngster, that gang would shoot the hull crowd of you as soon as look at you!" said Lomax seriously.

"We shall do some shooting first!" said Bob determinedly. "We're standing by you, Mr. Lomax!"

"But I reckon—" "Bosh!" said Frank Richards warmly. "Do you think we could let you land among that gang, to be murdered?"

"We sha'n't, anyway!" said Vere Beauclerc. "If it's a fight, we're all in it, Mr. Lomax!"

"I guess you've no call to face that for me!" said the miner.

"Well, I dare say Handsome Alf wouldn't let us get away to tell the yarn if we did let him have you, Mr. Lomax," said Bob. "I guess I wouldn't trust him!"

Lomax nodded. "That's so!"

"Anyway, it's a fight if they come up!" said Beauclerc. "And we're in a good position! They'll be easier targets than we shall!"

"I guess I can still handle a shooter!" said Bill Lomax, taking out his revolver. "Can you handle that rifle, young 'un?"

Bob grinned. "Can a canoe float?" was his answer.

"Bob's the champion shot of Cedar Creek!" said Frank Richards, laughing. "They won't be glad to get in range, I can tell you!"

Rifle in hand, Bob Lawless looked over the rim of the car.

The balloon was settling slowly downwards over a wide plain that rose in a gentle acclivity towards the distant mountains.

Closer now, though still far away, the horsemen were riding in hot pursuit, and they were near enough for the schoolboys to discern the glitter of Handsome Alf's earrings in the sun.

Bob set his lips. "That galoot gets the first bullet when the circus begins!" he said grimly. And they waited and watched.

THE SECOND CHAPTER. A Fight for Life.

LOWER and lower the great balloon surged.

The schoolboys waited quietly. Bill Lomax said no more, though evidently it weighed upon the honest Canadian's mind that he had brought the schoolboys into this deadly quarrel.

It would have been easy to carry out his generous suggestion.

He could have been landed before the enemy came up, and the balloon, lightened of his weight, would have risen swiftly into the clouds again.

But not for a single instant did Frank Richards & Co. dream of such an expedient. THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

The man was a stranger to them; but he was an honest man pursued by lawless ruffians, and they were bound to stand by him.

The coming conflict caused them no fear. If their minds were troubled, it was rather by their repugnance to taking human life than by the thought of their own terrible peril.

But there was no choice in that matter, and they had made up their minds to it.

Lower and lower, till the grassy plain below was close enough for them to discern the gophers blinking out of their holes.

At the lower level there was little wind, and the balloon drifted slowly, almost imperceptibly, westward.

The rustlers, riding hard, were gaining fast now.

In a dusty bunch the horsemen came on, and the schoolboys could see their faces, red with exertion, and could read the anticipation of success and triumph in their looks.

Handsome Alf's face was set and savage. As he came closer he raised his rifle and took a shot at the balloon, which grazed the gas-envelope.

The car was swinging less than fifty feet above the ground now, and the hard-riding horsemen were racing up.

The voyagers seemed to be descending into the very jaws of death.

Bob Lawless rested his rifle across the rim of the wicker car, and glanced through the sights steadily.

The muzzle was bearing upon the man with the earrings, and Bob's hand did not tremble.

His comrades watched him silently. Handsome Alf had fired the first shot, and of his intentions there was no doubt—murderous violence as soon as the schoolboys were at his mercy.

It was no time for hesitation. "Let him have it!" muttered Lomax.

The miner had dragged himself up, and was leaning on the wicker rim, revolver in hand.

Bob still waited. "I guess I'm going to make sure!" he answered.

There was a sudden burst of firing from the horsemen, and the bullets whistled round the balloon.

They had spotted the rifle-muzzle gleaming over the rim of the car, and realised that danger threatened.

But the rifle-shots, fired with the riders in rapid motion, flew wide of the mark.

But as the horsemen came closer the bullets flew nearer.

Bob set his teeth hard, and a glitter came into his eyes.

It was time! With a hand that was as firm as iron he pulled trigger.

Crack!

Frank Richards caught his breath as he followed, with his eyes, the sudden shot.

In the distance, Handsome Alf and his horse rolled on the plain together.

"A bullseye!" grinned Bill Lomax.

The next moment, however, Carson was seen to leap to his feet from the grass.

His horse lay where it had fallen. At the very moment that the bullet sped, the horse had tossed up its head and received the bullet intended for the rider.

Handsome Alf stood, thigh-deep in the thick grass, shaking his fist and raving curses as his companions galloped on, leaving him standing.

"The gee-gee got it!" muttered Beauclerc.

"Well, he's out of the race," said Frank. "I—I'm rather glad."

Bob knitted his brows as he reloaded the rifle.

Five horsemen were tearing on towards the sinking balloon.

"Fire!" muttered Lomax. "They're inside pistol-range now."

His revolver rang out as he spoke.

Crack, crack, crack!

The rifle and two revolvers opened fire upon the gang of rustlers.

Loud yells answered from the horsemen.

Two of them were seen to reel, and though they did not fall, they stopped in the race and dismounted.

It was plain that they were hit.

Three came tearing on furiously.

The balloon was not a dozen feet above the ground now, and looked like bumping at any moment.

A bullet whizzed over the car, and spun Frank Richards' hat from his head.

It fell in the bottom of the car, and Frank, dazed, clapped his hand to his head.

"Hurt?" cried Beauclerc.

"No!" panted Frank. "I—I think not—no!"

Splash!

There was a sudden splashing of water, and the schoolboys stared down in astonishment.

Unseen by the voyagers, whose eyes were turned on the pursuers, the balloon had drifted on over a wide river, and as it reached the level of the earth it was water that it touched instead of the solid prairie.

Splash, splash!

"Oh crumbs!" gasped Bob.

The three horsemen slowed down as the river rolled before them.

If the balloon crossed it, the pursuit was stopped, but in the very middle of the wide stream the car was dragging through the water.

"Throw something out!" panted Frank. "Anything!"

He grasped a heavy bearskin rug from the bottom of the car, and tossed it overboard.

Bob and Beauclerc pitched over two or three loose articles at the same moment.

The balloon, relieved, rose six or seven feet, clearing the river.

It drifted on, close over the shining water.

Bump!

Down it came again, striking the bank on the opposite side.

The concussion sent it spinning upward again.

Lomax sank down in the car, and the schoolboys held on as it rocked and swayed wildly.

There was a shout of rage across the river, and spattering bullets followed the balloon, few of them coming close.

Handsome Alf and his gang had been shaken off at last.

One of the horsemen, bolder than the rest, dashed into the river to swim his steed across, but the swift current whirled him away, and he was glad to struggle back to the bank.

Bump!

In a series of looping runs the balloon rolled on, striking the earth again and again.

It was a good two miles from the river when it collapsed at last, landing in the thick grass and remaining there.

The gas-envelope sagged over.

"I guess we're landed!" panted Bob Lawless.

He swept his eyes anxiously towards the now distant river.

There was no sign of the rustlers.

"I reckon it's O.K.," said Bill Lomax. "I know this hyer section. There ain't a crossing for five miles either way. I guess Handsome Alf has come out at the little end of the horn, arter all."

That was good news to Frank Richards & Co.

Lomax leaned on the edge of the car and scanned the plain.

Within a few miles rose the dark foothills to the west.

"You see that clump of trees yonder, sonnies?" said the prospector.

"Yes," said Frank.

"That's on the trail to Last Chance. I guess that if we can hoof it fifteen miles we're all O.K."

"I guess we'll try," said Bob.

The balloon had landed on thick grass in the midst of clumps of timber.

Here and there rocky spurs cropped out of the soil.

Bob Lawless looked for a handy tree to fasten the grapnel, for, collapsed as the balloon looked, there was no doubt that it would rise when it was relieved of their weight.

Whether Mr. Hiram K. Chowder, the American balloonist, would ever recover his property from that outlying region was a very great question, but the schoolboys naturally wished to do their best to secure it.

"I guess that tree will answer," said Bob.

"You fellows keep in the car till I've got it fixed."

"Right-ho!"

Bob took the rope and slipped from the car, which shifted a little, but did not rise.

He ran to the tree to secure the rope, his chums watching him.

To their astonishment Bob stopped suddenly as he reached the clump of timber, turned, and bolted back to the car.

His face was white. "What's the matter?" shouted Frank in alarm.

There was no need for Bob to answer. From the dark shadows of the timber a grizzly bear loped out in pursuit of the schoolboy, his savage jaws only a few yards behind Bob as he ran.

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Dropped from the Clouds.

BOB LAWLESS bounded frantically into the car.

The fierce animal gained on him at every step; his red, open jaws were only a couple of feet behind as Bob bundled in over the wicker rim, and rolled in the car head-foremost.

There was a deep, savage growl from the grizzly.

He reared on his hind legs, his paws catching at the car, and his little red eyes glared in over the edge.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Frank, almost frozen for the moment.

The grizzly was gaunt, and evidently hungry.

Doubtless he had been watching for prey in the timber when Bob Lawless almost walked into his jaws.

Vere Beauclerc caught up the axe and made a fierce slash at the threatening muzzle over the car's edge.

The huge animal growled savagely, and backed away.

"The rifle—quick!" panted Bob, as he struggled to his feet.

Frank handed it to him.

The grizzly was coming on again, and his paws were laid on the car, evidently to climb in.

Bob thrust the rifle almost into the bear's jaws as he pulled the trigger.

From the grizzly's deep throat came a howl that was almost a yell, and again the ferocious brute backed down.

Bill Lomax was on his feet.

He did not even draw his revolver; he knew how useless that weapon was against a grizzly-bear.

He was gazing upward at the strong, ample netting that held the car to the gas-envelope.

"Climb for it, sonnies!" he jerked out. "He'll be in the car in the shake of a possum's tail, and then—"

He did not finish, but caught at the ropes.

The miner's advice was too good not to be taken.

The three schoolboys swarmed into the ropes as the savage face looked again over the rim of the car.

Blood was streaming down the bear's fur, but the wound had not disabled him.

Bill Lomax struggled feebly to climb, and the schoolboys lent him their aid, without which he would never have cleared from the car in time.

The grizzly bumped heavily into the car, growling with a sound that was blood-curdling so close at hand.

Frank Richards & Co. helped the wounded miner as high as possible in the netting, and Bob ran a rope round him, and knotted it, to secure him there.

It was easy enough for the three active boys to hold on.

Below them, in the car, the grizzly was raging and growling.

He raged round the car, clawing and snapping, and casting savage looks up at the victims above his head.

The gas-envelope trembled.

In the sides of the balloon great dents were appearing, as the gas escaped more and more from the holes in the cover.

It was only a question of time before it collapsed, and either buried the voyagers under its bulk or hurled them into the jaws of the bear.

"The game's up if we stick here!" muttered Bob Lawless. "Franky, the dashed thing would rise if we cut the car away! Shall we chance it?"

"I think so," said Frank, with a deep breath. "It couldn't rise high—very high, anyway. We're safe if we hold on!"

"I agree," said Beauclerc. "What do you say, Mr. Lomax?"

The miner gave a shrug.

"I guess the b'ar will have us if we don't

vamoose," he answered, "and if the b'ar don't, Handsome Alf will! Look!"

He jerked his hand towards the distant river.

Against the glimmer of the water, shining in the sun, a horseman appeared in sight, followed by another, and another.

The delay caused by the grizzly had brought the enemy close again.

Frank set his teeth.

"It's the only chance now, Bob. Let's try!"

"Go it!" said Bob tersely.

Frank slashed at the ropes.

When at last only a single rope held the balloon captive there was a rifle-shot on the plain, and a sound of distant galloping.

Carson and his gang were close at hand.

Slash!

With a loud twang the last rope parted.

The next moment the axe dropped from Frank Richards' hand, and he clung to the netting with all his strength.

The balloon, released and lightened, shot upwards almost like a bullet.

In an instant, as it seemed, the car and the bear vanished from sight below.

The plain fled away from sight, and the galloping of hoofs was lost in space.

Dizzy and breathless, the four clung on to the netting, while the balloon rose and rolled.

Higher and higher it sped, till the earth was a misty blur, plains and trees and hills losing all their outlines.

Misty clouds oozed round them as they clung on and panted for breath.

But it was only for a short time.

The gas was still oozing away, and ere long the balloon began to settle, carried along by the wind as it descended.

Once more the earth became clear to their dizzy eyes, but they were nowhere near the spot where they had left the grizzly bear in the car.

The wind was bearing the released envelope onward in the direction of the Last Chance trail.

Bill Lomax uttered a sudden exclamation: "Thar's the camp!"

Sinking lower every moment now, the gas-envelope drifted on.

As they drew closer to the earth the schoolboys cut themselves loose from the securing ropes, and held on ready to jump.

Their feet dragged on the rough ground at last.

A hundred yards away they caught sight of a collection of rudely-built cabins by a silvery creek.

They guessed that it was the mining-camp of Last Chance.

Three or four men in red shirts were standing and staring, in dumb astonishment.

Perilous as their position was, the schoolboys could scarcely help laughing at the amazement in the faces of the Last Chance miners.

"Mind!" said Bob. "The beastly thing will jump as soon as one of us lets go! You first, Lomax!"

"I guess!"

"You first; you're hurt. Let go when your boots are on the ground."

"Right!"

Lomax's heavy boots were already dragging.

He released his hold, and rolled on the ground, two or three red-shirted men running to his assistance.

As Bob Lawless anticipated, the balloon rose when his weight was gone.

But the gas was escaping fast now, the great envelope sagged and hollowed ominously.

As it swooped down again, Bob muttered: "Now then, us three all together—when I say 'Go!'"

"Right you are, Bob!"

At the word the three released their hold.

They reeled and bumped on the ground, and the balloon shot upward, and vanished in the distance on the wind.

It was the last the chums of Cedar Creek ever saw of Hiram K. Chowder's balloon!

Frank Richards rolled over, dazed and breathless. A horny hand grasped his shoulder, and helped him up, and a rugged, bearded face grinned at him.

"All O.K., sonny?"

"Yes," gasped Frank. "Thanks!"

"I guess this hyer beats the Dutch!" said the big miner. "Fust time I've ever seen a new pilgrim come to camp by droppin' from the clouds! Search me!"

Frank Richards had already learned that "Search me!" was a Western expression implying surprise, so he did not take the words literally.



A PERILOUS POSITION!—In the very middle of the wide stream the car of the balloon was dragging through the water. "Throw everything out!" panted Frank Richards. The chums picked up loose articles and pitched them out into the swiftly running water. (See Chapter 2.)

A STIRRING TALE OF REAL SCHOOLBOYS! AN AMAZING DISCOVERY IS MADE AND TOMMY DODD'S "BLACK" CHARACTER IS CLEARED!

TOMMY DODD'S DOUBLE!



A Grand Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co., the Chums of Rookwood.

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

(Stories of Rookwood appear every Monday in the "Boys' Friend.")

THE FIRST CHAPTER. Under a Cloud.

"PUB-HAUNTER!"

It was Tubby Muffin, of the Classical Fourth, who squeaked out that unpleasant remark.

Tommy was walking in the quadrangle, at Rookwood, with a moody frown on his brow, and his hands driven deep into his pockets. He was thinking, and his expression showed that his thoughts were not pleasant ones.

He started out of his grim reverie as Tubby Muffin squeaked.

Tubby grinned at him. "What's the odds?" he proceeded. "Have you had a hundred up with Joey Hook lately? He, he, he!"

The Modern junior stared grimly at Tubby. "You fat rascal!" he said, between his teeth. "What do you mean?"

Tubby gave a fat chuckle. "Pub-haunter!" he said agreeably. "Yah! When did you last go to the Bird-in-Hand? He, he, he!"

Tommy Dodd strode towards him, his eyes gleaming.

The fat Classical promptly beat a retreat. Of late Tommy Dodd had been rather under a cloud in the Fourth Form, at Rookwood, and indeed there were few beside his own chums—Cook and Doyle—who did not believe that Tommy had taken to shady ways.

But being chipped on the subject in the quad by the fat and egregious Tubby was rather too much.

Tommy Dodd's look was quite Hunnish as he made for Tubby Muffin, and the fat grin died off Tubby's face as he fled.

Apparently he had not expected Dodd to cut up rusty at his agreeable remarks, but Tommy was cutting up very rusty indeed.

"Stop, you fat rotter!" panted Tommy Dodd.

He rushed in pursuit. Tubby Muffin did not stop. He was as likely to stop as if a wild Hun had been after him.

But the fat and tubby youth was no runner, and Tommy Dodd gained on him at every step.

Tubby blinked round, and saw Tommy's hand outstretched, and gave a gasp of affright.

He dodged through the archway into Little Quad, with Tommy only a yard behind. There was a collision and a roar as Tubby came charging through the shadowy archway.

On the other side, in Little Quad, the Fistical Four of the Fourth were standing in a group, talking football.

Jimmy Silver & Co. did not see Tubby till he arrived, and Tubby did not see them till he crashed into them.

Jimmy Silver received the full shock of Tubby's portly person, and sat down with a howl.

Lovell staggered back on one side, and

Raby on the other, and Newcome just succeeded in dodging the charge.

Tubby reeled back from the shock and sat down.

"Ow!" he gasped.

"You fat idiot!" roared Jimmy Silver. "Where are you running to?"

"Yaroo! Help! Rescue!" yelled Tubby. Tommy Dodd was upon him in a moment.

He grasped Tubby Muffin by the collar, and rolled him over on the ground.

Tubby yelled dolorously, as, with Dodd's iron grip on the back of his neck, his fat face was rubbed in the mud.

"Groogh! Hoogh! Yoogh! Help! Rescue!" spluttered Tubby.

The Classical chums stared at the scene in amazement for a moment.

Then they rushed to the rescue. The Fistical Four were not likely to look on idly while a Classical was thus handled by a Modern.

They grasped Tommy Dodd on all sides and dragged him off.

"You Modern rotter!" shouted Lovell. "What are you up to? If you're spoiling for a fight, here's four to choose from!"

Tubby Muffin sat up and roared. His podgy face was almost unrecognisable from the mud in which Dodd had rubbed it.

"Gerrogh!" spluttered Tubby. "Oh dear! Keep him off! Oh crumbs!"

Tommy Dodd struggled in the grasp of the Classicals.

He was so enraged that he did not seem to care for the fact that they were four to one, and they found it rather difficult to hold him.

"Let me get at him!" he roared.

"You're not getting at him at present, my pippin!" said Jimmy Silver coolly. "What's he done, anyway?"

"Yow-ow-ow! I only called him a pub-haunter!" wailed Tubby Muffin. "He is a pub-haunter, ain't he? Yow-ow-ow!"

"You hear him?" panted Tommy Dodd. "Let me go! I'll smash the fat beast!"

