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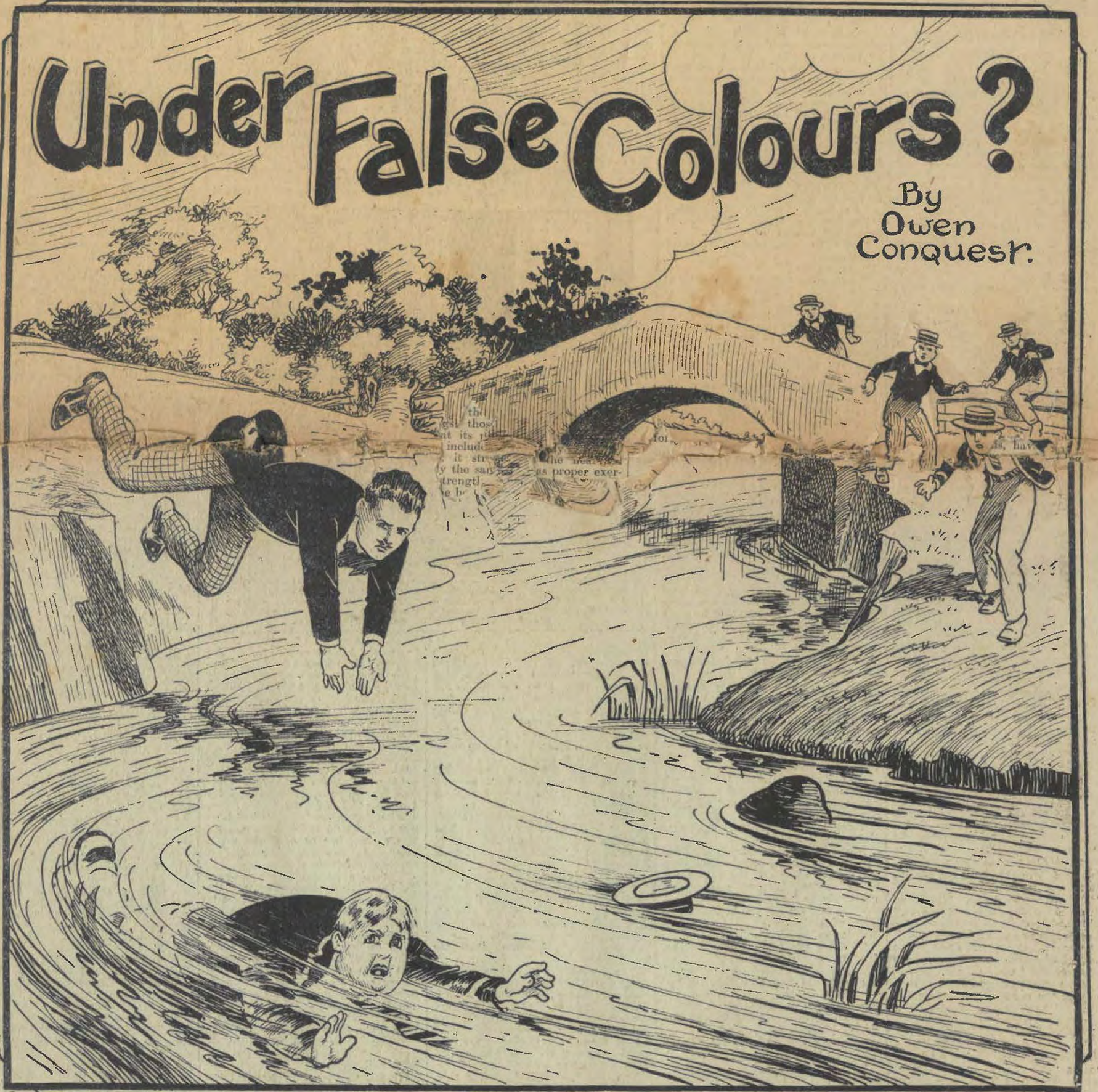
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THE BEST BOYS' PAPER IN THE WORLD!

[Week Ending June 14th, 1924.]

## Under False Colours?

By  
Owen  
Conquest.



