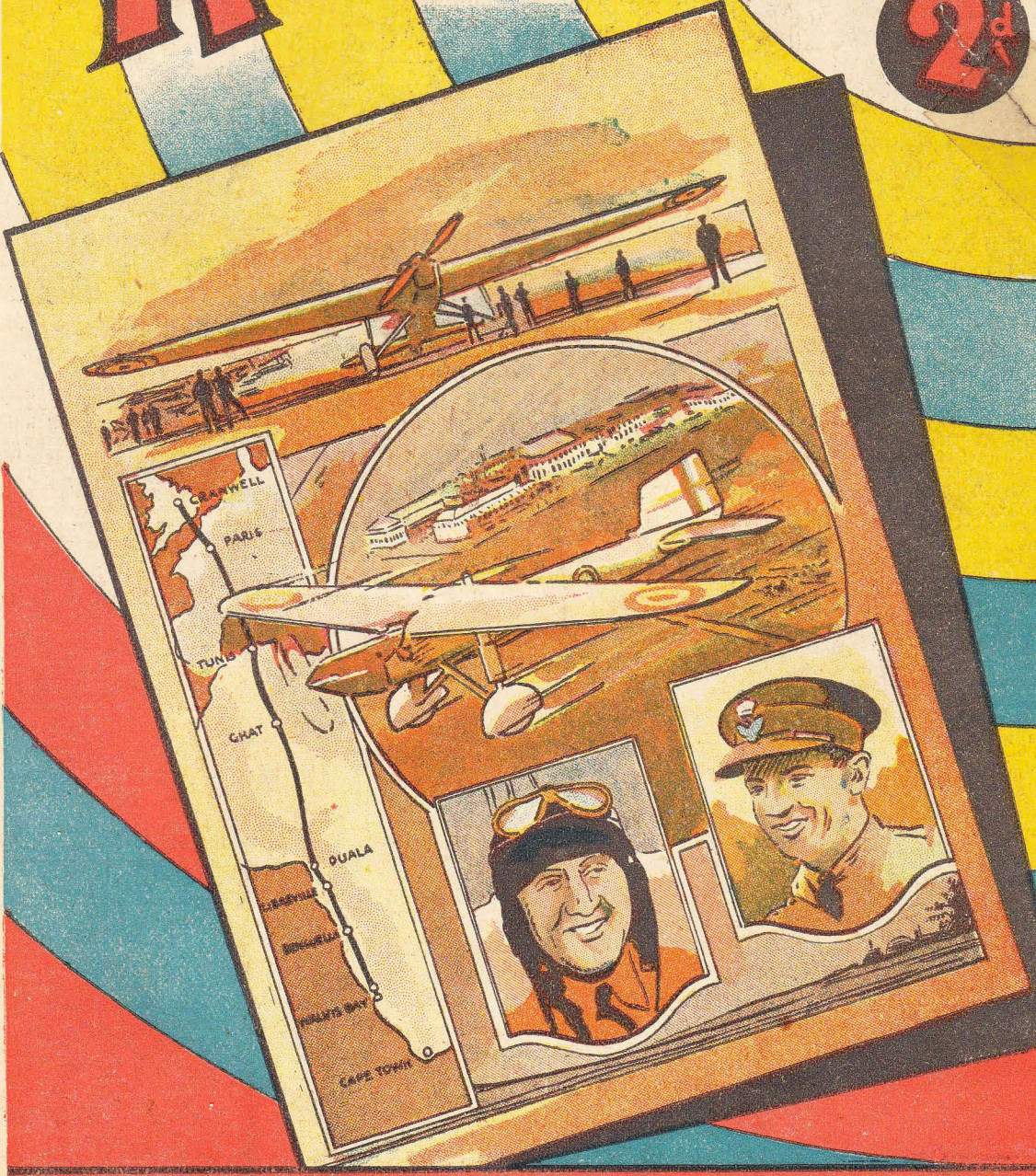


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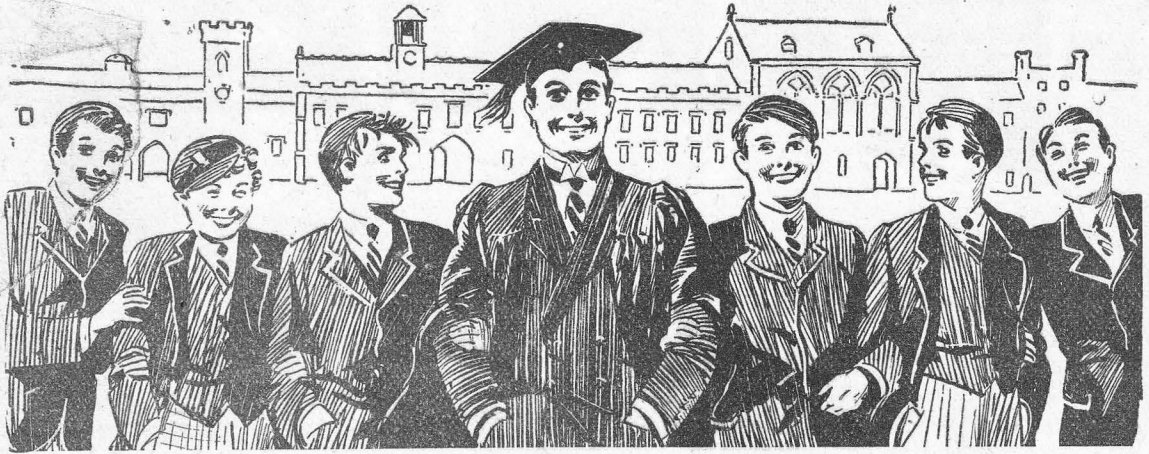
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YOU'LL ENJOY EVERY WORD OF THIS SCHOOL STORY—IT'S A WOW!

The Fourth Form at GRIMSLADE!

By Famous FRANK RICHARDS.



IT'S THE HEAD'S BOAST THAT HE HAS NEVER HAD TO EXPEL A BOY FROM GRIMSLADE—BUT JIM DAINTY, THE REBEL OF THE FOURTH, SOON SPOILS THAT REPUTATION. HE ASKS FOR THE "SACK"—AND GETS IT!

The Rebel.

"I WON'T!"

Jim Dainty's voice fairly rang through the Fourth Form classroom at Grimslade School.

He was standing up in his place, his face red with anger and his eyes glinting. And Mr. Peck, the master of the Fourth, stared at him. All the Fourth stared round at him. It was quite a sensation.

There were unruly fellows at Grimslade School. Grimslade, in fact, was a school to which unruly fellows were often sent for their own good. Dr. Samuel Sparshott, headmaster of Grimslade, had a reputation for handling fellows who would not toe the line. At Grimslade they learned to toe it. The process might be long, or it might be short; but sooner or later they would be feeding from Sammy's hand.

But Sammy seemed to have had less than his usual luck with Jim Dainty of White's House. For the most rebellious fellow that had ever given trouble at Grimslade had never stood up to his Form master and shouted "I won't!" at the top of his voice in the class. Even for Grimslade, it was rather a record.