Jimmy Silver tightened his grip on the enraged Modern.

"You won't do any smashing," he said. "I don't see that Tubby need howl it at you, certainly, but what he says is true. You are a pub-haunter and a smoky black-guard, Tommy Dodd!"

"What?" panted Tommy.

"What's the good of telling whoppers?" demanded Lovell. "Haven't all four of us seen you smoking at the window of the Bird-in-Hand? Hasn't Bulkeley of the Sixth caught you there?"

"It's a lie!"

"Oh, rats! You know it's true."

"Every word of it!" howled Tubby Muffin, scrambling up, and keeping at a safe distance. "You're a pub-haunting rotter, Tommy Dodd! You go to the Bird-in-Hand to smoke and play billiards and back horses! Everybody at Rookwood knows it. Yah!"

"Will you let me go?" hissed Tommy Dodd. "No," said Raby. "You're not going to touch Tubby for telling you the truth! If you don't like it, don't do it."

"Rescue!" roared Tommy Dodd, as Doyle and Cook of the Modern Fourth came out of the library. Towie followed them out.

The three Moderns rushed across at once. They did not stop to ask for explanations. It was enough for them to see a fellow-Modern struggling with Classicals.

They rushed into the fray at once. Tommy Dodd had to be released then, and the Fistical Four were engaged at once in a terrific combat with the four Moderns.

Tubby Muffin looked on. But as Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, appeared in sight, Tubby discreetly dodged through the archway into Big Quad and disappeared.

The fighting juniors did not see the Form master, however. They were too busily engaged for that.

Mr. Bootles strode upon the scene, with his eyes gleaming wrath over his spectacles.

"Boys!" he shouted

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Lovell.

"Bootles!"

The combat ceased.

Eight crimson and dishevelled juniors blinked at Mr. Bootles, panting and still furious.

"What does this mean?" exclaimed the master of the Fourth angrily. "How dare you fight like—like hooligans!"

"Those Classical cads—"

"Those Modern worms—"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Bootles. "I have no doubt you are all equally to blame! You will follow me to my study, and I shall cane you all!"

"Oh!"

Mr. Bootles whisked away, and the rival juniors, exchanging glares of defiance, followed him across the quadrangle.

In Mr. Bootles' study a few minutes later there was a sound of steady swishing that lasted several minutes.

When it was over, eight juniors limped away, squeezing their hands, and not feeling at present inclined for any further scrapping.

But they glared at one another as they parted, their wrath unappeased.

The old rivalry of the juniors of Rookwood was growing bitter, and the bitterness that had crept into it was due to the strange stories that were afloat concerning Tommy Dodd.

That unfortunate youth was under a cloud, and there were few juniors at Rookwood, even on his own side of the school, who did not believe that the accusation against him was true, and the angry indignation he displayed was looked upon as so much camouflage.

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

NEXT
TUESDAY!

"JOKER OR THIEF?"

A GRAND TALE OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL.
By OWEN CONQUEST.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Spotted!

PHWAT was it all about intirely?" Tommy Doyle asked that question as the four Modern juniors moved away towards Mr. Manders' House, looking grim and discomfited.

Tommy Dodd grunted.

"That fat cad Muffin yelled at me, and I bumped him!" he answered. "Those Classical cads stood up for him! He called me a pub-haunter!"

"Oh!" ejaculated Towle, with a change of expression.

Tommy Dodd glared at Towle, while Cook and Doyle looked still more uncomfortable.

"Perhaps you agree with him, Towle?" said Dodd, in a dangerous tone.

"I don't hold with allowing Classicals to slang Modern chaps," said Towle, "But, all the same—"

"Well, what?"

"Oh, don't glare at me!" said Towle independently. "Bump the Classicals as much as you like for calling you names, and I'll help you; but among ourselves we know what we know."

"And what do you know?" demanded Tommy Dodd fiercely.

"We know that Jimmy Silver & Co. say that they saw you at the Bird-in-Hand with Joey Hook, the billiard-sharper!" retorted Towle.

"It's a lie!"

"And we know," continued Towle, "that Jimmy Silver isn't a liar! What's the good of giving us that?"

Tommy Dodd clenched his hand.

"And it's not only that crowd—it's Bulkeley!" said Towle. "He fairly caught you there—it's pretty well known! He'd have reported you to the Head, only our prefect—Knowles—stood by you!"

"I was fagging for Knowles in his study when Bulkeley said he saw me at that pub!" said Tommy Dodd, between his teeth.

"We know Knowles said so!"

"Do you think our head-prefect would tell lies to get a Fourth Form chap out of a scrape?"

"I think Knowles would do anything that he thought was up against Bulkeley!" answered Towle.

"So you believe that I'm a pub-haunter, do you?"

"Of course I do, as you are one!"

Tommy Dodd clenched his fists and advanced on Towle.

"You won't tell me so without putting up your hands!" he said.

"Anybody else will tell you so!" retorted Towle. "I'll back you up against the Classicals, but I'm not going to pretend that I believe you when I don't! Nobody else believes you, either! You've been seen at the place more than once! If you don't like being called a pub-haunter, don't be one!"

"You lying rotter—"

"Easy does it!" murmured Tommy Cook, catching Dodd by the arm. "No good scrapping on our own side, Tommy! Keep that for the Classicals!"

"Do you think I'm going to let Towle or any other cad doubt my word?" roared Tommy Dodd.

"Cad yourself!" said Towle. "You're disgracing the Form, and you know it! And I can't see what you're putting on steam for—it's only humbug!"

Tommy Dodd would have rushed on him, but the other Tommies held him back.

Towle shrugged his shoulders, and walked away by himself.

Dodd gave his chums a look of passionate anger.

"What are you stopping me for?" he panted.

"No good scrapping. You can't fight every fellow on the Modern side, as well as the Classicals," said Cook.

"Perhaps you believe Jimmy Silver's lies?" exclaimed Tommy Dodd fiercely.

"They're not lies," said Cook. "Jimmy Silver must have made a mistake, I suppose. It's queer that the four of them made the same mistake, and then Bulkeley of the Sixth goes and makes the same mistake. You don't blame fellows for believing it."

"Does that mean that you believe it?" said Tommy, between his teeth.

"No," said Cook slowly. "I don't believe it—I can't. But if you weren't my pal,

Tommy, I should believe it fast enough on the evidence."

Tommy Dodd breathed hard.

"Put it to yourself, Tommy," said Doyle.

"If you heard that story about another chap, backed up by Bulkeley of the Sixth and Jimmy Silver as eye-witnesses, wouldn't you believe it?"

Tommy started.

It had not occurred to him to look at the matter in that light before, and he was startled.

"Suppose it was Lacy or Leggett or Towle, and you heard the yarn, with such witnesses to prove it?" said Doyle. "What then?"

Tommy Dodd did not answer.

But his silence was as good as an answer.

"You see," said Doyle. "It's no good getting your rag out. We don't believe it; we know you too well. But—but it bates me intirely! I can't understand it at all, at all!"

"It's not true!" said Tommy Dodd at last. "I've never been to the Bird-in-Hand, I don't know Joey Hook except by sight, and I never smoke, or play the fool with billiards or races! Yoa fellows know I don't!"

"We—we know, of course!"

"I don't believe you half believe, me!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.

"We—we do!" said Cook. "We're bound to. But it's jolly queer!"

"Awfully queer!" said Doyle.

Tommy Dodd gave a lowering look.

It was plain enough that it was only their chummy loyalty that made them cling to their faith in him.

On the evidence alone they would have found him guilty, as the rest of Rookwood did.

**ONLY THE
BEST
FREE REAL
PHOTOS
IN THE
POPULAR**

"There must be some chap like you in Coombe," said Cook at last, though with hesitation, for he realised how wild such a theory sounded—"some other fellow who's like you to look at, Tommy. Some low cad, of course, or he wouldn't be hobnobbing with that gang at the Bird-in-Hand."

"It's not possible!" growled Dodd.

"Is there anybody—a relation, for instance—who's just like you that you know of?"

"Do you mean to imply that I've got a relation who'd hang round in pubs with Joey Hook?" snorted Tommy Dodd.

"Oh, don't get your wool off?" exclaimed Cook impatiently. "Be reasonable! Some fellow was seen at that pub, and it was either you or a fellow who looked like you. That's certain. Have you got any relation just like you?"

Tommy Dodd sniffed.

"I've got a cousin who's like me," he answered—"my cousin Ralph. He's at school in the North of England, a good hundred and fifty miles from here."

"Well, it can't be him, then. Anybody else?"

"Not that I know of."

"Well, it's queer!" said Doyle. "But it's no good getting wild, Tommy darling! The fellows can't help thinking as they do."

"I know I won't speak to anybody who believes such a thing of me!" growled Tommy Dodd.

"Then you won't speak to anybody at Rookwood excepting us?"

"Oh, rats!" snapped Tommy.

He swung away, leaving his chums by themselves.

His face was dark and gloomy as he went out at the gates alone, not feeling in a humour for his chums' company just then.

As a reasonable fellow, Tommy Dodd could hardly help admitting that the evidence against him was strong, and that fellows could not be blamed for giving ear to it.

But he was not in a reasonable mood just then.

Innocent or guilty, he was intensely exasperated; and, like the prophet of old, he said to himself that he did well to be angry.

Cook and Doyle exchanged glances, and then followed their chum slowly.

They still clung to their faith in their pal; but they admitted to themselves that they believed in him for no better reason than that he was their pal.

Against any other fellow, they knew, they would have accepted such evidence without hesitation.

That knowledge made them feel extremely uncomfortable, for it amounted to admitting that they were deceiving themselves, knowing all the time that Tommy Dodd was guilty.

Tommy Dodd was out of sight when they came out of the gates, and they walked slowly along towards Coombe, wondering where Dodd had gone to.

Both of them glanced at the Bird-in-Hand public-house as they came in sight of that unsavoury building.

That delectable resort was the quarters of Joey Hook, with whom Dodd was supposed to be on a friendly footing.

As they glanced over the fence which ran by the footpath beside the inn both the juniors started violently.

Some distance from them, in the inn garden, a fat and puffy man was standing, with a pipe in his mouth, in conversation with a junior in an overcoat.

"Tommy!" gasped Cook.

"Tommy Dodd!" said Doyle, in wonder and disgust.

They stared at the junior in the inn garden as if they could scarcely believe their eyes.

He was a dozen yards from them, and they could see every feature with perfect distinctness in the wintry sunshine in the garden.

"The thafe of the worruld!" ejaculated Doyle. "That's why he left us in a huff—to sneak off here without our knowin'! He's put on an overcoat to hide his Etous, the rotter!"

"And taken off his Rookwood cap, too!" said Cook.

"The sneaking thafe!" exclaimed Doyle, with breathless indignation. "And we were sticking to him against all Rookwood, and he was pulling our leg all the toime!"

The Irish junior ran towards the fence, and waved his hand to the two talkers in the garden.

"Dodd, ye rotter!" he roared.

Joey Hook glanced round with a start, and the boy with him removed a cigarette from his lips and stared at Doyle.

"Hallo!" he answered.

"Ye thafe of the worruld, we've spotted you now!" roared Doyle. "We know the kind of spalpeen ye are now, bad cess to yez!"

"Hallo! Is that chap potty?"

"Bedad, and I've a good mind to come in to yez, and mop up the ground wid yez intirely!" shouted Doyle.

"My hat!"

"Come away, Tommy!" said Cook, dragging his chum by the arm. "We're not going to kick up a shindy in a pub, you ass!"

"Sure, and I'll—"

"Come away!"

Cook dragged his excited chum away, and Doyle calmed down as they left the spot.

Angry as he was, Tommy Doyle realised that it would not do to kick up a shindy in a pub, as his chum expressed it.

"But we know him now, intirely!" he said. "The rotter! The awful spoofer! What he's doing is bad enough; but to tell us lies—"

Cook looked very troubled.

"I'd never have believed it!" he said.

"Sure, we knew it was thue, though we wouldn't belave it!" answered Doyle. "I'm done with Tommy Dodd now, for one!"

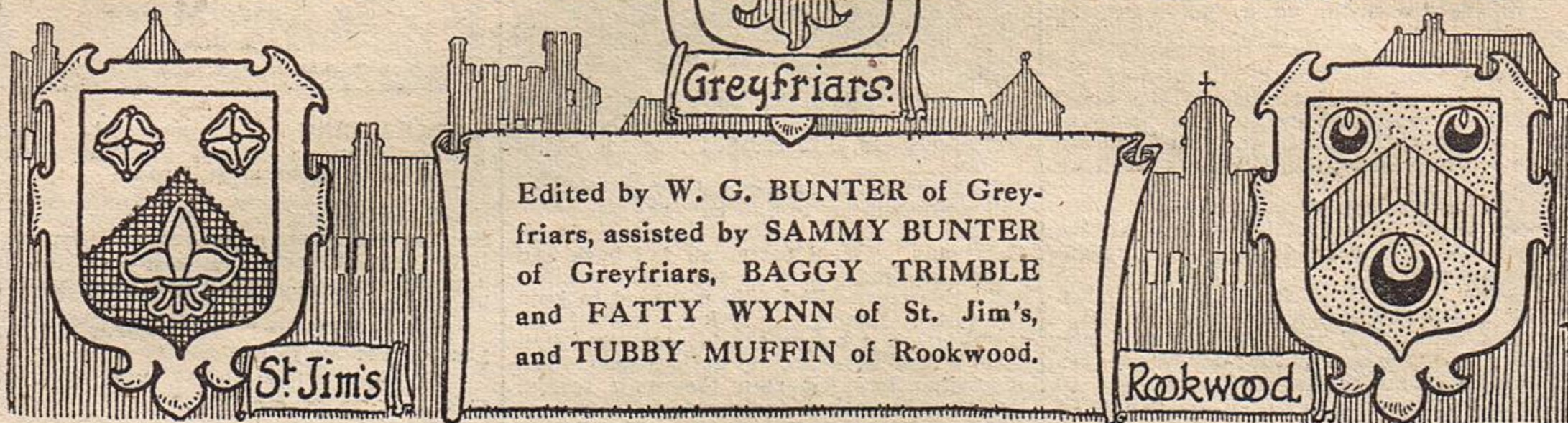
And Tommy Cook nodded assent to that.

The happy circle of the three Tommies of Rookwood was split up now with a vengeance!

(Continued on page 17.)

Meet the Cheery CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD above! They're Fine PALS!

BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY



Supplement No. 97.

Week Ending November 18th, 1922

BOLSOVER'S BRAIN - WAVE!

An Amusing Short Story of Greyfriars.

By Mark Linley.

BOLSOVER MAJOR of the Remove was behaving very mysteriously. His movements were mysterious; his expression was mysterious; everything about him savoured of mystery.

As a rule, Bolsover was not a secretive fellow. Everything he did, he did openly. But he was now behaving as if he were the leader of a secret society. Wherever he went, he was accompanied by ten fellows; and those ten fellows were just as mysterious in their manner as Bolsover himself.

"I can't make out what the little game is," remarked Vernon-Smith to his study-mate, Tom Redwing.

"Bolsover's got some scheme under way," said the sailor's son.

"Any idea what it is?"

"Not the foggiest notion!"

"There are eleven fellows in the giddy plot, whatever it is," said Vernon-Smith thoughtfully. "They meet every afternoon in the Close, just as it's beginning to get dark."

"Yes; I've noticed that. Some of them are quite decent fellows, too. There's Rake and Wibley and Morgan, and Russell and Desmond and Kipps."

"But there's also Skinner and Snoop and Stott and Trevor. You can't, by any stretch of the imagination, regard them as decent fellows. I don't like all this plotting as soon as Wharton's back is turned, and I want to know what it's all about."

Harry Wharton & Co. had started on their trip to the Congo. The Famous Five were the backbone of the Remove; and it was rather curious that, as soon as they were out of the way, Bolsover major should start behaving so mysteriously.

"Perhaps he's got designs on the captaincy of the Form, and he's getting those fellows to rally round him and give him their votes," suggested Tom Redwing.

Vernon-Smith shook his head.

"I don't think it's that. Fellows like Russell and Rake would never vote for Bolsover. Let's go down into the Close and investigate. I heard a murmur of voices just now. Evidently the Secret Eleven have just met."

Tom Redwing accompanied Vernon-Smith into the Close.

Although it was not yet tea-time, dusk was falling.

Supplement 1.]



PLAYING FOOTBALL IN THE FOG! The Highcliffe players blundered blindly about, finding it difficult to get their bearings. Suddenly Bolsover loomed up near the goal mouth and sent the ball crashing past Smithson's ear into the net.

Vernon-Smith peered around him in the gloom.

"No sign of them," he remarked. "They seem to have vanished off the face of the earth."

"Listen!" said Redwing suddenly.

The thudding of a football sounded in the distance.

"Surely they can't be playing footer?" ejaculated Vernon-Smith.

"Sounds like it, Smithy!"

The two juniors promptly wended their way to Little Side. As they approached the ground they caught sight of dim, ghostlike figures flitting about in the gloom.

Closer inspection revealed the fact that a

game was in progress. A team of six juniors was playing a team of five.

Vernon-Smith stopped short in astonishment.

"They must be potty!" he exclaimed. "How can they possibly see to play footer?"

But the fact remained that Bolsover & Co. were playing, and playing quite well, bearing in mind the conditions. They seemed to be quite used to playing in darkness.

Presently there was a shout.

"Goal!"

"Good shot, Kipps!"

Tom Redwing laughed.

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

Another Special Number of "Billy Bunter's Weekly" Next Week!

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN!

By BAGGY TRIMBLE.

My Dear Readers,—I can imagine you rubbing your eyes when you see my name at the top of this Editorial.

"Wear is Bunter?" you will ask. "Wear is our prize porpuss?"

Billy Bunter has started on a crooze of adventure to the Congo. I'm not quite sure wear the Congo is. It's either at the North Pole, the South Pole, or the Equator—I forget which.

Anyway, Bunter has gone, and the Famous Five of the Greyfriars Remove have gone with him. What they eggspect to do when they get there I don't know; but it's jolly nice to be able to cut lessons for several weeks at a stretch!

Billy Bunter had only one pang at leaving Greyfriars. He was worried as to what would happen to the WEEKLY in his absence. "It will be impossibul for the paper to carry on without me," he declared. But I soon convinced him that if he would hand over the reigns of offis to me, I should make a first-rate temperery editor. Bunter therefore handed over the paper to me, lock, stock, and barrel, and here I am, enthroned triumphantly in the editorial chair.

I have always fancied myself in the roll of editor. What I don't know about jernalism isn't worth knowing. I have no doubt that the WEEKLY will show a tremendus improvement, now that Bunter is out of the way.

