

TWO GOOD THINGS NOW ON SALE!

"The Schoolgirls' Own Annual"

PRICE SIX SHILLINGS.



"The Golden Annual for Girls"

PRICE FOUR AND SIXPENCE.

The Schoolgirls' Own 2^d



AN INSULT TO BETTY BARTON & CO.!

An incident from this week's
splendid long complete tale of
Betty Barton & Co.

A Splendid Long Complete Tale of the Morcove Girls in New Surroundings.



THE MAKESHIFT SCHOOL.



By MARJORIE STANTON.

Owing to the act of an unscrupulous schemer, the girls of Morcove are deprived of their old school, and forced to put up with a "make-shift" one. But, thanks to their loyalty to Miss Somerfield, they make no complaint, but are spurred on to fathom the whole mystery.

The Old School for Ever.

"NO, it really doesn't look at all bad, does it?" Polly Linton exclaimed, casting a glance round the room as she sat perched on the edge of the table, swinging her legs. "Even if it isn't quite the same as Study 12—"

"It is a jolly good makeshift, certainly," agreed Betty Barton. "What do you say, Paula darling?"

From a very elegant girl who was lolling back in a deep armchair there came a deep sigh—Paula Creel's only response to the question which had been put to her.

"Poor dear!" grinned Polly. "And she was going to be one of the ever-readies—oh, yes! Ready to put up with any makeshifts, so long as the name of Morcove as a school could be kept going."

"Let her rest," was Helen Craig's mock murmur of compassion. And now Paula Creel spoke pathetically:

"Yes, wather—let me west, geals. All I ask is to be allowed to wecuperate, to keep off the thwcatened bweakdown, bai Jove, I am vewy weavy. Not a wink of sleep last night."

"Oh, Paula!"

"Not one wink, geals, or I would not be the weck, the wuin I am to-day. Ah, dear!"

"This," said Betty, "is very sad. What can we do about her?"

"Yes, what?" Polly repeated, with a mischievous look that was strangely at variance with her tone of deep sympathy. "How do you feel, Paula?"

"Dweadful—dweadful, Polly deah. I have a sense of uttah pwestwation, bai Jove. Pwobably I have owtaxed my stwngth."

"Could you come for a walk, poor darling?"

"I couldn't cwawl a yard," sighed Paula, feebly resetting her pretty head against a cushion.

"Could you drink a cup of tea?"

"Eh, what? Bai Jove!" And suddenly Paula was very much alive. "Yes, wather! Tea, geals—hooway! Haw, haw, haw! Of course—tea!"

"Well, there's none to be had here until half-past four," Polly teased cheerfully. "And it is now two o'clock. Only two hours and a half to wait, dear."

Paula groaned.

"If you geals wealised that I was nevah made for woughing it!" she complained drearily. "Oh, for a cup of tea!"

"Never owe for anything, Paula," advised Polly. "Much better pay for a cup of tea—at Barncombe Creamery. Are you coming, because we girls—"

"What? Going to wide into Barncombe?" Paula exclaimed, sitting up again. "Oh, hooway! Wight-ho, yes, wather! Bai Jove, geals, what a delight it will be to see the tea-woom again at Barncombe!"

At this instant dusky Naomer Nakara closed the picture book which had been fascinating her, and boisterously jumped up from her chair.

"Ooo, yes, queek—queek—Barncombe!" she clamoured jubilantly; and in her excitement she playfully clapped the book to the crown of Paula Creel's head. "You dear old duffer—"

"Naowmer!" yelled Paula. "Dwop it! Now then, pway keep away! No-ow—"

"He, he, he! You give me ze piggy-back like this, all ze way to Barncombe!" Naomer laughed, having taken a spring on to Paula's back. "Goo-hun, zen! That is what they say to the horses on ze farm where Dolly Delane lives!"

"Dear old Doll; she is due here any day now, isn't she?" Helen Craig remarked, whilst they all began to get their things on for the jaunt into Barncombe. "Of course, she has heard all about the plight we are in—"

"Yet how amazed she will be when she gets to Morcove's temporary school!" chimed in Betty. "Girls, we must find room for Doll in this study of ours."

"Bai Jove, wather!" Paula agreed heartily, but breathlessly, now that she had rid herself of Naomer. "A wegular bwick, Dolly Delane! The same self-wealiant spiwit, bai Jove, that we all have."

"We?" questioned Polly. "Oh, of course, if you say so, Paula! But who was it, this morning, making such a complaint because the room was too dark for her to dress?"

"Now, Polly dear!" Paula protested. "Polly, I nevah complained. I nevah do complain—"

"Oh" came from the rest of the girls.

"Not without reason," Paula blandly toned down her extravagant assertion. "But when a geal who takes some pwide in her appearence is weduced to the extwemity of—"

"Ah, bah, you talk too much ze big word!" scoffed her Serene Highness the girl Queen of Nakara. "Queek, everybody, let us go!"

Polly opened the door.

"By the right—quick, march!" she gaily gave the order; but there was very little marching in the way they all went along to the stairs.

A bo'isterous scamper best describes the chums' mode of pelting down through the makeshift schoolhouse and so into the open air. Another minute, and they were riding away upon their bicycles.

This was only the third day Betty & Co., along with a good proportion of other Morcovians, had been installed at Sawnton House. The first full day's classes had been worked yesterday, but this afternoon a "halfer" had been granted, as a reward to the girls for the way they were "sticking it."

And certainly the schoolgirl inmates of Sawnton House—that old barrack of a place!—deserved recognition of the spirit they were maintaining.

Not one of them wanted to go home whilst things were in such a difficult state. Anybody might have supposed that Paula Creel's continual lamentations meant that she wished herself well out of it all. But those who knew Paula best could tell how "howwified" she would have been had she been wired for to return to her parents.

In starting off for this cycle-ride to Barncombe, the chums were certainly making the best possible use of the "halfer."

Hockey? How on earth could they play hockey at Sawnton House, when there was hardly space anywhere for even a game of rounders?

The windows from which the girls looked out at the temporary school showed them farmed fields coming close up to the walls of the old mansion. The private park had been ploughed up during the war to grow extra corn. Tennis courts had been dug up at the same time to grow vegetables.

No one had ever come to live at the neglected mansion since those days, and probably Sawnton House would have gone on standing empty and ruinous, if this strange state of affairs had not occurred at Morcove School.

That magnificent pile of buildings, replete with everything to make it one of the finest schools in the country—closed against the scholars!

It was a state of things that had caused such a sensation.

Famous Morcove School—not closed on account of anything being wrong with the property, but closed because the governors of the school had lost all claim to it!

Never before had such a strange case been known. It was what the lawyers called a question of title, difficult for Betty and the rest to understand. But they did understand this much. Someone had come forward and established a right to every stick and stone of the property that was known as Morcove School. In vain the governors had first tried to fight the claim, and then done their best to come to terms.