"My giddy goloshes!" murmured Ginger Rawlinson, of Redmayes' House. "Did you men hear that?"

There was a chuckle. Jim's voice might have been heard across the quad. But the chuckle died away at once. Matters were serious. Mr. Peck's face was a picture.

"What—what did you say, Dainty?" gasped Mr. Peck. "I told you to go at once to your headmaster's study!"

"And I said that I won't!" retorted Jim Dainty.

"Dainty!" gasped Mr. Peck. He lifted his hand and pointed commandingly to the door. "Go to your headmaster's study! Tell Dr. Sparshott that I have sent you to him for punishment! Go at once!"

"I won't!"

There was a pause—an awful pause. Mr. Peck's commanding hand was lowered. Dainty was not going!

The Form master rubbed his cheek, where there was a smudge of ink. An

ink-ball had landed there a minute ago. It had landed when Mr. Peck, for a moment, had turned from the class. He had turned back to his class quickly—very quickly. He had turned in time to see Jim Dainty, who was standing, drop back into his seat. So he had no doubt who had whizzed the ink-ball.

Fritz Splitz was not likely to tell him that he—Fatty Fritz—had done it, and that Dainty had been grabbing at him to stop him—too late! Fatty Fritz had no desire to be sent to the Head. To err is human, and Mr. Peck, being only human, had erred. Headless of Dainty's denial, he ordered him to the Head's study for a whopping, and Dainty refused.

