

**BLACKBEARD the BOLD BUCCANEER!** *See Inside.*

EVERY  
TUESDAY,  
2d.

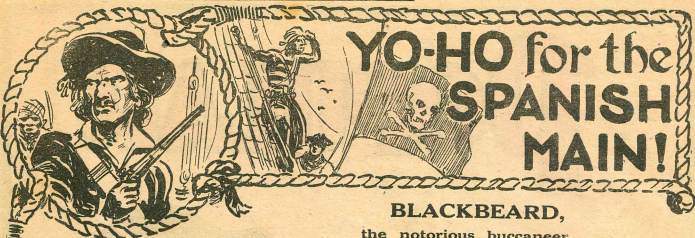
# THE **POPULAR**



Week Ending January 17th, 1931.

No. 625 (New Series).

## Red-Hot Life Story of a Bold, Bad Pirate!



A LARGE brig, laden to her utmost capacity with coco, copra, and plate from the mines of Venezuela and the town of Panama, lay at anchor just outside the roadstead of Port of Spain. Her voyage from Panama had been an adventurous one. Twice had her skipper been chased by a vessel which had hoisted the Black Flag. He had escaped and was thankful he now lay in front of Port of Spain.

Round the north of the island of Trinidad two large men-of-war were coming bearing the golden flag of Spain, to escort the plate-ship to Cadiz. These warships had been sent out specially by the King of Spain, for in the year 1716 the seas of the Main were unsafe for treasure ships. The pirate, Edward Teach, commonly known as Blackbeard, was lord of the ocean.

In the cabin of the brig the Spanish commander, Don

Alfonso Legaria, was perfectly at ease. He had invited some of his friends from Port of Spain to spend the evening with him. His wine was the best the home country could send him. His chef was one who had been at the Court. His crew were all men recruited from the navy.

"Gentlemen," said the Don, as he raised his glass, "we have a happy

evening before us, a happier one than we have had for many a day. But this scoundrel Blackbeard is no longer to be feared, for he would never dare to enter the waters that flow around the shores of Trinidad. I drink to the death of Blackbeard."

The company applauded his speech and drank deeply, then settled themselves to the banquet which had been provided. They were as safe as if they were in their own homes; at least, they thought they were.

But in the midst of the supper, while the sun was just sinking behind the peaks of the hills, a knock came on the door of the saloon. It was a quartermaster, who apologised to the company, and addressed the commander.

"Senor, there is a boatload of men coming from a ship not far off. I thought I had better tell you in case you expected visitors."

"I expect none," replied the commander. "They may be some seamen come to borrow provisions. We have none to give them—if they are English tell them to be off."

The quartermaster bowed and went out.

In five minutes he returned. This time, before he announced his news, the commander reprimanded him for interrupting his enjoyment.

"Senor," said the quartermaster, "the ship I told you of has come nearer. She is sailing straight for us."

"Well!" cried the commander, "let her come next! She is probably coming to anchor next to us for protection from this fellow Blackbeard."

The quartermaster bowed and withdrew again. The commander went on drinking to the health of his guests. But in the midst of the happiness the door of the cabin was pushed open. The commander, thinking it was his quartermaster again, shouted out angrily that he would have him put into chains. The door opened wide and there stood on the threshold one of the most fierce and sinister figures in all the Main.

This man was tall, dark, with a wide black hat crushed on his head. His beard was long and fell in tails about his chest, and two tails were looped about his ears. Swinging at his left hip was a cutlass, and there were four pistols stuck in his belt. Two other pistols were in his hands; and these he slowly raised to cover the company.

"Blackbeard!"

The shout came from every throat. Men struggled to their feet and staggered against each other in an endeavour to get away from that figure and from the menace of his pistols. The tall, dark man laughed, bowing.

"That's me!" he cried, with an oath, "and here is my visiting card!"

The roar of his pistols crashed through the room. The Spaniards, when the smoke cleared, were on the floor, all of them having dived for cover. No one was wounded, save the commander, who had a flesh wound in the shoulder, from which blood was streaming.

"Get up!" roared Blackbeard. "Get up and give a welcome to a gentleman!"

They rose from under the table and chairs and faced him. He ordered them to sit down, and himself took the head of the table, making the wounded Don sit on his right. Then he commanded that the banquet proceed.

In the meantime the sound of footsteps above them made the Spaniards look at each other in bewilderment. Here they were, within gunshot of Port of Spain, yet the ship had been boarded by the most terrible pirate of the Main.

"You needn't worry about your sailors," said Blackbeard. "They did not put up much of a fight. They are all under guard. In an hour I shall have given you all another course to sail and have taken my leave."

He leered at the captain of the ship as he spoke; and then followed the most frightful banquet that ever was served on the Spanish Main. The stewards found pirates stationed between the saloon and the galley to see that they did their work and served the company. A pirate stood with a drawn cutlass over the cook. Another stood behind Blackbeard's chair.

Throughout the meal Blackbeard, who had gained the title of the "bearded human pig," behaved as if he were owner of the Don's lives. First he quarrelled with the commander over the manner in which that man drank from his glass. On the Don attempting to reply to him Blackbeard shot him dead "for daring to argue with me." As the man slid to the floor the master's



## Fearsome Green Dragon Seen Wandering Loose About Town!

# THE HOBO ADVENTURERS



### The Organ.

**P**B-R-R-R-RANG! Prangety-prang! Tong-tong-tong!  
"I makeda music nice and sweet,  
To cheer up da people in da street!  
Yarrh-wharrh! Da blue Italian skies!"  
"Good corks!" gasped Tubby.  
"What's that?"  
"Sounds like a barrel-organ," groaned Pete.

Our old friends were mooching along a road in Milhampton, looking for breakfast. Often of a morning, Dick, the muffin-man, brought his muffins and crumpets round that particular neighbourhood, and the two tramps were hoping to meet him. Dick usually would spring a couple of crumpets to his old pals.

But Dick was nowhere to be seen. Tubby and Gloomy Pete listened for the sound of his bell; but all the noise that reached their weary ears was a hideous "pong-ponging!" and the sound of an Italian voice raised on its top note. Evidently an organ-grinder was doing business round the corner.

"Come on, Pete, old friend of me college days," yapped Tubby. "Let's go and 'ave a dance around the organ."

"How can I dance with an empty tummy?" moaned Gloomy Pete. "My ribs would rattle about like drumsticks."  
The two pals waltzed round the corner, and the scene burst upon their vision.

Before a large, well-built house, stood a man with a barrel-organ. The organ-grinder was a shifty-looking sportsman, who seemed to have had his last shave at the coronation of George the Third. On the steps of the house a purple-faced old buster was dancing frantically, waving his hands furiously, calling the organ-grinder every offensive name he could remember, and occasionally picking up various utensils and throwing at him.

"Go away, will you?" screamed the angry old bean. "I'll break your neck, you noisy villain. Take that infernal organ away and throw it in the river, will you? Go away! Take that!"

He picked a large vase off his window-sill, and flung it at the organ-grinder. The musician grinned, and dodged. The vase shivered to smithereens in the roadway.

"Da sun shines bright on da Ole Kentucky Home!" chanted the Italian, in a voice like an express train rushing into a tunnel.

Pong-pong-pongetty-pong!

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tubby, laughing at the expression on the angry old gent's face.

"Will you go away?" yelled the furious one.

He picked up a heavy walking-stick and hurled it. Again the organ-grinder dodged—and the walking-stick did no harm—merely hitting a small boy on the topknot.

Tubby and Pete forgot that they were hungry. They stood by and watched. This looked exciting.

Presently a large policeman hove up.

## A Skeleton Captures A Burglar.

"What's all this 'ere?" demanded the cop severely.

"Make that man go away, officer!" yelled the old merchant on the doorstep. "He keeps on coming round here with that rotten organ. I've heard nothing but that horrible pong-ponging for days!"

A frown gathered on the official's brow. "You 'op it—you 'ear me!" said the man in blue, giving the organ-grinder a push in the place where he kept his lurch.

"Ow!" gasped the Italian. "Yes, sar, I 'op it now!"

He bent down and caught up the handles of his barrel-organ. The policeman snorted and strode on majestically. He halted in front of Tubby and Pete.

"What do you tramps want 'ere?" he snapped.

"Tramp yerself!" warbled Tubby.

"I'm the Lord Mayor o' London, I am, come down here to see if the policemen

in this town are doing their duty, instead of loafing about with silly smiles on their ugly faces."

The policeman breathed hard. "I'll tell you what I'll do to you," he barked, "and that is— Whorroop!"

No doubt the policeman did not mean to say that. He yelled it out quite suddenly and sat down hard on the cold roadway. The fact was that the Italian organ-grinder, not looking where he was going, had pushed his organ into the small of the policeman's back.

The man in blue fairly crumpled up. The Italian, not noticing that he had knocked the policeman over, proceeded cheerfully to wheel his organ over him.

"Wow! Yow! Help!" yammered the cop, as the organ travelled across his tummy.

The organ grinder started, and dropped the machine—which immediately fell right on top of the unlucky constable, entirely blotting him out.

"Oh corks!" gasped the Italian. "Me for da woods! I getta out of this! Say—do you wanta da organ?"

Tubby blinked at him. "You can have-a da organ, if you like!" said the Italian, and he shot down the road like a greyhound.

The cop scrambled to his feet, pushed the organ into the gutter, and gave chase. They vanished in the distance—the Italian leading by about a mile.

"Crumbs!" muttered Tubby, staring at the organ. "We're in luck, Pete, my pippin! Old Mike Macaroni has given us the doings. It's ours! Now to earn an honest livin'. Catch hold of them handles, Pete. Push, old pard—push!"

Rather surprised at their luck, Pete set the organ on its wheels, and pushed it cheerfully down the road. In the next street Tubby called a halt.

"This looks a good pitch," he said. "You turn and I'll sing."

So while Pete turned the handle of the organ, Tubby lifted up his voice and sang. Tubby's voice was not sweet; it was not harmonious—but nobody could deny that it was powerful. As Tubby sang, all the slates fell off the roof of the town hall, and a bird in a near-by tree dropped to the ground with a dull thud.

Pong-pong-pong!  
"You are my sunbeam!" howled Tubby. "Shine on me only. When you are gle-e-aming, the ler-love light I see! Without you, sunbeam, life would be ler-honely. Shine hon, my sunbeam; shine honly for meeeeee!"

An old man with a beard hurried out of a house opposite and pressed a pound note into Tubby's hand.

THE POPULAR—No. 625.

"Take this!" he chanted. "Take this—take anything you like—but do go away. Your voice reminds me of a hippopotamus in pain."

"Good egg!" chortled Tubby, showing Pete the pound note. "Pete, old pal, we're rich. We'll make our fortunes with this organ. This is the best idea we've ever struck."

But their luck didn't last long. It never did. There was bound to be a snag in it somewhere, and the two tramps found the snag when they wheeled the organ into a street on the other side of the town and struck up.

It had occurred to them that the Italian had given up the organ very easily, considering that barrel-organs cost a lot of money. It is not like an organ-grinder to give away his valuable organ to a couple of tramps; they realised that. But it certainly didn't strike them that the Italian might have stolen the organ in the first place.

Tubby had hardly sang half a dozen notes when he saw an old man hurrying towards him at a great pace.

He looked a nasty bit of work, with a couple of glaring eyes, and a nose like a door-knocker; but Tubby thought he was going to give something handsome. So Pete cranked up the organ, and Tubby let him have the first verse of "My Old Kentucky Home."

The old buster didn't wait to tell Tubby what he thought of his singing. Waltzing up to the organ, he gave Pete a push which sent him head-first into an empty dustbin, and then tried to wheel the organ away.

"Here, put that down, old Gravy-Face!" roared Tubby. "That's our organ!"

"Police!" howled the old egg violently.

There was a policeman near at hand. Before Pete had managed to scramble out of the dustbin, the man of the law had arrived.

"What's this?" he asked. "Bloke stealing our organ, sir," answered Tubby.

"Stealing your organ!" yapped the man nastily. "This is my organ. It was stolen out of my yard. Here's my name on the side of it. Israel Bladderthwack. What have you got to say to that?"

"Why, I'm very sorry for you, guv'nor—that's all!" sniffed Tubby. The policeman looked fierce.

"Do you charge these men with stealing this organ?" he asked.

"Yes, I do!" shouted Mr. Bladderthwack.

"We never stole it!" groaned Pete. "We had it give to us by an Italian!"

"Ha, ha!" sneered the old gentleman, "space is too short to keep writing his name—'Ha, ha!' A likely story! Who would give away a fifty quid organ?"

The policeman took a grip of Tubby, and another grip of Pete. "Cummerlongerme!" he said, all in one breath.

"Take your unclean 'ands off me!" snorted Tubby. "Where are you taking us?"

"Cop-shop!" replied the policeman tersely.

"But I tell you we didn't steal the old organ!"

"You can tell that to the Beak," grinned the cop. "He'll believe you—p'raps."

With this the blabottle took a firm grip of our old pals and propelled them forcibly towards the police bazaar.

Mr.—what's his name?—Bladderthwack.

thwack picked up his organ and trundled it away.

He trundled it in the same direction as the policeman—he trundled it near to the policeman—he trundled it into the policeman—and, finally, he trundled it over the policeman.

The organ was getting used to running over policemen.

"Yoooooop!" the cop allowed a loud roar to drop out of him as his head smote the ground.

Tubby and Pete looked at each other—and then at the prostrate arm of the law.

"Leg it!" gasped Pete. They legged it.

The policeman jumped up and joined in the game. A stern chase followed.

Tubby and Pete whipped round a corner, and saw a flight of steps and an open door.

"Hide in here!" panted Tubby, springing into the doorway.

Two minutes later the bobby came round the corner, doing about seventy miles an hour.

He charged straight into the open doorway. He gave a yell of triumph as he saw the two tramps, and then, collaring them firmly, he marched them down the passage and into a room at the end.

Yes, too late, our old pals discovered that they had actually tried to hide in the police station itself!

### Fancy Dress.

"A VERY serious case," yapped the magistrate severely. "Pinching a bloke's barrel-organ, worth fifty quid. If

I had my way," he said, glowering at Tubby and Pete, "I'd send you to the condemned cell and have you hanged. But since they don't allow us to hang people for theft, I'll give you thirty days' hard labour. Next case!"

"Here! Hi! Look here!" yelled Tubby. "We didn't pinch the organ. It was given to us as a birthday present!"

"Next case!" snapped the Beak, waving them away.

A policeman hooked the two friends out of the dock and shot them into a cell downstairs.

"You wait there until the Black Maria calls for you," he said, giving them a sour look. "You're bound for gaol, you two—and I'm glad of it."

He slammed the door and locked it. Our two old pals were prisoners.

"This is a go!" groaned Cloomy savagely. "I wish I could meet that organ-grinder again. I'd tell him a thing or two."

"I'd wallop him black and blue," Tubby observed, sparring savagely into the air, and accidentally punching Pete on the nose.

"Wow! Who are you hitting off?" roared Pete.

"I tell you what, old pard," said Tubby, dodging Pete's fist. "That organ-grinder is a regular burglar."

"I know that!"

"Yes. And I bet he was only playing outside that old fellow's house because he's thinking of breaking into it. You heard the old gink say that the organ-man had been round there every day. He was watchin' the house."

"Quite likely. And I hope he gets copped, and gets the next cell to me. I'll tear him into little pieces and use

him to plaster up the holes in the wall."

"Don't talk silly. What's the time, Pete?"

Pete scowled at him.

"What do you want to know for, fat-head. You ain't going anywhere for thirty days."

The door of the cell was opened and a couple of hefty constables rolled in.

"The Black Maria is here," said one of them. "You two are going to 'ave a free ride in her—we don't charge nothing for the fare. Ha, ha!"

Poor Tubby and Pete were grabbed, hoisted out of the cell, propelled along a passage-way and heaved into a large black motor-car—the Black Maria.

"Open the door of me car, James," said Tubby to the policeman. "Mind you drive carefully, because I shall sack you at once if we have an accident."

The policeman grinned. "Git in!" he said.

Tubby and Pete stepped in. The door was shut and locked.

"All right, Bert!" said the cop to the driver. "Let her rip!"

Honk-honk!

The Black Maria fairly sped along the streets of Millhampton. Frantic old men and screaming old ladies dodged out of the way as she roared along. The driver was a speed maniac and he liked to let the engine out to the full.

He whizzed round the corner near the prison and, too late, saw that a coster with a barrow-load of oranges was crossing the road.

The driver stamped on his brake, but the van couldn't stop in time. With a tearing crash it collided with the barrow.

The air became full of oranges. Oranges, oranges everywhere. They simply rained down. One orange squashed an old gentleman's top-hat over his eyes. Another dropped on the head of the mayor and burst. A third went through the window of a restaurant, and mixed itself into the pea-soup—giving it quite a charming flavour.

The Black Maria overturned.

"Oooooooco!" ripped out Tubby, as he and Pete were flung together into the corner of the van.

They got slowly and painfully to their feet, and then they stared. The fall of the van had knocked the door off its hinges.

Escape!

Tubby looked at Pete. Pete looked at Tubby.

Two minutes later they were skidding round the corner in a cloud of dust.

The driver of the van had not noticed them bolting, for he was busy having a fight with the coster. But the policeman had spotted them, and he was after them like a rocket. Our two pals had a lead of a hundred yards; but so fast did the policeman run that he was catching them up hand over fist.

They were desperate.

In the High Street they dodged in and out of the traffic, with the policeman after them. In front of them was an empty taxi. The two tramps leaped at it.

"Woodhill!" roared Tubby to the taxi-driver. "Drive like the dickens. Let her out as fast as you can!"

The driver touched his cap. Tubby and Pete fell into the taxi, and it shrieked down the High Street in a cloud of blue exhaust.

The pals gasped. They looked out. The policeman was left standing far behind.



"Well, that's that!" panted Tubby. "We're free!"  
 Pete looked solemn.  
 "I say! How are you gonna pay the taxi-driver?"  
 "Oh, corks!" gurgled Tubby. "I hadn't thought of that."  
 "And, look here!" said Pete. "Here's another thing. We ought to change our clothes somehow. They'll send a description of us all over the country."  
 Tubby gazed blankly at him.  
 "We're done!" he said.  
 Then Pete noticed a large brown-paper parcel in the corner of the taxi.  
 "Look!" he said. "Somebody's left a parcel in the cab!"

Tubby picked it up and looked at it. "No name on the outside," he said.  
 "Better give it to the driver," suggested Pete.  
 But Tubby winked.  
 "I know a better stunt than that," he said. "Let's open it and see if we can find out who it belongs to. Then we can take it back, and maybe he'll give us a reward."

They cut the string and unwrapped the paper. The first thing that fell out was a small printed card. Tubby and Pete stared at it.

"Mr. and Mrs. BINGHAM-JONES desire the pleasure of the company of yourself and a friend to a FANCY-DRESS DANCE

at their house at 11, Lupin Avenue, Milhampton, at 8 o'clock on Tuesday next.

PRIZES FOR THE BEST FANCY DRESSES."

"A fancy-dress dance," grinned Tubby. "Well, whoever owns this card, he won't be able to go without it."

"It's to-night, too," Pete pointed out. "And it's due to start in half an hour. It's half-past seven now."

"Wouldn't I like to go," sighed Tubby. "Cakes and wine and chicken and—"

"Don't," interrupted Pete. "You make my mouth water. See what's in the parcel."

They opened the brown paper, then—  
 "Corks!" gasped Pete.  
 "Lumme!" choked Tubby.

There were two complete fancy dresses in the parcel. One was a black set of tights, on which was painted the form of a skeleton, with hideous, grinning jaws and protruding bones. The other was covered with green scales, and had a dragon's-head covering. It was a green dragon.