The law could do nothing for them, and the

calamitous thing was that the other side was without mercy. Why that was, Betty & Co. happened to know, perhaps, better than any other girls at present at Sawnton House.

They did not care to talk about this aspect of the matter too freely, even amongst themselves. But it was never out of their minds. At this very moment, when they were pedalling along the road to Barncombe—a road that would take them past the closed gates of Morcove School—they were thinking bitterly, sadly, of the cruel campaign of revenge which had caused the great upset.

"Look there, girls!" Polly exclaimed mournfully, as they came in sight of the old school from a viewpoint that showed them the whole romantic world of Morcove, spread out before them like a map. "Our school—and we dare not enter it now!"

"I wish to goodness," sighed Betty, "we were not compelled to ride past the old familiar gateway every time we go from Sawnton House to Barncombe. It is going to—hurt."

Madge Minden said softly:

"Yes. And, of course, it is meant to hurt us. Those horrid people who have caused the upset—they are striking at poor Miss Somerfield through us, her scholars."

This was received with nods of assent by the other girls. Madge Minden, in her serious, sober way, had put the case in a nutshell. Revenge upon Miss Somerfield was what the claimants to the property wanted. And, how better could that revenge be achieved, it was evident they had said to themselves, than by throwing the entire school into such a state of chaos? With the welfare of the school and of every scholar so dear at heart to her, cruel was Miss Somerfield's suffering indeed, at the present time.

The chums took a run downhill very carefully and without talking—for it was rather a difficult descent, that last hillside before getting to the gates of Morcove School. In any case, they felt too sick at heart for talk. Only too gladly would they have ridden past the familiar gateway with eyes shut tightly, if such a thing had been practicable.

Then suddenly they saw that the closed gates were adorned with a big placard. Curiosity got the better of all their painful emotions, and the girls simply had to dismount, to see exactly what the announcement said.

Leaving their machines along a bank on the other side of the road, they crossed over and came close to the closed gates, and a sort of tearful rage seized every one of them as they read:

This fine property
(LATE MORCOVE SCHOOL)
FOR SALE!
Apply to Owner,
in residence.

"Shame!" seethed Polly, stamping a foot. "Oh, how I would like to—"

She got no further with her passionate outburst. Some jeering laughter rang out, and as it did so two girls showed their heads and shoulders above the top of the high wall, grinning from ear to ear as they gazed down exultantly, mockingly, at the maddened Morcovians.

The Lupina Girls at Home.

"HALLO, you schoolgirls with no school to go to!" laughed the elder of the two girls, from the top of the wall. "How do you like it now, at Sawnton House?"

"So very comfortable, is it not?" jeered the

other. "Such a lot of room to play the hockey—oh, yes!"

Both girls were remarkably fluent in their use of the British tongue. There was only the faintest trace of foreign mannerisms, now and then. But in looks they were distinctly foreign.

South America was the country that had given them their birth, and they could certainly boast the striking good looks which are to be found amongst most South American girls.

These sisters—for they were sisters—had that astounding beauty which goes with Spanish blood. Betty & Co. had the best of reasons for detesting the couple; but the chums would never deny that Jose Lupina and her younger sister, Zilla, were dazzlingly lovely girls.

"You English girls, you are all for the sport, are you not?" Zilla mocked again. "Well, there are the most perfect playing-fields here at Morcove School! Oh, yes, we think you would like to be here ver' much!"

"When are you going to move back to Morcove School?" asked the elder one, showing all her pearly teeth as she hums over the wall. "You stupid, not to do what we told you! You could have been back here by now!"

"No doubt," Betty could not help exclaiming scornfully. "If we had liked to desert our headmistress."

"Well, who is she that you should bother about her, the silly old fool?" Zilla jeered. "Aha, she knows that it means now to have an enemy in Senor Manuel Lupina! It is not ended yet!"

"We can say that just as well as you!" Polly retorted fiercely. "Before it does end, you and your horrid parents may be looking small!"

At this, both the girls throw up their pretty heads and pealed with laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! How silly you are! When even the law of your own country says we are right—this place is ours! Run away and play the hockey, stupid!"

"Bai Jove!" breathed Paula, gazing up at the mockers indignantly. "Pwidge goes before a fall, pway remember. I would like to see one of you tumble down fwom that wall, and—"

"Come on, dear!" Betty checked the elegant one, with a gentle nudge. "After all, it's only wasting breath to bandy words with those wretches."

It was at once apparent that to stay in talk only meant gratifying the Lupina girls' gloating delight. As Betty and the rest turned to go back to the bicycles, Zilla Lupina did her best to goad them into a battle of words.

"What do you call that black-faced thing there?" was her insulting reference to little Naomer. "Morcove was never a school, but a monkey-house. Ha, ha, ha!"

Picking a loose fragment of mortar from the wall-top, she aimed it at the chums, but it went very wide of the mark. They saw her leaning over to pick away another bit of cement, and now Polly walked back towards the wall.

"What are you going to do with that?" Polly asked, whilst she edged closer and closer.

"I am going to throw it at Blackface, see?" grinned Zilla Lupina.

"Are you?" said Polly. "Then I am going to do—that!"

And with the word she jumped high and fetched Zilla a lightning open-handed smack on the cheek.

Zilla shrieked with rage. They must have been the most savage epithets that she started yelling at the chums, whilst she shook her tiny

fit, but Betty & Co. were laughing much too loudly for the raving voice to be distinct.

They mounted their machines and rode away, still chucking as they heard both sisters calling after them abusively. Paula was one perpetual "Haw, haw, haw!" whilst even Madge, the staid one of the party, had to laugh at great length. Polly had so obviously done the very thing to take the couple down a peg or so when she gave Zilla that well-deserved slap.

Zilla Lupina was indeed seething with rage as she dropped down from the wall, along with her sister, to go up the drive to the schoolhouse.

The hot blood of their race had been brought to boiling-point. They were girls who had no



NO LONGER THEIR SCHOOL!

As Betty & Co. turned away, a peal of jeering laughter broke out, and two girls showed their heads and shoulders above the top of the high wall, grinning as they mocked the maddened Morcovians.

idea of playing the game, and unless they had everything their own way they could be trusted to become very furious.

"That one who smacked my face—ah, if I could get her to myself, away from her friends!" Zilla whispered fiercely.

"They are like all the English—those girls," muttered the elder sister, her dark eyes flashing. "They do a thing straight out; not like us, who despise such methods. It is much, much better to strike a blow in secret, Zilla!"

"Oh, much better," the other assented, and she tossed her head with pride in the revengeful race to which she and her sister belonged. "We have

see how fine it is to be clever, in what our father and mother have done."

Jose nodded.