Unfortunately, Bunter has promised to kontribute something while he is away, so the paper will not be kept entirely without blemish!

I tried to get the name of the paper changed to "Baggy Trimble's Weekly," but Bunter wasn't having any. "When I come back from the Congo, Baggy," he said, "I shall eggspect you to give a good account of your stewardship. If I find that you've konducted the paper in a satisfactory manner, I'll give you a tanner a year increase in sallery. If I find you've been playing the giddy goat, I'll brain you with the offis poker!" So I had better mind my peas and cues!

Of course, this number of mine is bound to make a great stir among my many readers. I've packed it fool with all the best stories and articles which have bean sent in to me. If you could only have read some of the orfool trash that I received! It took me ours to weed out the rotten ones and find anything that could be called decent reading. But I have done so, and, I can honestly say, very well.

Next week's issue will be a Special Golf Number. If you want a reelly good larf, one that will almost split your sides, don't forget to read it.

Yours sinseerly,

BAGGY TRIMBLE.



Pages in a Page's Life!

By Peter Tupper.

(The Page-boy of Rookwood.)

MONDAY.

Cleaned two hundred pairs of muddy boots this morning, and I feel half-dead in consequence. Why should I have to clean boots, that's what I want to know? I'm a page-boy, I am; not a beastly bootblack! When the job was finished, I smuggled myself into the pantry, intending to spend a quiet half-hour reading the "Boys' Friend." In comes Mrs. Maloney, the House Dame, brandishing a rolling-pin. "Tupper," says she, "you're a good-for-nothing lazy little brat! It's ten o'clock, and you haven't started cleaning the windows yet!" "Madam," says I, superior-like, "it's beneath my dignity to clean windows!" Whereupon Mrs. Maloney gave me a fearful crack on the head with the rolling-pin, and I rushed out of the pantry shrieking blue murder.

TUESDAY.

The life of a page-boy is all kicks and no pence. I spent the whole of the morning boot-cleaning and window-cleaning, and I had just about reached the end of my tether when Mr. Mooney buttonholed me in the quad. "Tupper," says he, "I want you to clean my golf-clubs." "Clean 'em yourself, sir!" says I. "I'm a page-boy, I am—not a sheet of emery-paper!" At which old Mooney goes off the deep end, so to speak, and reports me to the Head. I was called over the coals, and given a month's notice. By the way, that's the third month's notice I've had this week! I spent the afternoon cleaning Mooney's golf-clubs. He's playing in a tournament to-morrow, on the Latcham Links. May he get badly bunkered in a quarry, and stay there all day looking for his ball! I don't wish him any harm—just a little inconvenience!

WEDNESDAY.

To my horror, old Mooney says to me, says he, "Tupper, I want you to come and be my caddy. I sha'n't keep you more than eight hours." Before I could reply, the beast slung his bag of golf-clubs over my shoulder, and I simply had to go through with it. As we walked out to the golf-links a hailstorm came on. The hailstones were as big as pebbles, and I was soon soaked to the skin. "Surely you're not going to play golf in this, sir?" says I. "Yes, Tupper," says he. "A keen golfer recks nothing of the weather conditions. He gets on with his game, even if a blizzard and a thunderstorm and an autumn gale are raging at the same time!" "Which I'm wet!" says I. "Same here," says he. "But that is a mere trifle. The play's the thing, as Shakespeare says." By the time we reached the golf-links I felt like a drowned rat!

For eight solid hours I tramped round the links with old Mooney. (I might mention that it took the old beast eight hours to go round the course.) A good golfer would have done it in seventy strokes. Mooney took about seventy thousand. I tried to reckon it up, but soon after reaching fifty thousand I lost count. I was in a terrible state, as you may guess, by the time we got back to Rookwood. And old Mooney was fearfully ratty because he hadn't won some brass cup or other. I had been looking forward to a handsome tip, but all that Mooney gave me was fourpence. "Here you are, Tupper!" says he. "That works out at a halfpenny an hour, and you ought to be well satisfied." So I was—I don't jolly well think!

THURSDAY.

As a result of yesterday's soaking on the golf-links, I woke up with a beastly cold. I've done nothing but sneeze all day. I told Mrs. Maloney I was suffering from influenza with a dash of pneumonia, and asked to be excused duty. But there was nothing doing. "Madam," says I, "I've got a temperature of a hundred and four. Atishoo!" "Tupper," says she, scornful-like, "get on with your work, and don't talk nonsense!" "Madam," says I, "if anything should happen to me, I'll give evidence against you at the inquest!" And I'm still wondering why Mrs. Maloney laughed.

FRIDAY.

Friday always was my unlucky day, and to-day was even more unlucky than most. I got into a row with Master Silver for not putting enough polish on his shoes. I got into a row with Sergeant Kettle for calling him a cross-grained old buffer. I got into a row with Mrs. Maloney for helping myself to a stale rabbit-pie which had been put on one side for the cat. I got into a row with old Mooney for shouting "Shylock!" after him when he passed through the quad. I got into a row with the Head for getting into a row with everybody else. And I've been given another month's notice, making the fourth I've had this week. Oh, what a life!

SATURDAY.

Glad to say my luck changed to-day. In fact, I am in clover. I carried Mr. Dalton's suitcase down to the station—he's going away for the week-end—and he gave me half-a-crown. I ran an errand for Master Mornington, and he played up like a real generous sport, and gave me five bob. I did some fagging for Master Silver, who was having a study celebration, and he gave me a plum-cake, and lent me his copy of the "Holiday Annual." I was given a word of praise by Mrs. Maloney, who had been slanging me all the week. She told the Head I had reformed, and he has cancelled all the months' notices he gave me. So the sun is beginning to shine once more, and I'm beginning to think that life is worth living, after all.

SUNDAY.

I stayed in bed nearly all day, reading the "Holiday Annual." Found it so fascinating that I simply couldn't lay it aside. Wish it was the "Holiday Weekly" instead of the "Holiday Annual." I should never be at a loss for amusement then!

"I SAY, YOU CHAPS—
AREN'T
THE 'POPULAR'S'
FREE REAL PHOTOS
FINE? ARE YOU
COLLECTING THEM?"

—Baggy Trimble.

ODE KONSERNING THE EDITOR OF "BILLY BUNTER'S WEEKLY"!

On the occasion of his trip
to the Congo.

By Tubby Muffin.
(Sub-Editor.)

It was the skooner Hesperus,
That sailed the wintry sea;
Bunter the porpus was on board,
And a merry larf larfed he.

"Good-bye to Lattin and to Greek!"
Our Billy gaily cried.
"I'm free from lessens while I sale
Upon the ocean wide.

"I'm going fourth in search of gold,
And lots of berried trezzure;
'Twill be a voyage of delight,
And eggstasy and pleasure.

"I'll make the native gods disclose
Where all the trezzure's hid;
Then back to Greyfriars I'll return,
A happy, wealthy kid!

"My 'Weekly' has been handed on
To Trimble of St. Jim's;
A fat and foolish fellow, who
Is fool of curious whims.

"I much regret I didn't give
The job to Tubby Muffin;
For Trimble always spends his time
In sleeping and in stuffin'.

"However, Tubby will assist
To keep the paper going;
The things that Tubby duzzent know,
Well, they are not worth knowing!

"Adieu, adieu! My native shore
Fades o'er the waters blue;
The brakers brake, the billows roar,
And shrieks the wild sea-mew.

(Muffin, you rotter, you cribbed this verse
from Byron!—Ed.)

"Keep the flag flying, Tubby boy,
With vigger and despatch;
See that old Trimble duzzent slack,
And keep him up to scratch!"

ANSWERS TO KORRESPONDENTS!

BY THE NEW TEMPORARY
EDITOR.

"Admirer" (Faversham).—"I consider your
'Weekly' is simply splendid, Billy!"—It's
not Billy Bunter's paper now, so kindly
transfer your praise to another quarter!

"Teddy" (Maidstone).—"Do the good really
die young?"—Of course not! I eggspect to
live to be a hundred!

R. H. N. (Wrexham).—"Where do the flies
go in the winter-time?"—Better ask Cardew
this konundrum. He's a very "fly" sort of
fellow!

"Sportsman" (Sheffield).—"Who is the
finest athlete at St. Jim's?"—Modesty for-
bids me from printing his name in fool, but
his initials are "B. T."

B. R. (Blackpool).—"Can you tell me who
wrote the line, 'Let me have men about me
that are fat'?"—Billy Shakespeare—and he
knew what he was talking about!

"Curious" (Devizes).—"Have you ever
eaten lambs' tails?"—No; but I've devoured
Lamb's Tails of Shakespeare!

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

LEFT BEHIND!

By Sammy Bunter.
(Sub-Editor.)

That is my sad fate, dear readers—to be
left behind at Greyfriars, while my bruther
Billy sets fourth on his globe-trotting eggs-
pedition with Bob Cherry's cuzzen, Kaptin
Kit Corcoran.

I think it's a crying shame, don't you?
What have I done that they should treat me
so? How can the trip to the Congo possibly
be a success without my presence?

I can pickcher my bruther Billy sailing
across the briny ocean, wissling to himself,
"The Minor I Left Behind Me." The hart-
less beest! If he had a spark of unselfish-
ness in his nature, he would have taken a
backseat, and aloud me to go in his plaice.

But hear I am, stranded at Greyfriars, with
nobody to give me a word of simperthy in
my grate trubble.

If this was my only greevance I should
keep a stiff upper lip and say nothing about
it. But Billy has added insult to injury by
refusing to let me run the "Weekly" in his
absence. He has actually appoynted that
burbling chump Baggy Trimble to be
temperery editor.

I've got more sense in my little finger than
Trimble has in his head, which is about the
sighs of a football. I should make a reelly
wunderful editor, and I told Billy so, but he
was too dense to see it. "I'm going to give
Trimble the job, Sammy," he said, "and you
can go and eat coke, or chop chipps, which-
ever you prefer."

I have come to the conclusion that big
bruthers are crool and hartless. They are
drained dry of the milk of yewman kindness.

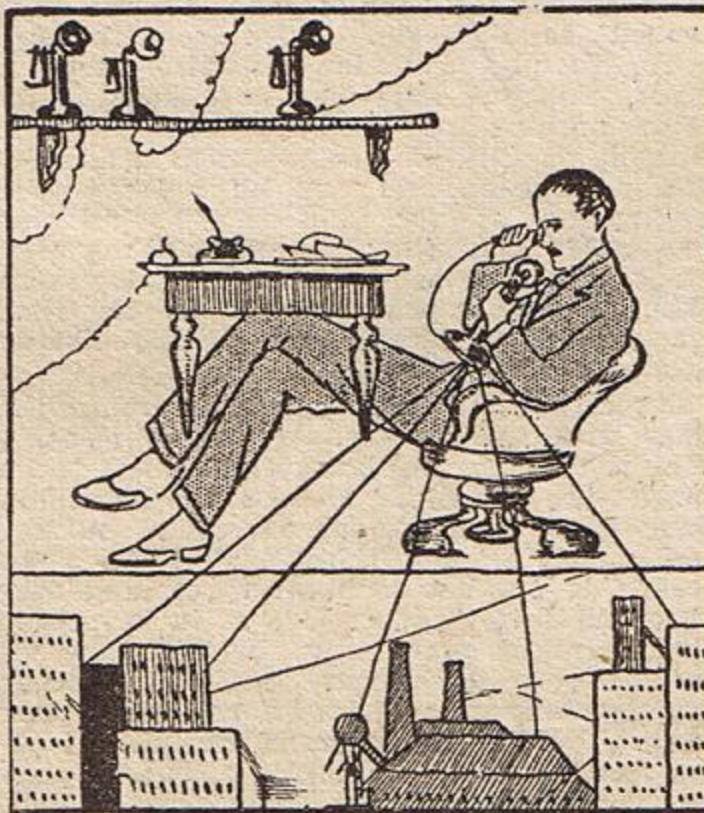
It was bad enuff not to be able to go to
the Congo with the others. But when the
editorship of the "Weekly" is denied me, and
given over to a frabjuss chump like Trimble,
I think it's time to lift up my voice in
protest!

Billy tried to console me before he went by
saying: "Cheer up, Sammy; I'll write you a
letter every day telling you al lmy advenchers,
and what I have to eat on board ship, and
how much trezzure I discover on the Congo."
He thought that would cheer me up, but it
had the effect of making me berst into tears.

I've a jelly good mind to go on strike, and
refuse to write for the "Weekly" any more.
But I've got to earn some pockitt-munny
somehow, and jernalism is the only corse open
to me.

PEEPS INTO THE FUTURE!

By George Kerr.



"Long-legged" George Figgins.
(Successful City Merchant.)

SPORTING TOPICS!

By Kit Erroll.
(Of Rookwood.)

A voting contest recently took place in
the junior Common-room at Rookwood,
to decide who were the twelve most
popular sportsmen in the junior section of
Rookwood. The voting was exceedingly
close, and resulted as follows:

1. Jimmy Silver.
2. Tommy Dodd.
3. Arthur Edward Lovell.
4. Val Mornington.
5. Tommy Doyle.
6. Arthur Newcome.
7. Teddy Grace.
8. Tommy Cook.
9. George Raby.
10. Kit Conroy.
11. Dick Oswald.
12. Tom Rawson.

* * *

Some of you may wonder where "little
me" came in. Matter of fact, I finished
thirteenth in the voting. Of course, you
won't all agree with the final placings,
but you must remember that we voted
for the most popular sportsmen, and not
necessarily the best athletes.

* * *

The junior football team at Rookwood
is feeling very pleased with itself. We
decided to enter the knock-out competi-
tion for the Hampshire Junior Cup. In
the first round we were drawn against a
big school near Winchester, and after
playing a drawn game with them on their
own ground, we defeated them at Rook-
wood in the replay by three goals to one.
We are now eagerly awaiting the second
round of the competition; but we realise
that we've a long long way to go before
we can hope to lift the Cup.

* * *

Our forwards are a most erratic set.
They resemble the young lady in the
nursery rhyme. When they are good,
they are very very good; and when they
are bad they are horrid! Fortunately,
they have played on top of their form in
the last few matches, and we hope this
happy state of affairs will continue.

* * *

Our next home fixture will be against
St. Jim's. Rally round, Rookwooders,
and cheer us on to victory! If we can
only "put it across" Tom Merry and
his "Merry" men, everything in the
garden will be lovely! We shall have
our strongest side out, and there can be
no excuse for failure. Anyone wishing
to borrow rattles and tin whistles, for
purposes of applauding, may obtain same
from me at my study.

**Next Week's Special Golf
Number Will Make You
Laugh!—B.T.**

[Supplement IV.]

A Special Number Every Week! Don't Miss Next Week's!

Tommy Dodd's Double.

(Continued from page 12.)

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Outside!

DUSK was falling when Tommy Dodd came in at the gates of Rookwood, looking tired and dispirited. He went straight to Mr. Manders' House, and entered his study. He found Cook and Doyle there, and the table showed that they had had their tea without waiting for him. Tommy Dodd glanced at it. "You might have given a chap a few minutes!" he remarked gruffly. His study-mates looked uncomfortable, and neither of them answered. "I'm sorry I marched off in a huff this afternoon," added Tommy, with an effort. "I was feeling rather ratty." No answer. "I suppose that's enough for a fellow to say, isn't it?" demanded Tommy Dodd, his anger beginning to rise again. "No need to say anything that I know of," said Cook. "In fact, the less you have to say to us the better!" "What?" "Don't I speak plain English?" inquired Tommy Cook sarcastically. "I'll say it once again if you like! The less you have to say to us the better! Got it now?" Tommy Dodd stared at him blankly. "So you're siding with the rest against me?" he exclaimed. "Yes—now we know!" "Now you know what?" shouted Tommy Dodd. "Now we know the kind of rotter ye are intirely!" exclaimed Doyle. "Ye're not going to thry and brazen it out now, are yez?" "Brazen what out?" "Faith, and I think it's potty ye are intirely! Didn't I spake to yez when we saw you there not more than an hour ago?" "Where?" shrieked Tommy Dodd. "You know where—at that pub, talking to Joey Hook in the garden!" Tommy Dodd panted. "You say you saw me there an hour ago?" "You know we did!" "It's a lie!" "Oh, don't play the goat! Doyle called to you over the fence, and you answered him!" said Cook. "What's the good of lying now?" "I've been on the moor—not within a mile of the Bird-in-Hand!" "Cheese it! What's the good?" "You don't believe me?" "Of course not! We believe our own eyes!" "I don't know what this game means!" said Tommy Dodd. "I never expected you two fellows to join in it against me! You're lying, both of you—lying like rotters—and if you don't swallow your own words this minute I'll give you something else to swallow! You first, Cook!" "Come on, if you like!" said Cook disdainfully. Tommy Dodd came on like a hurricane. There was a terrific scrap in the study, and it finished with Tommy Cook on his back on the rug, gasping for breath. Whether Tommy Dodd had taken to shady ways or not, it was clear that he was as good a fighting-man as ever. He turned savagely on Doyle. "Your turn now!" he snapped. "I'm your man," said Tommy quietly. And they went at it hammer and tongs. Tommy Cook rose to his feet, dabbing his nose. He had had much the worst of it, and he looked on glumly while Tommy Doyle was getting the worst of it, too. Doyle finished on the carpet. Tommy Dodd was pretty well spent by that time, and he showed signs of severe damage. "Now what do you say?" he gasped. Doyle rose rather painfully to his feet. "I'll tell ye what we say!" he answered, gasping. "We say that we won't have a pub-haunting, lying rotter in this study, and you can hop it, Tommy Dodd!" "I say the same!" exclaimed Cook. "Out you go!" "Put me out!" sneered Tommy Dodd.

Do You Know Jimmy?

"We'll jolly soon do that!" And they did. Tommy Dodd, resisting fiercely, was bumped into the passage, and the door of the study slammed on him. The next moment it was flung furiously open, and Tommy Dodd rushed in again. He was collared at once by his exasperated study-mates, and hurled forth with a crash. The door closed once more. It did not open again. Even Tommy Dodd was "done" by that time. His best friends had turned upon him, and in all Rookwood the once popular Tommy had not a friend to stand by him.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

The Marble Eye.