**THE NEW MASTER TO THE RESCUE OF TUBBY MUFFIN!**

(A thrilling incident from the great story of Jimmy Silver & Co. in this issue.)

HERE'S ANOTHER GRAND STORY OF THE CHUMS OF ROOKWOOD SCHOOL!



# Under False Colours?

By Owen Conquest.

(Author of the Tales of Rookwood appearing in the "Popular.")

A mystery develops at Rookwood with the coming of a new French master to the school!

## The 1st Chapter.

### Tubby's Latest.

Bang! All the fellows in the junior Common-room at Rookwood looked round and fixed their eyes on Tubby Muffin.

Reginald Muffin of the Fourth—generally known as Tubby, on account of his circumference—had entered the Common-room and slammed down a box on the table with an emphatic bang. No doubt that bang was intended to draw general attention upon Reginald. At all events, it did so.

Some of the fellows looked at the box. It was an oblong wooden box, with a locked lid and a narrow slit in the top of the lid. It looked like a money-box. Not a very useful article to Tubby Muffin, who never had any money.

"Well, what's the game, Tubby?" inquired Arthur Edward Lovell.

"That's the collecting-box," announced Tubby. "I'm taking a collection in the Fourth."

"What on earth for?" demanded Jimmy Silver.

"For poor old Mossoo."

"What" exclaimed a dozen voices. Tubby Muffin mounted a chair to address the surprised crowd of Fourth Form and Shell boys.

"Gentlemen," roared Tubby, amid laughter, "you are all aware that our respected French master, Monsieur Monceau, has been down with the flu."

"No need for you to tell us what we're aware of," remarked Newcome. "Besides, he's out of sanny now."

"Monsieur Monceau is going away from Rookwood for a few weeks, to get a change after his illness," went on Tubby. "I hear that another beast—I mean, another French master—is taking his place for the rest of the term. Now, you fellows know that poor old Mossoo is pretty hard up."

"No bizney of yours!" growled Lovell.

"It's the business of all of us, in the circumstances," said Tubby Muffin firmly. "Mossoo is a good chap. He never makes us work like the other masters do. Compare him with Mr. Dalton, for example. He isn't half such a beast."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's going away for a holiday. We know he's hard up, or he wouldn't wear the clothes he does. French masters always are hard up, I believe," said Tubby. "Anyhow, old Monceau is awfully poor. Well, I'm going to take a collection for him."

"You silly owl!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"I think it's up to us. The thing will be done delicately, of course," said Tubby Muffin. "The money taken in this box will be changed into a banknote. It will be slipped into his hand at parting, as a token of the respect of the Lower School. Sealed up in an envelope, you know. If it comes to ten pounds, we'll make it a tenner. I rely on you fellows for a fiver at least. See?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's not a laughing matter," said Tubby Muffin warmly. "We all owe a lot to Mossoo. He never asks for imposts. When he takes us in detention he lets us do practically what we like. Can you say that of any other master at Rookwood—Dalton, or Mr. Greely, or Wiggins, or anybody? You can cackle as much as you like, but I think it's our duty to stand

by Mossoo at this—this—this auspicious moment—

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"At this—this crisis in his career," said Tubby, growing eloquent. "Some of you fellows have a lot of money. Smythe, for instance, and Conroy—lots of you. Every fellow is expected to contribute according to his means."

"And who'll see that the jolly old token reaches Mossoo?" inquired Mornington.

"That's all right! The matter will be entirely in my hands."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors.

"It will be safe in my hands, I suppose?" howled Tubby.

"Safe to stick there!" grinned Putty Grace.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby Muffin glared indignantly at the Rookwood juniors. Jimmy Silver & Co. chuckled. Many and various were the methods by which Reginald Muffin was wont to seek to raise the wind when he was hard up—as he generally was. But taking a collection for a Rookwood master was really something new.

That Monsieur Monceau, however impecunious he might be, would refuse to touch such a token of regard was fairly certain. And that the cash would never reach him if it passed through Tubby's fat hands was a

certainty. It was certain that he would not be long in arriving at its destination. Possibly Tubby's intentions were good. But it was certain that the inner Tubby would be too strong for his good intentions once he found himself with cash in his hands.