The pause was only for a few moments, but it seemed an age to the breathless Fourth. Jim Dainty stood steady and determined. Mr. Peck gazed at him. Streaky Bacon kicked Fritz from under his desk as a hint to own up. Nothing was further from Fritz's thoughts. Owning up was not in his line. Fritz hated a whopping, especially from Sammy.

"Dainty, if you refuse to obey me—" said Mr. Peck at last.

"I never threw the ink-ball!"

"I saw you—or almost saw you! Go to the Head!"

"I won't!"

Mr. Peck came among the forms, and his grasp dropped on Jim Dainty's collar.

"Come!" he rapped.

As Dainty refused to go to the Head's study, his Form master was going to take him there!

"I won't!" roared Dainty.

"I think you will!" said Mr. Peck grimly.

He jerked at the obstinate junior. Dainty grasped at his desk and held on. The desk rocked. Startled faces looked on in breathless excitement. It was an unprecedented scene in the Fourth Form class-room.

Now Mr. Peck grasped the junior with both hands, and tugged. Still Jim Dainty hung on, like a limpet to a rock.

"You unruly young rascal, come with me!" gasped Mr. Peck.

"I won't!" panted Dainty.

His legs kicked out and crashed into the blackboard and easel. There was a terrific crack as the blackboard clumped Mr. Peck on the head. The master of the Fourth gave a wild howl, but he did not release the rebel of Grimslade. He gave another violent jerk, and this time Dainty was forced to release his hold on the desk.

It was some minutes before Mr. Peck arrived at the Head's study with the struggling, panting junior in his grasp. But he arrived at last, and threw open the door. Dr. Samuel Sparshott was not taking a class just then, and he was in his study, deep in mathematical papers. He jumped up in amazement at the sight of a master and a boy scuffling in his doorway.

"What—" roared Sammy.

"This boy, sir," Peck gasped—"this boy, Dainty, refused to come to you at my order!"

"Great gad!" ejaculated Sammy.

Peck fairly hurled Dainty into the study. The Fourth-Former sprawled headlong on Sammy's carpet.

"I leave him to you, sir!" gasped Peck.

"You may safely do so!" said Dr. Sparshott grimly.

Mr. Peck, breathless, retired—perhaps rather glad to leave that troublesome junior in the capable hands of Sammy. Dr. Sparshott picked up a cane. He stepped from his table. Dainty scrambled up, and made one bound from the study into the passage.

"Dainty!" roared the Head.

He leaped into the passage after the junior. His grasp landed on Jim as he bolted. With a swing of his arm, Sammy tossed him back into the study. Mr. Peck, in the passage, turned back. Sammy turned to him.

"Quite all right, Mr. Peck! I can deal with this boy!"

It was only a moment before Sammy turned to his study doorway again. But he wished afterwards that he hadn't lost that moment.

Jim Dainty was on his feet again in the study. He grabbed the door and slammed it. It slammed almost on Sammy's nose, and the key turned in the lock.

"Great gad!" gasped Sammy Sparshott.

And he stared at solid oak—locked out of his own study!

Holding the Fort.

"MY giddy goloshes!" murmured Ginger Rawlinson.

The bell had rung for break, and all Grimslade was out. The quadrangle buzzed with excited voices.

Every eye was turned in one direction—the window of the Head's study. All Grimslade knew that Dainty of the Fourth was there—locked in. All Grimslade wondered what on earth was going to happen now.

Trafford and Yorke of the Sixth, and some other prefects stood in a little group, with grim faces. They were ready to handle the rebel at a word from Sammy. But Sammy had not given the word. Perhaps Sammy fancied that the reckless rebel might think better of it, given time. If so, he was in error.

Jim Dainty was still locked in the study, and he had been heard to drag the Head's desk and writing-table across to the door to barricade it. That did not look like surrender.

"Here comes Sammy!" murmured Dawson.

"Mein gootness! Now tat Tainty will get peans!" said Fritz Splitz. "I tink tat Sammy vill giff him colossal peans!"

Dr. Sparshott came out into the quad, apparently unconscious of the sea of eyes turned on him. His manner was calm and unconcerned, as usual, as he strolled round to his study window. Evidently he was going to speak to the rebel there. The Grimsladers would have given a great deal to hear what was said, but Mr. White and Mr. Redmayes, the two Housemasters, held them back at a distance.