BY gum!" It was the following day, and Tommy Dodd, after leaving Mr. Manders' science class, had stopped at the letter-rack and found a letter there. The other two Tommies were coming along the passage, but they were not with Tommy Dodd. Since the scrap in the study the previous day they had not spoken. All the Lower School knew that Tommy's two best chums had done with him now, and were against him with the rest. The unfortunate Tommy was little better than an outcast in the Fourth Form at Rookwood. Naturally, the fact that Cook and Doyle had abandoned him clinched the matter for the other fellows. Anyone who had any doubts gave them up now. It was quite certain that Tommy's own pals would not have turned against him unless they had proof positive. Tommy Dodd stopped, with his open letter in his hand, and he uttered that sudden ejaculation as he read it. Evidently there was news in the letter—startling news, to judge by Tommy Dodd's expression. "By gum!" he repeated. "Missing, by gum! So that's it?" Cook and Doyle glanced at him and paused. Tommy Dodd was speaking to himself, in sheer surprise at the contents of the letter, whatever they were, and he was not looking at them. But the moody, troubled look that had haunted Dodd's face for the last day or two was gone now, and he seemed to be elated by what he was reading in the letter, as well as surprised. He turned suddenly to Cook and Doyle. "You silly idiots!" he said. "What?" exclaimed Tommy Cook. "You crass asses!" "Look here—" "You think you saw me at the Bird-in-Hand yesterday!" snapped Tommy Dodd. "We don't think we did; we know we did!" answered Cook. "You can't stuff us up any more about it, Tommy Dodd. We know you now." "You believe that, do you?" "Certainly!" "And you won't take my word that I wasn't there?" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, glowering at them. "No fear! Not against our own eyesight!" "Keep your opinion, then!" said Tommy Dodd savagely. "Keep it, and be hanged to you! I could prove it if I liked!" "I'd like to see you do it!" answered Cook, with a curl of the lip. "Well, you won't see me do it! You can go and eat coke! I'll prove it to you fast enough—when you come to me and tell me you are sorry for having acted like suspicious cads!" said Tommy Dodd fiercely. "That's as good as saying never." "Well, you go your way, and I'll go mine! I don't want to speak to fellows who can't take my word!" With that Tommy Dodd turned on his heel and walked out into the quadrangle. Cook and Doyle looked at one another. "Phwat does he mean, intirely?" muttered Doyle. "It looks to me as if he's going potty!" "Blest if he doesn't look like it!" agreed Cook. "He's denying things that everybody knows to be true! What's he doing it for?" "He says he could prove it if he liked." "Piffle!" "Well, it must be piffle," said Tommy Doyle thoughtfully. "I know I'm not going to speak to him again till he owns up that he's played the giddy ox, and told lies about it!"

Jimmy Who?

"Same here!" Tommy Dodd, as he walked in the quadrangle, found himself left severely alone on all sides.

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Prefects on the Track.

SILVER!" "Yes, Bulkeley?" "Cut across to Mr. Manders' House, Silver, and ask Knowles if he will step into my study after tea." "Right-ho!" Jimmy Silver went out again into the dusky quadrangle, and crossed over to the Modern side on his errand. In the hall, as he went in, he observed Tommy Dodd, with a look of moody anger on his face. Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle were going up the staircase without a look at their former chum. Towle was going along the passage, and he gave Tommy Dodd a look, but it was a look of supreme disdain. Leggett of the Modern Fourth was hovering near Dodd, and he was looking quite friendly; but Leggett was a cad of the first water, and Tommy Dodd took no notice of him, as was his custom. "Doddy, old chap—" Leggett was saying as Jimmy Silver came in. Tommy Dodd deliberately turned his back on him, leaving him with a furious face, and by that movement came face to face with Jimmy. He gave Jimmy Silver a dark look. "What do you want here?" he grunted. "Message for Knowles!" answered Jimmy cheerfully. He was passing on, but he paused. "Tommy Dodd, old scout!" "Well?" snapped Tommy. "'Tain't my bizney, of course," said Jimmy Silver, in a low voice, "but—but you're in pretty hot water all round. The game isn't worth the candle, is it? You used to be a decent chap enough. In the name of common-sense, old scout, why don't you chuck playing the goat?" "I don't chuck it because I haven't started it, you thumping chump!" "Oh!" said Jimmy. "If you're keeping that up, it's not much good my saying anything, of course." "Hold on a minute!" said Tommy Dodd, as he was turning away. "You're a silly fool, Jimmy Silver, but I admit that you can't help that. I'm not the fellow you saw at the Bird-in-Hand, and I can prove it!" Jimmy looked rather troubled. "Oh, I'm not going to tell you any lies!" sneered Tommy Dodd. "I'm not the chap, and I could prove it if I liked. I've got a letter in my pocket that would prove it right up to the hilt, if I cared to show it." "Why don't you, then?" asked Jimmy, in astonishment. "Because I don't choose to!" said Tommy Dodd doggedly. "You've chosen to believe I'm a liar and a pub-haunting cad, and my own pals have turned against me. Well, I'm not going to say a word! When you've got the decency to admit that you were mistaken, then I'll prove it." Jimmy Silver looked at him hard. "If I thought I was mistaken I'd admit it fast enough," he said. "But I don't think so, you know. I saw you there. I heard that rotter Hook address you by your own name—" "Am I the only fellow named Dodd in the country, do you think?" sneered Tommy. "I suppose there are some hundreds," said Jimmy Silver; "but they're not exactly like you to look at, I suppose." "One of them is!" Jimmy Silver started. "Tommy Dodd! Do you mean to say you know for a fact that there's a fellow in Coombe just like you, and with the same name, who's been taken for you?" "Too thick, isn't it?" jeered Tommy. "Well, it sounds rather thick. But if you prove it—" "You'd believe it, then?" "Yes, if you proved it." "But you won't take my word!" Jimmy shook his head. "I can't!" he answered. "It's too steep!" "Then you can go and eat coke!" said Tommy Dodd. And he turned and stalked away. Jimmy Silver went on to Knowles' study, and tapped at the door. Cecil Knowles, the head prefect of the

Read Next Week's Rookwood Yarn!

Modern side, gave him a sharp look as he entered.

"Bulkeley would like to speak to you if you'll come in after tea, Knowles," said the junior.

"I'll come," said Knowles laconically.

Jimmy Silver returned to the School House with that reply.

Then, after delivering it to George Bulkeley, he went up to the end study to tea.

There he related to Lovell & Co. what Tommy Dodd had said to him in Mr. Manders' House.

"What rot!" was Arthur Edward Lovell's comment. "Half a dozen fellows have seen Dodd at that pub! Why, I've heard Peel and Smythe, of the Shell, complaining because he's so reckless about it, that a prefect might go there for him any day, and it makes it unsafe for any other shady cad to go there for a flutter. Smythe is quite indignant about it. He's kept away from the place for a week because of Tommy Dodd."

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"But Doddy admits the fellow being there," he answered. "Only he says it wasn't he, but another fellow like him."

"Rot!" said Lovell tersely. "About the lamest yarn I've ever heard!"

And Raby and Newcome nodded assent.

While the Fistical Four were at prep after tea Cecil Knowles sauntered over from the Modern side, and looked into Bulkeley's study.

"Come in!" said the captain of Rookwood. "Squat down, Knowles. I want to speak to you about Tommy Dodd."

Knowles yawned.

"There seems to be a lot of talk about that kid," he said. "I'm convinced that there's nothing in it."

"Nearly every junior in the school seems to think there's something in it," said Bulkeley quietly. "The Head's had Dodd before him, and he doesn't know what to make of it all. He's asked me specially to do what I can, in concert with you. The thing's growing into a regular scandal!"

Knowles shrugged his shoulders.

"You told me you'd seen him at that pub a few days since," he remarked. "I know that he was fagging for me at the time, and he could hardly have dodged out of my study and back again."

"He must have done so, Knowles, for I certainly saw him."

"A mistake, my dear fellow!" said Knowles blandly. "It really wasn't possible."

Bulkeley bit his lip.

"Well, I've seen the Head," he went on, "and the Head's view is that Dodd should be kept under observation. If he should leave the school at forbidden hours, for instance—"

"He doesn't!"

"If he does, he should be looked for. As a prefect on the Modern side, it's for you to keep an eye open for that. From what I've ascertained, Dodd has been seen at that pub half the evenings this week."

"Impossible!"

"I've been making inquiries, and it seems to be the fact," said Bulkeley quietly. "Will you keep yourself posted as to whether he disappears in the evening, and let me know? It's the Head's request."

"Oh, I'll do that, certainly! Rely on me!"

"That's all I want."

Knowles nodded, and strolled out.

He hardly disguised his belief that Bulkeley was prejudiced against Tommy Dodd, because the latter was a Modern, and Bulkeley certainly held the opinion that Knowles was stretching a point very considerably in Dodd's favour, for the same reason.

But Knowles, though not specially dutiful as a prefect, had some sense of the duties of that position, and he did not neglect to carry out the wishes of the Head.

Later in the evening he looked in at the junior study in Mr. Manders' House, which was shared by the three Tommies.

He found Cook and Doyle there, but Tommy Dodd was absent.

"Where's Dodd?" asked Knowles abruptly.

"Sure, and I don't know," answered Doyle.

"Has he gone out?" asked Knowles suspiciously.

"He's gone out of the study."

"You don't know where he's gone?"

"No."

Knowles looked at them very sharply, and left the study.

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

He looked into the other Modern junior studies, Shell and Fourth, but no one knew where Tommy Dodd was.

That was not surprising, as Tommy Dodd, not being on speaking terms with his old friends, was not likely to acquaint them with his movements.

But it certainly was odd that he was not to be found in Mr. Manders' House at all, and Knowles looked for him for a quarter of an hour in vain.

He was very suspicious indeed by that time, and, after some reflection, he crossed over to the School House to speak to Bulkeley.

"Dodd doesn't seem to be in the house," he announced. "Of course, he may be in the quad, or about the place somewhere—perhaps with some of the Classics."

Bulkeley shook his head.

"He's not on visiting terms with any of the Classical juniors," he said. "He's getting the cold shoulder on both sides of the school. I fancy it's pretty clear where he is."

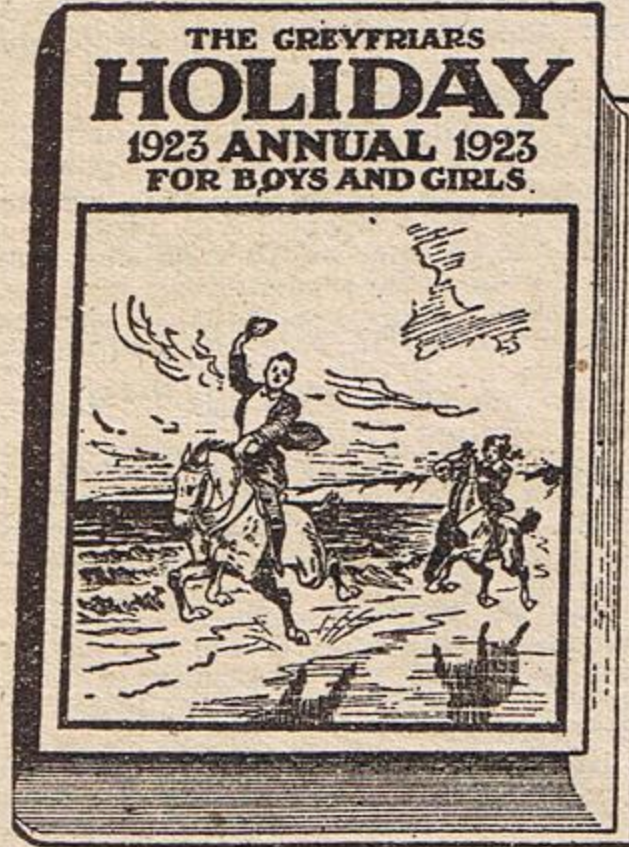
Knowles knitted his brows.

"I'm willing to come with you if the Head asked it," he said.

"Then we'll go," said Bulkeley. "I haven't

NOW ON SALE!

THE FINEST BOOK OF THE YEAR FOR BOYS AND GIRLS.



Packed with complete stories of school and adventure, articles, coloured plates, puzzles, riddles, tricks, etc.

PRICE 6/-

You mustn't miss this Big Budget of the best reading—three hundred and sixty pages of sheer delight!

the slightest doubt where we shall find him, Knowles."

"I'll admit that I'm wrong when we do find him," answered the Modern prefect tartly.

Bulkeley nodded without speaking, and the two prefects left the School House together.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER. A Strange Story.

"COME in!" sang out Jimmy Silver, as a tap came at the door of the end study.

He expected to see Mornington, or Erroll, or some other Classical fellow, when the door opened.

To his surprise, it was Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth who came in.

Tommy's face flushed as he caught the surprised looks the Fistical Four turned upon him.

Lovell turned back to his work grimly. He had nothing to say to the hero of sportive exploits at the Bird-in-Hand.

"Come in!" said Jimmy Silver, hesitating. "What is it—something about footer, Dodd?"

"No," said Tommy, in a low voice.

"Well?"

"I—I've been thinking," said Tommy Dodd, his colour deepening. "I—I've been tramping about a bit in the quad, thinking it out, and I've made up my mind. I'm going to tell you the facts."

"Oh!" said Jimmy.

"About time you owned up, I think," grunted Lovell.

Tommy Dodd did not reply to that.

"I had a letter this morning from my pater," he said. "It let in a lot of light on what's happened lately. I didn't mean to tell a soul. But—but I won't speak to Cook and Doyle. They were my pals, and ought to have trusted me; but there's no reason why you fellows should, I suppose. I dare say you've a right to ask for proofs. Under the circumstances, its natural enough you should have taken that fellow at Coombe for me."

"What fellow?"

"Read that!" was Tommy Dodd's answer. "That part I've marked."

He tossed a folded letter on the table. The Fistical Four, in great surprise, read the paragraph marked with pencil.

It ran:

"I did not intend to acquaint you with the foolish action of your cousin Ralph, but it has occurred to me that he may communicate with you, and in that case you must inform me at once. Ralph has done very badly at Low Moor, and has had the folly to run away from school. I am, however, afraid that he would have been expelled had he remained. He has been guilty of breaking bounds at night, betting on horses, and consorting with low characters, and it had come to his headmaster's knowledge. His present whereabouts are not known, and his parents are naturally very anxious. If you should hear anything of him, please write to me at once."

Jimmy Silver looked at Tommy Dodd.

"Well?" he said.

"My cousin, Ralph Dodd, has bolted from the school," said Tommy. "I thought he was at school up in the North, or I should have known at once who was that fellow at Coombe. He's as like me as a twin brother, but we're on bad terms; we never got on together. He was always a bit of a worm. Now that I know he's left school, and gone off on his own, I know that he must be that chap at Coombe. That's all."

"Oh!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver.

"He's been spoiled," continued Tommy Dodd. "He has lots of money from his father, who makes a fool of him. I don't know what's brought him into this neighbourhood. I shouldn't wonder if he's been rotter enough to plant himself near here to give me trouble because we're so much alike. He's played tricks like that before, before I came to Rookwood. We never did pull together. I haven't seen the fellow at Coombe, but it must be Ralph. There can't be another chap so like me. Now do you understand?"

The Fistical Four looked very hard at Tommy Dodd.

His colour deepened to crimson.

"Don't you believe me now?" he exclaimed, panting.

Jimmy Silver jumped up.

"Yes, I do, for one!" he exclaimed. "Dash it all, it's a queer yarn, Tommy, but I do believe it, every word! I was surprised at your turning out to be a silly fool like Peele or Gower, and I do believe you, old chap!"

"I—I'm glad you do!" said Tommy Dodd, his face softening. "It's easy enough to prove, for that matter. The fellow is plainly putting up at the Bird-in-Hand. I dare say he was recommended to Joey Hook by some other rascal he knew at his old school. Now I've thought it out, I don't blame you fellows for what you believed. It's only my own pals—" Tommy's voice faltered.

"Well, it's jolly steep!" said Lovell. "But if Jimmy believes it, I do. I'll tell you what, Tommy Dodd; let's go down to-morrow and rout that fellow out."

The door of the end study was burst open suddenly, and Tubby Muffin rushed in, breathless with excitement.

"They've got him!" he yelled.

"You fat duffer, what are you burbling about?"

"They've got him—they've got Tommy Dodd!" spluttered Tubby, not observing the Modern junior in the study, for the moment. "Bulkeley and Knowles, you know—they've caught him in the Bird-in-Hand, and brought him home. He, he, he!"

"What?" yelled the Fistical Four together.

"They've got him! Come on! Why—what—how—who—" Tubby Muffin's jaw dropped as his eyes fell on Tommy Dodd. "Why—you—how—Tommy Dodd! B-b-but you're downstairs!" babbled the astounded Tubby.

"My only hat!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "Have they collared a fellow who doesn't

belong to Rookwood at all, and brought him here?"

"Oh crumbs!" ejaculated Raby. There was a rush from the study at once. Tubby Muffin followed the juniors, his round eyes open wide with amazement.

As they crowded down the staircase Jimmy Silver & Co. beheld a strange scene in the hall below.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.
Two of Them.

BULKELEY and Knowles had returned. They had entered the School House, with a boy of about fifteen walking between them, with a sullen, savage face.

Mr. Bootles had come out of his study, and a crowd of fellows—juniors and seniors—had gathered round.

Mr. Bootles peered at the delinquent over his glasses.

"Bless my soul!" he said. "It is Dodd! Where did you find him, Bulkeley?"

"Look here—" began the sullen-looking junior.

"Silence, Dodd!"

"We found him at the Bird-in-Hand public-house, sir," said Bulkeley quietly. "Knowles and I were there together, meaning to inquire, but we saw him at once. He was in the billiard-room, playing billiards with a man named Hook, and the French windows were open."

"Bless my soul!"

There was a rustle in the corridor, and the crowd parted respectfully as Dr. Chisholm came up.

He signed to Bulkeley to continue.

"We stepped in," went on the captain of Rookwood. "The man Hook wanted to interfere, but we pushed him away. He—ahem—fell down. We took Dodd, and made him come out."

"He told us he wasn't Dodd of the Fourth," said Knowles. "He seems really to be a little wrong in his head, sir. He wanted to make us believe that he was not a Rookwood fellow at all."

"Bless my soul! Absurd!"

"Stand forward, Dodd!" came the Head's voice.

The two prefects released the junior, who stepped forward, with a sulky, sneering expression on his face.

The Rookwooders looked at him in wonder. Certainly the culprit, caught red-handed, as it were, did not look alarmed.

"You've no right to bring me here!" he said. "I don't belong to this school!"

"What!" exclaimed the Head.

"I suppose you're mistaking me for Tommy Dodd," went on the junior. "Well, I'm not Tommy Dodd! Now let me get out!"

"How dare you, Dodd?" said the Head thunderously.

"I tell you I'm not Tommy Dodd!" shouted the junior savagely. "If you want to know, I'm his cousin, and my name's Ralph Dodd! Now I'm going!"

He turned towards the door; but Bulkeley's hand dropped on his shoulder with a grip of iron.