"Yes, Zilla; I call that something to be proud of—the way our parents have waited and waited for years and years, and then struck—so!"

She illustrated her meaning by imitating the striking of a dagger.

"Into the very heart of that Somerfield woman—just so!" Zilla nodded and smiled. "Well, in the same way, Jose, we must not forget what that English girl did to me just now. Revenge, Jose!"

"When we get our chance—yes! Listen, Zilla!" the elder spoke on craftily, drawing closer to confide her cunning ideas. "It would be nice to get that girl to fall into a trap we shall set for her. We will get her to come alone to this place that used to be Morcove School, and then—"

"Revenge! All right, yes," Zilla nodded, recovering her spirits as quickly as she had lost them. "You and I, Zilla, we always agree, do we not? And anything that those girls do to one of us it is done to both!"

Zilla nodded, and they now roamed on together very affectionately. That, again, was part of their passionate foreign nature—to be so very demonstrative in their regard for each other. Each had an arm round the other's waist as they sauntered to the porch of what used to be Morcove School.

All was very quiet about the place to-day. No wonder, when buildings capable of housing hundreds of scholars held only the Lupina family and their foreign servants!

It would have fairly broken the heart of the Morcovians could they have seen the disgraceful state into which the dear old school had already fallen. Very likely the Lupinas were deliberately letting the place go to rack and ruin. They were people of tremendous wealth, and Senor Manuel Lupina was not going to care how much he was out of pocket in the long run, provided he got his revenge!

Arrived indoors, Jose and Zilla made for what used to be Miss Somerfield's beautiful drawing-room. It was richly furnished now, but had not the old-time look of refinement and charm. Nor was the one lady who was here—if one may call her a lady—the least bit like the sweet and gracious one whose room this used to be.

This present occupant of the drawing-room, the mother of the Lupina girls, had doubtless been as beautiful as they were to-day in her youth.

"Ah, my dears," the mother greeted the two girls, with a smile that brought out a double chin, "what was so amusing you just now, then? I hear you laughing loud—"

"Mother, it was because some of those school-girls went by the gates," Jose was only too delighted to explain. "Zilla and I were there at the moment, so we climbed on to the wall and teased them."

"So?" Madame Lupina responded in a pleased way. "Quite right, my dears. Always laugh at them and tease them when you meet! Even as I would laugh at that mistress of theirs if I had her here now—yes, and if she wept, I would laugh all the more!"

The woman's face had suddenly darkened; her bright, dark eyes were narrowed under knitted brows. Such a sudden passion of hatred against Miss Somerfield was this that had seized the woman she seemed to swell with anger.

Then suddenly she let her breath go in a laugh and shrugged.

"Ah, well! All goes splendidly, my dears, so come, kiss me, and then run away and let me have my sleep. This country—Bah, I yawn all day, it is such weary weather they have!"

That she was a proud and pampering mother there was not the least doubt. Admiringly she eyed each beautiful daughter as the pair turned back to the door. She must have been thinking how well they wore the fine clothes that a bottomless purse provided, and with what a proud step they walked.

Outside the drawing-room Zilla suddenly exclaimed to her sister:

"Come on, Jose, let us go upstairs and have some fun in one of the studies! Shall we?"

"Then let it be one of those studies that what they call the Fourth Form used to have," Jose answered, scampering off with her sister. "Remember, we are going to set a trap for one of them. If only we can get her here—"

"And let her see what the studies are like now. Ah, that will be fine!" exclaimed Zilla. "I believe I know which one it is that the girl was in who smacked my face. Wait, I will show you!"

Hurrying up the big staircase, in a few moments they were prancing along the corridor that used to resound so often with the happy voices and light laughter of the Fourth Form scholars. Now the place was like a city of the dead, except for these two girls.

"Study 12—here we are!" Zilla broke out, smiling her malicious smile. "On the day all the scholars were being turned away from Morcove, I heard those girls talking about Study 12. This was their study then, so let's make it ready in case one of them comes back some day."

Poor old Study 12!

Well for Betty & Co. that they knew nothing of the wanton mischief that was being done to it just then. Perhaps they never would know how these two girls, in their sudden burst of animosity, did their best to make the empty room look more forlorn than ever that afternoon.

But what was the bit of mischief which was taking place at Sawnton House at precisely the same moment? Betty & Co. were to know all about that soon enough.

About half-past five they got back to the temporary school, feeling pretty tired after the long cycle ride into Barncombe and back. Paula was by no means the only one who looked forward to a good sit down in the room upstairs that did duty as a study for the whole lot of them. Wearily they dragged upstairs, and even Polly was too fagged out to make any impetuous run in advance of the others as the landing was reached.

So, in a big batch, they passed round to their study door, and then— They stopped dead and stared aghast.

"My goodness!" panted Polly at last, whilst the others also gave voice to their surprise and anger.

"Good gracious, geals!"

"The cheek! The the— Oh—"

"If they aren't the limit! Those Fifth Form girls—"

"Yes, wather! Bai Jove—"

"Disgraceful!"

For there, just outside the closed door, were dumped all the Fourth Form chums' personal belongings, making a huge pyramid of lumber, on the top of which was the glaring notice:

"DUSTMAN, PLEASE COLLECT!"

Fifth Formers, Too!

A COUPLE of affected voices became audible from the study as Betty & Co.'s burst of indignant exclamations died away.

The angry chums looked at one another, and some pretty mouths were set hard in a firm line. "Well, we'll go in," said Betty, ending the tense pause.

"Yes, wather! What an outrageous thing, bai Jove! I can see valuable pproperty of mine looking absolutely wuined!"

Betty threw open the study door without ceremony and strode inside, her chums crowding upon her heels.

The two girls who had "seized" the study broke off their talk to gaze in bland surprise at the rightful claimants to the room.

"What do you kids want?" asked Anna Silke, repressing a teasing smile. "Nothing here of yours."

"No, outside, please," Millie Ashwell bade the Fourth-Formers with an airy wave.

"Anna—Millie," the Fourth Form captain said very steadily, "this is our study."

"Oh, no!"

"Oh, yes! This is one of the rooms that were allotted to the Fourth on the day we came to Sawnton House. We know you would have liked to bag it for yourselves, but—"

"We have bagged it," said Anna coolly. "So what are you going to do about it? Girls who tell tales are horrid!"

Then the chums smiled scornfully. In that remark of Anna's they discerned a fear lest they should complain to Miss Redgrave.

"We would never dream of bothering a mistress about a thing like this," said Betty. "We shall not make any fuss—"

"How perfectly sweet of you!" Millie Ashwell exclaimed serenely. "Good little girls!"

"There are seven of us," Polly remarked, rather unfortunately, as it happened, for Anna at once commented:

"We are seven," as the poet says. Seven little Fourthites, all in a row; we bagged their study, and so they had to go!"