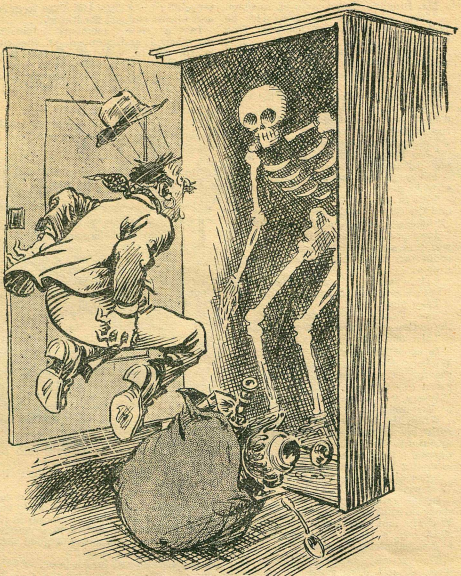
"A skeleton and a green dragon," murmured Pete, picking up the costumes. "And this skeleton's rig-out would fit me like a glove."  
 "Look!" cried Tubby suddenly.

Folded in between the dragon's costume was a pound note. Pete gasped, and Tubby's eyes glimmered.

"I say, let's go to the dance," he said. "We want to get rid of our clothes, and we can have a good blow-out at the dance, and chance what happens afterwards. This pound note will pay the taxi-driver."

"It's not ours," said Pete.  
 "Can't help that. We're desperate. And we can earn a pound somehow, wrap it up with the costumes, and take it to the Lost Property Office. Let's go."  
 "Let's!" grinned Pete.

Tubby leaned out of the window and spoke to the driver.



The door of the cupboard opened and out walked a shining skeleton. The Italian gave one howl and flopped down on his knees.

"I don't want to go to Woodhill, after all," he said. "Drive to No. 11, Lupin Avenue, instead."

"Right-ho, sir!"  
 "We're going to a fancy-dress ball. Do you mind if we change our clothes in the cab, old sport?"

"Not at all."  
 "Good-ho!"

They changed swiftly. As Pete had foreseen, the skeleton costume fitted him perfectly. The dragon was not such a good fit on Tubby; but he tugged it up a bit, and it looked quite well.

"Lumme!" gurgled Tubby, gazing at Pete. "If I didn't know it was you, old pard, you'd give me the creeps!"

"And you look a proper corker!" grinned Pete. "Just as if you'd walked straight out of some fairy-story. Straight, you do!"

The dragon opened and shut its terrible jaws. Pete giggled.  
 "What a lark!" he chortled. "What a lark!"

"Great snakes!" he said. "This is the house where the old joint was throwing things at that organ-grinder this morning."

"The house we reckons he means to burgle!" gasped Pete. "I say, what a lark if we could catch him!"

"How can we catch him, fat'ead?" snorted Tubby. "He ain't likely to be at the fancy-dress ball."

They dropped out of the cab, and Tubby handed the driver the pound.

"Keep the change, my good man!" he said haughtily.  
 "Yessir! Thank you, sir!"

They walked in. A footman and a page-boy were in the hall. They both nearly broke down as they saw the skeleton and the dragon roll in.

"Haw, haw, haw!" roared the footman. "Ain't that a coughproud!"

There were heaps of guests present. Ladies dressed up as pierrettes, columbines, Queen Annes, shepherdesses—all sorts of costumes. And men dressed as cavaliers, Henry the Eighths, clowns, Guy Fawkeses, and bandits. But Tubby and Pete outshone them all. There was nobody remotely like a skeleton or a dragon.

"Bravo!" roared all the guests, clapping and cheering.  
 Pete nudged Tubby.

"Let's get out!" he muttered. "I've got the wind up now, ol' pard!"  
 "Shuttup!" hissed Tubby.

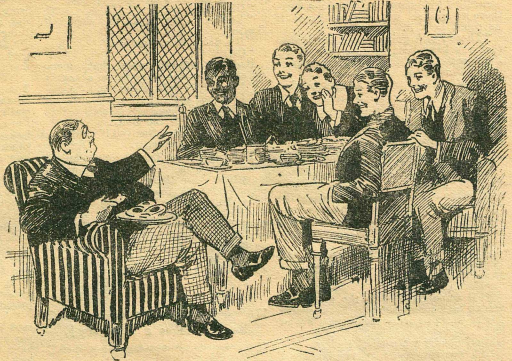




## Smashing Greyfriars School and Footer Tale!

### RUCTIONS IN THE REMOVE FOOTER TEAM!

Vernon-Smith  
Chucked Out!



◆◆◆◆◆

Dropped!

**H**ARRY WHARTON stopped at the door of Vernon-Smith's study in the Remove passage at Greyfriars, and knocked.

Three or four Remove fellows, in the passage, glanced rather curiously at the captain of the Remove.

Wharton's brows were knitted, and the expression on his face was not at all pleasant. His look indicated that he was not dropping into Smithy's study in exactly a friendly spirit. Skinner, lounging in the doorway of Study No. 11, with Snoop, winked at his comrade.

"His Magnificence is ratty!" murmured Skinner. "Smithy's goin' to get the benefit of it."

Snoop grinned. "Smithy isn't the man to stand it," he remarked.

"No. Looks as if there's going to be a row," said Skinner. "Smithy will give as good as he gets. What will you bet that the great man doesn't come out of Smithy's study on his neck?"

Snoop chuckled at the idea. From inside Study No. 4 Smithy's voice rang out cheerily:

"Trot in!" Harry Wharton opened the door of Study No. 4 and entered.

Tea was going on in Vernon-Smith's study. Smithy and his study-mate, Tom Redwing, were at the table, and both of them nodded cordially enough to the captain of the Remove.

"Welcome as the flowers in May, old bean," said Smithy. "Take a pew and join us with this cake."

Wharton coloured a little. He had not come to Study No. 4 on a pleasant errand; and Smithy's cordial greeting embarrassed him a little.

"Thanks, I've had my tea," he said. "Have another!" smiled the Bounder. Wharton shook his head.

# DROPPED FROM THE TEAM!

"Nothing wrong, is there, Wharton?" asked Tom Redwing, who had noted at once the cloud on the Remove captain's brow.

"Not so far as you're concerned, Reddy," answered Wharton. "Little me?" asked Smithy.

"Well, yes."

"What's the jolly old trouble?" asked the Bounder amicably. "Give it a name and get it off your chest. Sure you won't sample the cake?"

"Quite, thanks."

Wharton hesitated. Vernon-Smith's manner was still cheery and civil, but a gleam had come into his eyes, and his face hardened.

If the captain of the Form had come to his study to call him over the coals, Smithy, as Snoop had remarked, was not the man to stand it. In the right or in the wrong—and he was more likely to be in the wrong—Smithy was not the fellow to take slanging from anybody.

"Go ahead!" he suggested, as the captain of the Remove hesitated. "No charge for a seat, if you'd like to squat." Wharton remained standing.

"The fact is, perhaps, I'd better speak to you alone, Smithy," he said at last. "I didn't know you were tea-ing—you're rather late. I'll look in again."

"Rot!" said Smithy. "Whatever it is, you can cough it up before Redwing. I've no secrets from Redwing."

"I'll get out, if you like," said Redwing. "I don't mind."

"I do," said Vernon-Smith tersely. "Stay where you are!"

He fixed his eyes on Wharton.

"Look here, Wharton, get on with it. If you've come here for trouble you've found me at home."

"Wharton hasn't come here for trouble, old man," said Redwing mildly.

"He looks like it," grunted the Bounder.

"Not exactly," said Harry.

"Aren't you satisfied with my form for the match with the Fourth?" asked Vernon-Smith sarcastically.

"You can scratch my name from the list as soon as you like."

"I'm quite satisfied with it," said Wharton.

"Oh, that's good!" said the Bounder, still sarcastic.

"But it's the Fourth Form match that I've come to speak about," said the captain of the Remove. "The Remove play the Fourth next Wednesday, and you're down to play, Smithy. But—"

"But—" mimicked the Bounder.

His cordial manner was quite gone now. Smithy wanted to make it quite clear that he was not the kind of fellow to be called on the carpet, even by his football captain.

Wharton compressed his lips. "If you want me to speak before Redwing, I'll speak," he said.

"I'm waiting!" The Bounder shrugged his shoulders. "You can speak before the whole Form, or before all Greyfriars, if you choose. Shout it out from the house-tops, whatever it is, and I shan't care a rap. By gad! Do you think I'm a man to tremble at your frown, like Bunter?"

Smithy rose to his feet, facing Wharton across the table. His eyes were glinting now.

"Smithy!" murmured Redwing. The Bounder did not heed him. His eyes were fixed aggressively on the captain of the Remove.

Wharton breathed hard.

THE POPULAR—No. 625.

His own temper was quick enough, and his aggressive reception was quite enough to make him angry. But he controlled his temper. He had not come there to quarrel with Vernon-Smith if he could help it.

"There's talk going round the studies that you have been making bets on the Form match, Smitty," he said quietly.

The Bounder started.

"You've heard that?" he exclaimed.

"Yes."

"Blessed if I see how."

"I only want you to say it isn't true, Smitty, and, of course, I shall accept your word without question."

"I hope so," assented the Bounder. "But suppose it is true?"

"I want an answer—yes, or no," said Harry. "I needn't refer to the fact that betting on the matches is against the rules of the school, and means a row if the Head heard of it. You wouldn't care about that?"

"Not a rap!"

"I needn't mention that it's shady and blackguardly, either—I don't suppose you would care much about that."

"Thanks!"

"I'll come straight to the point. If you've laid money on the Form match you're dropped from the team. Yes or no?"

The Bounder compressed his lips.

"So you've come here to give me a sermon?" he sneered.

"Not in the least," said Harry. "Your ways aren't my ways, and whatever I think of them it's not my business to preach to you. I've never done it that I know of. But if you bring your rotten shady tricks into the school games I'm bound to put my foot down. They're saying in the studies and in the Rag that you've laid bets on the Form match with Angel, of the Fourth."

"And you feel bound to bring the tattle of the studies and the Rag to me?" sneered Vernon-Smith. "If it had been Bob Cherry, or Frank Nugent, or Johnny Bull, or Hurree Singh—"

"I should have known it was tattle, in that case, and taken no notice of it," said Harry. "In your case it's different. But I've come here as a friend, Smitty; I only want you to deny it. As I've said, your word is good enough for me; but I must know."

"And if I've laid a tinner with Angel of the Fourth you're going to drop me out of the team like a hot potato?" jeered the Bounder.

"Yes," said Wharton unhesitatingly.

"Drop me, then. I'm not going to make excuses to you, or to anybody else," said Vernon-Smith scornfully. "What do you think I care for a match with the Fourth?" He snapped his fingers.

"Not that! Almost any Remmie team could beat Temple's fumbling crowd. You don't need a man of my weight for the game. And that's why you're mountin' the high horse about it. If it had been the Rookwood or Highcliffe match, or the St. Jim's, you'd think twice before you picked a row with your best forward just before the date."

"That isn't so," said Harry quietly.

"If it were any fixture on the Remove list, and I found a man making bets on the game, I'd drop him fast enough. You know that, Smitty, or you ought to know it. But I don't mind saying frankly that I'm glad it's only a match with Temple's crowd—I can easily find a man to replace you good enough for that lot."

"Well, if that's all, there's the door," said Smitty gruffly.

"You haven't answered me yet," said

the captain of the Remove. "If you haven't laid money on the match with Angel of the Fourth—"

"Oh, rats!"

"You've only got to deny it, Smitty."

"It's quite true, you ass."

"Oh!"

Redwing uttered only that monosyllable. He was quite taken aback.

"It's true?" said Wharton.

"I've said so."

"That's all, then."

And Harry left the study.

"Shut the door after you!" called out the Bounder mockingly.

The captain of the Remove quietly closed the door. Skinner and Snoop stared at him along the passage, disappointed that there was no sign of "his Magnificence" leaving Smitty's study "on his neck." Harry Wharton went down to the Rag, where the football list for the Form match was pasted on the door. A dozen fellows watched him as he drew a pencil through the name of H. Vernon-Smith.

### Smitty Makes a Discovery!

HERBERT VERNON-SMITH drove his hands deep into his pockets and scowled. He was in a bad temper that afternoon, and Tom Redwing, his chum, had a rather troubled look. Redwing bore with his companion's ill-humour—he was very patient with Smitty. But it was not a happy half-holiday. The two juniors had gone out of gates. The Bounder had declined to join in the Form games practice as he was dropped from the Form eleven.

Redwing would have been glad enough to play in the pick-up, but Smitty seemed to expect his company, so Redwing had gone out with him. Little had been said by either of the strangely assorted chums as they rambled by lanes and fields. Vernon-Smith's remarks, when he made any, consisted of grumbling, which really was not very entertaining. He seemed to nourish an implacable resentment against the captain of the Remove, and he seemed to expect his chum to play chorus, as it were. And as Redwing did not do so the Bounder's resentment seemed to be turning on him.

They stopped at a stile on the border of Friardale Wood, and sat down for a rest—the Bounder for a smoke. Redwing gave no sign as he lighted a cigarette.

"Shockin' you—what?" asked Smitty.

"You might be seen, Smitty," said Tom Redwing mildly. "It would mean trouble with Mr. Quelch. You know what happened a few days ago. And you promised me that you'd chuck playing the silly goat."

"Oh, we're safe enough here, with the wood between us and Greyfriars!" said the Bounder carelessly. "I shouldn't be smokin' if I were still in the eleven. Wharton's fault."

Redwing made no answer.

"You haven't said a word about it," said the Bounder. "Do you think that Wharton has treated me decently?"

"What's the good of talking, old chap?" said Redwing. "There's a lot of things we don't agree on. Let's agree to differ."

"Do you think that Wharton has treated me decently?" repeated the

Bounder, raising his voice a little.

"I'm askin' you a question,"

"Well, then, yes, I do," said Redwing. "It was up to him to do as he did, and you had no right to expect anything else, Smitty."

"Straight from the shoulder, at all events!" said Vernon-Smith. "You don't beat about the bush, Redwing."

"Well, you made me answer," said Tom. "It was too rotten to make bets on the Form match, Smitty; I was no end surprised when you said it was true. I'm not surprised at it in Aubrey Angel; he's a bad egg all through. But I can't think how you came to let him draw you into it!"

The Bounder laughed sardonically. "You take me for an innocent little duck that was drawn into it by a naughty bad egg?" he asked.

"No; I'm afraid you're anything but an innocent duck, Smitty," said Tom, with a faint smile. "You do a lot of things I wish you wouldn't do. But betting on the school games is too thick; and I don't believe you'd have thought of it yourself. I'm sure that the suggestion came from Angel, and I'm surprised that you fell in with it."

"As a matter of fact, you've hit it," said Vernon-Smith moodily. "If Wharton hadn't been so high-and-mighty, I'd have explained; it's not so shady as it looks. I know it doesn't look nice."

"I'm glad you can see that, at any rate."

"It was really a trifle," said the Bounder. "Temple & Co. have been going all out in games practice lately, hopin' to beat the Remove, and they think they've got a chance. Angel bragged that he would back his Form if he could find a Remove man to take him on, and, without thinking, I said I'd give him two to one. You see, I thought he was only gassing—he gasses no end—"

"He does," agreed Redwing. "And when I said I'd give him two to one, I was thinking of two to one in doughnuts," said Smitty.

"Oh!" ejaculated Redwing.

"But Angel took on my offer at once, and made it fivers," said the Bounder. "I wasn't goin' to let that swankin' cad think I was afraid to put up the money. So I let it go at that."

"I see," said Redwing quietly. "I knew Angel worked it somehow. You were rather an ass to care for his opinion, Smitty."

"Very likely; but he's not goin' to swank that I'm afraid to back my opinion. I was a silly ass to let myself be let in for it, I know. If I'd stopped to think a minute, I shouldn't have done it. But there it is—and I wasn't going to let Wharton call me over the coals, like a prefect ragging a fag!" said the Bounder savagely.

"If you'd explain to Wharton how it came about, Smitty, he would see that it wasn't so jolly serious, and—"

"Catch me explainin'!" sneered the Bounder. "He came to my study to jaw me; and I'm not a fellow to take jaw from anybody."

"Well, I don't think he exactly came to jaw you, Smitty," said Tom. "Naturally, he wanted to know how the matter stood. Perhaps he might have been a bit more tactful; but he was naturally feeling a bit annoyed—"

"Catch me takin' any notice of his annoyance!" said Vernon-Smith disdainfully. "He's not my master, I suppose?"

"You ought to have remembered that you were in the wrong, in the first place, Smitty," said Tom. "But, look here, can't you call that bet off? That



would make it all right; and Wharton would most likely come round."

"I don't care a rap whether he comes round or not; I'm not askin' any favours of his Highness! I don't want to play in a measly Form match; it's bein' dropped from the team and sermonised that gets my goat!" growled the Bounder. "I've a jolly good mind to stand out of the footer for the whole season. But I dare say that's just what Wharton wants. He would be glad to see me get my back up to that extent."

"Rot, old chap! You can't be spared from the big fixtures," said Redwing. "And, really, you know, you asked for this. You let Angel of the Fourth land you with a bet you never wanted, and you didn't even keep it dark."

"I did keep it dark!" snapped the Bounder. "Haven't you any eyes? Or any sense? Angel let it out on purpose, knowin' how Wharton would take it. With me out of the Remove team he's got a better chance of baggin' my

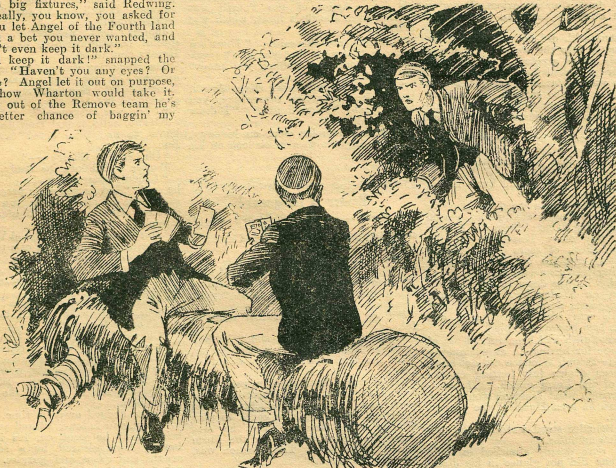
"No; I'm the only black sheep in the flock," he said sardonically. "Except perhaps Hazel—and Hazel's got no money. Besides, if Hazel dropped out of the team it wouldn't weaken it—it would strengthen it, as Wharton would play Field in his place, and Field's worth a dozen of Hazel. Hazel's only played because he's Marjorie Hazeldene's brother, anyhow."

"Oh, not quite that!" said Redwing laughing. "Hazel keeps goal jolly well when he's in form. Still, if Wharton put Squiff into goal, the

and isn't likely to happen," said Redwing. "Wharton wouldn't think of anything of the sort. Look here, old chap, forget all about it. A match with the Fourth is nothing; to a footballer of your standing the thing isn't serious at all."

"A fellow doesn't like being called over the coals, and treated like a naughty kid," growled Smithy. "I've had plenty of chipping about it. Skinner—"

"Oh, Skinner's always out to make mischief. For goodness sake, don't let



Vernon-Smith's eyes glistened as he burst upon the two card-players. "Is this how you're getting ready for the Form match, Hazel?" he asked.

tenner. If I'd played, I'd have made jolly certain of baggin' his fiver!"

"I dare say he's rotter enough to scheme such a thing," admitted Redwing. "But I can't quite catch on all the same. The Fourth have a better chance now, but they won't beat the Remove. Your standing out makes a difference; but it doesn't make all that difference."

"I know! Angel's got something else up his sleeve, I fancy," said the Bounder. "I thought he was gassin' when he offered to back his form; but as he turns out to have been in earnest, he must think that he has a chance of pullin' it off. Temple's crowd are in better form than usual—and the Remove have lost their best man—in my opinion. That gives the Fourth a chance—a good chance; but not a certainty. And I can't imagine Angel laying five quids on a chance. He's hard up these days—he's had an awful run of luck on the races. My tinner will set him up a little, if he gets hold of it—and he's countin' on gettin' hold of it. He's got another move up his sleeve."