He struggled for a moment, giving the captain of Rookwood a furious look; but Bulkeley's grip hardened, and he was quiet.

"Dodd—" began the Head.

There was a hurried scuttling of footsteps on the big staircase, and a murmur of voices that grew to a roar.

Dr. Chisholm turned his head angrily at the interruption, and then stared, dumb.

For, hurrying down the staircase, followed by Jimmy Silver & Co., was Tommy Dodd of the Modern Fourth!

The Head stared at Tommy Dodd on the staircase, and then at the sullen junior before him, dumbfounded.

But for the difference of clothes the two juniors were exactly alike; and it was clear enough now that the newcomer's tale was true.

"Dodd!" stammered the Head.

"Tommy Dodd!" stuttered Bulkeley dazedly.

"Dodd!" said Knowles, with a grin. "I think I was right, after all, Bulkeley. Dodd was indoors all the time, and this fellow—"

Tommy Dodd hurried through the amazed crowd in the Hall.

"Here I am, sir!" he exclaimed. "Everybody can see now that it's not as they supposed. I haven't been out of gates this evening."

"Dodd," gasped the Head, "who—who is this boy?"



TWO DODDS!—The Head stared at Tommy Dodd, and then at the sullen junior before him. But for the difference of clothes the two juniors were exactly alike. "Here I am, sir!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "Everybody can see now that it's not as they supposed." (See Chapter 7.)

Tommy Dodd gave the sullen newcomer a glance of the strongest disfavour.

"He's my cousin Ralph, sir," he said. "I heard from my father this morning that he had run away from school, and was missing; and then I guessed who it was that had been seen at the public-house."

"Bless my soul!" said the Head.

Ralph Dodd broke into a sullen laugh.

"Well, now you can see it's a mistake, you can let me go!" he sneered. "I suppose you can see now that I'm not Tommy Dodd, and don't belong to Rookwood! Let me go, hang you!"

"Silence!" exclaimed the Head. "Dodd, you say that this boy has run away from the school he belongs to?"

"Yes, sir."

"In that case, he will be detained here till he can be handed over to his parents!"

"I won't!" yelled Ralph Dodd furiously.

"I—I— Let me go! Let go!"

"Kindly take charge of him for the present, Bulkeley."

"Certainly, sir!"

"Dodd," said Dr. Chisholm, with a kindly look at the Modern junior, "I am very glad that your name has been cleared in this way! I am sure that your schoolfellows will do you justice now."

"Thank you, sir!" faltered Tommy Dodd. Dr. Chisholm swept away, following Bulkeley and his unwilling charge.

There was no more freedom to "play the goat" for the reckless fellow from Low Moor.

The roof of Rookwood was to shelter him that night, and on the morrow he was to be handed over to his father's charge, which was certainly the best thing that could have happened to him.

There were congratulations on all sides for Tommy Dodd, and requests for pardon for having doubted him.

Tommy Dodd answered cheerfully enough; but there were two fellows whom he did not answer, and they were Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle.

He went to his study in Mr. Manders' House without a word or a look to his former chums.

But he had not been there many minutes when the two Tommies came in.

Dodd looked at them grimly.

"Sure, we're sorry, Tommy darling!" murmured Doyle.

"How were we to know?" said Tommy Cook pleadingly.

Grunt!

"We take it all back!"

Grunt!

"We're really sorry, Tommy!"

Grunt!

"Tain't like you to bear malice, Tommy, old sport!" murmured Cook. "We ought to have believed you, and we own up!"

Grunt, but less formidable! Tommy Dodd was softening.

"Tommy, old chap—"

"You bumped me out of the study!" said Tommy Dodd.

"You can bump us out, if you like!" said Cook. "Honest Injun! And we won't raise a finger!"

"Honest Injun!" repeated Tommy Doyle solemnly.

Tommy Dodd burst into a laugh.

"Oh, I suppose you couldn't help being duffers!" he said. "It's all right, and I'm jolly glad it's ended all right, too! I say, there was a remittance in my pater's letter this morning! What about something for supper? The tuckshop isn't closed yet."

"Sure, it's a broth av a bhoys ye are, Tommy!"

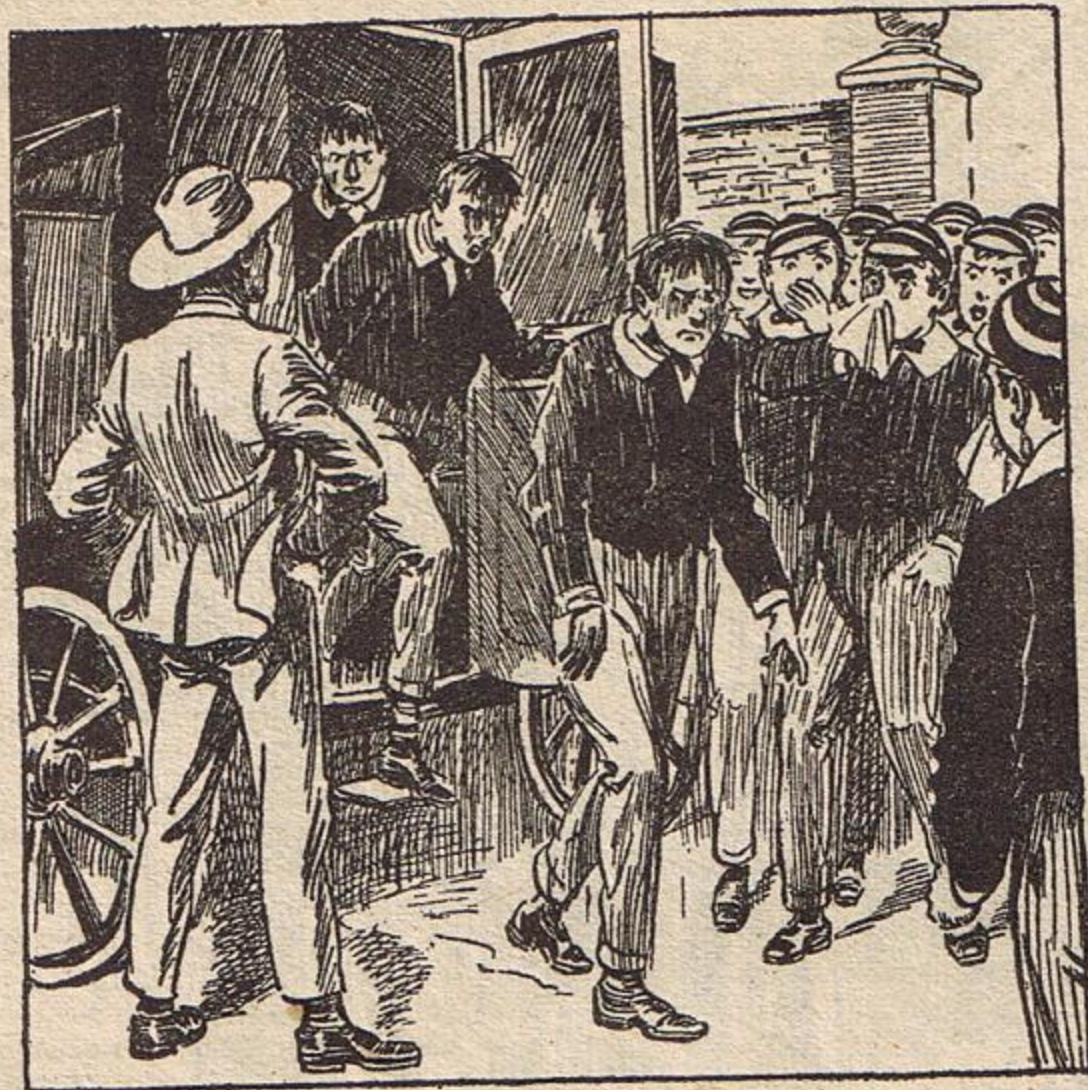
The three Tommies were united again. And when Jimmy Silver & Co. met them the next day the three were walking, with linked arms, in the quad, evidently on the chummiest terms once more—which the Fistical Four were very glad to see.

THE END.

(A dramatic story of the Rookwooders in THE POPULAR next Tuesday is entitled "Joker or Thief?" by Owen Conquest.)

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

THE BORNEO BOY ARRIVES AT ST. JIM'S—BILL BARKER, GRUNDY'S COUSIN FROM BORNEO, BURSTS UPON ST. JIM'S LIKE A HUMAN HURRICANE! EVEN GRUNDY IS SURPRISED AT THE NEW BOY'S "NERVE"!



THE BOY FROM BORNEO!

A Splendid Long Complete School Tale which tells how Grundy, of the Shell Form at St. Jim's, didn't put his cousin "in his proper place!"

By

MARTIN CLIFFORD.

Author of the Famous Tales of St. Jim's now appearing in the Greatly Enlarged "Gem."

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

Grundy Is Annoyed!

GRUNDY gave a snort. When George Alfred Grundy ventured to snort, it was not a faint noise that he made. Monty Lowther likened it to the sound of a fog-horn.

Grundy's snort echoed through the junior Common-room at St. Jim's. Fellows who were reading, or playing chess, looked up from their diversions.

"What's the trouble, Grundy?" inquired Tom Merry.

"Trouble enough!" growled Grundy. "I've just had a letter by the evening post—"

"And there was no remittance inside?" suggested Manners.

"No. It's a letter from my Uncle Toby. He's just back from Borneo."

"You don't mean to say that your uncle's the celebrated Wild Man of Borneo?" said Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course not!" said Grundy irritably. "He's an Englishman, and an F.R.G.S."

"What does that mean—Fathead Rarely Giving Satisfaction?" inquired the irrepressible Lowther.

Grundy directed a withering glance at the humorist of the Shell.

"It means Fellow of the Royal Geographical Society, of course!" he said.

"Uncle Toby went out to Borneo to carry out a research on behalf of the society. And he took my cousin Bill—his son, you know—with him."

Tom Merry lifted his eyebrows.

"First I've heard of your cousin Bill, Grundy," he said.

Grundy laughed mirthlessly.

"You'll hear more about him before long," he said. "He's coming to St. Jim's."

"My hat! When?"

"He arrives to-morrow afternoon."

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

"By Jove! This is sudden," said Manners.

Grundy's statement had electrified the crowd in the Common-room.

"What's your cousin Bill like, Grundy?" asked Jack Blake. "Nothing like you, I hope?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy gave another of his expressive snorts.

"I haven't seen him for several years," he said. "My last impression of Bill Barker—that happens to be his name—was that he was a weedy waster."

"I say! That's putting it pretty strong," said Talbot.

"I don't pretend to be in love with my cousin," said Grundy. "Uncle Toby had arranged to take me to Borneo with him first of all, but cousin Bill chipped in, and queered my pitch. He did me out of the trip, and you can't expect me to be pally with him after that."

"You say he's a weedy specimen?" said Aubrey Racke curiously.

Grundy nodded.

"Something like Skimpole," he said.

"Great Scott!" ejaculated Manners.

"We don't want another Skimpole at St. Jim's. It's as much as we can do to put up with the present one. Two would be a crowd."

"Of course," said Grundy, "it's years since I saw my cousin. He might have altered; but I don't think it very likely."

"Does he use jaw-breaking words, like Skimmy?" asked Jack Blake.

"Oh, no! He's quite a rough diamond. No polish or education about him, like there is about me."

"Can't say I've ever noticed any polish about you, Grundy—not even on your boots!" said Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grundy glared.

"You'll feel my fist if you don't dry up, Lowther!" he said threateningly.

"Hasn't your cousin ever been to school, Grundy?" asked Tom Merry, in wonder.

"No. He had a tutor when he was quite a youngster, and Uncle Toby took on his education after that. Not that Uncle Toby would have been able to teach him much. He's an awful ignoramus!"

"Why? Because he didn't enclose a remittance with his letter?" asked Cardew.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Uncle Toby knows his geography inside-out," said Grundy, paying no heed to Cardew's pleasantry. "He can tell you what year Julius Cæsar invaded Britain, and the date that Oliver Cromwell won the Battle of Waterloo—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you silly chumps cackling at?" asked Grundy, in surprise.

"It was Wellington who won Waterloo, you ass!" said Tom Merry. "And judging by your remarks, history seems to be your uncle's strong point—not geography."

"Anyway, Uncle Toby hardly knows a thing outside geography," said Grundy.

"He's a fearful duffer. He'd tell you that two and two made five, and that it was Shakespeare who wrote 'Hamlet.'"

There was a further yell of laughter, which mystified George Alfred Grundy more than ever.

"Shakespeare did write 'Hamlet,' you crazy coon!" shrieked Clive.

"What rot!" said Grundy scornfully.

"Well, it may not have been Shakespeare, after all," said Tom Merry.

"Lots of nice people who are always trying to belittle the Bard of Avon are saying that Bacon wrote all his stuff."

"I don't believe it!" said Talbot bluntly.

"Neither do I. But we won't start an argument on the subject, or we shall jaw for hours without getting any forrader. So your cousin Bill is arriving to-morrow afternoon, Grundy?"

"Yes—confound him!"

"Let cousinly love continue!" murmured Monty Lowther.

"By Right of Conquest!" is Next Week's Grand St. Jim's Story.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
The majority of the St. Jim's juniors seemed to be looking forward with eager interest to the coming of cousin Bill. But Grundy, who was the person most intimately concerned, showed no interest—merely annoyance. It was clear that Grundy had a poor opinion of the boy from Borneo, and that he was far from pleased at the prospect of having him for a school-fellow.

"Is your cousin any good at games, Grundy?" inquired Manners.

Another of Grundy's familiar snorts echoed through the Common-room.

"Good at games? Why, he doesn't know a football from an Indian club!" he said scornfully.

"Then I'm convinced he must be your double!" said Monty Lowther.

Grundy clenched his hands, and made a bull-like rush at the speaker. Lowther promptly took refuge behind Tom Merry and Manners. He pretended to be in a blue funk, and Grundy really believed him to be; but Monty would cheerfully have stood up to George Alfred Grundy had the occasion been more serious.

"You wait till I get hold of you, you sarcastic beast!" hooted Grundy. "I—I'll burst you!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You'd better reserve your energies till to-morrow," advised Jack Blake. "I suppose you'll lick your cousin on his arrival, just to show there's no ill-feeling?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I wouldn't take the trouble," said Grundy. "Cousin Bill isn't worth it. He's one of those soft specimens that's got no stamina. One tap on the nose would put him out of action for a week. Of course," added Grundy thoughtfully, "if he should start trying to be funny when he comes, I shall have to put him in his place."

"Oh, quite!" said Tom Merry gravely.

Grundy crumpled Uncle Toby's letter in his hand, and tossed it on to the fire. The scowl on his rugged face boded ill for cousin Bill.

"Of course, you'll met your giddy cousin when he comes?" said Aubrey Racke.

Grundy shook his head. "He can find his way up to the school by himself," he said. "Dashed if I'm going to be his guide, philosopher, and friend!"

So saying, George Alfred strode out of the Common-room, shutting the door after him with a slam which re-echoed the length of the corridor.

THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Enter Cousin Bill!

"I 'VE got a wheeze!" said Aubrey Racke, after dinner next day.

Crooke and Mellish pricked up their ears.

"Expound!" said Crooke briefly.

"What price our goin' down to the station to meet Grundy's cousin, an' playin' a little jape on him!"

"Ripping!" said Mellish.

And Crooke nodded his assent.

"The fellow won't know where St. Jim's is situated," said Racke. "He'll be a stranger in a strange land when he gets off the train at Rylcombe. We'll meet him, an' be very pally with him, an' see to his luggage, an' all that sort of thing. Then we'll take him along in the station hack to Rylcombe Grammar School, an' spring him on Gordon Gay & Co. Cousin Bill won't realise that we've taken him to the wrong school—until later! As soon as we've handed him over to Gay & Co., we'll clear off in the hack."

"Good wheeze!" chuckled Crooke. Racke consulted his gold wrist-watch. "Train will be in soon," he said. "We'd better be gettin' along."

The trio of rascals made their way to the railway-station.

There was no fear that anybody else would go to meet Bill Barker. Tom Merry & Co. had a football-match against Rookwood; and Grundy had not the remotest intention of going to greet his cousin.

The train was signalled when Racke & Co. reached the little station.

"Here she comes!" said Crooke, as the engine swung into view round a curve.

As the train rumbled into the station, the juniors curiously scanned the compartments.

The door of a first-class carriage was burst open, and a youth stepped out.

But for the fact that he was the only passenger to alight, Racke & Co. would never have supposed him to be Grundy's cousin. To begin with, he did not in the least answer Grundy's description of "a weedy waster." He was a burly, overgrown fellow, and he was dressed more like a cowboy than a prospective public-school boy. Although it was a bitterly cold day, he wore a khaki shirt, open at the neck. A loose jacket hung upon his back. It was unbuttoned at the front, affording the juniors a glimpse of a coloured belt. The trousers were of a coarse material, and the boots were of the hobnailed variety. A wide-brimmed hat was perched on the new boy's head.

In features, cousin Bill was not unlike Grundy himself. His face was rugged, and far from beautiful. Racke & Co., carefully taking stock of him, noticed that his hands were large and rough. His skin was deeply tanned, proving that he was on terms of close friendship with the open air.

"Oh, my giddy aunt!" murmured Aubrey Racke. "What a specimen!"

"I expected to see an undersized little brat," said Crooke. "He must have altered a good deal since Grundy saw him last."

"Yes, rather!"

"Do you think he's much of a fighting-man?" asked Mellish, with a note of uneasiness in his tone.

"Shouldn't think so," said Racke.

"He looks pretty burly, but I expect it's just flabbiness."

The fellow who had alighted from the train advanced towards the trio.

"Say, are you from St. Jim's?" he asked.

Racke nodded genially. "You are Bill Barker, I take it?" he said.

"That's so. Hasn't my cousin come to meet me?"

"No. He didn't seem wildly elated at the prospect of your comin' to St. Jim's."

Cousin Bill frowned.

"He might have had the decency to come and meet me," he said. "I shall have to ask cousin George what he means by it. Just see to my luggage, will you?"

"Well, that's pretty cool!" muttered Crooke.

Racke plucked his companion by the sleeve.

"Let's humour him," he whispered.

Accordingly, the trio set off in quest of Bill Barker's luggage. It had been pitchforked on to the platform by a careless porter. It consisted of a stout wooden box and a couple of kitbags.

It was as much as Racke & Co. could do to convey the baggage to the station hack. They had to exert their strength to the utmost, and they were pretty breathless by the time they had accomplished the feat.

"Now take me along to the school!" said the new boy imperiously.

"Certainly, old chap!" said Racke. "That's what we came here for. You wouldn't like a feed at the bunshop first?"

"No; I had a tea-basket on the train."