This was getting too aggravating for the chums. To be twitted about their juniorship by girls who, after all, were only a year older, was always a red rag to Betty & Co.

They suddenly advanced farther into the room, leaving the doorway clear.

"You must clear out of here!" Betty stated flatly.

"Oh, no!"

"You must please—"

"We have no intention," declared Anna, "of doing anything of the sort. So that's that!"

"And this is this!" Betty retorted, suddenly giving a sign which her chums well understood.

In a flash, Anna and Millie were ringed about by the indignant Fourth-Formers. The two girls began to fend their juniors off, but the chums were roused spirits. They instantly had the too-audacious pair held fast.

"You intended to stay here, did you? Then stay you shall!"

Betty laughed grimly whilst she hooked open a cupboard door with one foot, still retaining her hold on Anna Silke, along with Polly and Tess. The others were holding Millie.

"In with them—yes, yes!" chuckled Polly, and Naomer shrieked with delight:

"Ooo, yes—queek, queek! He, he, he!"

"Don't be so ridiculous!" Anna now began to protest loftily, finding herself hustled towards the spacious cupboard. "Do you think we are going to be treated like this?"

"You wouldn't go when you were told. Now you'll go when it suits our convenience to let you go!" said Betty.

And next moment—really, Anna Silke thought it too bad! She was bundled into the cupboard. She, a Fifth Form scholar!

Millie joined her there after a feeble struggle. The ensuing commotion was rather like that made by people catching hens and cooping them; but at last—

Slam! went the cupboard door, and all was quiet.

"Haw, haw, haw!" Paula chuckled, promptly flopping down to take a breather. "How wick, how good!"

They were all on the grim—even sober Madge. Anna and Millie's high-handed action had let them in for a humiliation for which they had long been asking.

Quickly the chums fetched back their cast-out belongings, carefully preserving the large card-board ticket, which said: "Dustman, please collect." There would be a use for that presently!

Meantime, Anna and Millie had to swallow their pride and start rapping and imploring to be let out.

"Can you hear a noise from that cupboard?" Polly asked her chums roughly.

"Yes, wather!"

"I suppose it's some nasty creatures in there," Polly remarked in the same loud tone as before. "These old houses always do have objectionable things like mice and rats."

"Let us out!" shrilled Anna and Millie.

"It's my belief," said Helen, "there are two cats in that cupboard. Such a scratching and dashing about!"

"Haw, haw haw!"

"Take no notice," grinned Betty, and the work of restoring the room went on gaily. "They are not worth troubling about."

"Oh, no, a couple of poor creatures like that. No home to go to, poor dears!" Tess said.

This sort of thing, all perfectly audible to Anna and Millie, was simply too maddening. Bad temper getting the better of dignity, they stormed and hammered at the cupboard door, threatening the most direful things unless they were released.

"Then why were you such naughty children?" Polly chided them severely, in a motherly tone. "At your ages you should know better. But there, one never can get any sense out of Fifth-Formers!"

Paula went off into another fit of chuckling.

"Bai Jove, haw, haw haw! I nevah was more amused, geals! Haw, haw, haw!"

Anna and Millie, for their part, could never have been more exasperated. The fact that they ceased their banging to be let out only meant that their anger had got past actions or words.

At last, when the study was looking its nice, orderly self again, the chums softly debated the next step. They had now to take out the captives—a different thing from letting them go free. Some fresh rumpus was to be expected, but the girls did not anticipate more trouble than they could manage.

Betty unlocked the cupboard door. Two or three of her chums stood nearby, to see that it



THE HEADMISTRESS'S SORROW!

Betty stood stock still in the French windows, seized with a sudden hesitation. Alone there, in her private room, Miss Somerfield, the headmistress, was sitting at her desk—weeping!

did not fly open and let the captives out with a rush.

As a fact, Anna felt she must do the dignified thing and simply walk out, head in air. So did Millie. Their minds were made up. They must stalk away, promising themselves tit for tat some other time.

But Betty & Co. were not forgetting that important placard and the use that could be made of it. Three of them promptly seized Anna as she came out of the cupboard. Three others did the like with Millie.

"Now what are you doing, you absurd things?" Anna said contemptuously.

"You'll see!"

Nor was it another moment before the crest-fallen Fifth-Formers saw, only too clearly, what the crowning indignity was to be.

First their hands were tied behind them with handkerchiefs, then Millie was made to stand behind Anna.

The latter, being the foremost of the pair, now had a certain cardboard placard suspended round her neck by a piece of tape. Thus adorned, she was led to the door and gently but firmly sent forth into the outer world, as it were, her chest adorned with the inscription:

"DUSTMAN, PLEASE COLLECT!"

The chums felt they were fully entitled to enjoy their little joke. Anna and Millie had asked for it. And so, as that foolish-looking pair scurried away, desperately wriggling their bound wrists to get them free, whilst Anna's placard flopped and waggled violently at her chest, peal after peal of laughter followed them.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Another time, you two, perhaps you'll think twice before taking liberties with *our* study!" cried Polly mirthfully.

"Yes, wather; haw, haw, haw!"

Then the door of the disputed room was closed, and all was peace again.

Cora Pays a Call.

THAT same evening a certain girl belonging to the Fourth Form took out the motorcycle and sidecar that she always had with her at school and rode away from Sawnton House.

The girl was Cora Grandways; Cora, the ever-treacherous, the standing enemy of the Form captain and her loyal following.

The sidecar held no passenger this evening. Cora's own sister Judith was at Sawnton House, but when did the sisters ever go out together now?

In any case, this particular trip with the famous "outfit" was one that Cora had a secret reason for wanting to enjoy alone.

Hilly roads that Betty & Co. had found so trying, riding "push-bikes," were nothing to Cora, astride her powerful machine. Uphill and downhill she careered along, in her usual fly-away style, soon leaving behind her the few miles that separated Sawnton House from what used to be Morcove School.

And there, at the old familiar gateway, Cora pulled up.

It was something that wore a sinister appearance—for this girl to be unlatching the big iron gates and standing them open, so that she could then drive the "outfit" up the gravelled approach to the grand old schoolhouse.

She, one of the scholars who had been banned the place; one of the girls who had the best reason for regarding the one-time school as an absolute enemy camp these days, and yet she was paying this visit!

Why?

What would other Morcove girls have thought of it all, had they known?

With a quiet engine, the mischief-worker of the Form came slowly up to the porch, and there alighted. Bold as brass, she jangled the porch bell to announce her presence, and showed no nervousness, even when a forbidding-looking foreign woman—one of the Lupinas' servants—came to the door.

"Can I see the two girls who live here now?" Cora asked, with an air.

The woman did not answer. Perhaps she could not speak English well enough to care about engaging in talk, or it may have been her sulky disposition that made her sign to Cora to enter.