"Blessed if I can guess what, Smithy. He can't play the same trick with another member of the eleven." The Bounder sneered.

Fourth wouldn't have much chance of putting the ball in; so I don't suppose that Angel has any designs on Hazeldene."

"And there's no other fellow in the eleven that would fall to such a trick," said the Bounder. "Even Bolsover major, who's been shoved in, would draw the line at betting on the Form matches. All the same, Angel's got something up his sleeve, and I've been wonderin' what. He doesn't expect the Fourth to win on their football form; but he expects them to win, or he wouldn't have backed them with a fiver."

Redwing frowned. "He's a bad hat," he said. "It's rather a pity the Head doesn't spot him, and boot him out of Greyfriars. A fellow like that can do a lot of harm in a school. I suppose his time will come. I hear that Temple batted him when it came out about the bet on the Form match."

"Wharton didn't think of battin' me!" said the Bounder. "I don't think I should have taken it like a lamb, like Aubrey Angel. By gad, if— The Bounder's eyes glazed.

"Dear old chap, don't work up steam over something that hasn't happened,

Skinner pull your leg as well as Angel of the Fourth."

"It's a lot of fuss about nothing," said Vernon-Smith. "If I were a fellow like Angel, grubbing about with dirty betting on the matches, it would be different. Is that how it stands?"

"No; but—"

"Well, that's what Wharton is making out. He's not treated me decently, and you jolly well know he hasn't."

Redwing made no reply. In Smithy's present mood it was difficult to say anything without giving offence.

"You don't agree with me?"

"You know I don't, Smithy, old man. What's the good of arguing about it?" said Redwing patiently.

"Are you my pal, or Wharton's?" sneered the Bounder.

"Yours, old chap; but you can't expect me to agree with you when you're playing the goat. For goodness' sake, let's drop the subject!"

Redwing was showing signs of restiveness at last.

"Drop it, then—and drop me, too!" said the Bounder savagely. "Are you going back by the road?"

"Yes."

"Then I'm going through the wood."  
And with a sullen, savage glance at his chum, the Bounder dropped over the stile, and strode away into the wood by himself.

Redwing glanced after him and sighed; his friendship with the Bounder of Greyfriars, was sometimes rather trying. But he hoped that Smithy would succeed in walking off his ill-humour, and that they would meet on friendly terms, as usual, for tea in the study at Greyfriars.

So, leaving the Bounder for the present to his own devices, Redwing walked away by the road towards the school.

Vernon-Smith did not glance back as he plunged into the wood. He would probably have greeted Redwing with a bitter gibe had Tom followed him. But he was irritated at being taken at his word, all the same. He was, in fact, in a bitter and unreasonable temper, ready to quarrel with friend or foe.

He tramped on by a lonely footpath, thick with fallen leaves, with his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a deep scowl on his face.

Suddenly he halted and burst into a sardonic chuckle.

In a glade of the wood he came in sight of two Greyfriars juniors, seated on a fallen log. One of them was Aubrey Angel, the other Hazeldene of the Remove. Both of them were smoking cigarettes, and the log between them was being used as a card-table.

Hazel, who was down to play for the Remove on Wednesday, should have been at games practice that afternoon; and this was where Hazel was, and this was how he was occupied.

Vernon-Smith had been turned out of the eleven for having, in an unthinking moment—though Wharton did not know that—been drawn into betting on the result of the Form match. He wondered grimly what Wharton would have done had he seen Hazel at the present moment.

The Bounder stood watching the two for a few minutes.

They were deeply absorbed in their game, and did not glance in his direction, and they had not heard his footfalls on the thick carpet of leaves.

Hazel's face was a little white and anxious. Smithy judged that he was not getting the best of the game. That, however, went without saying. The foolish fellow was no match for Aubrey Angel.

Hazel was losing money which he could not afford to lose, and he was growing troubled, and sullen, and sulky. He threw away a half-smoked cigarette with a savage gesture, but almost immediately lighted another.

The Bounder watched, and his eyes glistened.

He had told Redwing that the sportsman of the Fourth had another card up his sleeve; he had been glad to get Smithy dropped from the Remove team, on the principle that every little helped. But he had some other move to make—some other move of more effect. And as Smithy watched the gamblers, he knew what that move was. The black-guard of Greyfriars was getting at the Remove goalkeeper!

Hazel, doubtless, did not know it yet. It was fairly certain that he did not know it.

But the Bounder knew it as he gazed at the scene—knew it as well as if Aubrey Angel had told him.

He burst into a loud laugh.

THE POPULAR—No. 625.

Hazeldene started violently at the sound and looked up. Angel of the Fourth glanced round carelessly.

"Smithy!" exclaimed Angel.  
"Is this how you're getting ready for the Form match, Hazel?" asked the Bounder in a tone of grim banter.  
"No bizney of yours. You're not in the team now," said Hazeldene sullenly.

"Come and take a hand, Smithy," said Angel amicably.  
The Bounder hesitated a moment. His evil star was in the ascendant that day. But he shook his head and curled his lip. Angel of the Fourth was beyond even Smithy's limit, which was a wide one.

"Thanks, no," he said. "There's a proverb that says that you can't touch pitch without bein' defiled, you know."

"What?"  
"I'm not a particular chap, Angel, but I draw the line somewhere, you know," said Vernon-Smith. "I draw it at you!"

And the Bounder went on his way, leaving Angel with a black look on his face.

### Bunter is Indignant!

"TOPPERS!" said Bob Cherry.

"Eh?"

"Toppers!"

The Famous Five of the Remove were at tea in Study No. 1 when Bob Cherry made that cryptic remark.

All the juniors were rather thoughtful.

Wharton was troubled about football matters. The absence of his goalkeeper from the afternoon's practice disturbed him.

Hazel was a good man in goal when he liked; but he was uncertain, and sometimes given to slacking, and Wharton would not have cared to play him in a big fixture. But he was more than good enough for the Form match, if he liked. The question was, whether he liked.

His absence that afternoon looked as if a new spell of slacking was setting in; indeed, his walking out with Angel of the Fourth hinted that something more than slacking was going on.

Wharton wondered whether he was heading for trouble again, as he had so often done before. But it was quite possible that Hazel's absence that afternoon was simply due to a desire to show that he was not to be dictated to, and that he could do as he liked. The captain of the Remove was strongly tempted to scratch his name out of the football list, but he was unwilling to take that extreme step if it could be helped. It meant throwing away all the work that had been done in making a footballer of Marjorie's shiftless brother.

Nugent, and Inky, and Johnny Bull were also thinking about the football captain's difficulty. Bob Cherry, however, was thinking about another matter, as his observation showed.

"Toppers!" repeated Wharton, coming out of a brown study, and looking at Bob in surprise.

Yes, we shall have to sport toppers for the occasion," said Bob.

"Toppers in a Form match?" ejaculated Wharton.

"Eh? Who's talking about a football match?"

"Well, I was thinking about it," said Harry, laughing.

"I was thinking about our walk-to-morrow," said Bob.

"Oh, I see!"  
"Forgotten it, old chap?" asked Bob.  
"I suppose you know we're calling at Cliff House to-morrow morning for Marjorie and Clara, with Hazel? As it's a Sunday walk, we shall have to sport toppers."

"Oh, certainly! I hadn't forgotten," said Harry. "It's rather awkward. I shall have to speak to Hazel about cutting the practice to-day, and one never knows how he will take even the mildest word. I hope he won't be sulky to-morrow. It will be awkward."

"Dr-r-r-r!"  
Johnny Bull, apparently, had no special consideration to expend upon Hazel's touchiness.

The discussion was interrupted by the opening of the study door. Billy Bunter's fat face and big spectacles glistened in.

"I say, you fellows—"  
"Hallo, hallo, hallo! How did Bunter know we had tarts here?" exclaimed Bob.

"Oh, really, Cherry—"  
Bunter rolled into the study.

"I didn't know you had a plum cake," he said. "But as you're so pressing, I'll sample it, old man. I say, you fellows, that cad Hazeldene—"  
Bunter helped himself to a cake aply.

"Has Hazel come in?" asked Wharton.  
"Yes, rather; in no end of a temper," said Bunter, munching tarts. "I say, you fellows, it's really thick, you know. Hazel's really a rank outsider. No gentleman, you know."

"What has he done now?" asked Nugent. "Has he refused to cash a postal order for me?"

"Oh, really, Nugent— Groooogh!" Bunter gasped. Cake and conversation together did not seem to agree. Something had gone down the wrong way, and Bunter gasped and spluttered.

"Shall I smack you on the back?" asked Bob.

Bunter dodged away in time.  
"I say, you fellows, I'll tell you what he's done; he went on his fat neck having been cleared by a series of coughs and gasps and gurgles. 'Ho's asked me to square.'"

"What?"

"He lent me a few shillings last term," said Bunter. "Now he's dunning me for it. Awful cad! I told him that it was an old account, and he said that made no difference, and he wanted the money. Fancy a fellow being so hard up that five bob makes a difference to him! Poverty-stricken outsider, you know!"

"Of course, you squared at once?" asked Bob sarcastically.

"I told him, of course, that I should not keep him waiting for his measly bobs," said Bunter, with dignity. "I happen to be short of money temporarily—"

"Not really?"

"Yes, really, for once, old chap. But, as I told Hazel, I've got friends in the Remove who won't let me be dunned for money. That's really why I came here to see you fellows."

"Why?" asked Nugent. "Why not go and see your friends?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, really, Nugent! Now, which of you chaps is going to lend me five bob to square that cad Hazel?" asked Bunter, blinking round through his spectacles. "Don't all speak at once."

The Famous Five did not all speak at once. They did not speak at all. They grinned.



"Well, I'll get along and ask Smithy, as none of you will offer," said Bunter. "I can't let that cad ruin me for money."

And the Owl of the Remove rolled out of Study No. 1.

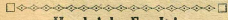
Harry Wharton & Co. looked at one another.

"Hazel must be jolly hard up if he's really been trying to collect a debt from Bunter," said Bob, with a faint grin.

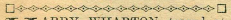
"The hard-upfulness must be terrific," Wharton frowned.

"It looks—" he began, and broke off. "Well, I suppose Hazel's private affairs are no concern of ours. But I hope the silly ass hasn't been playing the goat again."

Ten o'clock, the juniors left the study, and Harry Wharton went along to No. 2, Hazel's study. In the Remove passage he passed Vernon-Smith, who had just come in. Wharton gave the Bounder a nod, and received in return a hard and steeley stare. He shrugged his shoulders as he walked on. He was quite willing to forget the late unpleasantness, if Smithy was; but if the Bounder chose to keep it up, it did not affect the captain of the Remove very much. Vernon-Smith cast a scowl after him, and trumped on to Study No. 4.



**Hazel Asks For It!**



HARRY WHARTON tapped at the door of Study No. 2, and entered. Hazelizena was there. His study-mate, Tom Brown, was "tea-ing" along the passage with Squiff. Hazel was sitting limply in the study armchair, with a black look on his face, and was evidently tired and troubled. His look grew blacker as he saw the captain of the Remove.

"Well, what is it now?" asked Hazel, before the captain of the Remove could speak. "I'd better warn you that I'm not in a mood to be jawed. If that's it, you can cut it out."

Hazel was evidently in a quarrelsome mood. But it takes two to make a quarrel, the captain of the Remove did not intend to let the trouble materialise. "But I haven't come to jaw you, old chap," he said mildly.

Hazel grinned.

The soft answer is said to turn away wrath; and soft answers from Wharton were rare. But Hazel looked as sulky and irritable as before. It was easy to see that there was some worry on his mind, unconnected with the idea of any "jaw" from his football captain.

"But I expected to see you on Little Side this afternoon, you know," said Harry amicably.

"I went out of gates."

"Yes, I know. But—"

"I suppose I can go out of gates on a half-Hazel, if I choose?"

"Certainly."

"Well, that's that!" grunted Hazel.

"But we wanted you, you know," said Harry. "Still, let it be. We've got a good practice on Tuesday, and you've been in great form lately. You'll do well in goal; and you know that since Smithy was dropped, we want to take care not to let the Fourth beat us."

"I don't see that you need have dropped Smithy."

Wharton breathed hard for a moment.

"Well, he's dropped, anyhow," he said. "It weakens the team; and unless I make some more changes; but I don't want to do that if it can be helped."

"You mean you think you could strengthen the team by putting Field into goal?" said Hazel unpleasantly.

Every fellow in the Remove, excepting Hazel, knew that the eleven could be immensely strengthened by putting Squiff into goal. Hazel was the only fellow who did not know it, or rather, refused to know it.

"Never mind that," said Harry. "I was disappointed not to see you with the team to-day; but you'll turn up on Tuesday. That will make it all right."

"I don't know that I shall."

Again Wharton breathed hard. He was aware that he would not have taken so much "cheek" as this from any other member of his team. Hazel was pressing on his patience and good temper.

"Let's have this clear, Hazel!" said Harry, gently enough. "I've put you into the team, and you're bound to play up. If I let a man cut the games practices, what will all the fellows say?"

"Let them say what they like."

Harry Wharton stood silent. His patience, so far, would have surprised any Remove fellow who had heard him talk. But there was a limit to patience.

"Anything more?" sneered Hazel.

"Well, we're walking to Cliff House to-morrow, and I'll speak of it again," said Harry, and he turned to the door. "Oh, rot!" said Hazel. "Let's hear an end of it. I'm not a fellow to be called over the coals, and I tell you so plainly. I've heard a lot of talk about Field in goal—I think I'm as good a man, if you ask me. But if you think Field's a better man, why the deuce don't you play him? I'm not asking for any favouritism."

"It isn't that," said Harry. "You're every bit good enough to play Temple's crowd, and you're entitled to a show in a match."

"But not good enough to play St. Jim's?" sneered Hazel.

"If you want to play St. Jim's, you've only got to stick to games practice hard, and get into form for it. I'd be glad to see you playing in a school match, if you were equal to it."

"I don't want to play St. Jim's," said Hazel coolly. "I don't want to play the Fourth, for that matter. You offered me the place, and I took it on—I never said I was keen about it. It doesn't matter a half penny rap to me whether I play on Wednesday or not."

"Look here, Hazel—"

"If you think you're conferring a tremendous benefit on me, you can wash it out," said Hazel contemptuously. "I'm giving up a half-Holiday on Wednesday to the footer—and I'd jolly well rather be somewhere else, if you want to know. And you can't call me to heel when you like, either. I shall suit myself about turning up for practice on Tuesday; it's not a compulsory day."

Wharton looked at him steadily.

"I want to keep friendly with you, Hazel," he said. "I want to keep you in the footer if I can. But there's a limit—I've got the team to consider."

"I'd better say plainly that unless you give me your word to play in the practice on Tuesday, I can't keep you in the eleven for the Form match."

"Am I askin' you to?" sneered Hazel.

"You mean that you want to stand out?"

"I mean that I don't care a rap one way or the other," exclaimed Hazel irritably. "I'm fed-up with footer, and fed up with you, if you want to hear what I feel about it."

Wharton compressed his lips.

"I suppose that means that you are playing the goat again—I heard that you were with Angel, of the Fourth, this afternoon."

"No business of yours, I suppose," said Hazel. "Are you going to meddle

with my private affairs because I've consulted to keep goal for you?"

"Consented!" repeated the captain of the Remove.

"Yes—consented, I've not asked for the place, and I'm not asking for it now. I don't care a dash about it."

"Very well; you're scratched," said the captain of the Remove. "There's a limit, Hazel. You don't play on Wednesday."

"I dare say I shall find something else to do," sneered Hazel.

Harry Wharton turned and left the study.

Hazel threw himself into the armchair again, scowling blackly. He was not thinking of the place in the team that he had lost; obviously, he did not care about that. Other matters were on his mind—not unconnected, probably, with his card-play with Angel, of the Fourth, that afternoon in Friardale Wood.

He turned his head irritably as the study door re-opened a few minutes later, half-expecting to see Wharton again. In his conceit, he would not have been surprised if the captain of the Remove had returned to ask him to alter his decision. But it was Tom Brown, the New Zealand junior, his study-mate, who came in.

"Sorry, old bean," said Tom Brown cheerily.

"Sorry for what?" grunted Hazel.

"I see your name's scratched."

"What rot!"

"I noticed the list in the Rag," said the New Zealand junior, "Your name's marked out. I'm sorry, as you were getting on so well with the footer. But, really, it was rather thick cutting practice to-day. You might really have expected it, old man."

Hazelizena sat bolt upright, and fixed a furious stare on the New Zealand junior. Tom Brown was taking it for granted that he had been dropped from the team because he had cut games practice.

"You silly chump!" hooted Hazel.

"Hallo! What's biting you?"

"Do you think I've been turned out of the team like Smithy?"

"Eh! I suppose so, as Wharton's taken your name out of the list," answered Tom Brown, staring.

"You fathead! I've checked up the place because I don't want it!" snarled Hazelizena. "I could have it if I liked."

"Oh, draw it mild, you know," said Brown. "You're telling me that you've checked up a place that dozen fellows would like to have. Draw it mild."

"Well, I have! Can't you take my word?" almost shouted Hazel.

"Your word isn't exactly as good as gold, is it?" said Brown. "But let it drop—it doesn't matter to me. Have it as you like."

"You cheeky rotter!"

Tom Brown gave him a quiet, warning look.

"That's enough, Hazel! I don't like that talk," he said. "Keep that kind of chat for Bunter, a fellow who can't punch your cheeky head."

"Cheeky cad!" bawled Hazel.

"That does it."

Hazel put up his hands as the New Zealand junior came towards him. He was in a mood for a quarrel and a scowp with anybody. He struck out fiercely and passionately, and Tom Brown hit out in return, and in a moment more there was a fight going on in the study.

"I say, you fellows," came a yell in the Remove passage, "they're fighting in Study No. 2!"





and stood upright with his tunic buttoned.

He had put on the spurs with his boots. He and Mendoza were of very similar build, and everything fitted Bill almost as though it had been made for him.

He borrowed a razor from the soldier, and, going to the looking-glass and soaping his chin and cheek, he removed all signs of stubble from them.

Then he obtained his make-up case from his discarded clothes, skillfully manufactured a slight moustache from some black crepe hair, and gummed it upon his upper lip.

It caused him to appear considerably older than was the case, and as he put on Mendoza's plumed, peaked cap he looked to the life a soldier of the republic.

Mendoza brought him the cartridges he had asked for. Bill removed the leaden pellets from their ends and slipped five of the clips into his pocket.

The last he placed in the soldier's rifle, which Mendoza fetched, and from which he took the live cartridges. Then, whilst the San Loredian departed to don a civilian suit and make ready for fight, Bill outlined his plan to his comrades.

"Remember, keep near the prison, lads, in case I need help, and have three horses handy," he said. "The same thing will apply in the square to-morrow morning. But I know that, whatever happens, you will not be far away."

"Now to sit down and wait until it is time for Private Juan Mendoza's report for duty," he added with a smile as he concealed a revolver in his hip pocket.

The faces of Jock and Mick were anxious as their clum at length arose and left the house. It was then half-past five.

Adopting the arrogant swagger of the soldiers he had seen about the streets, Bill walked slowly towards the barracks, which lay at the end of the main street, quite near the prison. His hat was adjusted at a rakish angle, and he had Mendoza's rifle resting upon his shoulder.

At a little before a quarter to six Bill entered the barrack-yard and approached the orderly-room. Five other soldiers were already gathered outside, resting upon their rifles and smoking cigarettes.

He joined them, nodding coolly; and not one of them guessed how his pulses were racing.

A sergeant appeared, and the cigarettes were cast on one side. At an order from the N.C.O., the men shouldered their rifles and fell into line. The officer who was to inspect them was coming.

The man—who wore a captain's uniform, and whose villainous cast of countenance suggested that he might be one of Carranza's ex-brigand followers—ran his eyes over the guard, then stepped back. After acknowledging the sergeant's salute he turned away.

At an order from the sergeant they fell into double file. Then "Quick march!" ordered the N.C.O. in Spanish, and the tramp to the prison began.