"I say, this isn't a laughing matter, you silly chumps!" exclaimed Muffin. "It's jolly serious!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We're bound to stand by a good sort like old Mossoo at this suspicious—I mean, auspicious—moment. It will buck him immensely to know how much we think of him." Tubby Muffin descended from the chair.

"Now, stop cackling, you fellows, and roll up and contribute. Shove in as much as you can. Currency notes will be best."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But half-crowns and shillings will be welcome, and coppers will not be despised," said Tubby. "Walk up! Cackle as much as you like, but shove in your spare cash. It's up to you!"

And Tubby Muffin, leaving the collecting-box on the table, walked across to an armchair and plumped down.

There was a ripple of laughter in the Common-room.

Apparently Tubby Muffin expected to see the Rookwood juniors drop their spare cash into the slit of the collecting-box. His expectations were not likely to be realised.

"I'm waiting for you fellows!" he said, with dignity.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've got lots of oof, Smythe. It's up to you to begin!"

Adolphus Smythe of the Shell chuckled. It was true that he had plenty of money. But it was not likely that any of Smythe's ample supply of cash would find its way into Tubby Muffin's fat hands.

"Up to me, is it?" asked Adolphus.

"Yes. Go it!"

"Well, I don't mind starting the ball rollin'," said Smythe of the Shell, with a wink to the juniors near him.

He walked up to the table, and his hand hovered over the box.

Clink!

He stood between Tubby and the box as he made his contribution; so,

naturally, Tubby could not see that it was a trousers button that Smythe of the Shell dropped in through the slit. Tubby heard the clink as it fell in, and smiled with satisfaction.

"Now, then, you fellows, Smythe's set you an example," he said encouragingly.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Adolphus Smythe's example was followed. Nobody had any cash to spare for Tubby's collection, but plenty of fellows had odd buttons or other valueless odds and ends, and they were quite willing to put them in the



IN PURSUIT! Tubby Muffin fairly bolted from the study with the money-box clutched in his hands. "After him!" roared Lovell. Instantly there was a rush of juniors in pursuit of Tubby Muffin and the money-box.

collection. Indeed, the collection caught on in a way that Tubby Muffin had never dreamed of anticipating. Fellows left the Common-room, apparently to fetch loose cash, and they came back and slipped things into the box, clinking.

Tubby Muffin sat in the armchair and smiled a fat smile of happy satisfaction.

Every minute or two something was added to the collection, and Tubby began to dream golden dreams.

Mornington lifted the box at last, and weighed it in his hands. The contents rattled and clinked.

"Full up, Tubby!" announced Morny.

"Oh, good!" gasped Tubby.

"I fancy it won't hold any more," said Jimmy Silver. "You'd better take it to Mr. Dalton, Tubby, and ask him to change what's in it for banknotes."

Tubby detached himself from the armchair.

"Right-ho!" he said cheerfully.

He took the box from the table. It was very heavy, and Tubby's eyes fairly gleamed over it. If only coppers were in the box, the sum inside must be a goodly one. And surely a good proportion of the contents must have been in silver. Tubby hoped so, at least.

"Thanks for rolling up like this, you fellows!" he exclaimed. "You're sportsmen, you are, really. Of course, I knew you'd play up! Thanks all round!"

Tubby Muffin walked out of the Common-room with the box under

his arm. A roar of laughter followed him. Two or three fellows looked out after him, to see whether he headed for Mr. Dalton's study. He didn't. He headed for the stairs. Tubby Muffin was heading for his own study, and the contents of that box, if in the form of cash, were much more likely to be changed for jam-tarts at the tuckshop than for banknotes to be presented as a parting token of esteem to Monsieur Monceau.

## The 2nd Chapter.

### Hidden Treasure.

Reginald Muffin placed the money-box on his study table, and contemplated it with fat and smiling satisfaction.

The box was so heavy that it had been quite an exertion for Tubby to carry it up to the Fourth Form passage.