Thus, after all, one Morcove girl at least had gained re-admittance to the old familiar walls. Cora Grandways was beneath that roof which Senor Manuel Lupina had decreed should never shelter any Morcove scholar again, unless—

Unless what?

There were those who knew the one condition on which he would suffer Morcove School to be restored to its couple of hundred scholars. Let them agitate for a new headmistress; let him see Miss Somerfield cast off by her own scholars, her career ruined, utterly ruined, and then Morcove should be theirs again!

But Cora was not one of those who knew about this. She was only here this evening because she wanted to find out what Betty & Co. knew!

She was shown into a sitting-room, and hardly had the servant withdrawn before Jose Lupina came in, head up, and walking with her usual high step.

Hostilely she looked at the schoolgirl, not knowing Cora for what she was, but deeming her like all the rest—loyal to Miss Somerfield.

"Well, what do you want?"

"As insolently as that Jose Lupina addressed the visitor, at the same time standing to show herself off, as it were, to that girl.

"You are one of the girls who came to Sawnton House the other evening," Cora questioned softly, "to have a talk with Betty Barton and her friends?"

"Are you another of them?" Jose returned contemptuously. "Sent here, I suppose, with some message from that stupid captain-girl!"

Then Cora started a grin.

"I like to hear you call Betty Barton that, Jose Lupina. Friend of hers, you ask me! Not much! I am no friend of Betty Barton's—anything but! You've only to ask anyone who knows the school, and they'll tell you how much love is lost between Betty Barton and Cora Grandways!"

"That is your name—Cora Grandways? Oh, you must sit, then," Jose said, betraying just the least foreign touch, as usual, in her speech. "We ought to be friends, is it not?"

Cora smiled as she sat down.

"I think you are so different from those other girls," Jose remarked, smiling.

"I should hope I am!" Jose laughed, with a disdainful shrug. "My people like me to be different. Any girl can play hockey and tennis. I've a sister who goes in for all that rot, silly that she is. Where is your sister, by the way?"

"She will come in a minute," Jose said. "When you come, we are just dressing for dinner. I am finished and she is not. But tell me, why did you come?"

"To be quite plain, I thought I'd like to know what you said to Betty Barton and the rest the other evening," Cora said frankly. "I happened to hear them talking rather angrily after you had gone, as if—as if you had made some suggestion that made them feel mad."

Jose Lupina lolled her head back to enjoy a laugh, as she lounged in an easy chair.

"They were savage with me and Zilla—oh, yes, we could tell that! No matter! As we said to them, it was our last word before we came away; they will perhaps change their minds in the end, yes!"

"About what?" Cora asked, bending forward in her eagerness to ferret out the position.

"I do not mind telling you in the least," Jose answered, shrugging up her pretty shoulders. "You do know that it is a—how you call it—an old grudge against your headmistress that has made my father do what he has?"

"Yes, the whole school seems to feel there is something like that behind it all."

"Well, then," Jose went on, "we only give Betty Barton and the rest a—what is the English word, once more? A—"

"A tip?"

"Ha, ha! Yes, a tip!" laughed Jose. "We give them the tip that Senor Manuel Lupina would let this place be used as a school once more, only—there must be another headmistress! On that one condition—"

"If Miss Somerfield is dismissed by the governors—"

"And they will dismiss her, surely, if the scholars all say she must go! Surely," Jose rushed on, with a sudden vehemence, "if the girls all complain that it is only Miss Somerfield who is keeping them out of this school? You understand, do you?"

"Oh, perfectly!" Cora answered, looking delighted at having acquired the key to the whole situation. "I see! And what you really want is someone to start the girls agitating for Miss Somerfield's dismissal?"

"Yes, that is so—that is it!" Jose nodded vehemently. "And you—would you, perhaps—"

Cora laughed softly.

"Well, I wouldn't mind! I never mind doing anything that offers a bit of fun! And then, too, anything that riles Betty Barton—you know what I mean by that?"

Before Jose could answer, the door opened and Zilla came in, very daintily and expensively dressed.

With an excited smile Jose started up from her chair, giving a graceful pass with one slender arm to indicate Cora.

"Zilla, is it not splendid? Here is a girl who belongs to the school, yet she will be on our side!"

In a flash the younger sister was looking round-eyed with joyful surprise. She quickly crossed over to Cora, first seizing her by both hands, and then kissing her.

"How loffy of you!" Zilla said, speaking, as usual, with rather more of an accent than her sister had. "Ah, you we shall be friends with, ver' much!"

"It is just what we wished," Jose exclaimed delightedly. "Someone to be on our side, yet with the other girls all the time!"

"Ah, yes!" Zilla agreed, with enthusiasm. "If our friend could stay to dinner, then, we shall like it, Jose?"

Cora could not do that, however. She was not going to explain that she must be back at Saw-



A TRAITRESS'S WORK! "Betty, do look!" cried Polly, leading the way. "It's awful—disgraceful!" A little knot of girls stood staring at the base suggestion which had been chalked on the wall by an unknown hand.

son House before dark, so she pleaded that she had a lot of work that must be done that evening. Some other time she would be delighted to come again and let her new-found friends entertain her.

Less than fifteen minutes later she was going off, with just sufficient time to be sure of getting in before dark. Much can be discussed in fifteen minutes, and Cora Grandways knew a good deal, and knew exactly what was expected of her, as she rode away, looking back half-way down the drive to see Jose and Zilla waving her good luck!

The motor-cycle raced along in the gloaming, and the rush of wind fanned a face that was set in a hard and crafty expression.

At last! That was Cora Grandways' dominant thought as she rode along. At last she was to have a most wonderful chance of gratifying her long-baffled delight in hitting at Betty Barton & Co.

Never mind that the thing she had undertaken to do was bound to work for the school's undoing, if success crowned her efforts. To Cora, all that mattered was that she should triumph over girls whom she hated as much as they despised her.

Full well she knew that the measure of any distress that Miss Somerfield suffered would be the measure of Betty & Co.'s grief and anxiety. They were all standing up for the headmistress. They simply adored her. For them to find the other girls' loyalty being slowly undermined, and the headmistress in danger of being regarded as a stumbling block to the school's return to Morocco—it would just about drive them crazy!

Cora turned in at the shabby entrance to old Sawnton House just as dark night was closing over the fields. No one else was about. She put her motor-cycle in the ramshackle shed that was doing duty as a cycle-store, and went with her mincing step towards the front door.

Then suddenly she was seized with a daring idea that made her draw away from the door and go stealthily round to one of the side walls of the old house.

Peering about, she soon found what she wanted—a piece of the chalk which was mixed with the soil of a neglected flower-bed.

And the use to which Cora put that bit of chalk, in the next minute or so, was one which made her go indoors at last, smiling her crafty smile.