Cousin Bill clambered into the hack. Crooke and Mellish followed. Racke paused to whisper a few words to the driver.

"Rylcombe Grammar School," he murmured, with a sly wink. "I'll make it worth your while," he added.

The driver nodded and grinned, and whipped his ancient steed into action. Racke clambered into the vehicle as it started off.

Cousin Bill had very little to say during the journey. His stolid silence was rather disconcerting. New boys, as a rule, were very garrulous. They wanted to know what the school was like, and what the masters were like, and what sort of reception the fellows were likely to give them. But cousin Bill seemed quite unconcerned. He produced a packet of chewing-gum from his pocket, took out a slab, and commenced to chew the cud, as it were.

The hack rattled along the narrow street of Rylcombe. Soon the Grammar School came into view. Racke, glancing from the window, could see Gordon Gay & Co. standing in a group in the school gateway.

"Here we are!" said Crooke, as the hack rumbled to a halt.

Cousin Bill broke his long silence. "Hasn't taken us long to get here," he remarked.

"No," agreed Racke. "It's only a stone's-throw from the station."

Cousin Bill stepped out of the vehicle. Racke & Co. got out after him, and lifted down his luggage.

Gordon Gay & Co. watched these proceedings with undisguised curiosity.

"Who on earth is this?" ejaculated Gordon Gay.

"Looks like Ragtime Cowboy Joe!" chuckled Frank Monk.

"What are those St. Jim's fellows doing with him?"

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

FREE EACH WEEK

2

HAND COLOURED

PHOTOS

OF FAMOUS

FOOTBALLERS



Here's a fine chance for you, boys! Every week "Boys' Friend" is giving away TWO HAND COLOURED PHOTOS of Famous Footballers. Don't miss them! Start to collect them TO-DAY! Ask for

The Boys' FRIEND

The Burly, Bouncing Borneo Boy Comes To Stay!

"Ask me another!"

Aubrey Racke introduced cousin Bill to the Grammarians with a wave of his hand.

"This is Bill Barker, from Borneo," he explained. "He's your property. Take him into your Home for Incurables, an' tether him up somewhere."

Having delivered himself of this brief speech, Racke hopped back into the hack. Crooke and Mellish followed on the instant, and the vehicle rattled away.

For a moment, cousin Bill stood as if nonplussed. But it didn't take him long to put two and two together. He was not quite so dense as his cousin Grundy.

REAL—

He noticed that the caps worn by Gordon Gay & Co. differed from those worn by the trio who had brought him along. He rightly concluded that this was a hoax, and that he had been deposited at a rival school instead of at St. Jim's.

Leaving his luggage on the ground, cousin Bill promptly dashed off in pursuit of the hack. Gordon Gay & Co., watching him, marvelled at his turn of speed. He flashed along the village street like a champion of the cinder-path.

Aubrey Racke saw the danger, and he urged the driver of the hack to put the pace on. But the ancient horse—christened "Tishy" by the St. Jim's fellows—was incapable of raising a canter.

Presently the driver was compelled to halt, owing to the approach of a large steam lorry.

Cousin Bill came galloping up. He paused for a moment to recover his breath. Then he whipped open the door of the hack.

"Out you come!" he growled.

His large hands closed over the slim ankles of Aubrey Racke in a vice-like grip, and he hauled Aubrey out of the hack feet foremost.

"Leggo!" yelled Racke. "I—I'll jolly well—"

But before Racke could finish the sentence he found himself lying on his back on the pavement.

Crooke and Mellish followed in rapid succession, and the trio lay in a huddled heap, striving vainly to sort themselves out.

Cousin Bill was possessed of prodigious strength, and he had not been slow to use it.

The new boy stood glaring down at his victims for a moment. Then he turned to the driver.

"Go and pick up my luggage, and come back here!" he commanded. "If you don't I'll haul you down from your perch and wallop you! Your age won't protect you!"

This annoyed the driver intensely, for he was not yet forty. However, he realised that cousin Bill was not a fellow to be trifled with.

The steam lorry had passed by this time, and the driver sullenly reversed his vehicle, and returned to the Grammar School.

"Don't be more than five minutes!" shouted cousin Bill after him, "or it will be the worse for you!"

Meanwhile Racke & Co. had managed to totter to their feet. They eyed cousin Bill furtively, doubtless debating whether

THE POPULAR—No. 200.

it would be worth their while to attack him. The odds were three to one, and they would seem to have a big advantage, on the face of it. But they hesitated. Cousin Bill had proved himself to be a second edition of Samson.

Grundy's cousin regarded them calmly. "Why did you take me to the wrong school?" he asked. "I suppose it was your idea of a joke?"

Racke muttered something unintelligible.

"You'll soon discover that I'm a dangerous sort of fellow to play jokes on," said cousin Bill. "I pitched you out of the hack, but I don't call that a punishment. I'm going to give you your punishment now!"

At the end of the village street there was a stagnant pond. Cousin Bill gave a significant glance in that direction. Racke & Co. became greatly alarmed.

"I'll deal with you first," said cousin Bill, advancing upon Aubrey.

"Look here, you rotter—"

But the boy from Borneo was not to be reasoned with. He laid violent hands upon Racke, and hustled him away towards the pond.

"Rescue!" yelled Racke.

Crooke and Mellish realised that unless they tackled cousin Bill there and then there would be an unpleasant ducking in store for them. So they mustered what little courage they possessed, and rushed at the new boy.

Cousin Bill shook off the two juniors as if they had been nothing more than troublesome flies. A hefty shoulder-charge sent Crooke spinning; and a similar charge caused Mellish to measure his length in the roadway.

Racke was then hustled along to the

—GLOSSY PHOTOS—

edge of the pond. Arriving here, cousin Bill lifted the junior bodily in his arms, and sent him hurtling into the muddy water.

Splash!

"Gug-gug-gug!" gurgled Racke, finding himself immersed in four feet of stagnant water.

Cousin Bill turned to Crooke.

"Your turn next!" he said cheerfully.

"Don't you dare—" began Crooke.

But cousin Bill did dare. He picked Crooke up as if the latter were a baby, and tossed him into the pond.

There was a further splash and gurgle. Percy Mellish turned to flee, but cousin Bill was too quick for him.

"No, you don't!" he said, seizing Mellish by the collar and swinging him back. "When I tackle a job of this sort, I do it thoroughly!"

After a brief but fruitless struggle, Mellish joined Racke and Crooke in the pond.

As the trio came crawling out, their features were scarcely recognisable. They were plastered from head to foot with mud and slime. Cousin Bill was so tickled by their appearance that he burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! You look a set of bright beauties, and no mistake! Your little playmates will hardly recognise you when you turn up at the school."

"We're not goin' up to the school in this state!" snarled Racke.

"Your mistake!" said cousin Bill pleasantly. "Ah! Here's the hack, with my baggage on board. Hop in!"

Racke & Co. hesitated. But only for a moment. There was an expression on cousin Bill's face which showed that he meant to be obeyed.

Reluctantly the trio clambered into the hack.

"You'll excuse me if I sit up with the driver, won't you?" said the new boy. "You fellows are giving off a sort of effluvia, and it's rather unpleasant at close quarters."

The mud-bespattered trio sat huddled up inside the hack, while cousin Bill climbed up and squeezed himself into the driver's seat. In this manner the hack proceeded to St. Jim's with its human cargo.

Racke & Co. were half inclined to jump out while the vehicle was in motion, for it was travelling at a snail's pace. But the trio thought better of it. If cousin Bill saw them trying to escape, there would be trouble. And Racke and his companions had had quite enough trouble to be going on with!

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

Making Himself at Home.

"GREAT jumping crackers!" "What the merry dickens has happened?"

A crowd of St. Jim's juniors surrounded the station hack when it came to a halt in the quad.

They had ample reason to be astonished. Reason number one was the spectacle of cousin Bill in his unorthodox attire. Reason number two was the strange appearance of Racke, Crooke, and Mellish, as they staggered out of the vehicle.

Tom Merry & Co. shrank back, with their handkerchiefs pressed to their noses, as the trio hurried past them. For the odour that Racke & Co. gave forth was far from pleasant. It was obvious that they had not been trying to emulate the Queen of Sheba by anointing their garments with myrrh, aloes, and cassia.

Racke & Co. dashed into the building without giving any explanation of their unsavoury condition. It was left for cousin Bill to explain, which he did in a few words.

"They tried to trick me by taking me to the wrong school," he said. "People who try to trick me usually find they've woke up the wrong passenger. I ducked 'em."

"Is—is your name Barker?" stammered Tom Merry.

Cousin Bill nodded.

"Where's that cousin of mine?" he demanded.

"George Alfred Grundy—forward!"

—EVERY

WEEK!

boomed Monty Lowther, in the tones of a regimental sergeant-major.

Grundy came forward to meet his cousin.

"So you've come?" he said, without troubling to extend his hand.

"Yes," said cousin Bill grimly. "I've

"I'll Be Captain of This Show NOW!" said the Borneo Boy. Will He?

arrived, as you will shortly discover to your cost."

The new boy turned to the driver of the hack, who had set his luggage upon the ground.

"There's your fare," he said, handing over a couple of half-crowns. "Now, cousin George," he went on, turning to Grundy, "why didn't you meet me at the station?"

Grundy shrugged his shoulders.

"I didn't mean to put myself out to that extent," he said. "I may as well tell you quite plainly that you're not welcome here."

"Indeed!"

"We were always at loggerheads when we were kids, and I haven't forgotten how you used to carry favour with Uncle Toby, and cut me out of everything. I don't like you a scrap! I'd as soon have gone to the station to meet an utter stranger, rather than you. So now you know!"

Cousin Bill eyed Grundy grimly. Then his gaze rested on Tom Merry & Co.

"You knew I was coming?" he inquired.

Tom Merry nodded.

"Then why didn't you come and meet me, in the absence of my cousin?"

"Most noble lord," said Monty Lowther, "accept our profuse apologies for the omission! We have no excuse to offer, except that we had a trivial football fixture with Rookwood."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Cousin Bill frowned.

"Don't jest with me!" he said, "or you'll find yourself floundering in the bowl of the fountain, Funnycuts!"

Monty Lowther fairly gasped. To be "cheeked" in this manner by a new boy was absolutely unheard of.

Cousin Bill had nothing more to say to Lowther. He turned again to his cousin.

"It was very rude of you not to come and meet me, cousin George," he said. "Your conduct merits a jolly good licking, but I'll let you off this time."

"You—you'll let me off?" echoed Grundy dazedly.

"Yes. Just carry my traps into the building, will you?"

"Why, you—you—I'll do nothing of the sort!" hooted Grundy. "If you think I'm going to fetch and carry for you, you're jolly well mistaken!"

Cousin Bill pointed to the wooden box and the kitbags.

"Do as I tell you!" he said sternly.

All eyes were on George Alfred Grundy. Would he eat humble pie, and carry out his cousin's command? Or would he wade in and slaughter this colossal cheeky new boy?

Grundy did not leave his schoolfellows long in doubt as to his intentions. He clenched his fists and rushed at his cousin, muttering something to the effect that he would dispatch cousin Bill into the middle of next week.

The new boy stepped smartly to one side. As Grundy floundered harmlessly past him he shot out his right with a sweeping movement, and his fist came with the force of a battering-ram upon Grundy's jaw. Grundy swayed for a moment like a tree in an autumn gale, then he measured his length on the flagstones.

Grundy lay like a log, and he seemed in no hurry to rise.

Tom Merry & Co. looked on in wonder.

"If this is the weedy specimen Grundy told us about last night, I hope I never come up against him, that's all!" muttered Manners.

"Same here!" said Jack Blake. "That blow felled Grundy like a giddy ex!"

Cousin Bill dragged Grundy into a sitting posture. Then, by inserting his knee into the small of Grundy's back, he hauled him to his feet.

Grundy blinked around him as if he had just awakened from an unpleasant dream.

"A few minutes ago," said cousin Bill blandly, "I gave you an order. You refused to carry it out. Do you still refuse?"

"Nunno!" said Grundy hastily.

"I'm glad to hear it. Carry my traps into the building."

Grundy stooped and lifted the heavy wooden box.

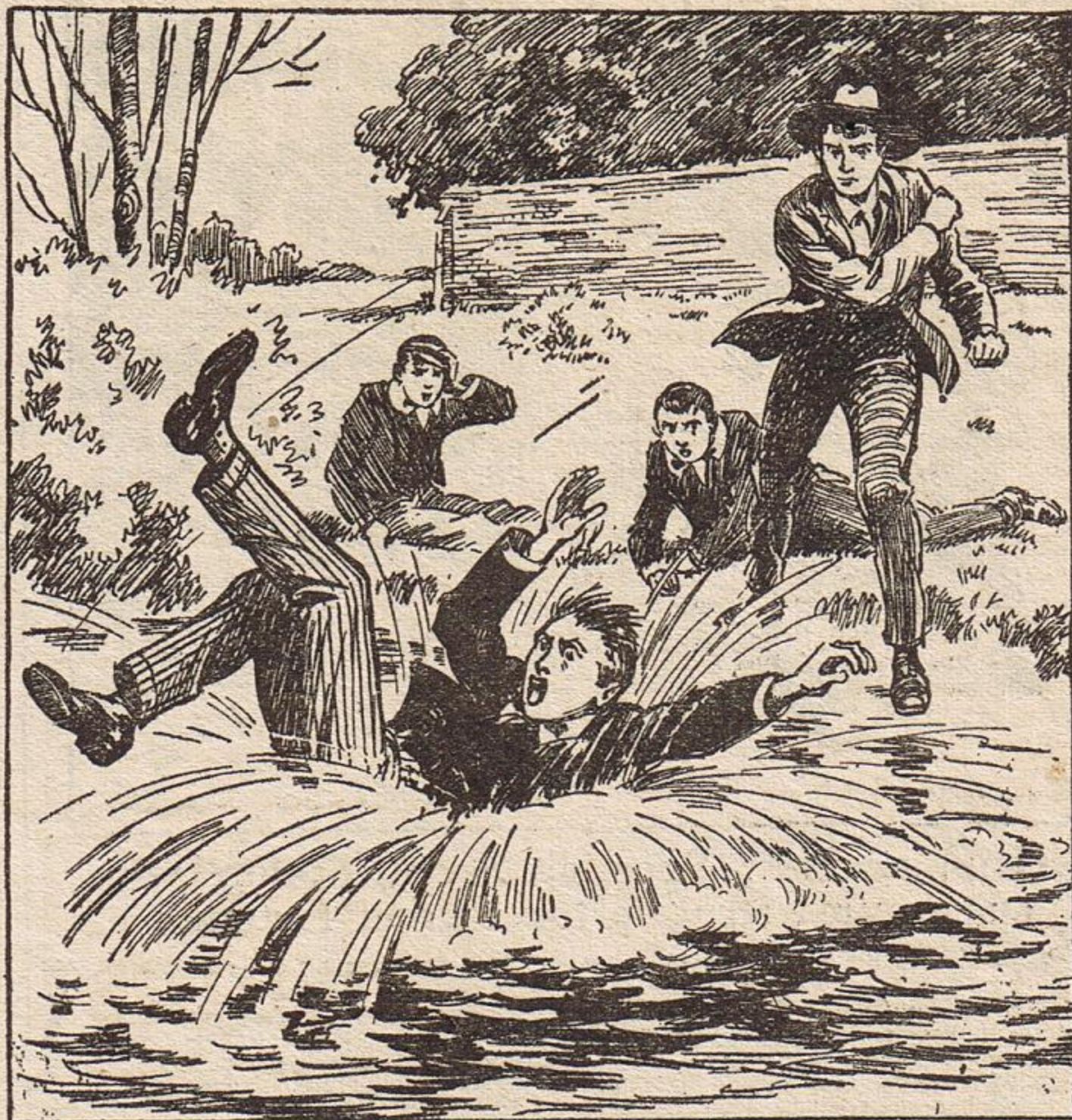
to wallop. In my case, though, it's different. I guarantee there's not a fellow in this school that I couldn't make bite the dust."

"Oh!"

The juniors piloted cousin Bill to Mr. Railton's study. What the Housemaster would say when he saw the new boy's quaint attire they could only surmise.

Tom Merry tapped on the door, and in response to Mr. Railton's "Come in!" he turned the handle, and ushered cousin Bill into the study.

The juniors waited in the passage until the interview was over.



A LESSON FOR THE CADS!—Racke was hustled along to the edge of the pond, and lifting him bodily in his arms, cousin Bill sent the cad of the Shell hurtling into the muddy water. Splash! "Next one!" said Barker, turning to Crooke. (See Chapter 2.)

"Where shall I take it?" he asked sullenly.

"Put it in the hall for the time being. When I've seen the Housemaster, I'll let you know which study to take it to."

Grundy carried the box up the School House steps and dumped it down savagely in the hall. Then he came back for the kitbags.

When his property had been temporarily disposed of, cousin Bill addressed himself to Tom Merry & Co.

"Would you fellows direct me to the Housemaster's study?" he asked.

"Certainly!" said Tom Merry. "This way, Buffalo Bill!"

"Cut out those fancy names," said the new boy, "or I'll wallop you!"

"Walloping seems to run in the family," murmured Monty Lowther. "Grundy's always threatening to wallop people."

"I dare say," said cousin Bill. "But I expect there are several fellows here that cousin George would find it difficult

Master and new boy remained in conversation for nearly twenty minutes, at the end of which time cousin Bill emerged. He was looking quite merry and bright.

"Which Form are you going into, Barker?" asked Jack Blake curiously.

"The Shell!"

"Thank goodness!" said the leader of the Fourth in tones of relief.

Cousin Bill had burst upon them like a human hurricane, and they were rather puzzled as to what line of action to take. Certainly they could not allow him to domineer them in this manner. He would have to be put in his place, and that right speedily.

Whether Tom Merry & Co. would succeed in taming the boy from Borneo remained to be seen.

THE END.

(The boy from Borneo looks like making things hum in the Shell! Keep your eye on him. More of cousin Bill next Tuesday.)

