

THE **SILVER** No 2 **16** 1953
JACKET



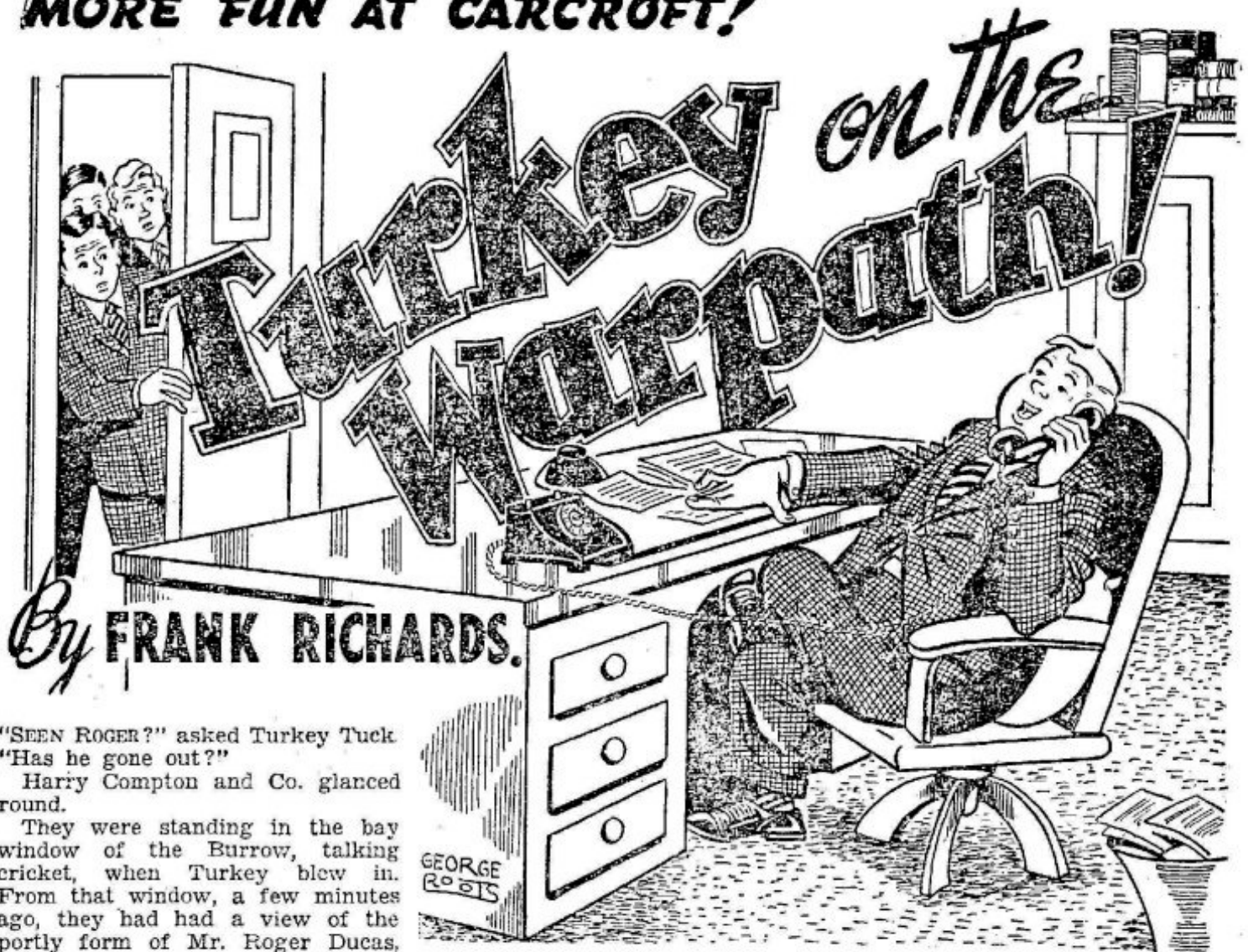
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MORE FUN AT CARCROFT!



"SEEN ROGER?" asked Turkey Tuck. "Has he gone out?"

Harry Compton and Co. glanced round.