She, the traitress in the school, had lost no time in getting to work. Something had been done by her already that would surely bear good fruit!

If Only they Could Help Her.

NEXT morning, Sawnton House awoke to what it knew, was going to be a day of proper school routine.

After breakfast there were ample signs that the girls now expected to settle down to the term's work in real earnest.

Those who felt free to do so, did a dash out of doors for a breath of fresh air before going into class. Others began the old last-minute hunt round this or that study for books, favourite pens, and so on.

This last ten minutes before assembly found all but one of the Study 12 coterie in the open air. Betty—she happened to be wanted by Miss Redgrave, in the latter's room; but it was nothing very particular, and the Form captain was soon hurrying away to rejoin her chums.

She expected to find them taking a turn on the country road, there being nowhere else for the girls to disport themselves.

Yet there was no complaining, and Betty was just thinking what a comfort it must be to Miss

Somerfield to see things going on so smoothly and cheerfully, when she got a painful shock.

On a flagged path near the house the Fourth-Form captain suddenly encountered the headmistress herself, and that much-to-be-pitied lady looked, oh, how upset!

Agitatedly, and clearly on the verge of tears, she was coming along the flagstones, to go in by some French windows to her sanctum. Betty felt horribly uncomfortable. She had no time in which to turn back, and yet she could imagine how her headmistress would hate to be seen in such a state of emotion.

In the end, the scholar simply shrank aside and looked down, so that Miss Somerfield could pass by without feeling bound to stop and speak. Their eyes did not meet. For the first time in her life, Betty Barton was passed by in silence like this by her beloved headmistress. Not a word nor yet a glance!

Impulsively Betty suddenly turned about and went along the paved walk to the French windows. Then, in the very act of stepping into the room, she stood stock-still, seized with fresh hesitation.

Alone there in the dingy room that had become her private study at Sawnton House, Miss Somerfield was sitting sorrowfully at her desk—weeping!

Betty crept away as silently as she had come, but only to return once more. She would go in—it was the right thing to do!

"Miss Somerfield, please, may I— Oh, Miss Somerfield!" she floundered, feeling ready to give way to tears herself, such a sorrow-stricken face was that which now confronted her. "I had to come in. I— You are so upset—so worried and sad!"

With brimming eyes the troubled headmistress gazed at this girl, than whom there was no dearer scholar in the school.

"Dear Betty," came the heartfelt exclamation. "Ah, I know how you at least feel for me—you and your chums."

"The whole school feels for you, Miss Somerfield," Betty answered earnestly. "If only we could all do more than just feel so very sorry!"

"You think there is not a scholar who does not sympathise, dear? Ah, I wish I could think so, too. But—"

Another rush of tears made the unhappy principal turn aside; nor did she again look at Betty. With head still averted, she entreated brokenly:

"Leave me, dear Betty. I am ashamed for you to see me so upset. But, oh, there has been a cruel shock for me this morning—a crueler one than ever."

What did this mean? Only anxious that she might show how she felt for her stricken mistress, Betty advanced a step, with a look imploring confidence. Those sad eyes were still averted, however, and at last Betty turned and passed from the room, her own head drooping sorrowfully.

How awful it all was—how cruel!

So she was thinking as she slowly paced the paved walk that would bring her amongst her chums, no doubt. They must be coming in from the road now, as it was so close upon the time for assembly.

Above all, she wondered what had taken place this very morning to deal the hapless headmistress a greater blow than ever. Had there been some letter from the Lupinas? Some letter, perhaps, full of heartless taunts and wicked threats? What else could be behind those helpless tears of poor Miss Somerfield, her distracting grief and—

Betty's sad musings took flight as she took a right-angle turn in the paved walk that showed

her a big crowd of scholars, with Polly and her other dear chums amongst them. They were all grouped close to a side wall of the house, and were in great excitement about something. A dozen tongues were going at once, and every voice was tense.

"Betty—oh, Betty, do come and look!" Polly rushed at her to entreat excitedly. "It's awful—disgraceful! We are wondering who did it! Look there, Betty—look!"

And the Form captain, staring in the direction indicated, saw what was holding the eyes of all. There, on the house wall, some hand had chalked the base suggestion:

"THE HEADMISTRESS MUST GO!"

The Writing on the Wall.

DASTARDLY thing for anyone to have chalked upon the wall!

Who, then, was the culprit? Who was it? That was Betty's immediate and furious thought—the same thought that was bringing such indignant looks to the faces of other girls.

How long most of the scholars had stood staring at the offensive words the Fourth-Form captain did not know. It could have been for only a little while, however, or they would have got over the first shock of it all by this time.

Only now did some of them shake off the spell-binding effect of the surprise and make a sudden dart to commence rubbing out the chalked inscription. Ethel Courtney, the head girl of Morcove, was one who did this. Polly Linton and Madge and Tess were others. Betty herself pressed forward to take a hand in the good work.

But, ah, easy though it was for such eager hands to remove all traces of the writing, who amongst them all could ever forget that it had been there for every passing eye to see?

"The headmistress must go!" And why—why was that outrageous suggestion being made?

The chums, at any rate, could guess. Here was the first attempt to stir up the school against its own beloved headmistress. The scholars who were having to put up with such trying conditions at Sawnton House—they were to be reminded, like this, that Morcove School could be theirs again, whenever they liked to agitate successfully for Miss Somerfield's removal!

Betty suddenly nudged some of her chums and drew them clear of the crowd of scholars.

"Girls, from something I saw just now," the Form captain whispered to Polly and the rest, "I believe poor Miss Somerfield herself saw that writing on the wall."

"Oh, no!" was Madge's pained murmur. "If she did—"

"It was awful," sighed Betty. "I found her in such a state—crying. She was more broken down than I have ever seen her before. She spoke, too, of having received a crueler blow than ever this morning."

"Then it must have been that!" Polly exclaimed tensely. "Oh, how awful for her indeed!"

"But who did it—who?" Helen Craig questioned fiercely. "The wretch ought to be found—"

"If we do find out who it was, we'll deal with the hateful creature ourselves," Betty declared grimly. "Could it have been any girl at the school, though?"

"Who else could it have been?" sighed Polly. "Unless—"

"Just so!" nodded Betty, speaking softly. "The Lupina girls! Supposing they came over here from Morcove, last night, and did the hateful trick?"

As Betty said it, the others' faces began to clear a little.

"Oh, I'd give anything to know for certain that it was only their doing," Madge murmured. "So long as no one in the school has started that sort of thing, we can afford to despise it."

"Yes, wather! A wotten, vulgar twick, geals," Paula exclaimed indignantly. "Depend upon it, too, the Lupina geals are the culpwits."

"We ought to prove it," Betty said, her eyes aflash. "We— Bother! There goes the bell for assembly."