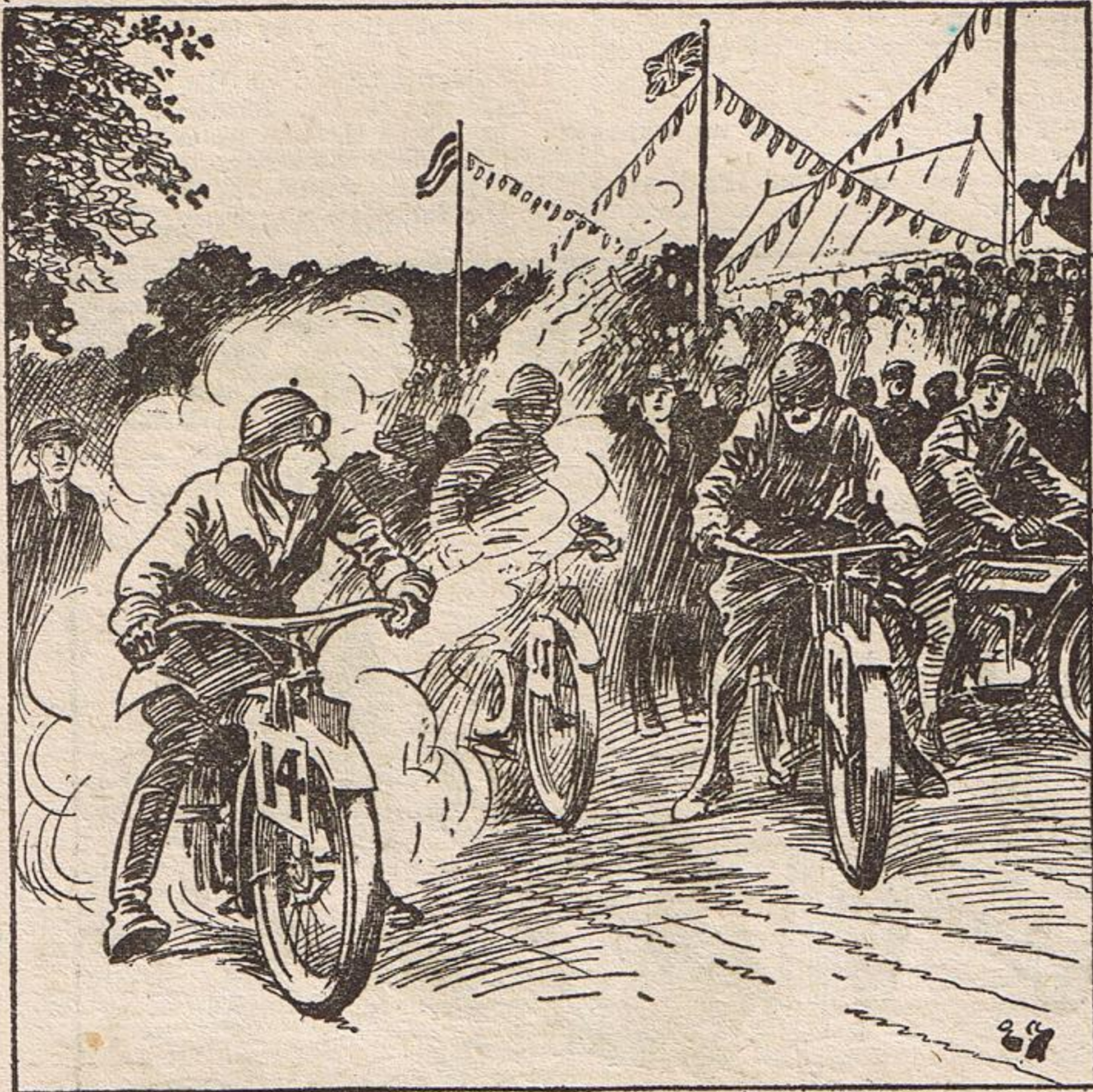
THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

Have You Read This Yarn About St. Jim's Amazing New Boy?

A SPORTING TALE WITH A DASH AND SWING! DEALING FURTHER WITH THE THRILLING MOTOR-CYCLE RACE BETWEEN HARRY LESTRADE AND AUSTIN COURTNEY.

THE RIVAL SPORTSMEN!

By VICTOR NELSON.



A Gripping New Sporting Serial, dealing with an amazing struggle for a great fortune.

WHAT HAS GONE BEFORE.

By the terms of the late Sir Charles Lestrade's will, Harry Lestrade and his cousin, Austin Courtney, must fight for the possession of the Lestrade fortune on the field of sport. The one who distinguishes himself most becomes owner of a vast amount of wealth. Harry Lestrade receives the first opportunity to distinguish himself in a local football match, for which club he is "signed on." Several other sporting events, in which both the cousins compete, are won by

young Harry Lestrade. Furious at being beaten so many times by his cousin, Courtney tries underhand methods of getting Harry out of the struggle.

A famous motor-cycle race on the Isle of Man is the next event in which the two rival sportsmen have entered.

Before the day of the race, Courtney sends for one of his touts, and between the two a dastardly plan is arranged for spoiling Harry's chances in the race.

(Now read on.)

The Great Motor-Cycle Race.—The Smash!

THERE was an air of suppressed excitement in Douglas, the capital and largest town of the Isle of Man. Through the streets were hurrying crowds of inhabitants and visitors, and all were making in the same direction, all discussing one topic—the great motor-cycle race that was due to start in rather less than an hour's time.

For the past two days all the hotels and apartment houses of the island had been full. Crowds of motoring enthusiasts and sportsmen had made a pilgrimage to the island from all parts of the United Kingdom. The route the some fifty entrants would take when the race began had been specially cleared of traffic by the local authorities, and already most of the competitors were gathered at the inn just outside Douglas whence the start would be made.

"Good-bye! Best of luck, old bean!"

It was a lad of about sixteen or seventeen who spoke, as he gripped the hand of another boy in leathern motoring kit, who wheeled

THE POPULAR.—No. 200

a smart Imperial motor-cycle from the garage of the Douglas Grand Hotel.

The latter was Harry Lestrade, who had crossed from England with his motor-cycle some two days previously, and the speaker, who was a rather pale-faced boy with long, dark hair and a somewhat studious look given him by reason of the great black-rimmed glasses he wore, was his old school friend, Theodore Grainger, more familiarly known to all his intimates as "Specs."

Specs had been told over the telephone by Harry of how his name had been used to lure him into the clutches of those who were undoubtedly hirelings of his cousin Austin. Realising that his old chum might be in need of a friend, and that there might be much adventure and excitement before the great sporting contest was over, Specs had gained his people's permission to stay with Harry for at least the next few weeks.

Tony Wagg, the ex-boxer-trainer of the Wanderers Football Club, had also emerged from the garage with Harry. Since the dastardly nobbing of Tearing Haste II, and the attempted kidnapping of the boy, the good-natured, if sometimes aggressive, Tony

had felt that, as Courtney grew more and more desperate, new and even more pressing dangers might beset the youngster. For that reason, Tony had made up his mind to keep a watchful eye upon him.

It was unfortunate that neither Harry himself nor his two friends had chanced to see a man, who, for the past day or so, had been occupying lodgings in one of Douglas' side streets. Had they done so, they would have sensed peril, and perhaps been able to avoid the terrible thing that was shortly to happen. For that man was none other than the unscrupulous little racing tout, Jerry Murker.

Early that morning, accompanied by another evil-looking man, he had left the town and made his way out along the route to be taken by the competing cycles, carrying some bulky objects concealed in a sack.

The race was to take a circular course, which was to be covered twice, making a total distance of one hundred miles. The cycles were to be started at intervals of two minutes. All were numbered, and the competitor completing the distance in the least space of time was, of course, to be declared the winner.

Vast crowds had gathered to watch the race, and occupied the fields and pavements at either side of the road, when, twenty minutes later, Harry Lestrade rode up and joined the other entrants already gathered at the starting-point. He was followed a few minutes later by Specs and Tony Wagg, who had hired a two-seater car.

A surprise was in store for Harry as he glanced at the many other motor-cyclists. Amongst them was his cousin, Austin Courtney, whom he had not been aware possessed an Imperial. As Harry coldly ignored his cousin and studied his machine, he saw that it was brand-new, and guessed that Courtney had somehow found out that he was competing, and had bought it specially to try at least to beat him.

Officials of the motor company and the timekeepers at length marshalled the starters into order, and, amid an encouraging cheer, number one set off, quickly letting out his machine into a spanking pace, and disappearing around a distant bend in the road.

Harry Lestrade was numbered "fourteen," and, in his turn, he went roaring from the starting-point. Courtney watched him go with a peculiar little smile playing about his thin lips, and, as he was numbered twenty, he would soon be after his cousin.

From twenty miles an hour, Harry Lestrade let his machine out to thirty, then forty. The needle of his speedometer dropped back as he began to climb a stiff rise, but, once it was negotiated, and he was again on level ground, he was speedily travelling at nearer fifty than forty miles.

With his goggles-protected eyes steadily fixed on the white, winding road before him, the boy thundered on and on, seeming fairly to eat up the ground beneath him.

It was a mad, breakneck pace, at which any sort of accident that would cause a spill could fail to end fatally only by something very like a miracle.

The boy overtook and passed the motor-cyclist who had left two minutes before him—roared by him at a speed that made him look almost as if he were standing still. Then, fifteen minutes later, as he was thundering into hilly and open country, a second competitor was overhauled and left in the rear.

When he again had the route to himself, and was nearing a sunken road, running between sloping, grassy banks, Harry thought he heard the shrill of a whistle, which seemed to come from the summit of a towering rise on his right.

He had to keep his eyes ahead, and did not look in that direction. Had he done so, however, it is doubtful whether he would have glimpsed the man who crouched behind some bushes at the elevated point, watching his approach through a pair of powerful field-glasses, and who had blown the whistle as a signal.

Just around a bend the evil and unshaven face of Jerry the Limper appeared for a moment above some low bushes growing on the bank at the roadside. He was hanging upon a rope tied about a tall tree that had been all but sawn through at the base, and, as he heard the whistle from back along the highway, he released his hold upon it. The tree gradually swayed towards the

road lying beneath, and, as Harry Lestrade came thundering round the bend, there was a sharp, ominous crack. The next instant the tree had fallen with a crash right in the path of the onrushing cyclist.

Harry Lestrade saw it, and a thrill of horror shot through him. He had no time to swerve and avoid the obstacle, and, though he clapped on his brakes, he was upon the tree before any appreciable check could be effected in his whirlwind pace.

There was an awful jarring shock. The front wheel of the motor-cycle struck the thick trunk, buckling like soft lead, and it and its ill-fated rider were hurled high in the air.

The End of the Race!

WATCHING from behind the bushes on the sloping bank whence the tree had fallen, Jerry Murker, otherwise the Limper, drew an awed breath, scoundrel though he was.

Harry Lestrade's leathern-clad figure described a somersault in mid-air, and then crashed into the branches of the tree, broke partially through them, and fell heavily into the road.

The unfortunate lad rolled over and over like a shot rabbit, and, as his body was brought to a halt by the bank at the roadside, with his face scratched and bleeding and his eyes closed, he lay prone on his back, inert and ominously still.

"Killed for a certainty!" the Limper breathed, his face going a curious mottled grey, and glistening from the sudden perspiration that bathed it. "By shots, I must get out of this slick! I guess I don't want a rope round my neck!"

The evil little rogue scuttled down into the road, and, hastily drawing and opening a clasp-knife, he slashed through the rope that was tied about the lower part of the trunk of the tree.

Bundling it up in his hands, he made to dart up the opposite bank, beyond which was a stretch of somewhat dense woodland. In his haste he almost stumbled over Harry's motor-cycle, which lay near him, a mass of broken and twisted wreckage, with its front wheel buckled almost double.

The Limper avoided it only just in time, and, carrying the tell-tale rope with him, he rushed up the grassy slope at the roadside, and thrust his way out of sight into the wood. He was trembling like an aspen, for he had heard the drone of the engine of the competitor directly following the "crooked" Harry, and knew that it was touch and go that he had not been seen.

The next second the motor-cyclist came rushing round the near-by bend, and a gasp of dismay broke from his lips as he saw the almost completely blocked road.

He clapped on his brakes, swerved dangerously to avoid the tree and the wrecked motor-cycle, and missed the head of the prostrate Harry only by inches.

As quickly as he could, the competitor, who chanced to be a young man of wealth who had entered the race merely for the sport of the thing, pulled up. Dismounting, he ran his cycle into the side of the road, and came sprinting back to the scene of the catastrophe.

He had decided to abandon all thoughts of attempting to win the race for the sake of others. Serious consequences would be sure to arise unless the obstacles now blocking the road were removed.

Shouting for help, the cyclist snatched up the limp figure of Harry Lestrade, and hurriedly carried it up on to the bank. He laid the boy gently down, then darted back to the motor-cycle, which he contrived to drag into the side of the road.

But when he attempted, single-handed, to get a grip upon the tree, and to tug it clear of the track, he found it defied all his efforts.

Another motor-cyclist thundered into view, and, in his turn, he swerved just in time, avoiding the tree more by luck than anything else. The winning of the event must have meant more to him than the first competitor to appear after Harry's disaster, for he selfishly went on, and left the former to do the best he could unaided.

But, fortunately, two farm-hands, who had been working in a distant field, had been on their way towards the road. Hearing the drone of the passing motor-cycles, they

had realised that the race had started, and decided to leave their work, and see as much of it as possible.

The cries for help the motor-cyclist who had stopped had given reached their ears, and, hurrying their steps, they broke through the bushes near the spot whence the tree had fallen just as the second cyclist rushed away out of sight.

The two men came dashing down the bank into the road. They helped with the tree, and it was dragged and rolled towards one side of the road by the time another of the starters thundered into sight.

Another and another appeared, whilst the three men struggled with the obstacles, but all found sufficient room to avoid it, and between them the cyclist and the farm-labourers at length got it parallel with the bank and safely out of the racers' course.

Austin Courtney, who, like Harry, had passed more than one of the competitors starting before him, was the next to sweep round the curve in the road.

He had a glimpse of his cousin lying, white-faced and motionless, on the bank, and his first sensation was one of triumphant satisfaction. But he was not a mile farther along the road before he was obsessed by an uneasiness he found it impossible to shake off.

What if his cousin had been killed! he wondered. He had thought of the possibility in quite a callous spirit before the dastardly plot he had hatched had materialised. But now he began to realise that, if the smash he had brought about had had fatal results, he might find himself in a very unenviable position.

With him standing to gain so much by Harry being put out of the great contest between them, suspicion would be sure to be directed his way, and—who knows?—perhaps the police might trace the actual felling of the tree to the Limper, and—

Even as he tore madly on and on along the gradually curving route, Austin Courtney found a cold sweat breaking out upon his forehead.

Courtney, whatever his other failings, was an expert and daring motorist, and, despite

his misgivings, he rode like the wind, surprising himself when he passed yet another man on the road.

And as Courtney crouched low over the handlebars, and bore round a sharp bend into a road that would carry him back towards the starting-point, whence the second round would commence, the cyclist who had abandoned the contest and the farm-labourers were stooping over the still form of Harry Lestrade.

"He's dead, purr lad!" declared one of the labourers, as he looked down into Harry's white and blood-smearred face and gravely shook his head.

And the motor-cyclist thought the man was right until he had laid his hand over the boy's heart.

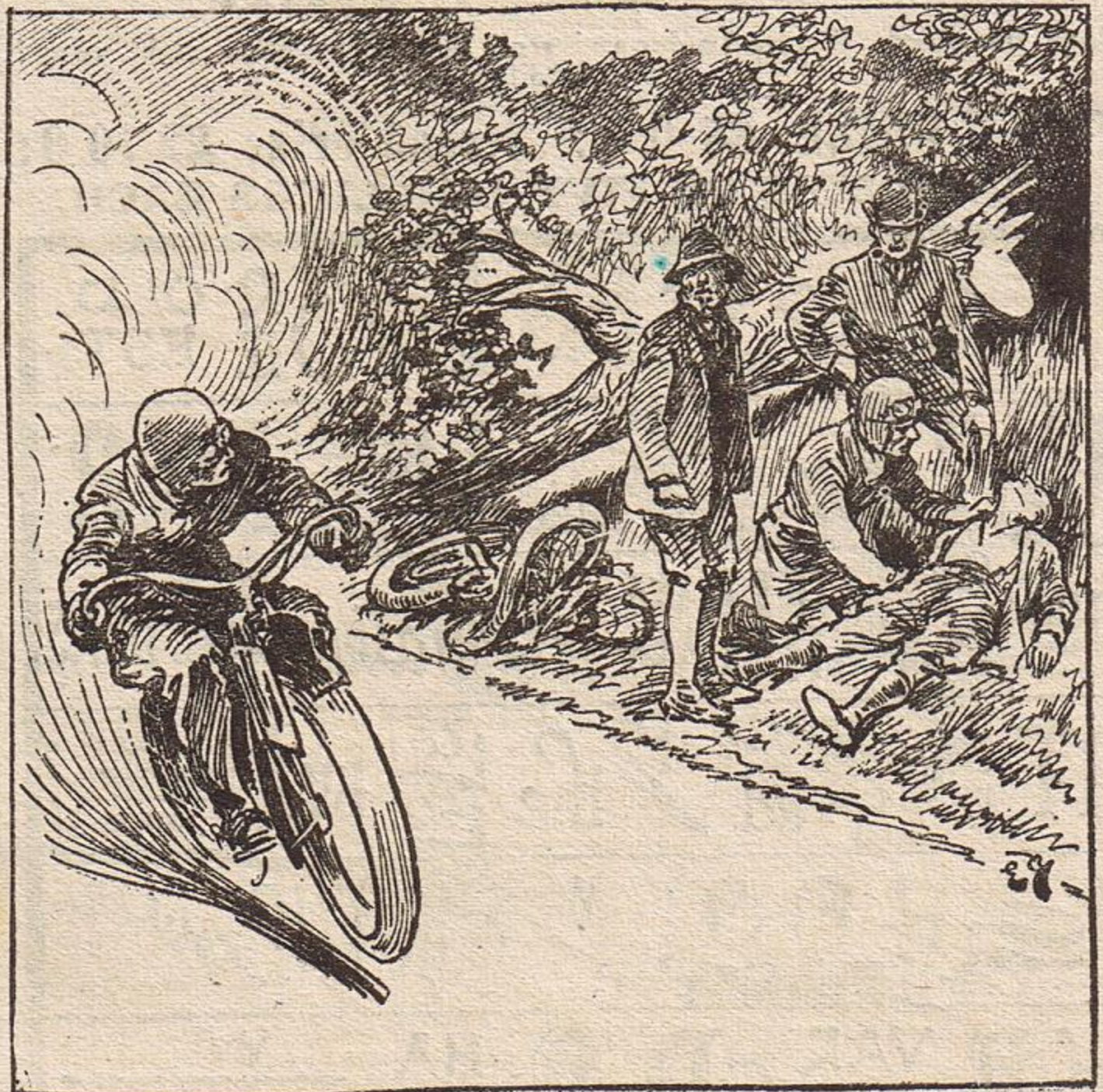
He then uttered an exclamation of relief.