They were standing in the bay window of the Burrow, talking cricket, when Turkey blew in. From that window, a few minutes ago, they had had a view of the portly form of Mr. Roger Ducas, master of the Fourth, going out of gates. Roger had gone for a walk after class, in the pleasant summer afternoon, which was quite a natural thing for a beak to do, and did not interest the Carcroft Co. But it seemed that the fat Turkey was interested.

"Just gone out!" answered Bob Drake.

"Sure he's gone?" asked Turkey anxiously. "I heard him tell Groom he was going—but a fellow wants to be sure. I mean to say, it would be jolly awkward if he barged in while a fellow was using his phone."

"You're going to use Roger's phone?" asked Harry Compton.

"Oh! No! Nothing of the sort!" said Turkey, hastily. "Don't you fellows get saying anything of that kind. If Roger heard of it, he might think it was me."

Upon which the Carcroft Co. gave James Smyth Tuck their special attention. They grinned at what they saw. Had Mr. Ducas's eyes fallen on Turkey just then, doubtless he would have been told to go and wash—a thing Turkey hated. Turkey, it was plain, had been somewhere where there was jam. Jam was smeared round his capacious mouth. There were spots of

it on his jacket, and quite a chunk of it on his tie. His fat paws were shiny and sticky with it. Turkey was of the jam, jammy. It was not unusual for the fattest member of the Carcroft Fourth to be sticky. But his stickiness at the present moment was rather a record, even for Turkey.

"I'm not going to phone to anybody," Turkey further explained, squinting uneasily at the grinning three. "I mean to say, I trust you fellows, of course—you wouldn't give a man away. But the least said is the soonest mended, what? When a fellow japes old Roger, he can't be too careful, can he?"

"Hardly!" chuckled Bob. "If you're thinking of japing Roger, old fat man, you'd better think out something safer—such as twisting a tiger's tail."

"What has Roger done this time?" asked Dick Lee.

"He's always picking on me!" answered Turkey, indignantly. "A beak ought to be just, and not make a scapegoat of a fellow—"

"A what?" yelled Bob. "Oh, a scapegoat! I see! Carry on."

"That cad, Crewe of the Sixth, was making a fuss about a pot of

jam he said was gone from his study. And Roger asked me if I knew anything about it! As good as making out that I'd had it, you know. Fat lot of good telling him that I knew nothing about it. Suspicious beast, you know! He actually looked in' my study."

"And did he spot it?" asked Bob. "No fear—luckily, I'd parked it in the box-room—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, you can cackle," hooted Turkey. "It wouldn't have been a laughing matter if Roger had spotted it in my study. Making out that I'd had it, you know, without any evidence. That's the sort of justice we get here. I thought he was going to give me six. He didn't, as it happened—but the suspense was awful! But I jolly well know how to make him sit up! I'll give him jam!" said Turkey, vengefully.

"You'll give Roger jam!" ejaculated Bob.

Turkey grinned—a jammy grin. Evidently Turkey had disposed of the jam in the box-room since Mr. Ducas had vainly looked for it in his study. That accounted for his state of stickiness. But Turkey seemed as wrathful as he was sticky.

"That's telling!" answered Turkey. "I'm not going to tell you fellows anything. A still tongue is a stitch in time, you know. That's a proverb. Perhaps Roger is going to get a surprise when he comes in. Perhaps he ain't. Perhaps he'll have a jolly long-bill to pay for jam. Perhaps he won't! That's telling."

"What has that fat image got in his fat head now?" asked Bob Drake, gazing at James Smyth Tuck in wonder.

"You're sure he's gone out?" asked Turkey.

"Yes. But—"

"O.K. then," said Turkey. And the fat Turkey revolved on his axis and rolled out of the day-room.

Harry Compton and Co. exchanged glances. Turkey, it was clear, was 'up' to something, though what it was, they could not guess.

"If that fat chump means anything, he means that he's going to hunt for trouble with Roger," remarked Bob. "Better go and see. If he's japing in Roger's study, he'll be in need of a friend to yank him away by the ears. Come on."

And they followed on Turkey's trail.