With hard sighs the chums moved off to go into the temporary schoolhouse and begin the day's work. How they were ever going to concentrate upon classwork they simply did not know, but they would have a good try.

There had been no opportunity for the girls as a body to debate the affair, yet they had a definite and unanimous feeling that it behoved them to "carry on" very quietly and steadily.

Miss Somerfield was bound to know that they had seen the scurrilous inscription. What could be better, then, than to let her see that it had failed utterly to unsettle them?

Accordingly, there was a zeal for work that morning, which was the scholars' own simple yet striking way of showing how loyally they still stood by Morcove School—and its headmistress!

Even Paula got her sums right, for once, whilst Naomer was a model of good conduct in class, instead of being her usual restless little self.

Then, at middle day, Betty & Co. were not the only ones to do something that would be yet another sign of their fixed resolve to put up with Sawnton House conditions, rather than hanker to be back at beautiful Morcove School at Miss Somerfield's expense.

Lest, Miss Somerfield should be feeling a great heartache because in their spare time they had no playing-field to which to go, all sorts of games requiring little space were indulged in by batches of girls in various odd corners.

There was a bit of a back courtyard, and the fun there was all the greater because now and then a tennis-ball went whizzing in at an open kitchen doorway or a scullery window, to the confusion of cook!

As for the Fourth Form, they found hockey-sticks and boldly went out into a stubble field hard by the house to get a bit of practice.

The land there was lying idle, waiting to be ploughed up for the winter. It was loose and flinty, and the straw stubble was a terrible drawback. Never mind! Two teams that were the best of friends managed to get a vigorous game to follow the laughable bully-off that took place "in the rough."

"We shall have to start golf," laughed Polly. "There are such good bunkers!"

"Yes, wather! Haw, haw, haw!" Paula breathlessly simpered. "Geals, just look at my shoes, bai Jove! Half the field clinging to them! Never mind, however, this is a treat!"

"Yes, come on! Up, Morcove!" was the spirited cry, and gaily the game went on.

But suddenly play ceased as the girls realised that a car had pulled up in the road to let two people get down and come into the stubble field through a five-barred gateway.

What did this mean? The scholars saw a lady and gentleman hurrying towards them, and they suddenly wondered—was this the farmer and his wife?

"Oh, bother!" grimaced Polly. "I suppose we are going to be told that we must clear out of here!"

"Look, though," Betty exclaimed, knitting her brows. "Surely these two are people we have seen before? Polly, you remember?"

"Why, yes—my word," Polly responded, suddenly looking scornful, "they are the Lupina girls' parents!"

The word flew from lip to lip amongst the girls who were out there in the stubble field. Here were Senior Manuel Lupina and his wife coming to talk to them!

As the couple tramped towards the girls, who were now grouping themselves for the encounter, it could be seen that Manuel Lupina was smiling in an oily way. A few moments more, and he took off his hat to the girls with a magnificent sweep.

"Good-morning, young ladies!" he greeted them, receiving nothing but cold looks in return. "I see you try to play the game in this field!"

"We try to play the game anywhere and always," Betty answered pointedly.

Manuel Lupina laughed, refusing to be ruffled; but his wife bridled at the thrust.

"I should not think," the man said, still retaining his leering smile, "that the farmer would like you to be here!"

"If we are trespassing, so are you!" Polly promptly said.

"Yes, wather! Haw, haw, haw!" Paula chuckled. "Wather neat, that, Polly deah!"

"I say nothing about the farmer," shrugged Manuel Lupina. "We only say, my wife and I, that it is pity, great pity, you have not the nice smooth playing-field—the grass that in England is so good, yes?"

"You miss the playing-field at Morcove, do you not?" the woman suggested boldly.

"Mr. and Mrs. Lupina," Betty said steadily, "it is like this. We do not mind what we give

up, so long as we do not have to give up—our headmistress!"

A perfect chorus of assenting cries burst from the other girls.

"Hear, hear——"

"Yes, wather! Geals——"

"Miss Somerfield for ever!"

"Hoowah, yes! Hoowah!"

"I love her—we all love her!" was Naomer's own emphatic cry. "As for you—ah, bah, we de-test you, there!"

Madame Lupina drew back a step, her face darkening; but the husband still refused to be put out of countenance. He gave a low, fat laugh.

"It is not a surprise to me," he said in his faulty English, "that you are angry. No. Well, then, I say this to you, my dears. Always, when you wish, you may come to the playing-field at the old school, to play the games. I give you full permission——"

"On condition, no doubt?" Betty said curtly.

"No, no," was the bland reply, delivered with a wave of the hand. "On no condition—egsept, perhaps, that you not have the headmeestress with you ever."

"Our quarrel is with Miss Somerfield, not with you girls!" Madame Lupina came back a step to remark haughtily. "In case you do not know it already, you can have the entire schoolhouse restored to you at once, if——"

"Oh, we know!" Polly burst out scornfully. "If we throw over Miss Somerfield—and we are not going to!"

"Not if it means staying here for the rest of our schooldays," added several of them in one voice.

In a stung way, Madame Lupina shrugged, tossing her head. Nor could Senior Lupina keep his temper any longer.

"How can you be so stupeed?" he cried, whilst he showily pulled out a gold cigar-case to choose a smoke. He bit off the end of the cigar and spat it out, and then fumbled for matches.

"It is all nonsense!" he upbraided the girls, glaring at them whilst he lit the cigar. "What is it your parents will say, think you? Are they going to let you live in that—pouf!—that messer-able house?"

"They are not going to tell us to turn against our headmistress," Betty replied spiritedly. "They know all about it, and——"

A nudge from Madge caused the Form captain to break off. Betty read something in all her chums' looks that warned her to glance round. And then she saw that Miss Somerfield herself had entered the field and was intending to have word with the very couple whose heartbroken victim she was.

A Ray of Light Upon the Past.

THE girls waited, feeling the pit-pat of their hearts as Miss Somerfield drew closer.

The wife of Manuel Lupina seemed to hug herself with malicious delight. The man alternately drew at his cigar and smiled as he blew the smoke from his thick lips. He took off his hat to Miss Somerfield with the same extravagant wave as before; but it was obvious that the politeness was mere mockery.

Then the headmistress stood still, and, taking no notice of either man or wife, spoke to her scholars in the old gentle way.

"Girls, you had better come in. Come away, girls, or you will only be annoyed. It has made

Do You Know Scottie and Binkie?



They are two of the jolly little characters from the front page of **PLAYTIME**. Every week they are to be seen in some new and amusing adventures. This brightly coloured picture paper will give hours of fun to your little brother or sister. Buy a copy to-day.

PLAYTIME
Every **2nd** Wednesday

The Famous **COLOURED** Picture Paper.

me feel prouder of you than ever, to find you getting some sort of a game—"

"But, pardon me, Esther Somerfield—" Manuel Lupina was interposing, when the headmistress turned upon him with an annihilating look.