Five minutes later Bill found himself detailed with another man to take the first four hours watch in the prison. When the sergeant had marched them to the great doors of the grim-looking building of grey stone he rang a bell, and a wicket-gate was opened by a gaoler. They passed through, the N.C.O. accompanying them.

The cells were situated in a central

block, and a corridor ran right round this, which Bill and his companion were expected to parade, passing one another, of course, at frequent intervals.

Having seen them started upon this duty, the sergeant marched off two men who had been on duty from the day guard for the past four hours, and the two sentries were left alone.

In all the doors of the cells was a small iron grille, so that the soldiers could glance in at the prisoners.

Bill's heart bled for these unfortunates as he glanced into cell after cell, seeking for a prisoner who looked like a Britisher. The place was much as the prisons of Spain. Wickedly insanitary conditions prevailed, and in many cases the only bed supplied the captives consisted of a heap of filthy straw.

As Bill peered in at a cell near the end of the stone passage down which he was walking he felt that he had found his man.

A prisoner better dressed than the others and with a handsome, typically English cast of countenance sat upon a stool, his chin resting upon his bunched hands, and an expression of despair in his eyes.

"A word with you," Bill said in English; and the man started and sprang to his feet in amazement at hearing his own language come from a soldier of the Republic. Then, to make quite sure, "Who are you?" Bill asked.

"Clifford Howard—a Britisher," the man replied. "But you—are you a fellow-countryman?"

"Yes. And I am here to try to save you and your wife," the lad breathed tensely, lowering his voice, for he could hear his fellow-sentry approaching round the angle of the wall. "I cannot stop to say more now. Be ready to speak to me when I come back."

He drew away from the grille and resumed his steady march, as from around the wall stalked the genuine sentry. They passed one another with a nod, and Bill hastened his steps once he was out of sight of the man so that he should have more time to converse with the condemned mine-owner when he once again reached his cell.

As he drew level with it again, after tramping right round the central block, he found Howard at the grille, with his eyes alight with a wild, new hope.

"During the night I mean to try to substitute the cartridges in the fringsquad's rifles for blanks," Harry said. "You must find an opportunity to communicate this to your wife; and as soon as the order is given to fire, and the reports of the rifles ring out you must both drop as though mortally shot. I am from your father-in-law, Don da Silva, and I have two staunch comrades with me. Don da Silva may be here to lead the loyalists at almost any hour now; and at all events, an effort will be made to rescue you when you are being carried from the Puerta del Sol, or after. You fully understand?"—as the footfalls of the other sentry again sounded around the wall.

"Yes. And Heaven bless you—whoever you are!" Howard whispered huskily.

### The Execution!

AS the first grey streaks of dawn began to steal across the sky the half-light showed a great crowd gathered on the pavements of San Loreda's main square, the Puerta

del Sol, whilst inhabitants craned from the upper windows of the houses, waiting to watch the grim scene that soon was to be enacted below.

Already a number of soldiers were stationed in the square to keep back the crowd and ready to quell any disturbance that might occur whilst the execution was taking place.

"Viva the president! Viva the Excelleza Carranza!"

The cries rang out from those of the inhabitants who favoured their present despotic ruler, as a carriage drawn by a couple of horses entered the square and pulled up near its farther end.

In the conveyance sat the ex-brigand, Carlos Carranza, a sallow-faced, obese man, with a fierce, upturned black moustache, and small, dishonest eyes. He was smoking a cigarette, and laughing over some joke his Prime Minister, who sat with him in the carriage, had cracked.

"They come!" The words rang tensely through the waiting crowds as there sounded a steady tramp of feet, and the six men who had been on duty in the prison during the night marched into the square, with their rifles on their shoulders, and the two condemned prisoners between them.

They were not yet bound, and Clifford Howard held the hand of his young wife, as if to give her courage.

Carmen Howard was tall and slender, and her beauty was still almost girlish. Her wealth of black hair caused her delicate features to look even more pale than was actually the case. Her lips were quivering a little, but otherwise she was quite calm.

With the soldiers was Bill Merton, and once, as he helped to lead the prisoners to where they were to stand, a grim smile hovered about his finely-chiselled lips.

For his ruse had met with success.

It will be remembered that his own rifle had already contained cartridges rendered harmless. The men who were destined for the last watch were sprinkled on the floor, covered with blankets, and their rifles stood in a corner.

The man who came off duty with the Britisher placed his weapons with the others, and obtained a blanket, and, like the other two, he was soon dozing.

In half an hour all three were snoring lustily, and Bill changed the cartridges in their rifles for the blanks he had concealed in his pockets. When the pair on the middle watch returned to the guard-room at two o'clock in the small hours, they found him apparently asleep with the others, but in reality he was very wide awake indeed.

When the pair on the last watch had taken their places, the two who had just come off duty lost little time in seeking slumber, and whilst they slept Bill served their rifles similarly, so that all the weapons were then loaded with blanks.

As the officer, a captain, who was with the firing-party, tied the hands of the prisoners behind their backs, Bill caught sight of Jock and Mick, who looked more than anxious, standing in the crowd away to the left. The fringsquad was ordered to retreat, and lined up facing the prisoners. The officer drew his sword and stood beside the soldiers. He raised it and saluted the president, then a tense, expectant silence fell over the throng.

The actual execution was at hand. THE POPULAR—No. 625.

"Ready!" the officer said in Spanish. "Present!"

The soldiers of the firing-squad, including Bill, raised their rifles to their shoulders.

The officer's sword fell, and—

"Fire!" he cried.  
Almost as one, the rifles rang out in a sharp report that went echoing through the square and re-echoed in the distant hills. Women—ay, and men, too—caught in their breath, as they saw Clifford Howard and his young wife collapse and lay prone upon the flagstones in the square.

Bill had seen that a cart in which were some tarpaulins stood near, and he hoped that the mine-owner and his wife would be immediately placed in it, and the tarpaulins flung over them before it was realised that they were unarmed. But nothing of the sort was to happen, and as Bill saw the captain in charge of the squad draw a revolver from his belt and start to walk forward, he had difficulty in suppressing a cry of horror.

He had forgotten the coup-de-grace! As happens nearly always after a person or persons have been riddled by the bullets of a military firing-squad, the officer was about to make sure Howard and his wife were dead by placing his revolver to the heads of both and firing.

Bill started to march after him, as if he had received an order to do so, the other soldiers of the squad staring in amazement.

The officer did not realise his presence until he was about to stoop over Clifford Howard, and he turned with a snarl of anger.

"Dog! Get back to the others!" he ordered in Spanish. "What do you do here?"

Bill's reply was to lash out with his left, and all the weight of his body was behind the blow. His bunched fist landed full upon the point of the officer's jaw, and the man went down like a log, to lay unconscious.

Bill stooped, whipping out a clasp-knife. He snatched the bandage from the eyes of Howard and his wife, and hastily severed the bonds about their wrists.

"Quick! Escape if you can!" Bill cried, shaking first Howard, then Carmen, by the shoulder, for they had kept their eyes shut, not realising his identity.

They sprang up, and in an instant the square was in an uproar. Carranza—the president, uttered a hoarse cry of mingled amazement and rage, and, leaping to his feet, he sprang from his carriage.

"So there has been treachery!" he cried. "I will soon remedy the hitch that has occurred." And he drew a revolver and levelled it point-blank at the white-faced Carmen.

Craek!

Before he could pull the trigger, Bill, who had dropped his rifle and whipped out his revolver, fired. The bullet lodged in Carranza's shoulder, and, with a gasping moan, the scoundrel collapsed in a heap. By now a score of soldiers were rushing towards the spot, and with a quick "this way!" Bill turned and ran for it, with Clifford Howard and Carmen.

Mick and Jock forced an opening in the crowd for them, and the shots some of the pursuing soldiers hurriedly fired, missed the fugitives and wounded civilians.

"Bedad! The horses yez said have ready are in that lane there!" Mick said. "But we'll never reach 'em through this crowd! Quick! In here!"

They rushed into the open doorway of a house in front of them; rushed on and up the white staircase at the end of the hall. On the landing Bill thrust Carmen behind them, whilst Jock handed to Clifford Howard a spare revolver.

"Hoots! It's a forlorn hope, but for her sake we'll fight till we drop!" the

Soot said, through his teeth, as a number of soldiers thudded into the hall below.

Mick seized a large mahogany table. He dragged it to the spare stairhead, and turned it upon its side, so as to form some sort of cover.

A hail of lead from the soldiers' rifles was sent up the stairs. But the comrades, together with Carmen and her husband, crouched down behind the table and escaped unscathed. Then, before the soldiers were ready to fire again, Mick, Jock, and Bill, and also the young mine-owner, poured a withering volley from their revolvers into their midst.

Many fell wounded; but more and more soldiers were entering from the street, and matters looked very ugly for the dauntless three and the young couple they were championing.

Then suddenly sounds of firing came from the street, accompanied by the unmistakable spluttering of a machine-gun, and a bare-headed soldier, who had blood on his face, rushed into the hall.

"Da Silva has returned!" he cried. "He made a surprise attack upon the town, and already the army is in flight!"

"You heard, boys?" Bill shouted. "Da Silva is here in the nick of time!"

Down the stairs sprang Mick, Jock, and Bill, Clifford Howard following. The soldiers, utterly demoralised, turned and ran into the arms of Da Silva's forces.

Almost the first person the comrades encountered as they stepped into the street was Ramon da Silva, who, with a gasp upon his forehead, and other signs about him to show that he had taken an active part in the fray, was seated on a spirited black horse.

He sprang from the saddle, and clasped his daughter to his breast. Then he turned, and with his heart too full to speak, gripped the hands of each of the comrades in turn.

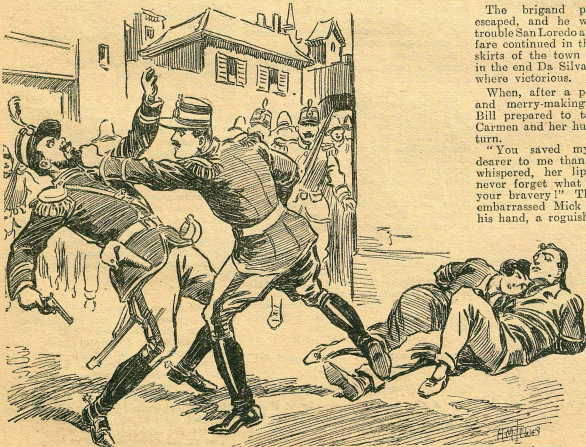
The brigand president, Carranza, escaped, and he was not destined to trouble San Laredo again. Guerrilla warfare continued in the hills and the outskirts of the town for some days. But in the end Da Silva's forces were everywhere victorious.

When, after a period of banqueting and merry-making, Mick, Jock, and Bill prepared to take their departure, Carmen and her husband thanked all in turn.

"You saved my life, and a life dearer to me than my own!" the girl whispered, her lips quivering. "I'll never forget what Cliff and I owe to your bravery!" Then, as she saw how embarrassed Mick looked, as she took his hand, a roguish light crept into her dark eyes, and suddenly she kissed his cheek.

"Faith," said Mick, still furiously flushed, when they got away, though he grinned, "us will seem a sin to wash the face av me after that, me darlints, an' Oi'm thinking Oi'd foight the whole of an army like Carranza's if Oi knew there was a reward loike that waiting for me afterwards, bedad!"

THE END.

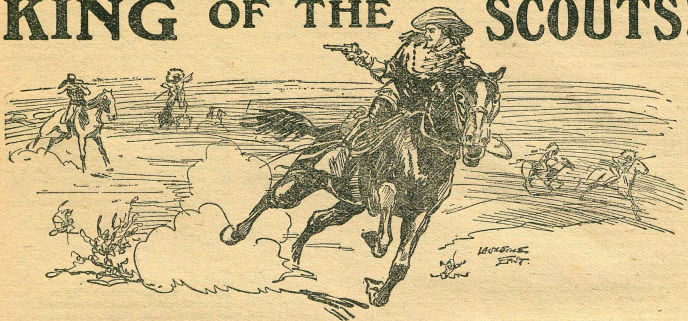


As the Captain approached him, Bill swung round and landed a blow clean on the officer's chin



Roaring Tale of the World's Greatest Scout!

# KING OF THE SCOUTS!



## The Mystery of the Broken Horseshoe!

**B**OB ASHMORE, the young pioneer, laughed light-heartedly. "Well, I've been some time on the prairie now, Bill, and I've had a few run experiences," he remarked, as he and Buffalo Bill, the great scout, cantered along together. "Of course, I'm not half as cute as you at reading off marks and signs and following up a trail, but, all the same, I do think I know something that way. And when you tell me that the knowledge I have gained would only lead me astray—"

"No, no! I don't go as far as that," Buffalo Bill grinned genially. "It might often serve your turn, but at other times you might just overlook the most critical evidence, and jump to a conclusion that— Swing round by the boulder there, lad! I'll canter through the dip yonder. There's not room for us here to ride abreast."

Bob pressed his mount with his left knee, and laid the bridle across its neck.

The well-trained animal swung round obediently to the hint, and the lad raced out to the plain whilst Buffalo Bill clattered down the hill amongst the stones.

The ravine opened out on to the plain again three hundred yards ahead, and Bob rode fast in a half circle, so as to reach his chum as he should emerge. But when the lad had covered half the distance he smothered a cry and pulled on the reins.

He had observed something that had

attracted his deep attention. Jumping to the ground and passing his arm through the reins, he gazed down.

For a circuit of twenty yards the grass was beaten flat with hoofmarks. The ground was soft, and the grass was still green where it had been nipped off by the horses' shoes.

As Buffalo Bill rode out on to the plain he looked back to see what had delayed the lad, and, seeing him standing, he wheeled round and jogged towards him.

"Hallo! Hallo, there!" he shouted. "What's up? What have you come across now?"

## Buffalo Bill Jumps on a Gang of Claim Jumpers!

Bob beckoned to the great scout to approach nearer, and when the latter had reached the spot the lad pointed down to the ground.

Buffalo Bill whistled, jumped off his horse, and began to walk around, humming a tune softly. After an inspection of a couple of minutes he sat down on a rock and looked questioningly up at Bob.

"Well, lad, what do you make of it?" he asked.

Bob laughed. He knew that his companion had arrived at some definite conclusion, from the tone in which he spoke.

"Can't say I've got a definite clue,"

Bob admitted at once. "There's been a scuffle here, that's certain; but I don't know that I can work out the reason of it. There's the marks in the centre of a horse's hoofs—three sound shoes and one that has lost half an inch of iron. That horse backed and plunged and tried to break away. Finally, he galloped off, surrounded by the others. They weren't cantering; they all sprang off too hard on their hind-legs for that. Look how their shoes sank into the ground!"

"Mount, and let us ride on," Buffalo Bill suggested. "They've gone the road we're taking, so we can track 'em without going out of our way. Keep your eye on that broken shoe, Bob. We'll ride at a gallop, and see if you can keep it in sight."

The two friends vaulted into their saddles and set spurs to their horses. Buffalo Bill rode ahead, and Bob could see that, for the fun of the thing, he was trying to take him off the trail.

The lad made no remark, however, but kept on to it steadily in and out of the scrub, and presently he shouted to his companion, who was thirty yards before him.

"Come back here! You've over-ridden the trail!" he called out.

Buffalo Bill wheeled round. There was a twinkle in his eye.

"I was wondering if you'd pass it," he laughed. "That's jolly good work you've done, my lad! Now, what do you make of all this? Seems a bit peculiar, don't it?"

"Rather!" Bob assented. "There's been another scuffle here, and the horse with the broken shoe dashed off, followed by the others. He swung away here, and—and— Why, Bill, he drew



away from them! Look—look! They couldn't keep up!"

They were riding on again as Bob was speaking; and now, as he turned to look at his companion, the lad saw that the great scout's face was grave and puzzled.

Suddenly he straightened himself, shook up the reins, and galloped ahead, without uttering a word.

Bob knew Buffalo Bill's humours, and he followed in silence. And so, without exchanging further remarks, they covered the odd eight miles that separated them from the town of Smoky Hollow, and cantered down the street till they came to the hotel.

Buffalo Bill crossed the street to speak to a friend; and Bob, throwing his horse's rein over a post, walked into the hotel. The big bar was crowded. Half the town residents were there in their shirt-sleeves, their eyes round with excitement and wonder as they pushed and jostled to get closer to a small knot of men eagerly conversing.

One of these latter was coated with dust; his clothes were torn; his face was scratched as well as bleeding. He was pallid and exhausted, and the hand that held his whip trembled as he leant against the counter for support.

"Two men were eagerly questioning him. One was the sheriff for that locality—the lad knew him well by sight—the other was a stranger to Bob.

"What's happened?" the lad asked quickly. "Who's the chap who looks so bad? He seems awfully upset!"

"Haven't you heard?" a brawny townsman asked in reply. "Why, that's your Ted Biscoe yonder. He's been knocked about something shameful! He was riding from Fort Angus with money from the bank there, and some lurchers lay in wait for him, and robbed him, and laid about him. He could hardly get off his horse when he reached here, and the sheriff is sending Dick Hefferman yonder in pursuit. He's a good scout is Hefferman, and there's two hundred dollars reward for him if he tracks down the thieves.

"Hefferman! I never heard of him before," Bob replied. "Why, he's not a patch on Buffalo Bill, anyhow! Now, if they want a man who can—"

The scout had overheard Bob's remarks. He pushed his way forward and scowled at the lad. He was a sullen, sinister-looking man, and his face was all the more unpleasant for a deep scar that had injured one eye.

"Ay, I'm Hefferman! What have you got to say about me, you young cub?" he snarled. "If the sheriff thinks I'm good enough for the job, you'd better keep your jaw tight! It's Buffalo Bill, is it, you'd like to see on the trail? Well, he ain't here, and even if he was—"

At that moment there was a stir on the veranda outside the hotel, and Buffalo Bill strode into the bar. Hefferman started when he saw him. For a moment the two men gazed fixedly at one another. Then the great scout looked around, without even nodding at the other; and, observing the sheriff and Biscoe, he walked towards them. A curious light was in his eyes.

"Ha, sheriff, so you've got a big job on hand!" he laughed, tapping that functionary playfully on the shoulder.

"The youngster there was set upon when coming here from Fort Angus—eh? What are you going to do?"

"He's been robbed of ten thousand dollars in paper money, Bill," the sheriff explained excitedly. "Half a dozen ruffians lay in ambush for him. Clifford,

the bank manager at Fort Angus, entrusted the money to him; and the chap showed fight, anyhow. Just look at him! Hefferman happened to be here when he came in, so I gave him the job to track the curs down. But if I'd have known that you were coming this way—"

"Oh, don't bother about me, sheriff!" Buffalo Bill replied, as, stepping back a pace, he eyed both Biscoe and Hefferman quietly yet searchingly. "I've plenty of work in hand, and I must be on the move soon. How many got on to you, youngster, and which way have they gone?"

Biscoe was still trembling all over, and when he spoke his voice was husky.

"Half a dozen of 'em attacked me," he spluttered. "They knocked me off the horse and pinned me down to the ground. After they'd robbed me they put me on my mount again, and when they'd galloped a couple of miles, and they were wrangling about the money, I got a chance to be, and my mare showed 'em a clean pair of heels."

"So Hefferman is going to run them down!" Buffalo Bill laughed, with a slight ring of scorn in his voice.

"You're a smart man, sheriff! Ha, ha, ha!"

The other scout stepped forward quickly. His face was flashed and his eyes were blazing.

"Have you anything to say against it?" he thundered. "Do you think you're the only man who's able to do a day's work? It's jealous you are, I guess! I'll show that I'm as good a man as you."

Buffalo Bill shrugged his shoulders. "You and I will come to hand-grips soon enough," he cut in coldly.

"Then we'll see once and for all who's the better man. Take my tip and ride away, for if you talk too big I'll get on this job myself, and catch those rogues whilst you're fooling about! Well, sheriff, will you join us in a feed? Young Bob Ashmore and I have ridden far, and we're half starved!"