The fat junior was losing no time. He was at the corner of Masters' passage when the chums of the Fourth sighted him again. Bob called to him—subduing his voice, for it was not safe to shout in the beaks' quarters. The good-natured Bob was rather anxious for Turkey; but he was not anxious for a master to look out of a study doorway and inquire what a mob of juniors were doing there.

"Turkey, you ass! Come back!"

Turkey squinted round over a fat shoulder. But he did not come back. He accelerated, and rolled on to the door of Mr. Ducas's study. A sticky hand turned the door-handle, and Turkey rolled in, and shut the door after him.

"What about hooking him out?" asked Bob.

"Can't kick up a shindy here," answered Harry Compton. "Tinshaw's study is next to Roger's, and I believe he's in."

"Better go and see, anyway."

They trod quietly down the passage, and reached their form-master's study door. Bob turned the handle quietly, and they stepped in.

There was a startled squeak from within. Turkey was already seated at Mr. Ducas's desk, with the telephone in a fat paw. He squinted round in dire alarm as the door opened.

"Oh, haddocks! I say, it ain't me!" he gasped. "I ain't here—I mean to say, I wasn't going to

phone, sir—Oh! You silly idiots, it's you! Making a fellow jump! I thought it was Roger come back."

"Lucky for you it wasn't," said Bob. "Come out of this, you ass."

"Shan't!" retorted Turkey, independently. "Shut that door before a beak comes along. Do you want to give a fellow away!"

Unheeding the Co. further, Turkey lifted the receiver, listened for the buzz, and proceeded to dial—RID 125.

"That's the Ridgate grocer!" breathed Bob. "What the thump—"

"Shut up," hissed Turkey. "Trickle's answering."

The three gazed at him in silence. Turkey was through to Mr. Trickle, the grocer who supplied Carcroft. What followed made the Co. jump.

"Mr. Ducas speaking from Carcroft School!" said Turkey, in a deep grunting bark, quite unlike his accustomed squeak.

"Turkey, you mad ass!" gasped Bob.

anything more, sir?"

"Thank you, Mr. Trickle, that is all!" barked Turkey. "But please instruct your man to deliver the pots of jam in my—er—study."

"In your study, sir?"

"Yes! This is a matter—er—quite unconnected with the housekeeping—a treat for the boys of my form—a rather large tea-party, you understand. You will send a separate bill for the jam, with the delivery. Is that clear?"

"Quite, sir."

"And they must be delivered in my study—that's very special. The house-porter will show your man the way. If—if I do not happen to be here, the jam may be left on my study table—with the bill."

"Very good, sir."

"Thank you, Mr. Trickle. Good-bye."

Turkey jammed the receiver back on the hooks. He rose from Mr. Ducas's chair, and grinned at the three juniors, who stared at him



Roger Ducas stared at the bill like a man in a dream.

James Smyth Tuck did not heed. Having given Roger's name to the grocer, he proceeded to speak to Mr. Trickle, in the deep gruff voice he was assuming for the occasion. This, evidently, was intended to be taken for Roger's voice. Certainly it would not have deceived anyone accustomed to hear Roger speaking. But Mr. Trickle probably did not hear Roger's voice twice in a term: and it sounded like a man's voice, anyway. That Mr. Trickle had no suspicion was clear, for his voice came back without a hint of doubt.

"Yes, sir! Good afternoon, sir! What can I do for you, sir?"

"I—er—I am giving a treat to my boys, Mr. Trickle. I require some—er—supplies at very short notice. Can you deliver within the hour, six dozen pots of strawberry jam!"

"Oh, gum!" breathed Bob.

"Certainly, sir! I will despatch the goods immediately. Is there

blankly. Turkey's fat face was a picture of glee.

"Get the idea?" he grinned. "Fancy Roger's face—when he comes in and finds six dozen jars of jam stacked on his table! He, he! Fancy his face when he sees the bill! He, he! Pounds, I expect. Trickle's jam is two bob a jar—six dozen jars—let's see—six twelves is eighty-four and eighty-four shillings is seven pounds ten—ain't it? Roger will be let in for seven pounds ten! He, he! Here, leggo my neck."

"Come out of it!" hissed bob. "If you're caught here, after what you've done, you'll be skinned alive. Come on, you fathead! Quick, you chump! Hop it, you blithering bandersnatch."