He groped in his pocket for the key with a dazzling prospect of sudden wealth dancing before his eyes. Such a weight, even in coppers, could not work out at less than some pounds. And if there was a good proportion of shillings and florins and half-crowns, the sum contained in the money-box was dazzling to contemplate. It was a large money-box, and it was full almost to the lid.

"Ripping!" murmured Tubby.

"Topping! Splendid! Fancy the fellows playing up like that! Of course, they know they can trust me. That's what comes of being a really straightforward chap."

And then Tubby felt a slight

Ninety-five per cent for "expenses" was a large percentage, even for a charitable collection. But Reginald Muffin felt that that would be about right.

"After all, if Mossoo gets five per cent for nothing he's doing well out of my stunt," said Tubby aloud. "I think he's jolly lucky myself. I hope he'll be properly grateful, but you never can tell. I've come across a lot of ingratitude in my time."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby Muffin, with the key of the money-box in his hand, started, and stared round. Half a dozen grinning faces were looking in at the doorway of Study No. 2.

Tubby waved a fat hand at them.

"Don't you fellows butt in!" he exclaimed. "I'm busy. I'm just going to count it up."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Nothing to cackle at," said Tubby. "This is a business matter. I'm very careful in money matters. I'm going to account for the money to the last farthing."

"Well, let's see you open it," grinned Lovell.

"Let's!" chorused the juniors.

Tubby did not unlock the box.

He was keen to feast his eyes upon his ill-gotten gains, but not in public. The other fellows were equally keen to watch Tubby's face when he saw his collection. They felt that Tubby's expression would be entertaining.

"Oh, get out, you chaps!" urged Tubby. "I have to attend to business matters like this in private."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You mean you don't want us to know that you're going to pinch Mossoo's collection?" grinned Raby.

"Nothing of the sort!" exclaimed Tubby indignantly. "Mossoo will receive every penny he's entitled to after I've deducted my percentage for expenses."

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.

"Oh, don't cackle! Get out!"

Instead of getting out the hilarious juniors got in. They surrounded the table and the money-box.

"Let's see it opened," persisted Lovell.

"Yes, rather!"

"Open it, Tubby!"

"We want to count it up, you know!" chortled Putty. "I know you'll be surprised, Tubby, when you see what's in that box."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Into his pocket. He was doing so, solved not to open the box in the presence of a crowd of the Fourth. Tubby was not bright, but he was bright enough to know what the Classical Fourth would think of ninety-five per cent for "expenses."

"Look here, you chaps—"

"Open the box!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell.

"Shan't! I tell you—"

"Let's open it for him!" suggested Oswald.

"Good egg!" exclaimed Lovell.

"I'll get the poker."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby Muffin made a sudden clutch at the box, grabbed it up from the table, and fairly bolted from the study with it. Clink, clink, clink! rang the contents of the box as Tubby raced out into the Fourth Form passage.

"After him!" roared Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a rush in pursuit of Tubby Muffin. The fat Classical rushed for the stairs, with the hilarious juniors on his track. On the landing Lovell caught him by the collar and jerked him back.

"Now, you fat fraud—"

"Yooop!"

Crash! The money-box escaped from Tubby's hands and went crashing down the staircase.

With bang on bang it rolled from step to step, the contents rattling and ringing and clinking with a terrific din.

"Oh dear!" gasped Tubby. "Oh dear!"

"Bless my soul!" It was a deep, fruity voice from the lower landing, the voice of Mr. Horace Greely, the plump and portly master of the Fifth Form at Rookwood. "Bless my soul! What—what—what is this?"

Tubby Muffin jerked himself free from Lovell and fairly raced down the stairs. On the next landing Mr. Greely was standing, with a surprised countenance, holding in his hands the money-box, which had rolled to his feet, and which he had picked up in great astonishment.

"What—what—what—" the surprised Form master was repeating.

Tubby panted up.

"That's mine, sir!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Lovell, on the landing above. "It's old Greely! Better leave him to it!"

And the Fourth-Formers faded away along their passage, leaving Tubby Muffin to settle the matter with the master of the Fifth.