"Esther, indeed! It is like your insolence, Mr. Lupina, to address me so familiarly. I will not converse with you at all, however. Go away—go!"

"Manuel, come then," his wife said, plucking him by the sleeve. "You see the pride in her is not yet broken, and will you lower yourself to say one word more? Come!"

"It is so; your pride is as great as that brother of yours was!" Manuel Lupina hissed at the headmistress, as she stood with the girls about her. "But before I have finished—ah, it will be seen what I am to those who insult me!"

Miss Somerfield simply turned her back upon

however, he seemed to feel he must fling another taunt at Miss Somerfield. With a word to his wife which made that woman laugh he came striding back.

"Before I go—" he began.

But the girls would not let him continue. They were suddenly between him and Miss Somerfield, and with one voice again they proclaimed their anger and disgust.

"Get away, you heartless wretch! You shall not treat our headmistress like this! Clear out!"

Ignoring this outburst, he drew himself up and called the headmistress by her Christian name again—"Esther!" Then, in a language that sounded very much like pure-Spanish, he said a few venomous things, laughed like a man who is enjoying some triumph he has promised himself, and stalked away.

Pale as death, Miss Somerfield hastened her faltering steps, the girls walking with her—two of them still giving her their support. How she



A CONFEDERATE FOR THEM. "Zilla, is it not splendid?" Jose cried, indicating Cora Grandways. "Here is a girl who belongs to the school, yet she will be on our side!" The younger girl looked at Cora with joyful surprise.

him. White as death, she signed to the awed scholars:

"Let us go, girls."

Yet it looked as if she herself would drop to the ground in a swoon before she had gone a dozen paces. Her step was a faltering, stumbling one; she tottered, and Betty and Madge, being on either side of her, gave her a steady hand.

"Thank you, girls—thank you," came faintly. "It is all right; only that man's presence—ah, it distresses me, you could never tell how much!"

"He is a wretch!" Polly said, clenching her fists. "Oh, if I were a man, I'd give him something!"

Nor was she the only scholar, by any means, to fling a look of contempt at both the man and his wife. He and she had begun to walk away, talking volubly in their native tongue. Suddenly,

trembled, poor soul, it was for Betty and Madge to know better than any of the others. And perhaps they also knew better than their school-fellows, just then, how full the good woman's heart was with gratitude. A gratitude too deep for words where they, her loving and loyal scholars, were concerned.

Some of them kept with her as far as the french window leading into her own private room. Betty and Madge even went into the room with her, loath to leave her until she had subsided into a low chair.

She sat for a few moments as in a stupor, but at last looked up, and the suffering in her eyes was a thing that those two girls would never, never forget.

"How good you are to me in my time of trouble, all of you!" she exclaimed emotionally. "But leave me now, Betty dear, and you,

Madge. And, oh, I pray that none of you may ever have word with Manuel Lupina or his wife again. Leave me!"

They stole away, leaving her weeping freely now, all so unstrung as she was. Polly and some others were waiting about the paved path, anxious and sorrowful. When they, the chums of Study 12, were by themselves again, Polly exclaimed excitedly:

"You heard Senor Lupina say something, last thing of all, in Spanish?"

"Yes," Betty nodded. "It was so that we girls would not understand, of course."

"There is one of us, you are forgetting, Betty dear, who knows Spanish," Polly continued agitatedly. "Naomer—she knew Spanish before ever she learned to speak English. She can tell you what that wretch said just now."

Betty and Madge turned eagerly upon Naomer, who nodded.

"Yes, yes, I can tell you! But I must not spik it loud, must I?"

"No, darling," approved Madge very softly. "Well?"

Naomer drew nearer, whilst the others gathered round.

"Manuel Lupina—he is doing it all because, years ago, Miss Somerfield's brother spoilt a big swindle that Manuel Lupina was going to carry out. The Lupinas cannot have revenge upon Jack Somerfield—he is far away on his travels. So—"

"They are hitting at Miss Somerfield, like the cowards they are?" Polly said fiercely.

Naomer nodded.

"I hear Manuel Lupina say—eet will pay out Jack Somerfield all the better eef they strike at his sister! They know how Jack Somerfield love his sister!"

Deep silence followed the whispered words.

The chums of Study 12 were looking at one another.

Now they understood.

(END OF THIS WEEK'S STORY.)

At last Betty & Co. understand—but what can they do? The Lupinas have all the power, and it is impossible for the loyal chums of the Fourth to take that power from them. You must not, on any account, miss next week's splendid long complete tale, which is entitled: "The Traitress in the School!"

THIS WEEK'S SPECIAL CROSS-WORD PUZZLE.

IN response to many requests, I am giving you another cross-word puzzle this week. Each number on the diagram indicates the first letter of a word, and when you have filled in the correct words, you will find that they interlock and read across or down, according to their position.

The puzzle is given for amusement only, and solutions, therefore, should not be sent in.

The solution will be published next week.

YOUR EDITOR.

CLUES ACROSS.

1. A dweller in the desert.
5. A nod or motion of the hand, especially when used as a sign of command.
9. Essential in cricket.
10. What a schoolboy wears on his head.
12. Anger.
13. Near to.
14. A British island in the Red Sea.
16. In certain dialects this is said in place of "you."
17. Guided.
18. A negative.
20. A thing which shows which way the wind blows.
21. A girl's name which, when reversed, means to eat.
23. You will find this on the floor.
24. A precious stone.
25. Not this, but the other.
28. An important British coaling station.
31. The self-conscious subject.
32. Sometimes a sailor is called this.
34. A hesitation in speech.
36. Something used to reduce the purity of a metal.
38. To perform.
39. A score which the Fourth Form hockey team at Morcove rarely make.
41. Not very bright.
42. Assistance.
43. Every girl passes through this to get into her study.
44. A girl's Christian name.

CLUES DOWN.

1. A French priest.
2. A line of light.
3. Denotes general presence or nearness.
4. A bank of sand forming a shoal at the mouth of a river.
6. When reversed, is used to indicate "for example."
7. What babies often do.
8. The central tower of a feudal castle.
10. To yield or give up.

11. A cone-bearing evergreen tree.
14. Used when writing "lines."
15. What Trixie Hope says for "my."
17. A machine for turning and shaping wood and metals.
19. A very ferocious animal.
20. A large vessel or cistern for holding liquors.
22. A thing in which lions live.
26. An important Turkish officer.
27. Related.
28. The smallest possible particle of matter.
29. Twenty-four hours.
30. Despatch.
33. Often used in washing-up dishes.
35. Spanish for "river."
37. Lighted up.
38. A noisy commotion.
40. Old English for "look."
42. A prefix used before certain dates.