And Harry Compton and Co. hurried Turkey out of Roger's study.

MR. ROGER DUCAS, when he came back from his walk, had no idea how eagerly his return was awaited

by his form. When he turned in at the old arched gateway of Carcroft School, he did not suspect that a sea of eyes watched for him from the bay window of the Burrow.

Turkey had intended to be very secretive about that rag on Roger. Even Turkey Tuck realised that a fellow who japed Roger couldn't be too cautious. But Turkey had his own way of keeping secrets. He could not resist confiding that great jape to a friend or two. The friend or two multiplied into the whole form before an hour was up. So, when Mr. Trickle's man arrived from Ridgate with the carrier on his bike stacked with pots of jam, quite a number of the Fourth were hanging about near the corner of Masters' passage to see what might be seen.

What they saw was Mr. Trickle's man, aided by Ruggles the house-porter, conveying apparently endless pots of jam to Mr. Ducas's study.

It had come off! It had worked like a charm! Levett of the Fourth ventured to peep into Roger's study after Mr. Trickle's man was gone. He brought back to the Burrow the news that Ducas's table was piled, stacked, crammed, with pots of jam—a regular mountain of them, waiting for Roger to behold when he came in. From the bay window of the Burrow, Roger's dutiful form watched for him to come. Turkey was there—grinning from one fat ear to the other. It was Turkey's great day.

"I'll give him jam!" said Turkey for the umpteenth time. "Making out that a fellow scoffed Crewe's pot from the study!"

"And you didn't?" grinned Vane-Carter.

"Not the sort of thing I'd do, I hope," retorted Turkey. "You might, V.C. Or Levett! I'm a bit more particular than you fellows are about the mummum and tum-mum."

"Oh, gum! Do you mean meum and tuum?" gasped Levett.

"No, I don't—I mean mummum and tum-mum. You're pretty rotten at Latin, Levett. As for Crewe's jam, I wouldn't have touched it if I'd known the cad was going to make all that fuss. Not that I did touch it, either. I never even knew he had a pot of jam in his study at all. And it was only plum jam, after all—not strawberry, as you'd expect in a Sixth-form man's study."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But Roger's got strawberry!" added Turkey. "I was jolly careful

about that, Trickle's strawberry jam is good—it's got real strawberries in it: I know! They're old-fashioned people, you know, in a sleepy place like Ridgate. It's going to be all right, I can tell you."

"Oh, crumbs! Do you think Roger will give you any of the jam?" yelled Bob.

"Well, what will he do with it?" argued Turkey astutely. "He can't send it back—and he can't eat it—he's past jam! He will have to hand it over to the house-keeper, won't he? Then we shall all get our whack, I expect."

"Great pip!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Evidently Turkey's fat intellect had been working, to great purpose. Really, this looked like a winner. Not only was Roger to be astounded and exasperated by a mountain of jam on his study table. Not only was he to be "let in" for the bill for the same. But the jam itself—at least some of it—would be coming Turkey's way! For what, after all, could a form-master do with six dozen pots of jam?

"Jam for tea for a week, I expect," said Turkey, brightly. "I shall jolly well tea in Hall as long as it lasts! What? Roger will be tearing his hair—and we shall be eating the jam! He, he."

"Turkey's treat!" chuckled Bob.

"And he'll never dream who did it!" chortled Turkey. "Anybody might have nipped into his study and phoned. Two hundred and fifty fellows to choose from if he wants to know who did it. I say, chaps, is he coming?"

"Just coming in at the gate!" grinned Bob, glancing from the window.

"Oh, good."

A crowd of fellows watched as Roger Ducas came across to the House. Turkey's wide grin widened and widened, till it bade fair to meet round the back of his head. Roger passed into the House.

"Now wait for the fireworks!" murmured Bob Drake.

And the juniors—breathlessly—waited.

"WHAT—!"

Roger Ducas stopped, and stared blankly.