**The 3rd Chapter.**  
**Called to Account.**

Mr. Greely, holding the heavy money-box in his plump hands, stared at Tubby Muffin.

Tubby eyed him breathlessly. He could barely resist snatching at the box; but it was impracticable, of course, to snatch at a box held in the august fingers of a Form master. But anxiety thrilled Reginald Muffin from one fat end to the other.

Certainly, as the money-box was his property, Mr. Greely ought to have handed it over without a word. But as Tubby knew from dismal experience, with Form masters you never could tell. They were a very uncertain race at the very best, and generally boasts.

"It's mine, sir!" gasped Tubby. "My—my money-box, sir! I—I was showing it to some fellows, sir, and it slipped out of my hands."

"Your money-box?" repeated Mr. Greely.

"Yes, sir. You—you can see it's a money-box," said Tubby anxiously.

Mr. Greely was staring at the box, as if really he supposed it might be a musical-box or a Christmas box or any old kind of box, whereas it was quite plainly a money-box.

"This is very extraordinary, Muffin," said Mr. Greely in his booming, fruity voice.

"Is—is it, sir?"

"This box weighs some pounds, I should say," exclaimed Mr. Greely. "At all events, it seems full of money."

"Yes, sir. I've been taking—" Tubby broke off suddenly. It dawned upon his fat mind that if he mentioned the collection he had been taking for Monsieur Monceau the matter would be out of his hands.

Once the collection came to official knowledge it was most probable that the whole thing would be quashed; but at any rate, it was absolutely certain that the collector would not be allowed to deduct ninety-five per cent for "expenses." He would not be allowed to deduct five per cent; in fact, he would not be allowed to keep a single coin in the whole collection. Tubby was not too obtuse to understand that, and the words died on his tongue.

"You have been taking what?" exclaimed Mr. Greely.

"I—I've been taking—taking—taking—" stammered Tubby, at a loss for a plausible statement.

"I trust, Muffin, that you have not been taking money that does not belong to you?" boomed Mr. Greely.

Reginald Muffin jumped. Even Reginald was not quite capable of proceeding to that length in his schemes for raising the wind.

"Oh, sir! No, sir! Certainly not!" he gasped.

"Then what do you mean that you have been taking?"

"I—I—I mean I've been taking care of my money this term, sir," gasped Muffin. "I—I've been saving up, sir. That's how it is, sir. And—and I've got my money-box full at last, sir!"

Tubby held out his fat hands nervously for the money-box. Mr. Greely seemed to hold on to it more tightly than before. His look was fixed on Muffin with deep suspicion.

"The money in this box belongs to you, Muffin?"

"Yes, sir!" gasped Tubby.

"All of it?" boomed Mr. Greely.

"Oh, yes, sir. Every shilling!"

"There must be a large sum, Muffin?"

"Oh, yes, sir! All my tips this term!"

"All your tips for several terms, Muffin, would not amount to such a sum as this box apparently contains," said Mr. Greely sternly. "I am not satisfied with this, Muffin."

"I—I say, gimme my box!" stammered Tubby. "You—you ain't my Form master, sir!"

Mr. Greely frowned portentously. "I am not your Form master, Muffin. If I were your Form master I should insist upon your opening this box in my presence, and in making a strict investigation into the matter. As it is, I shall do nothing of the kind."

"Oh, thank you, sir!" gasped Tubby in great relief.

"I shall, however, take this box to your Form master Mr. Dalton—"

"Ow!"

"And you will accompany me, Muffin."

"Oh dear!"

"Follow me at once, Muffin!" boomed Mr. Greely. And he stalked away down the lower stairs, the money-box under his majestic arm.

Tubby Muffin blinked after him in utter dismay. He rolled dismally in the wake of the majestic Mr. Greely.

In the lower passage he came on Jimmy Silver and Mornington. They looked at the money-box under Mr. Greely's arm, and looked at Reginald Muffin.

"I—I say, Jimmy!" gasped Tubby. "Speak to him."

"Eh?" ejaculated the captain of the Fourth.

"Tell him it's mine—he'll take your word!" breathed Tubby in an anxious whisper. "He's taking my money-box to Dalton!"