The window was closed. Sammy tapped on the glass, and Jim Dainty's face appeared at a pane within. Dr. Sparshott signed to him to open the window. The rebel hesitated a moment, and then opened the small ventilating pane, so that Sammy could speak to him. Sammy smiled grimly. From a distance all Grimslade watched with breathless interest.

"I fancy it's time to chuck this, Dainty!" said Sammy in his cool drawl.

Dainty set his lips.

"I never did what Peck sent me to you for, sir," he answered.

"I know that," answered Sammy.

"Oh! You know it?" exclaimed Jim.

"I know it because you say so. Peck made a mistake. We all make mistakes," said Dr. Sparshott quietly. "Why not Peck?"

Jim gazed at his headmaster. That was Sammy all over. Mr. Peck, in his angry haste, had refused to listen to the junior's denial. Sammy Sparshott did not make mistakes like that. He knew when a fellow would lie himself out of a scrape, and he knew when a fellow wouldn't. Jim was telling the truth, and Sammy knew it as well as he did.

"But that is immaterial," continued Sammy, in the same calm tone. "Right or wrong, a master has to be obeyed. You did not buzz the ink-ball at Mr. Peck. Granted! But you refused to obey Mr. Peck. That is much more serious. I am not going to cane you for the ink-ball. I am going to give you the thrashing of your life for disobeying a Form master and resisting authority. Got that?"

Jim's teeth set.

"Are you?" he said.

"I am. We never sack a man here," said Sammy, with his whimsical smile. "We manage without that. At any other school you would be expelled on the spot. I've never yet had to kick a fellow out. I hope I shan't have to begin with you. At least, I shall try all other methods first. I've a lot of faith in whopping. Open that door."

"Rats!"

"Ah!" said Sammy thoughtfully. "I see that we shall have to argue." He turned from the window without another word to the rebel. "Mr. White, please ask Sykes to bring his ladder here—the short ladder. Trafford, Yorke, Carter, will you oblige me by climbing in at the window and securing this junior?"

The broad window-sill was six feet from the ground. In a few minutes the Grimslade porter brought the ladder and planted it against the sill. The three prefects approached it, watched breathlessly by the whole school, and from within by Dainty's glinting eyes. Trafford glanced round at Sammy.

"We shall have to break the window, sir."

"Quite!" assented Sammy. "Easier than breaking in the door."

Trafford called to a fag who scudded off to Redmayes' House and returned with an Indian club. The captain of Grimslade mounted the ladder, with Yorke, the House captain of White's, behind him, and Carter of the Sixth behind Yorke.

Crash! Smash! Bang! Crash!

Glass flew in fragments, right and left. An Indian club in a hefty hand did plenty of damage in a very short time. Jim Dainty jumped back as the fragments flew. He grabbed a couple of books from Sammy's shelves. A Greek lexicon and a Latin dictionary were mighty missiles. The rebel stood with one in either hand.

The window was open now. Trafford put a hand through smashed spaces and undid the fastenings. The way was open, and the Grimslade captain put his head in.

Whiz! The lexicon flew. It was Liddell & Scott's Smaller Greek Lexicon. But as it landed on Trafford's

face, he felt as if it was Liddell & Scott's Larger Greek Lexicon—in fact, the largest ever! It fairly swept him backwards, and he rolled off the sill. He clutched out wildly to save himself as he flew, and caught Yorke by the neck and Carter by the hair. Three men of the Sixth went to the ground together, crashing and roaring, and from the breathless crowd that looked on there came another roar.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rotten luck!" said Sammy calmly.

"Try again!"

Trafford & Co. were eager to try again. They scrambled up, crimson with fury, and fairly hurled themselves at the study window. From within came a Latin dictionary, whizzing like a bullet. It caught Yorke under the chin, and stretched him out. Trafford and Carter scrambled in furiously.

But they met with a fierce defence. Jim Dainty had seized the bust of Socrates from the top of the bookcase. He swept it round in both hands, and Carter yelled frantically as he caught it on his chest. He rolled off the sill as if a bullet had hit him.

Dainty swiped again, and barely missed Trafford, who ducked his head in time. In ducking, he sprawled half in the window and half out. Dainty dropped Socrates, grabbed the sash, and dragged it down with all his force. It jammed down on Trafford's back.