It had happened before that the master of the Fourth had made unexpected discoveries in his study. Gum in his inkpot had happened: even a bent pin on his chair was not wholly unknown. But this discovery was the most startling one he had ever made in that study since he had been a form-master at

Carcroft. His eyes almost bulged as he stared at a mountain of jam—pots and pots of jam, pots piled on pots, like Pelion on Ossa. For a long, long moment Roger could hardly believe his eyes.

Then he stepped to the table, and picked up a paper that lay by the hill of jam. It bore the style and title of Messrs. Trickle, Family Grocers, Ridgate: and written in pencil:

Mr. Ducas.

Personal Delivery.

6 doz. Strawberry at 1s.

£3 12s.

Roger Ducas gazed at that bill, like a man in a dream. Messrs. Trickle supplied Carcroft School with jam, among other commodities; but how they could have made this extraordinary mistake was a mystery. It was a mystery that Mr. Ducas decided immediately to solve. He stepped to his desk, and the telephone, with sharp words ready on his lips.

Then he snapped out an annoyed exclamation. The receiver was sticky—and it made his fingers sticky. It was very annoying. However, Mr. Ducas was too keen to get through to Messrs. Trickle, to give it more than passing heed. Rapidly he dialled RID 125. A smooth polite voice came back:

"Trickle's Ridgate—"

"Mr. Ducas speaking from Carcroft School!" barked Roger. When Roger was annoyed, his voice bore quite a strong resemblance to the melodious tones of a bulldog, and really it was quite like the rough, gruff voice Turkey had assumed.

"Yes, sir! I trust you have found the jam to your satisfaction."

"I have found my study table piled with jars of jam, and a bill for three pounds twelve shillings—"

"Yes, sir, that is correct: six dozen at one shilling. I trust the jars were delivered in your study as you desired."

"As—as—as I desired!"

"You remember, sir, you gave special instructions for the jam to be delivered in your study, when you telephoned—"

"When—when—when I—I telephoned?"

"Yes, sir—six dozen strawberry, for a tea-party of your young gentlemen. I hope they liked the jam, sir! Our very best—"

Roger Ducas breathed hard—very hard. He understood now—better than Mr. Trickle did—Roger was quick on the uptake.

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(Continued from page 10)

Somebody had phoned from Carcroft ordering that mountain of jam in his name—some japing young rascal! Now that Roger knew, he was not going to tell Mr. Trickle—for Mr. Trickle to confide to all the other tradesmen in Ridgate that a Fourth-form boy of Carcroft had played such a trick on his form-master. He breathed hard, and he breathed deep: but he answered Mr. Trickle quietly and courteously.

"Quite so, Mr. Trickle! Thank you. Good-bye."

He thumped the receiver back on the hooks, with a thump that made the instrument rock. Then he rose to his feet, his eyes glinting under grim brows.

Who had done this. Who had had the nerve to do it?

He was not going to let Mr. Trickle know how the matter stood; and that meant a bill of £3 12s. to pay. But it was not only the bill—and not only that absurd mountain of jam—it was a matter of prestige. He had to spot the japer on the telephone, and make an example of him. But who? Who?

Grimmer and grimmer grew Roger's brow. He muttered an angry exclamation, as the stickiness on his palm irritated him. He drew out his handkerchief to wipe that stickiness away.

Then he gave a sudden start. Instead of wiping his sticky palm, he stared at it. Then he spun round to the telephone, and scanned the sticky receiver. Jam!

Someone with a jammy, sticky hand had handled that telephone during his absence. Up to that moment, Roger had not thought of Turkey Tuck. He had not dreamed of thinking of him. But he thought of him now. He stepped to the bell and touched it.

Ruggles, the house-porter, appeared in the doorway.

"Kindly find Master Tuck, of my Form, and send him to this study at once, Ruggles."

"Yessir."

"HE, he! I say, chaps, ain't it funny! What?"

Turkey, in the Burrow, was in great spirits.

"Fancy his face!" gurgled Turkey.

"Six dozen jars of jam—he, he, he! Ten to one we'll get some of it for tea! If we do, it will be all through me. You fellows wouldn't have thought of japing Roger like that! You wouldn't, Compton."

"Never!" agreed the captain of the Fourth, laughing.

"You wouldn't have had the nerve, V. C."

"Might have had the nerve, but not the fatheadedness!" answered Vane-Carter.