Hefferman scowled savagely at Buffalo Bill. The others in the bar kept silent. Truth to tell, they were surprised at the way Buffalo Bill had spoken. They attributed his tone to jealousy; and not one of them had ever known the great scout to show that feeling before. Hefferman stamped wrathfully out to the stable, and a few minutes later Buffalo Bill and Bob heard him galloping away. Meanwhile, Biscoe had limped painfully from the room, and the sheriff, having taken his depositions, joined the two friends at their repast. Buffalo Bill was devouring his meal rapidly, and a wink to Bob conveyed to the latter that something unusual and exciting was in store.

In ten minutes' time the meal was over, and the great scout bade the sheriff a hurried farewell.

"Hope you'll have luck," he said. "We must be getting on! We have to ride on to Daisy Creek to-night, otherwise I'd gladly help you to catch those thieves. You expect to see Hefferman in the morning, you say? Well, I s'pose he'll turn up all right."

He spoke in a loud voice, and, nodding cheerily to all in the room, he strode out, his spurs clinking as he walked. All gazed after the tall form admiringly; no man was so respected or so popular as Buffalo Bill. When he got into the shelter of the stable, he clutched Bob by the arm.

"You and I must part company," he whispered. "I'm going after Heffer-

nan and you will follow that young knave Biscoe!"

"Biscoe a knave! You going after Hefferman!" Bob replied, in amazement. "What do you mean, Bill? What's your game now?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" Buffalo Bill chuckled softly. "Didn't I often tell you, sonny, that you ought to follow a trail right to the end? When you came into the street you forgot all about it. Ha, ha, ha!"

The great scout touched his horse lightly with the spurs and the animal sprang forward. With a clattering of stonies Buffalo Bill dashed out of the yard and into the street, and Bob, sorely puzzled, stood irresolute for a few moments. Then he went back to the stable, and, climbing to the loft, he lay down on the straw.

"Biscoe will have to come here for his mount, if he does mean to clear out," he muttered, "so I'd better stay here and watch—"

He broke off and stooped forward. The catch on the stable door had been softly lifted, and the door opened slowly. A man entered and gazed around. It was Biscoe! He held himself erect; he was no longer trembling; he looked alert, eager, anxious. Bob

looked at him with eyes round and lips parted. The other stepped into a stall, led out his horse, and vaulted on to his back. Instead of riding out on to the street he made for a gate leading on to a big paddock; knocking down the bar, he led his horse through. Then, mounting again, he galloped noiselessly away.

"Bill was right! There is villainy afoot!" Bob muttered as he slid down from the loft after gazing at the disappearing horseman through a slit in the loft. "Biscoe is as fit as a fiddle! And he's racing away like mad!"

As the other disappeared down a bend in the rolling prairie Bob started in pursuit. And Buffalo Bill, looking back from the crest of a neighbouring hill, laughed heartily as he saw them both.

## Run to Earth!

**B**UFFALO BILL, having noticed the direction that Biscoe had taken, and having seen that Bob was following him, now jogged up his horse and cantered steadily along. Mile after mile he covered, till darkness set in. Then, off saddling, he let his mount loose and prepared to camp for the night. Soon he had a fire blazing merrily, and lying down he slept so soundly as if he had not a care on his mind. He was up an hour before daybreak, and vaulting into the saddle again, he continued his journey.

A couple of hours' riding now brought him to the crest of a hill. Below lay a straggling town, of fair dimensions. He could see figures moving about the streets; he could hear the crack of a stockpile now and then as a bull-team drew out on a long journey across the prairie. The town looked attractive, alluring. But he did not ride down to it. On the contrary, he dismounted, and, leading his horse into the shelter of a belt of trees, he tethered him, and then returned to the road. Selecting a boulder, from which he could get a good view of the town and observe all who came towards him without being seen himself, he sat down and remained patient and watchful. Time dragged on. Horsemen



cantered out of the town and galloped past. The great scout knew many of them, but he did not attract their attention. Presently he drew out his watch.

"Close on nine o'clock!" he muttered. "He'll come this way before long."

He examined his revolver, saw that it was loaded in every chamber, and thrust it back into his belt. Sitting forward, with hands clasped around his knees, he gazed keenly along the road. Presently he jumped to his feet.

"Here he comes! I thought he

down," he explained coolly. "They've told a tale that's dead against you. I'm not following you through spite—I don't think enough of you to do that; but I mean having the money you've stolen!"

"You dare to call me a thief!" Heffernan yelled back. "I'll get you for that!"

"Steady there!" Buffalo Bill cut in coolly. "There's no use trying to bluff. I called you a thief, and you are one. I rode yesterday along the road youn Biscoe took, and I came to the place where you and your confederates met

stable and examined his hoofs before I entered the hotel.

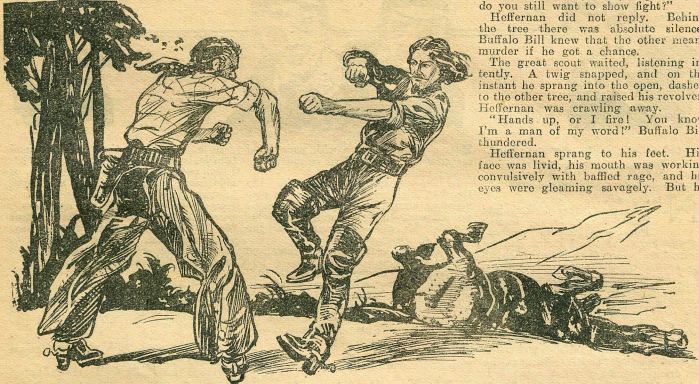
"I knew then that you were in the theft, and that it was all a put-up job. When you rode away I followed you here by the track of the same broken shoe, and I knew you must come back this way in order to join your confederates, so I waited. You wouldn't be long; I felt sure of that. You'd be lurking about until the bank opened, and as soon as you'd exchanged the notes for gold you'd clear out, sharp. The money is in the bag, there, strapped to your doad horse. Now; will you give in, or do you still want to show fight?"

Heffernan did not reply. Behind the tree there was absolute silence. Buffalo Bill knew that the other meant murder if he got a chance.

The great scout waited, listening intently. A twig snapped, and on the instant he sprang into the open, dashed to the other tree, and raised his revolver. Heffernan was crawling away.

"Hands up, or I fire! You know I'm a man of my word!" Buffalo Bill thundered.

Heffernan sprang to his feet. His face was livid, his mouth was working convulsively with baffled rage, and his eyes were gleaming savagely. But he



Cool and scientific, Buffalo Bill acted on the defensive whilst Heffernan rushed in, slogging wildly.

wouldn't be long!" he murmured. "Well, I guess I'm going to give him the biggest surprise in his life."

A man had jogged slowly down the street, had urged his horse into a canter as he reached the last fringe of houses, and now was galloping up the hill at a terrific pace. As he came near the crest, Buffalo Bill, with revolver in hand, sprang out and levelled his weapon at the horse's chest.

"Stand, or I fire!" he thundered. "Hands up, or you are a dead man! Ah, Heffernan, I told you that before long you and I would be in handgrips! Now, you cur, you've got to fight!"

The horse shied, the rider swung him round and tried to get away in a circle, the great scout fired, and the animal crashed to the ground. Heffernan, for in truth it was he, was thrown on his hands and knees a couple of yards farther on. With marvellous agility he sprang to his feet and jumped behind a tree, and Buffalo Bill, taking shelter ten paces away, the two men stood, each ready to fire at the first chance.

"You'd better cave in," Buffalo Bill remarked drily. "The game's up! I haven't followed you to be beaten at the finish. I've got you in a trap now. You can't bolt, and I mean nabbing you!"

"You've followed me! Is this the way you try to vent your spite?" Heffernan cried hoarsely. "How did you know I'd be here?"

Buffalo Bill chuckled softly.

"You ought to look to your horse's shoes if you don't want to be tracked

him. There was no robbery from him; Biscoe was in the swim with you scoundrels. Your horse has lost half an inch of one shoe. That was the horse that was in the centre of the crowd; you were the boss, and the others were around you. The cattle were fresh, and you were curvetting about. You laid your plans there and galloped off together. When you'd gone a couple of miles you agreed that you should ride on first to Smoky Hollow and drop into the hotel, promiscuous like."

"Go on!" Heffernan jeered. "You're jolly cute! You'll have your work cut out, though, to get others to believe this tale!"

"I'm going on," Buffalo Bill replied as he held his revolver with a finger on the trigger and watched for any movement on the part of the scoundrel lurking behind the tree. "I'm explaining everything, because I have an offer to make you at the finish. You were to be in the hotel when Biscoe was to gallop up, panic-stricken, and tell of the robbery. You were to offer to track down the thieves, and you got the job. But why did you come here, eh? You didn't expect to meet them, did you?"

Heffernan was silent. Buffalo Bill laughed outright.

"Oh, you mug!" he scoffed. "Before you think you're fit to do scout's work, you ought to learn how to hide your own tracks," he went on, shaking all over with laughter. "I followed the horse with the broken shoe; I saw he had stopped at the hotel; I went into the

raised his arms above his head. He preferred capture to death.

Still holding the revolver in his hand, Buffalo Bill advanced deliberately, picked up Heffernan's revolver, flung it sixty yards away, sent his own after it, and stood facing the thief.

"Now, my friend, we're equally matched," the chivalrous scout remarked quietly. "You're half a stone heavier than I am, but I throw that in. You said last night that you were as good a man as I am. Put up your dukes, and if you lick me you can clear off and get out of the country. But you won't trouble to take the money, I guess, after what I know. You'd be shot at sight if you did."

As he spoke Buffalo Bill flung his coat to the ground. For an instant the scoundrel stared at him, hardly believing his hearing; then he, too, whipped off his jacket and fell into position.

They looked a splendidly matched pair of heavy-weights as for a moment they faced one another without moving a muscle; then Heffernan shot out viciously at his gallant opponent.

The blow was guarded. Cool and scientific, whilst Heffernan stood on the defensive, whilst Heffernan rushed in, slogging desperately.

One blow got home, and the great scout staggered back. As Heffernan rushed in again, Buffalo Bill ducked and let out a tremendous uppercut as the other stepped back.

(Continued on page 22.)

What is the Biggest Crook in the Underworld Doing at Rookwood?

# A CROOK IN DISGUISE!



## Waiting for Kick-Off!

**N**OT ready?" Jimmy Silver looked into Study No. 4, in the Fourth Form passage. He was looking for Erroll of the Fourth, and he frowned as he saw that junior. Erroll was seated on the edge of the study table, his hands in his pockets, staring at the embers in the grate. He gave a start and glanced round as the captain of the Fourth appeared in the doorway.

"Why, you haven't even changed!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

Erroll was in Norfolk, just as he had come in from a bicycle ride. It was two-thirty; and on Little Side the footballers were ready; the kick-off was for two-thirty. No wonder Jimmy Silver frowned.

"I'm sorry, I—"  
"Sorrow will do after the match," said Jimmy testily. "Get into your things now and follow me down sharp."  
"Oh, all right!"

Jimmy Silver strode out of the study, still frowning. It was not like Kit Erroll to give trouble like this, and the captain of the Fourth did not like it.

"Ready now, Silver?" asked Tommy Dodd, as the captain of the Fourth came up.

"Oh, hang on a few minutes!" said Jimmy. "Erroll's not quite ready."

"Hang on as long as you like," said Tommy Dodd politely. "You Classical chaps have queer ideas about football matches, haven't you?"

"Why the thump isn't Erroll here?" demanded Arthur Edward Lovell, of the Classical Fourth. Arthur Edward was considerably annoyed by the smiles and yawns of the Modern juniors.

"Found him mooning in his study," said Jimmy Silver curtly.

"Then put in another man."

"I'll lend you a man," suggested Tommy Dodd. "I know you find it a bit difficult to make up a team among the Classicals, Jimmy Silver. Like a Modern in your lot, to give it a backbone?"

"You silly ass!" roared Lovell.

Tommy Dodd gave a deep yawn.

"Hallo, there's the Head and his giddy visitor," remarked Putty Grace.

"Order, my infants! Don't let the

Head's visitor see you with your usual manners on, you Modern bouncers!"

The juniors glanced round.

In the distance Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, could be seen, progressing along the drive at his usual stately pace. A young man was walking by his side—rather a handsome fellow, of about thirty.

"That must be Mr. Darie," remarked Jimmy Silver.

"Who the thump is Mr. Durie?" yawned Tommy Dodd, not much interested in the Head's visitor.

"Some pal of the Head's," said Jimmy. "I heard he was coming to-day; the Head's been down to Coombe to meet him, I suppose. Looks a bit of a knut."

## Kit Erroll Recognises A Gangster Acquaintance of the Past!

The Head and his companion disappeared from sight. They went into the Head's house, and the juniors' interest in them, which was faint enough, faded away.

Jimmy Silver looked impatiently for Erroll. That rather expiring youth appeared in sight at last, coming along with Mornington. Morny was hurrying him along to the football ground.

"Hallo, here comes your man!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, as if in great surprise. "We shall be able to begin before dark, after all!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chortled the Moderns.

"I'm ready, Silver!" called out Erroll, rather breathlessly, as Mornington fairly rushed him on to the ground.

"Time you were!" snorted Lovell.

"I'm sorry, I—"  
"Line up!" snapped Jimmy Silver.

And the Rookwood footballers got going at last.

## On the Football Ground!

**J**IMMY SILVER'S face cleared as the ball rolled and the game began.

It was a fine afternoon, cold and clear—just the weather for foot-

In a very short time Moderns and Classicals were going strong, and Kit Erroll, who was playing on the Classical right wing, played up in his best style. It was Erroll, who, getting the ball from Jimmy Silver, at centre-half, passed it to Mornington just in time for Morny to take a pot-shot at goal, which came off. It was first blood to the Classicals, and the Classical crowd round the field roared applause.

"Goal!"

"Hurrah!"

"Jever see such a fluke!" the Modern crowd asked one another, and all agreed that they never had! But from the Classical point of view it was a masterly goal, and they cheered it loud and long.

"Good man, Erroll!" said Jimmy Silver, as they walked to the centre of the field. "You were worth waiting for, after all!"

Erroll smiled.

"It was Morny's goal," he said.

"Yours, too," said Jimmy. "Keep that up, old scout. I think we're going to knock the stuffing out of the Moderns this time."

Tommy Dodd & Co. played up hard from the restart. But it was close on half-time when Tommy succeeded in putting in the ball at last, beating Conroy in goal. When the whistle went the score was equal.

Erroll had played up well, but Morny, who had rather curious eyes on his chum, noted more than once an absent look that came over Kit Erroll's face. He was playing well, but his thoughts were elsewhere, at least part of the time. When the play ceased, a thoughtful frown settled on Erroll's face and his lips set in a hard line.

"Penny for 'em, old bean!" said Mornington suddenly.

Erroll started.

"Eh, what?" he exclaimed.

"What the merry dickens is the matter with you to-day, Erroll?" asked the dandy of the Fourth. "You seem to be star-gazing half the time. What have you got on your mind?"

"I—I—" Erroll stammered.

"You forgot the match," said Morny.

"Now you're thinkin' about somethin' else. Did anything happen at Coombe?"

"At Coombe?"

"Yes. You've been wool-gatherin' ever since you came back from Coombe."



Erroll flushed a little.

"I—yes," he muttered. "Something did happen at Coombe, Mornny."

"I thought so," said Valentine Mornnington. "Blessed if I can guess what it was to knock you over like this. What on earth—"

"I—I saw a man—a man I knew—at least, I believe so," said Erroll in a low voice. "You—understand, Mornny? A man I knew, at least, a man I saw—long, long ago, at the time when I was—"

His cheeks crimsoned and he broke off.

Mornny's face became very grave. "At the time when you were with Gentleman Jim, the cracksman, before you came to Rookwood?"

"Yes," "Confound the man, then!" said Mornnington. "Like his cheek to come buttin' along and remindin' you of all that. I suppose it gave you a bit of a shock—what?"

"Yes," "Will you'll never see him again," said Mornnington. "Put it out of your head, old bean."

"It was queer," said Erroll. "Of course, it's years since I've seen the man, but—but I am sure it was the same man. And—and he was speaking to Dr. Chisholm."

Mornny jumped. "Speaking to the Head?" "Yes; standing with him in the High Street, at Coombe, and talking, as if they were friends."

Mornnington whistled. "That's jolly odd," he said. "You had a queer time when you were a kid, Erroll, and you met some queer characters. But I shouldn't have supposed that our merry old Head had any acquaintances—of that kind."

"It startled me," said Erroll. "Unless I'm mistaken—and I don't think I am—the man is an old associate of Gentleman Jim, and ought to have gone to prison with him. He was—a forger!"

"Poor old chap!" muttered Mornny. "It was rotten for you to be thrown among such a crowd. It wasn't your fault, though. What was this cheery Johnny called?"

"Slippery Smith."

"Ye gods! What a name!" "Of course, I might be mistaken," muttered Erroll. "But I'm sure—I'm sure! It was Slippery Smith, the forger sure! A man the police have been after for years. I don't know if there's anything against him now; he has been to prison, and may have come out lately. But—but what is such a man doing down here, in this quiet corner of the country, Mornny, and on friendly terms with our headmaster?"

"It beats me! Perhaps you had better give the Head a tip to be a bit more particular in his choice of friends!" grinned Mornnington. "I don't know whether it's the duty of the Fourth to look after their headmaster. But in the circles—" And Mornny chuckled.

But Erroll did not smile. His face was grave and troubled, and there was a haunted look on it—a look that always came to Erroll's grave, handsome face when he was reminded of the black old days he had spent with Gentleman Jim's gang.

"You fellows deaf?" bawled Arthur Edward Lovell. "Are you going to stand there chow-wowing all the afternoon, or are you going to line up?"

"Oh, gad! Time!" said Mornnington. And the chums took their places in the front line. The second half began, and

Erroll had perforce to dismiss his troublesome thoughts from his mind.

But he found it difficult. The sight of the man he called "Slippery Smith" had brought back the past to his mind—the past he had striven to forget, and which he had almost succeeded in forgetting. And that was not all; it was the fact that Slippery Smith had somehow ingratiated himself with the headmaster of Rookwood that troubled Erroll most. What was the man's object, and what was Erroll to do? It was a troublesome problem that weighed on the mind of the junior. It was possible, after all, that what he had seen was a chance meeting—that Slippery Smith had already gone as he had come. It was not likely that he would be seen at Rookwood!

"Play up, Erroll!" Erroll pulled himself together. He had missed a chance, and he strove harder to dismiss the problem from his mind, and give his attention to the game. And he succeeded.

The game swayed up and down the field, Moderns and Classics contending hard for the victory, it was towards the finish that Jimmy Silver & Co., making a determined attack on the Modern goal, carried all before them, and there was a buzz of excitement in the onlooking crowd.

"Go it, Classics! On the ball!" roared the Classics.

"Back up, Moderns!" yelled the rival juniors.

In the midst of the excitement two gentlemen walked on the field and stopped to look at the game. Dr. Chisholm was showing his visitor, Mr. Durie, round the school, and that exciting crisis in the junior football match drew their attention.

"Good game, sir!" said Mr. Durie, looking on. "The youngsters are going it!"

"They are very keen, I believe," said the Head with a smile.

"Kick!" roared Lovell. "Kick!"

Erroll had the ball. He had just time for a rapid kick at goal, and the Modern goalie, who had slipped in fisting out the ball, was sprawling, and the citadel was for an instant undefended.

Every eye was on Erroll—he was just the fellow to be depended on to make a lightning-like use of a sudden chance.

Some of the Classical crowd were already murmuring "goal!"—and at that critical moment Erroll's glance took in the two watching figures over the heads of the junior crowd—the headmaster and Mr. Durie.

He miskicked! In a second more a Modern back had sent the ball spinning up the field, and the game rushed away to midfield.

"You ass!" roared Lovell.

Erroll did not heed. He did not follow the rush of the game. He was standing as if rooted to the ground, his eyes fixed on the Head's companion in an almost wild stare. Jimmy Silver had caught him by the shoulder and spun him round.