"Ooooooogh!" gasped the Grimslade captain, as he was pinned.

"Great gad!" ejaculated Sammy Sparshott.

Trafford wriggled frantically. His legs thrashed the air outside the window. His arms saved the air within. Jim Dainty kept out of reach of the clutching hands. Trafford was

(Continued on page 420.)



"You unruly rascal, come with me!" gasped Mr. Peck. "I won't!" panted Dainty. His legs kicked out and crashed into the blackboard and easel. There was a terrific crack as the blackboard clumped Mr. Peck on the head, and the master of the Fourth gave a wild howl.

THE FOURTH FORM AT GRIMSLADE!

(Continued from page 415.)

pinned. Dainty grabbed the inkstand from the Head's table. Swish! Swooooo! Splash!

"Urrrghh!" gurgled Trafford, as he got the ink.

It drenched him, it smothered him, it almost suffocated him. His face was suddenly turned from crimson to black. Ink was in his eyes, his ears, his nose, his mouth, his hair. He gurgled helplessly and fell back on Yorke and Carter.

The window slammed shut again, and Dainty fastened the catch.

"Thank you," said Sammy. "Perhaps you had better leave it to me."

Sooty!

JIM DAINTY panted. Dr. Sparshott, reaching through a broken pane, unfastened the window. Jim raised a heavy ruler in both hands, and as he did so the Head's cool, clear eyes met his. Slowly he lowered it again. Wildly excited as he was, savagely angry and bitterly determined, there was a limit.

Jim Dainty was not exactly daunted, but he knew that he could not lift his hand against his headmaster. Sammy, cool as ice, proceeded to unfasten the window, and Jim, gritting his teeth, ran across to the fireplace.

The chimney in Dr. Sparshott's study was one of the oldest at Grimslade—a massive relic of the past. It was large and roomy, and within were the old climbing-irons clamped to the sooty sides, used in ancient days by the sweeps who clambered up to clean the interior. There was no fire in the study on that warm, spring day. A log fire was laid, but not lighted, under the huge, old chimney. Jim Dainty kicked it right and left as he ducked into the opening.

The window-sash flew up with a crash; Dr. Sparshott put a long leg in over the window-ledge. Then he shouted:

"Dainty! Stop!"

But Dainty was gone. Sammy, setting his lips, leaped into the study. He darted across to the chimney. Without pausing a moment, he ducked under it, in the hope of grabbing the escaped rebel before he was out of reach. A foot whisked away overhead—he grabbed at it and barely missed. There was a sound of scuffling and scrambling above, and a flood of dislodged soot came swooping down—on Sammy's upturned face.

"Grooogh! Atchooh! Oooooogh! Urrrgh! Oh gad! Ugh!"

Sammy gouged soot from eyes and nose and ears, and gasped. Mr. White and Mr. Redmayes looked in at the window. They jumped at the sight of Sammy staggering to his feet. He was black as the ace of spades.

Sammy tottered away from the clouds of soot that streamed from the chimney. He came in view of the Grimslade crowd from the open window—and the swarm of fellows in the quad gazed at him, almost in stupefaction.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Grimslade fellows really could not help it. The sight of their headmaster, looking like a chimney-sweep after a hard day's work, was rather too much for them. They yelled.

Sammy gave them a sooty glare. He detected lurking smiles on the faces of the Housemasters, even while they coughed and sneezed. Sammy realised that it was really rather ridiculous.

"Watch for that young rascal to escape from the roof!" he snapped. "I—I shall go and get a bath and a change—I need it."

There was a roar in the quad as a head was seen to rise from the chimney-pot. Black as ink, Jim Dainty emerged from the summit. Every neck was craned to look up at him. Resting his

arms on the chimney-pot, Jim rubbed soot from his smarting eyes and stared down into the quad.

Mr. White put his hands to his mouth to form a trumpet and shouted:

"Dainty! Descend at once!"

Dainty made no answer. He dragged himself from the chimney-pot, and all eyes were glued on him. A fall from such a height was death—the rebel was taking reckless risks. Some of the fellows, watching from below, turned quite pale. Dick Dawson hardly breathed. Billy White clenched his hands hard.