"Eh! You don't think Roger will find out, do you?"

"Roger's a downy bird," grinned Bob Drake. "He always seems to tumble, somehow. Better get a dictionary ready to pack your bags, Turkey."

"Oh, rot," said Turkey, uneasily. "How's he to know? Roger might suspect V. C., or you, Bob, but he'd never think of me, I—"

"Shut up," breathed Compton "here's Ruggles."

The house-porter put his head into the Burrow.

"Master Tuck here?" he asked.

"Oh! No!" gasped Turkey.

"Mr. Ducas desires you to go to his study at once, sir."

"Oh, haddocks!"

There was deep silence in the Burrow when Ruggles had gone. Turkey Tuck squinted anxiously from face to face. Some of those faces were sympathetic. More were grinning. But they all expressed the same belief: that Turkey was "for it". Roger, somehow, had "tumbled". Undoubtedly he was a downy bird.

"He—he—he can't know anything!" moaned Turkey. "How can he? Oh, lor'."

"Better go and see!" grinned Levett.

And Turkey, in the lowest spirits, went to see! He dragged himself to his form-master's study and almost tottered in. Even the sight of six dozen pots of strawberry jam, stacked on the table, did not comfort him. He fixed a dolorous squint on Roger.

"R—R—Ruggles said you w—w—wanted me, sir!" stammered Turkey. "I—I—I don't know anything about it, sir."

"About what, Tuck?"

"Oh! Nothing, sir. Nothing at all! I mean to say—er—nothing."

"Show me your hands, Tuck."

"Mum—mum—my hands, sir!" stammered Turkey in astonishment. He was surprised: but he was relieved. It always annoyed Turkey when Mr. Ducas asked to see his hands, and told him to go and wash them. But that—in comparison—was a trifling matter. If that was all that Roger wanted him for, Turkey was ready to give his fat paws a much-needed wash, little as he liked the process. Roger's eye scanned two fat and sticky paws.

"You have not washed your hands, Tuck, since you used my telephone this afternoon," he said. "They are still sticky."

"No, sir! I mean, yes, sir! I never used the telephone, sir!" exclaimed Turkey, in great alarm. "I don't know anything about that jam on the table, sir. If anybody phoned to Trickle's, it certainly wasn't me. I haven't been anywhere near the study, sir. You—you can ask Compton and his friends—they know—they followed me here—"

"That will do, Tuck."

"Yes, sir! Thank you, sir. C—c—can I go now?"

"You may not."

"Oh, lor'!"

"I shall not cane you for this prank, Tuck—"

"Oh! Thank you, sir!" Turkey brightened up. "I never did it, sir, and besides, it was only a joke. Can I go now, sir?"

"I shall not cane you, Tuck: I shall simply allow you to take the responsibilities of your action. It appears," said Roger, in a grinding voice, "that you telephoned to Mr. Trickle for six dozen jars of jam, for a tea-party of the boys of my form. Your generous wishes shall be carried out, Tuck. The jam shall be used at the Fourth-form table in hall. The bill—" Roger paused for a moment, and Turkey hung on his words, "the bill, Tuck, amounts to £3 12s. This you will pay."

"Eh?"

"And I trust," said Roger, with almost ferocious geniality, "I trust that your form-fellows will duly appreciate your generosity."

"B—b—b—but, sir—!"

"That is all, Tuck."

"B—b—but I've only got two-pence, sir!" gasped Turkey.

"Then the bill will be sent to your father."

"Oh, crikey!"

"You may go, Tuck."

TEA in Hall was unusually luxurious that day. There was an unlimited supply of jam—the best strawberry jam, made of real strawberries. Turkey Tuck's fat face might have been expected to beam over such a feast of the gods. But it didn't! Turkey was thinking of the bill for £3 12s. that was going to his father: and of what his father was likely to say—and do. Even strawberry jam in unlimited quantities could not comfort Turkey in such harrowing circumstances. Turkey looked as if all the woes of the universe had landed on his plump shoulders.

But Turkey's face was the only lugubrious face at the table. All the rest of the Fourth seemed to be enjoying the outcome of Turkey's first—and last—venture on the war-path.