"Erroll, you ass, are you dreaming? Play up!"

Erroll stumbled into the game again. But from that moment the winger was a "passenger" in the team, and his fumbling drew shouts of derision from the onlookers. And when the match ended with a draw, goal to goal, half the Classical team told Kit Erroll, with bitter sarcasm, that he made the Moderns a present of the game.

Erroll did not seem to hear. He threw on his coat, and almost stumbled off the football-field.

Erroll's Resolve!

"PRECIOUS ass, ain't you?" Tubby Muffin looked into Study No. 4 to make that remark.

Erroll was moving about his study restlessly. He seemed unable to keep still. The sight of Mr. Durie, whom he believed to be Slippery Smith, had greatly disturbed and alarmed him. What was the man doing at Rookwood? By what cunning trickery had he wormed himself into the confidence of Dr. Chisholm? What was to be the outcome of it? And what was he—Erroll—to do?

He did not heed the fat Classical who looked in at the doorway. Tubby Muffin's podgy face wore a scornful grin. The Classical fellows generally were irritated with Erroll for his inexplicable fumbling in the game, which had robbed them of a victory over their old rivals. Even Tubby Muffin felt called upon to add his fat voice to the chorus.

"Call yourself a footballer?" continued Tubby Muffin.

Erroll made a gesture.

"Clear off!"

"Call yourself a winger?" said Tubby.

"Fancy Jimmy Silver putting you in and leaving me out! Call him a football shagger, Yab!"

Erroll turned his back on the fat Classical. He had not heeded the remarks of the Fistical Four and the other footballers, and he was not likely to be perturbed by Reginald Muffin's observations. But he turned back again to the fat junior.

"Step in a minute, Muffin!" he said.

"Going to have tea?" asked Tubby, his expression changing. "I don't mind if I do, Erroll. After all, you can't help being a fumbler at footer, can you? 'Tain't as if you was a player like me."

Erroll smiled faintly.

"You've seen the Head's visitor, Muffin?" he asked.

"The man you were staring at when you ought to have been kicking for goal?" grinned Tubby.

"Yes, yes."

"I've seen him," said Muffin. "I say, do you know him, Erroll? A lot of fellows were saying you were staring at him as if he were a giddy ghost."

"Can you tell me anything about him, Muffin?" asked Erroll, without heeding the question. "You generally know."

"Generally!" assented Muffin, with an air of proud satisfaction. "Precious little goes on at Rookwood without my getting on to it, I can tell you. I keep my eyes open."

Tubby Muffin did not mention his ears, which he was also in the habit of keeping open.

"Well, have you heard anything about this man, Durie?" asked Erroll.

Tubby nodded.

"Yes, of course I have! I knew he was coming before any of the fellows," said the Peening Tom of Rookwood.

"I knew the Head had ordered a room to be got ready for him—the son of an old college friend of his. He mentioned that to the housekeeper. I heard him."

"The son of an old college friend?" repeated Erroll.

"Yes. He's name's Lucian Durie. His father was with the Head at Oxford," said Muffin. "I know that much. Young Durie has been abroad for years. I heard the Head mention that to Mr. Dalton. He's staying here for some days, and I believe the Head

is going to help him get a post somewhere. From what I heard Mr. Dalton say—"

Erroll made a movement of disgust. He was keen and anxious to learn what he could of Lucian Durie, alias Slippery Smith. But Tubby's methods of acquiring information were rather too much for him.

"That will do, Muffin!" he said curtly. "You can cut!"

"Eh? Aren't you going to have tea?" "No, no! Get out, for goodness' sake!"

"Well, my hat!" exclaimed Tubby Muffin, in great disgust and wrath. "I say, you are a rotter, Erroll, as well as a fumbling chump at footer! Here, leggo my ear. Morny, you beast!" roared Tubby suddenly.

Valentine Mornington had arrived at the study door. His finger and thumb closed on Tubby's fat ear.

"What were you sayin', dear man?" asked Morny politely.

"Yaroooh!"

"No, that wasn't it. Somethin' about Erroll's footer," smiled Mornington.

"I—I was just saying what a splendid footballer he was, Yaroooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Mornington released Tubby's ear, and the fat Classical rolled away, rubbing it ruefully. Morny came into the study, and closed the door, and fixed a curious glance on his chum.

"Well?" he said.

"I'm certain, Morny!" said Erroll. "That the Head's giddy pal is a member of Gentleman Jim's old gang of cheery criminals?" grinned Morny.

"Yes.

Mornington shook his head.

"Can't be so!" he said. "You've got it wrong, somehow, Erroll. Put it out of your noodle."

"I can't do that, Morny. The man

is Slippery Smith, the forger, and he must be here for mischief. I—I can't keep silent and let him go ahead. I—I must do something."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"I can't believe that you're not mistaken," he answered. "Anyhow, the Head believes in him, and if you start calling his pal a forger and a criminal I fancy he will drop down on you like a ton of bricks."

"I've got to risk that," said Erroll, setting his lips.

"You're going to speak to the Head?"

"Yes."

Kit Erroll had made up his mind. Mornington did not seek to dissuade him, though his doubts were very plain in his looks.

Erroll left the study. Mornington sat down to his prep, but he did not give much thought to his work. He was thinking of Erroll visiting the Head's study with such a purpose, and wondering what could possibly come of it.

Erroll wondered, too, as he made his way to Dr. Chisholm's study, but he did not hesitate.

He reached the Head's study, and hesitated at the door. For some minutes he stood in the corridor, his purpose unchanged, but pausing before he entered, trying to arrange his thoughts, and to decide exactly what he should say to the Head. He could picture, in his mind, the angry amazement in Dr. Chisholm's face, the lift of his stern eyebrows. He shrank from the ordeal before him. But it had to be gone through, and the junior nerved himself at last to face it. He tapped at the study door, and opened it.

There was a sound of a quick movement in the study.

Dr. Chisholm was not there. But a man who was bending over the Head's

desk made a sudden movement, whirling round towards the opening door.

Erroll, his doubts and hesitation vanishing on the instant, sprang into the study.

"Slippery Smith!" he panted.

"What?"

"Slippery Smith, forger and thief, what are you doing here?"

### Face to Face!

LUCIAN DURIE stood motionless, his gaze fixed on the excited face of the Rookwood junior. His own face had become pale—deadly pale—every vestige of colour had for the moment deserted it. There was a hunted look in the man's startled eyes. Erroll's sudden denunciation had struck him like a thunderbolt.

If Erroll had doubted, his doubts would have been dissolved now. There was guilt, there was terror in the startled face of the man before him.

He stood panting, his eyes blazing at the suspected man. It was a full minute before Lucian Durie pulled himself together.

"What—what does this mean?" His voice was unsteady. "Are you mad, boy? Who are you? What do you mean? What name did you call me by?"

"I called you Slippery Smith!" said Kit Erroll. "You scoundrel, what dirty game are you playing at Rookwood?"

"You are mad, I suppose!" Durie had recovered his self-command now. "Do you belong to this school? I suppose you do."

"I am Erroll of the Fourth Form."

"Well, Erroll of the Fourth Form, I shall report this outrageous conduct to your headmaster," said Mr. Durie calmly. "I am waiting here for him now, and as soon as he comes—"

"As soon as he comes, I intend to denounce you to him, Slippery Smith!" said the junior steadily.

Lucian Durie smiled.

"You seem in earnest," he said. "This is not a schoolboy practical joke, I take it!"

"You know it is not."

"But you astonish me, my boy! Who is this gentleman you allude to by so curious a name?"

"A forger—a thief—a member of the gang that Gentleman Jim was the head of before he was sent to prison!"

The man started.

"Gentleman Jim!" he repeated.

"You know the name!" said Erroll scornfully.

Durie looked at him steadily and grimly.

"Let's have this out!" he said. He crossed to the door, and closed it, Erroll eyeing him.

"If you are a Fourth Form boy at Rookwood, my young friend, what do you know of criminals—of such men as Gentleman Jim and Slippery Smith?"

"You do not remember me?" said Erroll.

"I have never seen you before."

"I have seen you often enough."

"Where? When?" snapped Durie.

"At the meetings of Gentleman Jim's gang, when I was in the power of that scoundrel, who had kidnapped me from my father."

Again the man started.

"The boy—Gentleman Jim's boy—you have changed a good deal," he said, his eyes on Erroll's handsome, flushed face.

"Yes, you are older and a good deal

(Continued on opposite page.)



## THRILLS!

### Book-length Yarns of SEXTON BLAKE for 4d. ONLY!

#### No. 269—THE RADIO CROOK

An absorbing detective narrative of SEXTON BLAKE in a case of astounding complexity. By Rex Harding.

#### No. 270—THE MYSTERY

##### GANGSTER

A sensational drama of gangland, featuring SEXTON BLAKE in an amazing problem. By Gilbert Chester.

#### No. 271—THE DEATH SIGN

A powerful story of startling thrills in which SEXTON BLAKE matches his wits against a ruthless international crook. By Guy Evans.

#### No. 272—THE CRIME ON GALLOWES HILL

A fascinating novel of baffling mystery in London and the country. By G. H. Teed.



## SEXTON BLAKE Library

Now on Sale - - - - 4d. each.



changed, but I remember you now. You are the son of Gentleman Jim, the crackman."

"I am not his son! I was stolen by him when I was a child," said Erroll. "My father found me afterwards. I used to see a great deal of his rascally associates, and you were one of them, Slippery Smith. You have admitted it now."

Lucian Durie laughed. "What is your game here?" he asked. "My game?" repeated Erroll.

"You are not here simply to study the classics, I suppose?" said Lucian Durie, with a grin. "Be sensible, my boy. I need not interfere with you, and you need not interfere with me. Probably there will be enough for both, and we may be able to help one another."

Erroll shivered with disgust.

"You are making a mistake," he said. "I am at Rookwood as a junior school-boy. I never had a hand in Gentleman Jim's rascalities, though you seem to think so. And I am going to denounce you to the Head if you remain here. There is time for you to go. Leave Rookwood at once on any excuse you like—"

"Scarcely!" "If you do not leave of your own accord, you will be kicked out when the Head knows what I can tell him!" "And you are going to tell him?"

"At once!" Lucian Durie remained silent with a wrinkle of thought in his brow. His eyes never left Erroll's face, and there was a mocking light in them. Erroll watched him steadily.

There was a sound of footsteps in the passage. Erroll knew the stately tread of Dr. Chisholm.

The Head was coming. "Silence!" said Durie, with a significant look. "It will be better for you, Gentleman Jim junior. Not a word, or—"

He had no time for more. The study door opened, and Dr. Chisholm came in. He gave Durie a nod and a smile, and then glanced at Erroll with inquiry.

"What do you want here, Erroll?"

Erroll tried to choose his words, to make his startling accusation. The Head was so obviously unprepared for anything of the kind that the words almost died on the junior's tongue. Lucian Durie broke into a light laugh.

"Is this boy quite in his right senses, sir?" he asked.

"Eh—what? Certainly, Durie!" said the astonished Head. "One of Mr. Dalton's best pupils in the Classical Fourth Form!"

"He has acted in a most unaccountable manner," said Durie quietly and calmly. "He has just burst into this room and insulted me in a most outrageous way!"

"Bless my soul!" "The Head's brow became like thunder.

"Erroll! How dare you! What—" "I must speak, sir," said Erroll, panting. "That man—"

"What! How dare you allude to Mr. Durie in such a way?" exclaimed the Head angrily.

"His name is not Durie, sir!"

"What?"

"His name is Smith!"

"The boy is mad!" exclaimed the Head, staring at Erroll more in astonishment than anger.

"It is true, sir! He is a criminal, and—"

"Erroll!"

"You know, sir, where I was before I came to Rookwood," said Erroll desperately. "You know I was stolen by a criminal, and that I saw much of his wicked life and his wicked asso-

old friend of mine, and that I have known Lucian Durie in his boyhood."

Erroll almost staggered.

"You see how absurdly you are mistaken!" said the Head, more kindly: "I am willing to believe that you spoke from a mistaken sense of duty. But you will be careful not to repeat a word of the kind in the school. If I hear that you have uttered such a suspicion with regard to my friend Mr. Durie, I shall expel you from Rookwood!"



Although Erroll had an easy shot for goal he stopped short and stared at the Head's visitor. He knew that face. The man was one of the biggest rogues of the underworld!

ciates. That man was one of them. He was called Slippery Smith. He is a forger and a thief, and he has been in prison!"

Astonishment deprived the Head of the power of speech for the moment. He could only blink at Erroll.

Lucian Durie broke in calmly:

"That is what the boy said to me just before you entered, Dr. Chisholm. Unless he is out of his senses—"

"He must be out of his senses, I think," said the Head, recovering his voice. "Erroll, how dare you—how dare you—"

"It was my duty to tell you, sir," said Erroll earnestly. "You trust that man, and I know him to be a criminal. I should be to blame if I remained silent and allowed him to deceive you."

Dr. Chisholm gave a gasp.

"Try to excuse this boy, Durie," he said. "He had some very odd and unfortunate experiences before he came to this school. No doubt he supposes he sees some resemblance between you and some character he saw at that time. You must try to pardon him!"

"Certainly," said Mr. Durie, with a slight shrug of the shoulders. "I am very much surprised to find a former associate of criminals among the boys of this school. Doubtless he is acting under an error; he may mean well. But if he spreads this absurd story over the school; it will be impossible, of course, for me to remain here as your guest."

"I shall see that he does nothing of the kind," said the Head. "I beg your pardon a thousand times, my dear fellow. Erroll, you have made a foolish—indeed, a wicked—mistake. You have wronged and insulted this gentleman! To convince you of your foolish error, I will tell you that his father was an

"But, sir—I repeat—"

Erroll almost wildly. "Do you dare to repeat your wicked statement, after what I have told you?" exclaimed the Head angrily. "This young man, whom I have known since he was a boy—"

"He admitted it, sir!" almost shrieked Erroll. "He admitted it only a minute before you came into the room, sir!"

"Boy!" "That is false," said Mr. Durie calmly. "But I need scarcely say that to you, Dr. Chisholm."

"Scarcely, Lucian," said the Head. "No more, Erroll. No more!" He took a cane from his desk. "I have dealt with you too leniently. You resort to palpable falsehood to support your wild and foolish accusation. Hold out your hand!"

There was nothing for it but to obey. Erroll held out his hand, and the cane came down with a lashing swish.

"There!" said the Head. "That is a warning, Erroll! Now leave my study."

Erroll almost staggered to the door. He open it with a shaking hand, and passed out into the corridor.

He went into Study No. 4, and the door closed on him. Mornington jumped up as his chum came in.

"Erroll! What's happened?" "Erroll burst into a bitter laugh.

"He's the man! And I've been caned for insulting the Head's guest. And I'm to be expelled if I say another word! And—and he's Slippery Smith; and he's here to play his old game. And—and I can do nothing!"

THE END.

(Drama and thrill in next Tuesday's gripping yarn of the Rookwood Chums.)

THE POPULAR—No. 625.

## KING OF THE SCOUTS!

(Continued from page 17.)

It caught the scoundrel fairly on the chin, and with a yell he crashed into the furze.

He was on his legs again in a couple of seconds, however, and again he rushed forward. And now both men were drawing their breath hard. They knew the fight must be fought to a finish in one long round. It was a rough-and-tumble, nothing less.

Heffernan fought with the desperate frenzy of a man who knew that his liberty depended upon the result.

He tried again and again to bring the contest to a finish with a knock-out blow, but Buffalo Bill always eluded those terrific slogs.

Minutes passed, and still they fought. Heffernan was near spent; the great scout, too, despite the splendid training in which he always kept himself, was growing weak, but still he kept on the defensive.

Last Heffernan's blows came feebler. He swooned as he approached. Buffalo Bill summoned all his remaining strength to his aid, hit with every ounce of weight and muscle, and the villain sank in a heap.

He lay as he had fallen, and Buffalo Bill, unfastening the reins from the bit of the dead horse, bound his beaten opponent where he lay. Five minutes later he was galloping off furiously.

And Bob, he had ridden into a trap! Following Biscoe, and resolved at all costs not to let him slip away, the lad had dashed up hill and down dale, till, rounding a corner, he had come face to face with half a dozen bravaodes, who, with rifles raised, were coolly awaiting his approach.

That Biscoe had expected them at that exact spot had been evident at a glance, for as Bob had swung round by a big rock the villain had already jumped from his horse, and was sitting on a boulder grinning in anticipation of the lad's discomfiture.

## DROPPED FROM THE TEAM!

(Continued from page 11.)

There was a rush of the Remove fellows at once. Bolsover major threw open the study door.

"Go it, Hazel!" sang out Skinner. Skinner had no doubts that Hazel was in the wrong; and any fellow in the wrong was sure of Skinner's support and encouragement.

"Man down!" grinned Russell. Hazel went down heavily to the floor. He lay there dazedly, gasping for breath. Tom Brown dropped his hands at once.

"Chuck it, old bean," he said. "You're not my weight, you know."  
"You—you rotter!" panted Hazel. "I'll lick you, you rotten cad."

Harry Wharton came through the crowd of fellows gathering round the open doorway. Hazeldene staggered to his feet. He rushed at Tom Brown.

"Stop that, Hazel!" exclaimed the captain of the Remove.

"Mind your own business."  
THE POPULAR—No. 625.

To show fight was useless. Perforce Bob had to surrender, and, surrounded by his captors, he was led off to an ambulance, which evidently formed the rendezvous of the gang.

There, bound hand and foot, he had lain a prisoner all the night.

The day broke, and the scoundrels cooked their breakfast, laughing merrily and cracking jokes at their prisoner's expense.

They were all in good spirits, and they spoke openly in the presence of Bob. To his amazement he now learnt what Buffalo Bill with his experience as a scout had divined already.

Bob realised that Heffernan was in the theft; that the gang had long angled for this chance of robbing the bank; that Biscoe had been bribed by them, and had given them notice when the money was to be sent from Fort Angus; and he heard, too, that Heffernan was expected shortly, when the plunder would be divided amongst them, and they would all separate, and leave several hundred miles between themselves and the scene of the robbery.

As Bob listened he was filled with admiration for the skill Buffalo Bill had shown, but he was still puzzled in some respects.

"Why did the great scout send him after Biscoe, when he knew that Heffernan held the money? He found himself asking that question over and over again.

Breakfast over, the gang made all preparations for a long journey. Bob watched them, idly wondering what they meant to do with him.

Presently the man who seemed their leader approached where he lay, and explained.

"We're waiting for our partner, and when he comes we're going to clear out," he began. "You must take your chance. We can't afford to trust you, and we want three clear days, anyhow, before we're pursued. So we'll leave you as you are, and if anyone chances to find you, you'll be all right, and if not—"

He shrugged his shoulders. Bob knew what he meant, but he said nothing. The morning dragged on, and the gang began to show signs of impatience.

Tom Brown grasped his assailant, and held him. He was twice as strong as Hazeldene, and had no difficulty whatever in handling him. Hazel struggled in his grasp.

"Let me loose!" he almost screamed. "Make it pax!" said Tom Brown, with a grin.

"I won't! I'll lick you—I—I—I—"  
Hazel stuttered with rage and chagrin.

"You look like licking me, I don't think," said Brown. "Look here, are you going to stop playing the goat?"

"You rotter! I—I—"  
"Then you go out till you're in a better temper," said Tom Brown coolly, and he spun Hazel to the doorway, and sat him down forcibly in the passage, amidst the laughing Removeites.

Then he closed the door on him. "You silly owl, what did you tackle Browney for?" asked Bolsover major. "He could eat you if he liked."

Hazel sat and panted, his cup of humiliation full. He realised only too clearly that he had made an exhibition of himself; and that it was useless to enter the study again to try further conclusions with the hefty youth from New Zealand.

Wharton bent to give him a helping hand up. Hazel struck his hand

Bob wondered what had happened. Had Buffalo Bill succeeded in capturing the scoundrel, or had he failed?