Slowly, coolly, the rebel of Grimslade crawled from the wide, old, red chimney-pot, down the stack, to the roof-ridge from which it jutted. There he sat down, astride of the ridge. He was in full view of the crowd below, and with cool impudence he waved his hand to his Housemaster.

"Get Out of Grimslade!"

DR. SPARSHOTT came quietly out into the quad. Bathed and changed, clean as a new pin, Sammy looked his normal self. But his face was set and grim.

In the class-rooms, even in the Sixth, there was deep excitement. Form masters had hard work to deal with their classes. Every fellow was thinking of the rebel of Grimslade, perched, defiant, on the roof of Big School, and wondering what would be the end of it.

Perhaps Samm Sparshott was wondering, too. His face was set, his eyes like cold steel, as he walked out into the quad to get a view of the rebel on the roof. He threw his head back and looked up, and the black and sooty schoolboy far above looked down at him.

"Dainty!" The Head's clear, incisive voice carried the distance, though he did not shout. "You can hear me?"

"I can hear you!"

"You are in danger there."

"I know that!"

"There is no ladder here long enough to reach such a height. You must descend the chimney again."

"I won't!"

Sammy Sparshott breathed hard and



The STABLES CRIME

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deep. Never, since he had been headmaster of Grimslade, had Sammy found a difficulty he could not master. Never had he been driven into "sacking" a Grimslade man. But in the rebel of the Fourth it looked as if Sammy, for the first time, had met a difficulty he could not handle. There was a long silence while Sammy stared steadily up at the rebel, and the rebel stared no less steadily down at Sammy.

The Head spoke at last.

"I cannot allow you to risk life and limb. You are taking an unfair advantage of me, Dainty. You are not playing the game. Fellows who do not play the game are not wanted at Grimslade. Come down while you are safe, and I give you my word that I shall not lay a finger on you."

"That's good enough, sir!"

Jim Dainty rose from his perch and coolly clambered up the chimney-stack again. Dr. Sparshott, from the quad below, watched him with a face of iron, though his heart beat with anxiety. But the boy's nerve seemed of tempered steel. Slowly, steadily, coolly, he clambered back into the wide chimney-pot and disappeared from sight.

Sammy drew a deep, deep breath.

He was in his study when Jim, sooty and suffocated, emerged from the chimney and stood before him, reeking with soot, hardly recognisable. Dr. Sparshott gave him a cold, quiet look.

Jim had expected hot words—angry words—bitter words. He received none. And there was a cool contempt in Sammy's eyes that stung him more than the angriest words could have done.

"Go to your House and clean yourself!" said Sammy quietly.

Slowly the junior left the Head's study. Slowly he went to his own House. It was in a strange, mingled mood that he bathed and changed his clothes in White's House. Dr. Sparshott was waiting for him at the foot of the stairs in White's House.

Jim stole a look at his face—it was quiet and calm, with the same slightly scornful expression on it. The Head signed to him to follow, and walked out of the House.

Dainty followed him into the sunny quad. No one was there—all the fellows were in the class-rooms—only old Sykes was to be seen—at the gates.

Dr. Sparshott came to a stop. Jim stopped, too. He wondered, with a beating heart, what was coming next. Why—a feeling of shame came over him. He struggled against it, but there it was. He had been treated unjustly—he had kicked against injustice—what was there to be ashamed of in that he asked himself savagely.

Yet he was feeling shame—and it brought the colour in a flood to his face.

The Head stood looking at him in grim silence, and Jim, with an unusual trepidation at his heart, waited for him to speak. He broke the silence at last—raising his hand and pointing to the gates.

"You can go!" he said.

"Go!" repeated Jim blankly.

Sammy's lip curled.

"We never sack a man here," he said.

"Never—till now! You've made a record at Grimslade, Dainty, if that's any satisfaction to you."

Jim stood very still.

"Your box will be sent after you. You're not wanted here. Get out of Grimslade."

In silence, like a fellow stunned, Jim Dainty walked down to the gates. Old Sykes looked at him curiously, his hand on the gate.

Jim passed him—and stopped—and looked back.

Clang!

The gate clanged on Jim Dainty—the only fellow who had ever been sacked from Grimslade!

(Jim Dainty sacked! Look out for surprises in next week's top-notch school story—and also for a grand Free photo-plate of the World's Fastest Train.)