"No; he's not done for, though he might be badly injured," he said, having to raise his voice to make it heard above the crackling roar of another of the competing motor-cycles as it flashed past. "Is there anywhere near where we can carry him? And what about a doctor? One ought to see him just as soon as possible."

"There's a cottage just along the road, sir," the second farm-labourer informed him; "We can get him there, an' Dr. Collister, who lives back towards Knockaloe, can be sent for."

Between them the two farm-labourers raised the boy, and, slowly, so as not to jolt him more than necessary, they carried him on along the road, with the cyclist following. The cottage the farm-hand had mentioned was only a short distance away, and Harry Lestrade was taken in by the occupants and laid upon a bed in one of the lower rooms. Gleaning precise information as to the whereabouts of Dr. Collister's house, the motor-cyclist went back to his machine and rode for him post-haste.

(Another thrilling long instalment of this amazing sporting story in next week's Bumper Issue. You must not miss it on any account.)



THE RESULT OF HIS FOUL PLAY! As he swept round the bend Courtney had a glimpse of his cousin lying white-faced and motionless on the bank, and his first sensation was one of triumphant satisfaction.
(See this page.)

Harry's a Sportsman After Your Own Hearts! He's GREAT!

A WORD WITH YOUR EDITOR!

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

GREAT STORIES FOR NEXT WEEK.

We shall again have a splendid programme of stories ready for you next Tuesday morning when you go for your copy of the POPULAR.

The story of Harry Wharton & Co. is a particularly fine story, with just that breath of excitement in it which every boy likes. It is entitled

"IN LAWLESS HANDS!"

By Frank Richards,

and tells you how Harry Wharton and one of his chums fall into the hands of a gang of seamen. They are taken aboard a ship, and everything points to their having to undergo an extremely long and uncomfortable voyage. This story is sure to please you.

Perhaps one of Martin Clifford's best accounts of the schooldays of his chum, Frank Richards, in the backwoods of Canada, is supplied under the title of

"THE RED RAIDER!"

An Indian comes to the Backwoods School—not as a student, but on the war-

path; and the excitement he creates there is terrific! You must read how the red rascal set the whole school raging!

Rookwood stories, always popular, are one of the features of this paper which we should sadly miss. Next week's story concerns the further adventures of cheerful Jimmy Silver & Co., and is entitled

"JOKER OR THIEF?"

By Owen Conquest.

There is a frightful row in the Fourth. Mornington loses his watch—not one of Billy Bunter's turnip variety, but a real watch. Suspicion falls on all sorts of chaps, many of whom think that there's some old joker having a little game with the watch. Others think differently, and strife is the order of the day. It is left to Tubby Muffin to solve the mystery—poor old Tubby Muffin! Read how he ran the thief—or is it joker?—to earth!

Tom Merry & Co. have another adventure put on record in next week's issue of the POPULAR. The story is entitled

BY RIGHT OF CONQUEST!

By Martin Clifford,

and the popular chums of St. Jim's are going to find a still warmer spot in your hearts when you have read of their latest adventure.

There we are, then, with four more complete school stories, all ready for you next Tuesday! They have only to be printed and sent to the newsagent—and

he'll be waiting for you on Tuesday morning. Jolly chaps, newsagents. I expect it is because they read the Companion Papers before they sell them! Reminds me of the remark one of my chums made to me when he called to see me. "I'm going to be a newsagent when I grow up, so that I can have ALL the Companion Papers every week, and not pay for them!"

That boy will get on in the world—with that ambition!

On another page you will find particulars of the Free Real Photos Given Away With All The Companion Papers. I just want to point out here that there will be

ANOTHER FREE REAL PHOTO IN THE "POPULAR" NEXT TUESDAY.

Save them all up, chums! Stick them in the album, and show them to all your chums! When you see the paper's report that JAMES BLAIR played a wonderful game for CARDIFF CITY, have a look at Jimmy's photo! The "Gem" gave you that. What about George Brewster and Ernest England? The "Boys' Friend" presented you with their photos! Then aren't Chelsea a top-hole team? You've had their photo—it was in the "Magnet" Library.

Save them all up. There's any amount more to come!

Your Editor.

FIVE POUNDS FOR A FEW MINUTES' WORK!

Read this puzzle Picture To-day and send in your solution right away!
No time to lose.

FIRST PRIZE £5 0 0: Second Prize £2 10 0:
TEN PRIZES OF FIVE SHILLINGS EACH.

	FOR ST		1 of 3		OLD EST
				made A	 HEROIC RESCUE AT SEA
REM		TU	its		RU
		ed		the	 60 BY A
	of			W	in THE course
of a	VAR	IED	CR		HA HA W
HON		60 minutes	60 minutes	H	
		INCLUD	T	H	E

What You Have to Do!

Here is a splendid Footer competition which I am sure will interest you. On this page you will find a history of Notts Forest Football Club in picture-puzzle form. What you are invited to do is to solve this picture, and when you have done so, write your solution on a sheet of paper. Then sign the coupon which appears underneath, pin it to your solution, and post it to "NOTTS FOREST" Competition, POPULAR Office, Gough House, Gough Square, E.C. 4, so as to reach that address not later than THURSDAY, NOVEMBER 23rd.

The FIRST PRIZE of £5 will be awarded to the reader who submits a solution which is exactly the same as, or nearest to, the solution now in the possession of the Editor. In the event of ties the prize will be divided. The other prizes will be awarded in order of merit. The Editor reserves the right to add together and divide all, or any of the prizes, but the full amount will be awarded. It is a distinct condition of entry that the decision of the Editor must be accepted as final. Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

This competition is run in conjunction with "Gem," "Magnet," and "Boys' Friend," and readers of those journals are invited to compete.

enter NOTTS FOREST COMPETITION and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final.

Name

Address

P

Save Money,

Time and Trouble by doing the Home Jobs Yourself.

You can learn how from

THE AMATEUR MECHANIC

This wonderful book was written by fifty expert craftsmen. They tell you, in the language you use yourself and understand, their own expert way of doing over 400 jobs—jobs that not only put money in your pocket, but give you hours of amusement. With "THE AMATEUR MECHANIC" you can never spend a dull evening. You will have not one, but hundreds of hobbies to choose from, and you will be able to make a success of them all.

Learn the Working Principles
of these Trades.

BOOT AND SHOE MAKING, WOOD WORKING, METAL WORK,

Wireless telegraphy—Electrical jobbing—Accumulators for electric light—Testing accumulators—Amalgamating zinc—An aquarium with aerating apparatus—Adjusting ball valves—Making a glycerine barometer and various other barometers—A constant bichromate battery—Leclanché battery—Beaumontage—To make a Blériot model flyer—Blowpipe manipulation—The cramping action of bolts—Boring lathes—Drilling with a brace—A brass-finisher's lathe—Buhl work—A bull-nosed plane—Centring bars with callipers—To make a Canadian canoe—Glass capillary tubes—A capstan lathe—Cartesian diver—Case-hardening—Ornamental cement work—Chamfering, hardening, and tempering chisels—Cistern barometers—A coaster hub—Colouring copper—An electric reading-lamp—Electro-magnetic waves—Overhauling a motor-car engine—A Fitzroy barometer—Model flyers of many kinds—Concrete floors—Choked flues—Fumigating furniture—Galvanising—Inlaying of many kinds—Colouring metals—Hektographs—Testing room for dampness—Using the micrometer—Gramophone needles—Glazing paint—To take paper casts from plaster models—Electric pole-finders—Making a printing press—Gramophone records—Scagliola artificial marble making—Scene painting—Lacquering tin—To make a vase from a tumbler, etc., etc.; also—

"THE MOTOR CYCLE" says:—

"In this work we come across special articles which should interest our readers, such as those on Filing Screw-cutting, whether by lathe or by hand. How to Use Spanners, Metal Turning, Metal Spinning, an article on the Overhauling of the Motor Car, another on the Motor Cycle, Taper Turning, Home-made Drilling Machines, Emery Discs, Bobs and Wheels, Hardening—and one on Fitting up a Workshop for Motor Repairs. . . . The motorist will find much to learn from this well-written and copiously-illustrated work. . . . We have had a copy of 'The Amateur Mechanic' in our possession for some years, and many useful hints and tips have been gathered from it. It should find a place in the library of every practical motor-cyclist."

SENT FREE.

An illustrated booklet telling you more about this great money-saver and showing specimen lessons and some of the 6,000 illustrations. It also tells you how you can get it at once by paying a small initial payment.

POST THIS COUPON TO-DAY!

To The WAVERLEY BOOK CO., Ltd. (U.J.B. Dept.),
96, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4.

Please send me, without charge, your Free Illustrated Booklet, containing all particulars as to contents, authors, etc., of "THE AMATEUR MECHANIC," also information as to your offer to send the Complete Work for a merely nominal first payment, the balance to be paid by a few small monthly payments, beginning thirty days after delivery of Work.

NAME
(Send this form or a postcard.)

ADDRESS

U.J.B., 1922.

12'9

Monthly

WITH
26
TUNES

is all you pay for a superbly made Mead Gramophone with massive, highly polished solid oak cabinet; gigantic richly coloured horn; extra large silent running motor, unusually loud rubber insulated Sound Reproducer; brilliantly nickelled seamless tapered tone arm and all other up-to-date improvements. Sent packed free and carriage paid with 26 Tunes and 400 Silver Steel Needles on

10 DAYS' FREE TRIAL.
Fully warranted. Money refunded if dissatisfied. Exquisitely designed Portable Hornless, Table Grands and Drawing Room Cabinet Models at 40% below shop prices. Write TO-DAY for the biggest and most beautifully illustrated gramophone catalogue in the world.

Mead

Company (Dept. 3105),
Balsall-Heath,
Birmingham.



IT'S NO USE AT ALL
chasing a Will-o'-the-Wisp. You may find a pearl in an oyster. You may find a good stamp in a cheap packet. But why not make sure by sending for BLUE LABEL APPROVALS & SEE BEFORE YOU BUY?
20 MINT PICTORIAL STAMPS FREE
with every first order.—B. L. CORYN, 10, Wave Crest, Whitstable, Kent.

NERVOUS FEARS

How many people fear meeting others, travelling in Trains, Trams, Tubes, or Buses, mixing in Society, going into a Restaurant, or of having anything important to do. Such Nervous Fears are ruinous to any man or woman's chance of success in life. Become Nerve-Strong, Self-Confident, Bright and Happy, by sending immediately 3 penny stamps for particulars of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment. **GUARANTEED CURE OR MONEY REFUNDED.**—GODFREY ELLIOTT-SMITH, LTD., 543, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C. 4.

GREAT MUSICAL DISCOVERY.



A BRITISH INVENTION. A Pocket Instrument that plays in all keys as perfectly as a violin without the laborious study of scales. The only British-made Pocket Instrument on the market. Post free, with full instructions. 1/9. Better quality 2/9, from

Range 3; Octaves.
THE GHELLAPHONE CO. (Dept. 33), HUDDERSFIELD

YOURS for 1!



This handsome full-sized Gent's Lever Watch sent upon receipt of 1/-. After approval send 1/- more, the balance may then be paid by 6 monthly instalments of 2/- each. Guaranteed 5 years. Chain offered Free with every watch. Cash returned in full if dissatisfied. Send 1/- now to Simpson's Ltd. (Dept. 2) 94, Queen Rd., Brighton, Sussex

CHAIN FREE.

WHY BE SHORT?—If a few extra inches are what you need, commence the Girvan Scientific Treatment at once. Carried out in your own home, quite privately. Your friends will be astonished at the improvement in your appearance. Students report from 2 to 5 inches increase. You will work, eat, and sleep better. Send P.C. for particulars and £100 guarantee to ENQUIRY DEPT. A.M.P., 17, STROUD GREEN ROAD, LONDON, N.4.

11 Handy Sized Tools 1/3 Only.



(Post. 4d.) WERE 3/6. Hammer, Etc., as shown. Delight or money back. FREE illus. Catalogue. Big Bargains, 7d. to 77/8. Cash or 1/- week, payable 2/- fortnightly. Watches, Clocks, Accordions, Toys. **PAIN'S PRESENTS HOUSE (Dept. 9G), HASTINGS.**

HOME CINEMATOGRAPHS.—Machines from 7/6; with Take-up, from £3. Large Stock of Films. Sample Film, 1/-, post free. Lists free.—Desk E, Dean Cinema Co., 94, Drayton Avenue, W. Ealing, London, W.13.

FUN FOR ALL!—Ventriloquist's Voice Instrument. Invisible, Astonishes, Mystifies. Imitate Birds, Beasts, etc. 1/- P.O. (Ventriloquism Treatise included).—Ideal Co., Clevedon, Som.

* When Answering Advertisements *
Please Mention This Paper. *

THE POPULAR.—No. 200.

BOYS! YOU CAN BUILD THIS WONDERFUL CRANE WITH MECCANO

A PERFECT CRANE one day, a splendid transporter bridge the next, then a wonderful tower with a running elevator, and so you go on every day for a year without once repeating a model.

REAL ENGINEERING. The reason why you can do such extraordinary things with Meccano is that every part of it is a real engineering piece—all perfectly designed and accurately made.

FULL INSTRUCTIONS. A big illustrated Book of Instructions goes with each Outfit, making everything perfectly clear. No study necessary.

Bigger Meccano Outfits This Year
New Parts Added : Splendid New Models

FREE TO BOYS

A Splendid New Meccano Book This is a beautiful new book which shows boys how to enjoy every minute of their leisure hours. It is beautifully illustrated, and explains in a simple way the joys of Meccano.

How to Get a Free Copy.

Just show this page to three chums and send us their names and addresses with your own. Put No. 37 after your name for reference.



GRAND £250 PRIZE COMPETITION

This contest brings golden opportunities to brainy inventive boys. Write us for particulars or ask your dealer for an entry form.

MECCANO LIMITED : BINNS ROAD : LIVERPOOL



OUTFITS

from 5/- to 370/-

Any boy can build this wonderful Revolving Crane.

RHEUMATISM CURED IN 3 DAYS.

Mr. Florent Fissore, the well-known Anglo-Indian Correspondent, writes:

"Dorset Square, London.

"Dear Sirs,—For many years I have suffered acutely from Rheumatism contracted in India, which left me unfit for work and nearly crippled me.

"Before I commenced Urace, I had been helpless for some weeks. In three days I was able to get out, and have since completely recovered. I am now in much better health than for many years past.—Yours truly,

"FLORENT FISSORE."



URACE DISSOLVES AND DRIVES OUT URIC ACID.

URACE, and URACE alone, can cure rheumatism. Nothing is more certain than that. It cures on a new and common-sense principle. It directly attacks the cause of rheumatism—uric acid—dissolves and expels the uric acid from the system, and prevents its reappearance. That is why it CURES AND CURES QUICKLY.

1/3, 3/-, and 5/- per box, from Boots, Timothy White & Co., Taylor's, and all Chemists and Stores, or direct from the URACE Laboratories, 89, Woburn House, Store Street, W.C.1.

URACE TABLETS

THE ACKNOWLEDGED REMEDY FOR
Neuralgia Cramp Nerve Pains
Lumbago Rheumatism Kidney Troubles
Gout Backache Sciatica

1/3, 3/- and 5/- per box.
Boots and all Chemists and Stores.

FREE FUN! Our Funny Novelty, causing roars of laughter, FREE to all sending 1/- for 70 Cute Conjuring Tricks, 12 Jolly Joke Tricks, 6 Catchy Coin Tricks, 5 Cunning Card Tricks, 5 Mystifying Magic Tricks, 250 Riddles, 18 Games, 10 Funny Readings, 5 Funny Recitations, 21 Monologues, 73 Toasts, 52 Wealth Secrets, Easy Ventriloquism Secret, and 1,001 Stupendous Attractions. Thousands delighted! Great Fun!—C. HUGHES, 15, Wood St., Edgbaston, Birmingham.

CUT THIS OUT

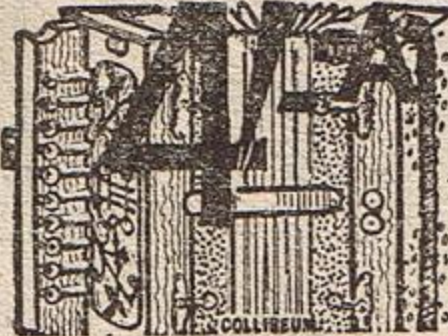
"The Popular." **PEN COUPON.** Value 2d.
Send 7 of these coupons with only 2/9 direct to the Fleet Pen Co., 119, Fleet Street, London, E.C.4. You will receive by return a Splendid British Made 14-ct. Gold Nibbed Fleet Fountain Pen, value 10/6 (Fine, Medium, or Broad Nib). If only 1 coupon is sent, the price is 3/9, 2d. being allowed for each extra coupon up to 6. (Pocket Clip, 4d.) Satisfaction guaranteed or cash returned. **Special New Offer—Your own name in gilt letters on either pen for 1/- extra.**
Lever Self-Filling Model, with Safety Cap, 2/- extra.

HOME CINEMATOGRAPHS AND FILMS.



Send for New Free Illustrated List of Machines, Toy and Professional, from 10/6 upwards, and Accessories. Films, all lengths, for Sale or Exchange. Enquiries Invited.

FORD'S, Dept. A.P.,
13, Red Lion Square, London, W.C. 1.



MONTH WITH FREE TUTOR

Easy to learn, easy to play. Price 35/-, on Easy Terms. Send 4/- now for one of these Famous sweet-toned Coliseum Accordeons and promise 4/- monthly. Satisfaction or deposit refunded. Send 4/- NOW.—**MASTERS, LTD., 32, HOPE STORES, RYE.**

DON'T BE BULLIED!—Learn the Wonderful Japanese Weapons. For small boys and men (also women). Send NOW Four Penny Stamps for Splendid **ILLUSTRATED SAMPLE LESSONS**, or 3/6 for Large Portion of Course.—**Dept. P.R., SCHOOL OF JUJITSU, 31, Golden Sq., Regent St., London, W.1.** Personal Tuition also given.

CURLY HAIR!

SUMMERS' "CURLIT" CURLS STRAIGHTEST HAIR! 1/5, 2/6. Gold Medal Diploma. Thousands Testimonials. Proof sent.—**SUMMERS (Dept. T.P.), 34, CANNON PLACE, BRIGHTON.**

DROP us a card for our Illustrated List of Sporting Goods, which will be sent free.—**FRANK CLARKE, Crown Works, 6, Whittall Street, Birmingham.**

STOP STAMMERING! Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—**FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.**

MAGIC TRICKS, etc.—Parcels, 2/6, 5/6. Ventriloquist's Instrument. Invisible. Imitate Birds. Price 6d. each, 4 for 1/-.—**T.W. Harrison, 239, Pentonville Rd., London, N.1.**