Clatter, clatter, clatter!  
A horse was galloping towards the ambulance at breakneck pace. The villains jumped to their feet in delight.

All gazed eagerly, expectantly. Presently a man swung into view. He galloped on coolly, steadily, and it was Buffalo Bill.

For a moment the scoundrels could not believe their eyes; they were dumb-founded. Then, with hoarse yells, they ran for their rifles.

"Halt, or we fire!"  
They stopped at the command in ringing accents came from the cliffs around. Gazing up terror-stricken, they saw the sheriff grinding down at them, a rifle in his hand.

All round the circular cliff other frontiersmen stood ready to fire at the word of command, and Buffalo Bill centered in to the arena, and rode amongst the gang.

Jumping to the ground, he strode forward to where Bob lay, a quiet smile on his strong face.

"Sorry you've had a bad time, old chap, but you can have a square meal now from the grub these ruffians have stored here," the great scout remarked, as he cut Bob's thongs and pulled him to his feet.

"Oh, yes, I nabbed Heffernan, and I've got the money. Help me now to strap up these pesky covetes. Why, we'll have quite an exciting time when next the judge comes this way!"

"But why did you send me after Biscoe?" Bob asked, as he staggered to his feet.

"Oh, so as I would have a certain track to follow!" Buffalo Bill laughed. "After I nabbed Heffernan I rode back to Smoky Hollow and got out the sheriff and the other chaps. When I had posted them round here I centered in myself. I'd no trouble following Biscoe when I had the trail of your horse as well as his."

"You're a wonderful scout, Bill!" Bob gasped.

THE END.

(You'll all enjoy next week's smashing story of the Prairie King and his young partner Bob.)

savagely aside, and staggered to his feet without assistance.

Wharton's eyes gleamed. Every fellow there expected to see him knock Hazel spinning along the passage; and for a moment he looked like it. But he controlled his temper, and walked away without a word or a look at Hazel.

"My hat! His Magnificence is gettin' jolly tame!" said Skinner.

Hazel had felt a momentary tremor; but Wharton's quiet departure reassured him. He cast a vaulting look after the captain of the Remove. The insult to Wharton seemed somehow, to his weak and sulky mind, to avenge his humiliation at the hands of his study-mate. But Bolsover major chimed in with his gruff voice.

"You're a silly ass, Skinner! Wharton doesn't think that he's worth hitting, and you jolly well know it. Don't talk rot!"

Hazel gave Bolsover major a furious look, and tramped away towards the stairs, followed by a laugh from the juniors.

THE END.

(What is going to be the result of all these ructions in the Remove? See next week's fine long Greysfriars tale!)



The Island of a Thousand Perils!

# GOLDEN ISLE!



## An Awkward Situation!

"SAY, Dick, the fire's over the edge! The scrub's alight on top of the cliff!"

Dudley, the lean American partner to Dick Daunt, pointed as he spoke to little tongues of flame that flashed up amongst the dry scrub on the side of the hill.

The two boys were scrambling out of the reach of the forest fire they themselves had made in an effort to cut off the pursuit of their enemies. Cray and his gang of beachcombers were after Dick and his pal, and this desperate remedy had been a kind of last resort of the two chums.

This looked likely to become the greatest adventure they had had since they had set foot on Golden Island only a few days ago. Much had happened to them in that short space of time.

They had failed to find the man, Matthew Snell, they had come to the island to rescue. He had vanished. But what they had found was trouble from the hands of a notorious beachcomber, Ezra Cray, and his gang. Cray had tried to get the two chums off the island because long gold veins had been found in the rocks—a regular El Dorado. But Dick and Dudley were also keen on sharing that gold find, and they had endeavoured to avoid the pressing attentions of their enemies. In this they had only partially succeeded. They were fugitives now, with Cray hot on their heels. Firing the scrub had been the only way to hold up the pursuit for the moment.

"Guess we'd better shift if we don't want to be roasted," said Dudley. "It's coming our way!"

They shifted without delay. It was time, too. Rabbits, snakes—all sorts

of small creatures were coming towards them, driven by the fire.

The worst of it was that the boys dared not rise upright. They were afraid of being seen. They ducked and dodged, making the best speed they could under the circumstances.

All of a sudden the scrub ended, and they found themselves on the bare hillside, with no cover of any sort, except a few rocks.

"This is a nice joke!" growled Dick, as he paused and looked out across the bare space.

## Fight to the Death Against Overwhelming Odds!

The nearest trees were at least a couple of hundred of yards away. "Your little scheme has cut both ways, Dudley."

Dudley crawled out into the open and took a quick glance around.

"Can't see anything of Cray's crowd," he said in a tone of relief.

"Then we'd better do a bunk across the open," Dick replied.

Dudley shook his head.

"I guess we can do better than that. What's the matter with turning right round and making back down the creek again?"

"The way we came? You're crazy, man! I'll take us right past the camp again!"

"Maybe it will," said Dudley. "But where's the harin? Most all Cray's folk are over in the other direction. There must be two looking after the schooner, and two more busy with the

niggers. I guess there won't be many left to form another search-party."

"By Jove, I believe you are right! The only thing I don't quite see is where you want to make for."

"Right over to the south side—our old quarters. We shall be a durned sight safer there than anywhere else."

Dick nodded.

"That's not a bad notion. We can spend the night in the spring cave."

"And be sure of a drink of water for supper, anyhow," smiled back Dudley.

Dick had no doubt in his mind that Dudley was right. There was far more cover near Rocky Beach. Besides, they knew the ground better. And then there was always fresh water in the Spring Cave. Grub, of course, was an awkward question. They could only hope to get hold of another gopher, or perhaps some crab or oysters.

The smoke was blowing thickly above them and under its cover they ran rapidly in a south-westerly direction, until they reached the woods below the gorge. Here they were able to slack a bit, and take things more easily.

"We shall have to look out as we get near the mouth of the creek," said Dick presently. "As likely as not we shall meet Cray and his little lot on their way back."

"I guess not," Dudley answered. "We've come too quick for that. They'll be plunging around in the scrub at the east end of the island for the next hour or more."

He was right. Reaching the end of the palmetto scrub above Rocky Bay, they reconnoitred carefully before venturing into the open, but saw nothing of Cray or his men. They climbed the big heap of the landslide on the west side of the bay, and by the time they reached the Spring Cave were only too thankful for a long drink of the ice-cold water from the little rock cup.

Dudley went to the mouth of the  
THE POPULAR—No. 625.

cave, and dropped down upon a rock. Dick perched himself on another.

"This is all very well," said the latter. "But what does it lead to?" "Sleep, anyhow," replied Dudley, with a smile. "We're safe enough here, and, in spite of my nap, I can do with a night's rest."

"Must say I should like something to eat first," grumbled Dick. "Sleep's all very well, but it don't fill one's tummy."

"That's true, Dick," Dudley answered more gravely. "I'll allow the grub problem is a mighty awkward one. I was kind of wondering if we went and hunted among the rocks in our old cave, whether we might dig out a tin or two of meat."

Dick sat up straight. "That's quite on the cards," he said. "Anyhow, it's good enough to try. What do you think? Shall we try it now?"

"Better wait a while, I guess," Dudley answered thoughtfully. "There's still nearly two hours daylight. Let's stop here an hour, then if we don't see anything of Cray's push, we'll go on and have a dig."

Dick agreed that this was a good notion. In an hour Cray would either sweep round to the beach, or he and his followers would probably have returned home for supper, and left the rounding-up of the fugitives for another day.

They lay back comfortably, and took it easy while the shadows lengthened; then when the sun was not more than half an hour high, crept out and reconnoitred carefully. There was not a sign of anything moving, so they started for the old cave.

The tide was coming in, and when they got down to the beach beyond the slide, there was only just room to walk between the water and the cliff.

The cave which they had abandoned in such a hurry was a pitiable sight. Cray's infernal machine had wrecked it most thoroughly. The whole roof was down, and the interior one mass of piled-up boulders. They stood and surveyed it with aching hearts.

After a while Dick suggested that they should start digging about.

It was precious hard work, shifting the masses of broken rock, and their hands grew sore, and their backs ached after half an hour of it.

Dudley straightened himself slowly and painfully.

"I don't reckon we'll ever get to the bottom of this," he observed mournfully. "It's no sort of use."

And just then Dick gave a cry of delight.

"No use, you say! What price this?" As he spoke he lifted triumphantly a squarish, red-labelled object. It was a tin of corned-beef.

"Bully for you, Dick!" exclaimed Dudley, and reached across to take it from Dick's hand.

The movement saved his life. At that very moment a shot rang out, and a bullet flattened on the side of the cave in a line with the point where Dudley's head had been one second before.

Without hesitation, Dick hurred the tin which he had just found at the man who had fired. So quick was he that it reached its mark before the would-be murderer could pull trigger a second time, and Rafe Finn—for it was he—went over like a poloxed bullock, with his blunt nose flattened to his face, and most of his front teeth adrift.

Dudley wheeled just in time to see the nigger go down.

"Good man, Dick! Gee, it'll be some

time before he eats beef, or anything else for that matter!"

"Take his rifle!" snapped Dick. "Don't waste time. The rest aren't far off."

He snatched up his own rifle, and stepping quickly to the mouth of the cave, cautiously looked out.

Crack! Crack! came two shots almost simultaneously.

Dick sprang back. His eyes were bright with the light of battle, and across the whole outfit are coming over the cliff face," he said quickly. "What shall we do—fight or hook it?"

"Clear out," answered Dudley instantly. "We can't hold this place. We must reach the ravine if we can. We ought to be able to hold them up there."

"Keep low, Dick," he added. "For goodness' sake, keep low. If you're hit we're done in!"

The ruins of the old breastwork which they had built to defend their cave just after the coming of Cray & Co. lay thick on the narrow platform outside, and gave cover enough, so long as they kept well down.

The moment they were outside, rifles began to talk again, but they flung them as flat, and crawled on hands and knees in among the boulders until they were round the bulge of the cliff. Then they both sprang upright, and were off along the ledges towards the mouth of the ravine.

"Don't break your neck, Dudley!" panted Dick, as Dudley took a risky leap from one point of the rock to another. "They don't know the ledges as we do. They won't be within range again for five minutes."

"Yes, but we've got to get cover of some sort. What do you want to do—hide in the ravine?"

"Yes, go right up it, and into the scrub beyond. We can dodge them there. Palmeto won't burn, so they can't smoke us out."

As he spoke, Dick turned up-hill, and began to climb quickly towards the funnel-like mouth of the ravine. Dudley came close after.

They had nearly reached their goal, when from above a fresh shot rang out, and a bullet struck a rock within a yard of Dick, and ricocheted with a vicious ping.

Dudley gasped with dismay. "Then, by thunder, they've got us!" he exclaimed. "They've got us covered!"

For a moment the two crouched low behind a projecting ledge. They were absolutely at their wits' end. A more hopeless plight could hardly be imagined. They could not go back, for Cray and his followers cut off their retreat. They could not go up, for the man posted on the bank of the ravine could pick them off at his pleasure.

Beyond—that is, to the west—the beach was already covered with the rising tide, and as for the cliffs, they were absolutely perpendicular.

They were literally between the devil and the deep sea.

### The Swim!

AGAIN the man by the ravine pulled the trigger, and the report of his rifle echoed along the face of the rugged cliffs.

Dick and Dudley were safe for the moment beneath their ledge. It was plain that the second shot was a signal to Cray.

It was instantly answered.

"Where be they, Degan?" shouted Cray's croak from some distance back.

"Jest underneath ye!" shouted back Degan. "They can't get away. You kin take your time."

"Can't get away!" echoed Dick, in a fierce whisper. "Dudley, it's the sea for us."

Dudley glanced down at the blue water leaving gully at the base of the cliff. He shivered. Small blame to him, either! Dick knew the reason of his hesitation.

"Sharks or not, it's better than falling into Cray's hands again," he said gravely. "And if we can once get round the Point we may do 'em yet."

Dudley set his teeth. "Go ahead! I'm game!" he said briefly.

The ledge they were on ran shelving downwards to within a few feet of the water. And so long as they were on it they were entirely hidden from Degan. From Cray, too, until he was much nearer than he was at present.

Once their resolution was taken, the two wasted no time in carrying out their plan. They scuttled down the ledge like two rabbits, and came to its end not two or three feet above the sea.

"Leave the rifles," whispered Dick. "We can't swim with them."

As he spoke he thrust his into a crack in the rocks. Dudley did the same. Then Dick let himself down from the ledge, and hung by his hands.

"Softly!" he said. "Don't make a splash. They can't see us, and we'll be a hundred yards off before they know what's become of us."

Dudley nodded. Dick dropped quietly into the sea, and waited for his chum; and Dudley, with splendid pluck, followed him.

The water was calm, and quite warm, and the two swam along side by side, keeping as close under the cliff-foot as they could. As he swam, Dick kept a sharp look-out in all directions. But there was no sign of sharks, or of the even more dreaded barracuda.

The splash of the slow swells breaking on the cliff drowned other sounds, and they could no longer hear their pursuers' voices. Striking out steadily, they were soon opposite to the narrow mouth of Hidden Bay.

Dick glanced at Dudley. Dudley was not nearly so strong a swimmer as himself.

"Can you keep going?" he asked anxiously.

"I guess so," was the quiet reply. "We could dodge into Hidden Bay if you liked."

"No use. We couldn't get out again." "Maybe we could after dark."

Dudley shook his head. "Guess I'd rather swim in the daylight!" he answered grimly.

It was at this moment that a shout rang out, loud enough to be heard even above the boom of the surf.

"They've spotted us!" muttered Dick. "Look out for the lead!"

Apparently, however, the man who had spotted them was in some place from which he could not shoot, and the two had gained nearly fifty yards more before the crack of a rifle woke the echoes along the cliff-face.

"The range is pretty long," observed Dick. "We've got a fine start. Don't hurry, old man. There's a long stretch before we round the Point."

"And a longer stretch before we can make any sort of a landing," he thought, but did not say so. As a matter of fact, he had not the faintest idea where they



would be able to land, even if they were lucky enough to escape the bullets of their enemies.

Two rifles rang out simultaneously, and a little jet of spray leaped from a wave-top to Dick's right. It was no use ducking or dodging. They must just keep straight on and trust to luck that they would not be hit. There was this much in their favour—that the range was now over three hundred yards, and that two heads bobbing among the waves at such a distance need mighty good marksmanship to make sure of.

Next came a regular volley, and bullets pitted the water all around.

"Rotten shooting!" said Dick, with a grim chuckle. "We've got the tide with us, and the next thing they know we'll be out of their range altogether."

He was right. A rapid current swirled along the base of the cliff, and was more than doubling their ordinary swimming pace.

"Gee, but that was close!" gasped Dudley, as a bullet clipped past his ear and struck the water not twelve inches in front of his nose.

It was a chance shot, for after that, although the firing went on for some minutes, nothing else came near enough to be dangerous. And every minute the Point showed nearer.

"Keep close in," advised Dick—"as close as you can, Dudley."

As he spoke he turned slightly to the left, meaning to skirt the Point as closely as possible.

The moment he turned he began to feel the pull of the current. The tide was in some way turned outwards from the curve of the cliff. He had to fight hard to keep close in.

He glanced at Dudley, and saw that, in spite of his efforts, he was being drawn gradually farther out from the cliff.

"Guess it's too strong for me!" panted the latter.

Instantly Dick struck out and came alongside Dudley.

"Hang on to me," he said quietly. "We'll make it all right."

At first Dudley objected; but Dick insisted, and the other yielded. Dick, wisely, did not try to haul his friend right back across the current, but swam obliquely, keeping as near the shore as he could, without exhausting himself.

This was just as well, for when they did reach the Point they found themselves in a swirl of contending currents. The water was a rough, too, and, into the bargain, Dudley was tiring. It was all that Dick could do to fight their way out of the turmoil.

But he did it at last, and they found themselves in calm water, well round the Point, and out of sight or reach of their enemies. Dick raised himself in the water, and took a look along the shore. His heart sank. So far as he could see, the cliff swept on without a visible break of any kind. There was no bay,

no beach—not even an isolated rock to which they might cling and rest themselves.

Dudley was watching him. He saw the look on Dick's face, and realised what it meant.

"Don't look healthy—eh, Dick?" he asked.

"To be quite honest, it doesn't," allowed Dick. "I can't see a landing-place. All the same, one can't see much from sea-level. It's quite on the cards there may be some opening, and not far off, either. Anyhow, we're safe from Cray, and there doesn't seem to be any sharks about, so we can just take it easy.

"You lie on your back, Dudley," he added—"lie on your back and float. I can tow you along."

Dudley obeyed, and in this way they travelled slowly for about two hundred yards along the base of the cliff. But, search as he might, Dick could see no possible landing-place, and he began to realise that he himself was getting badly fagged.

He paused again and trod water.

A swell lifted him slightly, and he had a glimpse of a long, smooth rock—a sort of spur running out into the sea from the base of the cliff. It was a long way off, and it looked terribly steep; yet, such as it was, it was the only possible chance in sight for making a landing.

He pointed it out to Dudley. "Come on!" he said cheerfully. "If we can make it, we ought to be able to climb out."

"All right," Dudley answered. His voice was very weak and hoarse, and Dick was frightened to notice how blue-white his lips were.

They started again, Dick towing Dudley as before. But Dick himself was so tired that they took a long time in reaching the spur. The nearer they got to it, the lower Dick's hopes sank.

The spur was quite smooth, with no handhold or foothold of any sort, and far too steep to climb upon. It looked to him as if their last chance was gone. For himself, he did not feel as if he could swim another hundred yards.

His legs and arms felt heavy, and all his muscles numb.

One of the long, slow swells that came softly in from the open sea broke upon the spur, and as the blue water washed upon it there came a curious, low, booming sound.

"It might almost be hollow," thought Dick vaguely, as he paddled slowly in towards it.

"It is!" he cried suddenly.

"It is what?" asked Dudley hoarsely.

"Hollow," answered Dick, in sudden excitement. "There's a hole in it—a hole in the rock-spur, just above the water-level. That last swell broke into it and made that queer, booming noise."

### One Mystery Solved!

"A HOLE—a cave-mouth, do you mean?" demanded Dudley, sharing Dick's excitement. "Gee, but you're right!" I can see it myself now."

"Can you keep yourself up a minute, old man?" asked Dick anxiously. "It's going to be a bit of a job to reach it."

"You bet!" Dudley answered briefly.

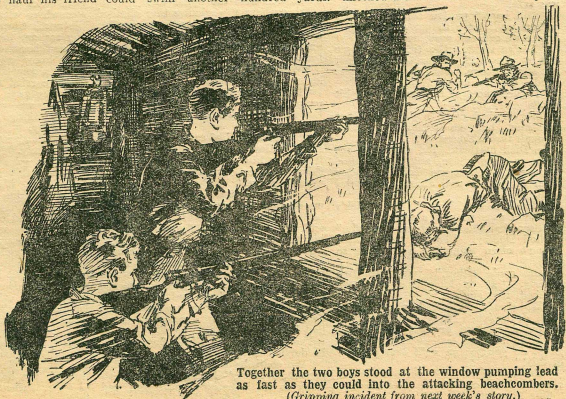
They were now quite close under the spur. The hole, which was not more than a yard across, was in the very face of the curious spur, which stuck out from the main cliff like a buttress.

On the face of it it seemed a most useless sort of refuge, for water was already breaking into it, and at high tide it would be completely submerged.

But it was a case of "any port in a storm." Neither of them could keep afloat much longer. If they could gain even a few minutes' rest, it might be possible to go on again and reach some other landing-place.

Dick swam as near as he dared to the lower end of the buttress, then waited for the next swell.

As it lifted him he struck out hard. He felt himself flung forward against hard rock, with a force that almost knocked the breath out of his body.



Together the two boys stood at the window pumping lead as fast as they could into the attacking beachcombers. (Gripping incident from next week's story.)

The water broke over his head, blinding and confusing him; then, as the wave dropped back, his groping fingers found a ledge, and grasped it desperately.

It was the lower rim of the opening, and in a moment he was standing upright on the ledge.

"Now then, Dudley! Quick, before the next swell comes!"

Stepping down, he managed to grasp Dudley's outstretched hand, and, using all his strength, dragged him safely up alongside.

"That's good!" he gasped. "Now hang on tight. There's another swell coming."

It came washing up to their waists, and tugging at them so strongly that Dick realised that the next one would probably carry them clean off their hardy gained perch.

"We must get inside. It's our only chance," he said, with sharp decision.

"Out of the frying pan into the fire, I guess," remarked Dudley; "or perhaps I should say, out of the waves into the water." But all the same, he followed Dick without a moment's hesitation.

Inside, the opening was very like one of those huge pipes which carry the water supply of the big towns. It was about the same size, almost as round, and almost as smooth. But it was not by any means straight. Indeed, the angle at which it ran upwards, combined with its steepness, made it anything but easy to crawl up it.

Yet crawl they had to, and quickly, too.

Both were painfully aware that, if caught by the next swell before they were beyond its reach, they would be licked out as swiftly and easily as a fly is licked down by the swift-darting tongue of a toad.

A hollow roar, a dash of spray, and Dudley, forcing his way up into the unknown gloom above, felt the water washing to his knees. He jammed his elbows against the two sides of the rock pipe, and held on like grim death. The wave fell back, and he heard Dick's voice anxiously inquiring if he was safe.

"Still here," panted Dudley, "but I reckon we'll have to get a bit higher before we can call ourselves safe."

"You're right. The tide's got some feet to rise still. Come on. It's not so steep above, and the air's quite good. Want a hand?"

"I guess not. I'm good for a bit yet."

Dick climbed on. Dudley could not see him, but he followed upwards through the darkness.

As Dick had said, the slope was not quite so steep above, and by the time the next swell came booming after them they were well above its upward rush.

"Here's a flattish bit," came Dick's voice. "I vote we rest a while."

"Seconded and carried unanimously," replied Dudley. "To tell the truth, I haven't often wanted a rest quite so badly."

"Or grub either," returned Dick soberly. "It's a long time since we finished the gopher."

"We shan't even find a gopher in this drainpipe," said Dudley. He paused a moment or two, then spoke again in a more serious tone. "Say, Dick, do you reckon we'll ever get out of this?"

"Get out of it? Of course we'll get out of it!" returned Dick quite sharply.

"See here, Dudley, because you're fagged out there's no need to chuck up the sponge. Once the tide's fallen again I'll go down, and swim along till I find some landing-place. Then I'll come back for you."

Dudley did not answer. Dick realised that for once his chum had come pretty near to the end of his tether.

"Back up, old chap!" he said persuasively. "We've been in just as bad places before, and got out. Anyhow, we're better off than we were twenty-four hours ago. Then we were Cray's slaves. Now, at any rate, we're free."

"Yes, we're free," said Dudley—"free to sit here and starve in the dark, free to take to the water and be snapped up by sharks, free—if we can ever get ashore—to be shot down by Cray's men."

Dick said no more. It was clear that Dudley was beyond comfort for the present. He sat still, shivering slightly in the strong draught which blew down from somewhere above.

Boom! A long-drawn swish. A shower of salt spray broke over them.

Dick sprang up.

"Come on, Dudley! The tide hasn't turned yet. We've got to get a bit higher."

"What's the use?" asked Dudley in a dull voice.

Dick reached down and caught hold of him.

"Come on!" he said, and though he spoke quietly enough, Dudley obeyed.

They scrambled on up the curious passage, slipping and sliding as they went, and often in danger of falling back. The rock which they crawled over was all smooth. Not a sharp corner anywhere. Dick realised that it was all water-worn. At times the waves must certainly come right up it. He began to wonder, uneasily if they would be able to climb high enough to escape the reach of the surf at full tide. Every wave which broke below sent a gust of sound up the tunnel, followed by a blast of air.

But between times the down-draught was strong, showing clearly that the tunnel, like the spring cave, had some connection with the upper air.

For perhaps five minutes they climbed steadily, then Dick's fingers, groping for a hold, found a broad ledge. He scrambled up, and discovered a flat surface.

"Where are you, Dick?" came Dudley's voice from below.

"Don't know; but I've found standing room, anyhow. Here, take my hand!" He reached down and helped Dudley up.

"Struck a kind of cave, haven't we?" said Dudley, groping about.

"Seems like it," Dick answered. "I think I'll use just one match to see where we are."

In spite of the long swim, Dick's matches, carefully preserved in the little bottle, were still dry. He struck one, and, shielding it from the draught with his hat, looked round.

It was, as Dudley had said, a cave—a very small one; in fact, a mere bulge in the long, bottle-necked tube up which they had crawled. They could see the tube itself, both above and below, with sides almost as smooth as though the dark-coloured rock composing them had been polished.

The match burned Dick's fingers, and he dropped it.

"We shall be all right here for the present, Dudley," he said. "The best thing to do is to perch ourselves, and wait until the tide falls."

Dudley hesitated. He hated the darkness and the chill of the place. He would have liked to have climbed higher and chanced finding a way out. But he had the sense to know that both he and Dick were very near the end of their tether, and that rest was what they needed most of all.

"I guess we had," he said reluctantly, and dropped down beside Dick, with his back against the wall of the little rock chamber.

They were too tired even to talk, and in spite of their wet clothes, their hunger, and the chill of the darksome place, both dozed off. They were roused by a deep, hooting roar, resembling that of a steam siren, and both leaped up in a violent hurry.

"Great Scott, what was that?" exclaimed Dudley, grasping Dick's arm with a force that proved how badly he was startled.

### The Glimmering Light!

"It—it must be a wave!" stammered

Dick, who was almost as much scared for the moment as Dudley.

At that instant there came a swishing sound, and then a spray of salt water broke over them in a fine mist.

"I know!" said Dick sharply. "I know! Dudley, d'you remember the hooting that puzzled us so the first days we were on the island—that we heard so plainly when we were in the cave on Crooked Cliffs?"

"I do that," answered Dudley in a puzzled voice. "But—but I don't understand."

"Why, it's plain as a pikestaff, and if I hadn't been an absolute idiot I'd have thought of it long before! It's a blowhole!"

"A blowhole?" repeated Dudley, in a tone which proved to Dick that he evidently did not yet understand.

"What's a blowhole?"

"This—is this is a blowhole! A rock funnel, the bottom of which is below high-water mark, while the top opens somewhere above. 'I've seen one on the north Cornish coast. When there's any sea on, the waves run right up to it, and burst out of the top. I don't quite know why it makes such a row, but it's something to do with the air that's carried up."

Dudley gave a low whistle.

"Then we—we are in the pipe of the infernal thing!" he muttered in a tone of dismay.

"That's about the size of it!" returned Dick calmly.

Dudley gave a bitter laugh.

"Then this finishes it! From that first burst, it's quite clear there's a storm working up. Now, I suppose there's nothing to do but wait until we're washed out."

"It's no use meeting trouble half-way, old chap!" answered Dick, as quietly as before. "Seems to me we were precious lucky to strike this little cave place before the first big wave came. And as that didn't do us any particular harm, perhaps the others won't, either. Remember, it isn't very far off high tide."

He had hardly finished speaking before there came another roar. It was louder than the first. The solid rock seemed to quiver under the shock, and a faint phosphorescence gleamed through the darkness as a great spout of water rushed past them up the rock tube.



Part of the wave sprayed out sideways, washing the floor of the little cavern in which they had found refuge, but the mouth of it was so small that the amount of water which found its way through was not enough to be dangerous or to threaten to wash them away.

For some ten seconds the fierce rush continued; then they could feel it falling back, rolling in a thundering cataract back to the sea from which it came. The noise, the rush, the feeling of the enormous power exerted, together with the impossibility of getting any farther away from the spout, was absolutely terrifying, and left them both gasping.

Yet there was nothing to be done. They could but remain where they were and hope against hope that in the end they might come out of it alive.

And so it went on for over an hour. Sometimes it would be five minutes between the upbursts, sometimes only three. Some rushes were much heavier than others, and once a full foot of water gushed into their refuge, and it was only by clinging to a tiny projection which Dick found in the wall that they were saved from being washed right out and drawn down the roaring pipe into the depths below.

At last, after what seemed an eternity of suspense, the waves began to slacken, and to come at longer and longer intervals. Then one came which failed to reach the cave at all, and fell back before doing so.

Still they did not dare to move. They almost held their breath waiting in frightful anxiety to see whether it was only a temporary respite. For all they knew a heavy gale might be working up in which case the surf would break higher than the entrance, even at low tide.

But time passed, and the bursts grew less and less frequent. There were still terrifying sounds down below, gurglings and hissings, as if some huge sea monster was writhing in its death agony.

"It's over at last!" said Dick, rising to his feet and beating his arms across his chest to try to restore circulation. The strong draught which had been blowing upon their soaked bodies had chilled them both to the bone.

Dudley scrambled up.

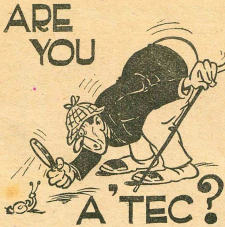
"Then, for any sake, let's get out of it, Dick!" he begged. "I've sure been through some ugly times the last week or two, but that beats all! I'd rather start to swim back to Florida than stick another hour like the last!"

"I'm with you there, Dudley," Dick answered. "It wasn't exactly enjoyable. 'Pon my Sam, I've had enough of caves and darkness to last me the rest of my life. What's it to be? Are we to try to climb up top-side?"

"Top-side or bottom-side, it's all the same to me, so long as we get out of this!" said Dudley. "Let's have one more match, Dick, just to start us on our way."

"Right!" Dick answered, and carefully struck one of his few remaining matches. Its flickering light shone on two soaked, white-faced, shivering scarecrows. Indeed, Dudley's appearance gave Dick a nasty shock. But neither had much time to comment on the other. They were too eager to see whether the upper part of the funnel was or was not too steep to climb.

"It looks all right!" said Dudley, with a sigh of relief, worming his way out through the narrow mouth of their cave.



Here is a game you can try on your gang who have designs on being detectives one of these days. All detectives have to be very brainy people, able to work out and solve problems by means of logical deduction. See what you can do with these:

Know anything about billiards? You do? Good! Tom Newman recently made a break of 1,239. He pocketed the red sixteen times, went in off red twelve times, and made all the rest of his score by cannons.

Now prove that I'm pulling your leg.

I wonder how many of you have heard the legend of the Moonrakers? This is it: Two old countrymen, who were smugglers, brought several kegs of whisky to land and dumped them at the bottom of a small lake until they could take them away without being seen by the police. The same evening they went out with rakes, and began raking about in the water to fish out the kegs.

A coastguard came along, and was suspicious.

"What are you doing there?" he asked.

The cunning old smugglers pretended to be very simple. Pointing to the re-

fection of the full moon on the water of the lake, they said:

"Why, sir, we was tryin' to rake out that there big cheese in the lake!"

The coastguard roared with laughter at their simplicity, and went on chuckling. The foxy old smugglers then raked out the whisky, and got away with it.

Now the legend doesn't say this—but a fortnight later the same thing happened again. They told the coastguard that they were raking for the big cheese; but, in spite of this, they were found out.

How did the coastguard bowl them out?

Here's a cute little catch for the last item. This time you've got to tell me the problem, instead of my telling you.

Two travellers were proceeding by dog-sleigh across Labrador. As they went along, there suddenly attacked them a pack of forty savage wolves. They shot one wolf, and the other thirty-nine stopped to eat it up. Then they gave chase again. They shot another wolf and that, also was eaten up by its companions.

They kept on shooting wolves, which were instantly eaten up—until there was only one wolf left.

Now you tell me. What is the problem of that little story?

SOLUTIONS.

1. As for the answer—I give it up. The other thirty-nine wolves finish him.

2. The problem is this: He had all was able to tumble to their game, the next occasion, and the coastguard moon—so there wasn't a moon at all on 2. A fortnight after full moon is new the figures must be wrong.

Therefore, number by scoring two. But he cannot possibly make an odd odd number with cannons to reach 1,239. (56 points), he would have to make an (48 points) and went in off twelve times

1. If Newman pocketed red sixteen times (66 points) and went in off twelve times

2. Pooketing red counts as 2; in off

what was worse—wider than below. The extra width made it all the more difficult to prop themselves against the sides.

"We're against it!" muttered Dudley. And then the match went out.

"Shall we try to get down again?" asked Dick.

"No use; we must go on."

Dudley began struggling up again. Dick heard him breathing hard as he struggled for hold, and braced himself, expecting every minute that he would slip. But Dudley stuck to it.

"I'm round the curve!" he panted.

Dick followed, but the way above was no easier. They were both dripping with perspiration and almost done. From his own feelings, Dick knew how Dudley must be suffering. Their hands were raw and bleeding, their knees and elbows were a mass of bruises. Yet they had to keep going, for there was no place where they could rest for even a minute.

Compared with this, the little cavern would have been a harbour of refuge.

All of a sudden Dudley gave a sharp exclamation.

"The light!" he cried. "Did you see the light?"

(Tons of thrills in next week's tale of the Chums of Golden Isle, chaps! Don't miss it.)



## "Yo ho, for the Spanish Main!"

(Continued from page 2.)

mate gave an exclamation of horror. Blackbeard shot the master's mate through the brain for "interrupting the proceedings."

So the feast went on. One man after another found that he was marked. A slight remark was enough for Blackbeard. Man after man was shot dead, until only one Don remained alive. He was seated at the end of the table opposite Blackbeard, and he rose and defied the pirate to his face.

"Shoot me if you will," he said. "I would rather die than have food at the same table as you!"

This time Blackbeard raised his pistol and drew the trigger. The weapon did not go off. Twice more the pirate looked to his priming and tried to shoot. Each time the pistol refused to act. Blackbeard rose, and, with an oath, he hurled his weapon at the Spaniard.

"You are the only man who will remain alive," he cried. "Some saint is meddling with my pistols."

He gave orders to have the vessel burned after the loot was taken out of her. This was done during the darkness, and as Blackbeard sailed away from the doomed ship where the crew could not escape—for all the boats had been destroyed—he took with him the Spaniard to whom he had promised life.

By this time the flames of the burning ship had raised an alarm on shore. Round the head of the hills the two men-of-war were creeping. Did Blackbeard hurry? Not he. He sailed close in to the land, gave his prisoner a boat with which to go ashore, and then calmly hoisted his sails again and steered straight south.

The warships were coming up with him now, but he was still cool and collected. He extinguished all his lights, beat down the coast towards the Serpent's Mouth, passed through at dawn, and was out into the open sea by the time the pursuing vessels had sighted him.

They chased him upwards along the Atlantic coast of Trinidad, but he dodged them among the islands of the Caribbee and escaped to continue his even more desperate and daring deeds.

It was commonly said that the only

virtue which Blackbeard possessed was the virtue of courage. He certainly had this in plenty. His favourite colour was blue, and he used blue ribbons to tie his beard like a dandy. His cabin on his pirate ship was painted blue. His clothes, so far as he could procure them, were blue in various shades. His very eyes were blue, though his hair was black, a most unusual contrast.

To his crew he was terribly severe, for it was the only way he could keep them in subjection. There were often attempts at mutiny on board his ship, but the cunning Blackbeard countered the mutineers by inciting others of the crew against them. He used to say it was better to get others to slay the mutineers than for he himself to slay them; but there were occasions when he slew and took a pride in the slaying. His men complained that he had

have a taste of what you will get when you die."

"If that is so," replied one of the men, "then you'll have a share of it, cap'n, when you anchor."

At this sally Blackbeard laughed until the tears flowed down his cheeks, and he gave the man who had replied the post of mate "because of his worth in having the nerve to answer me back."

As a sop to his crew he engineered one of the most daring coups ever perpetrated on the Main. It was nothing less than an attack on the gold "trains" that came down from Cartagena to the coast. These "trains" were long lines of mules, loaded with gold nuggets and dust which were shipped from the Indies to Cadiz for the King of Spain. Each train was worth a fabulous sum of money, for the Indians had worked for the Dons under a system of slavery which was cruel as it was universal at this period.

The attack on the gold "trains" was at first a failure, and the pirates had to retire. But they came back again, and after terrible hardships and much fighting they secured a "train" which would have made them all rich men had not Blackbeard duped his men of the spoil once more.

He buried all his treasure up and down the Main, but the spot where he is said to have laid most of it was the island of Utilla, off the coast of Honduras. Here he certainly buried a considerable amount; but he killed the men who buried it for him so that the secret was preserved by himself alone.

"I have buried my loot," he once said to a prisoner, "where none but the devil and I know, and it will go to the one who lives the longer."

The one who lived the longer was certainly not Blackbeard, for after his "train" coup he sailed north to catch a golden galleon coming out of Mexico, and there he was spied by the small war-sloop Pearl, belonging to the British Navy. The commander of the Pearl was Lieutenant Robert Maynard, who chased Blackbeard over the Main, past the Tortugas, through the channel between Cuba and Haiti, and so to the River Oberecock. There Blackbeard hid, but Maynard found him and attacked. It was a terrible fight. Maynard boarded the pirate ship and fought the buccaner on his own poop, killing him and carrying the head of the pirate into Bathtown fastened to the jib-boom of his sloop. Such was the end of the most atrocious pirate the Main ever saw.

THE END.

## Chalmers Chumley for Short!



"You going to Greyfriars," said Bunter, "and talking like a bargee?"

"You keep your 'ead shut, or I'll bust your 'at over it," said the new boy. And he did! Make sure you read this sparkling yarn in this week's issue of

## "The Magnet" 2<sup>d</sup>.

The Popular School Story Paper.  
Now on Sale 2d. Buy a Copy TO-DAY!

taken too big a "dividend" of the brig which they had burned off the Port of Spain, and Blackbeard called them into the waist of his ship and fired among them at random, beating them into the fore-castle. While they were there he threw down brimstone and smoking sulphur, daring them to come out. Two men died of suffocation; and when the others did come out they were cowed and ready to do his bidding.

"I gave you the sulphur and brimstone," he said "so that you would

**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.

**"BOY KING" TRIANGULAR PKT. FREE!**  
110 different including world's youngest ruler. 2d. postage only.  
LISBURN & TOWNSEND (U.S.), LIVERPOOL.

**BE TALL**  
Your Height increased in 14 days, or money back. Amazing Course, 5/-. Send STAMP NOW for Free Book.—STEBBING SYSTEM, 28, Dean Road, LONDON, N.W.2.

**MAGIC TRICKS AND PUZZLES**.—Baffling, amusing, mysterious. Just the thing for party fun. Try them on your pals—you'll score every time. Sample selection, 1/6, with List of 150 Tricks, Puzzles, and Jokes.—John J. Richards, Coventry.

**APPROVAL APPLICANTS**.—Fifty different stamps including Greenland.—WAY, Moreton Grove, WALLASEY.

**STOP STAMMERING!** Cure yourself as I did. Particulars Free.—FRANK B. HUGHES, 7, SOUTHAMPTON ROW, LONDON, W.C.1.

**HOME CINEMATOGRAPHS**  
FILMS AND ACCESSORIES.  
**PROJECTORS** all prices from 5/- to £16.  
Film Spools, Rewinders, Lighting Sets, Screens, Projectors, etc.  
**FILMS ALL LENGTHS & SUBJECTS.**  
FORD'S (Dept. A.P.), 276/7, High Holborn, London, W.C.1.

**GROW TALLER!** ADD INCHES to your height. Details free.—JEDISON, 39, BOND STREET, BLACKPOOL.

**BLUSHING,** SHYNESS.—For FREE particulars simple home cure write Mr. HUGHES, 7, Southampton Row (Box 167), LONDON, W.C.1.

**300 STAMPS FOR 6d** (Abroad 1/-), including Airpost. Barbados, Old India, Nigeria, New South Wales, Gold Coast, etc.—W. A. WHITE, Engine Lane, LYE, Stourbridge.