"Well, you wanted it taken to Dalton, didn't you?" asked Jimmy innocently.

"Nunno—I mean yes! But—"

Mr. Greely glanced round.

"Follow me, Muffin!"

"Ow! Yes, sir!" groaned Tubby.

The hapless fat junior followed on, leaving Jimmy Silver and Mornington chuckling. Mr. Greely knocked loudly at Mr. Dalton's study door. Mr. Greely did everything heavily, loudly, and impressively. He was, in fact, a very heavy and impressive gentleman.

"Come in!"

The Fifth Form master walked into the study with the hapless Tubby at his heels. A little gentleman with a pointed black beard was in the study with Mr. Dalton. It was Monsieur Monceau, the French master, who was about to leave Rookwood for a time, and whose place was to be taken temporarily by another gentleman from la belle France, Mr. Dalton and Mossou both looked in surprise at the new arrivals. The Fifth Form master slammed the box, rattling and jingling, on the table.

"This is a matter for your investigation, I think, Mr. Dalton," he said. "Muffin dropped this box in my presence. He declares that it is his money-box, and he has saved up the contents this term. You can feel the weight of the box. I recommend looking into this matter, Mr. Dalton."

"Thank you, Mr. Greely," said the master of the Fourth, rather dryly. Mr. Greely, as a matter of fact, was rather given to advising and recommending the other members of the Rookwood staff, and they were not always very grateful for his advice and recommendations.

The portly Form master of the Fifth withdrew from the study, leaving Reginald Muffin standing before his Form master.

"Please do not go, Monsieur Monceau," said Mr. Dalton, as the French gentleman moved. "This matter will not detain me many minutes."

"I—I say, sir! It's—it's mine!" stammered Muffin.

Mr. Dalton lifted the heavy money-box and set it down again.

"You had better speak frankly, Muffin," he said quietly. "If this box contains money, it cannot possibly all belong to you."

Tubby trembled.

"You—you see, sir—" he stammered.

"Is there money in this box?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton.

"Yes, sir."

"Then there must be a large sum."

"Yes, sir! I—I've been saving up—"

"Do not talk nonsense, Muffin. You could not possibly save up enough money to fill this large box. Where did you obtain so much money?"

"I—I—I—"

"Is it possible, Muffin, that you have been dishonest?"

"Ow! No!" gasped Tubby.

"Then where did this money come from? Answer me at once!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton sternly.

Tubby Muffin realised that there was nothing for it but the truth. Even parting with the money was better than being suspected of theft.

"It—it—it's a collection, sir!" he groaned.

"A collection!"

"Yes, sir. I—I've taken a collection—"

"You had no right to do anything of the kind, Muffin, as you very well know. Do you mean to say that your Form-fellows have contributed so much money as this to your collection?"

"Yes, sir! You see, they trust me."

"And for what was the collection taken?"

"For—for Mossou, sir!" gasped Tubby.

Monsieur Monceau sat bolt upright in his chair. Mr. Dalton knitted his brows.

"Muffin! Are you out of your senses?"

"You—you see, sir, we think a lot of Mossou!" gasped Tubby. "We—we wanted him to accept it as a token of our—our esteem, sir!"

"Mon Dieu!" exclaimed Monsieur Monceau. "Mister Dalton, you shall understand! I could not accept! I have no dream of such a thing! Ze boys—perhaps zey mean well, but it is insult to me!"

"I quite understand that, Monsieur Monceau," said Mr. Dalton.

"Muffin is the most stupid boy in my Form; but I cannot understand the other boys being foolish enough to enter into any such absurd scheme. Yet the money seems to be here."

"It's for Mossou, sir!" gasped Tubby. "I—I was only thinking of keeping ninety-five per cent—I mean five per cent, sir, for—for expenses."

"You were thinking of what?" thundered Mr. Dalton.

"Nothing, sir!" howled Tubby terrified. "I—I wasn't thinking of anything, sir—n-n-nothing at all."

"Zat boy, he is foolish," said Monsieur Monceau. "Vat you call in English, one fathead!"

"I am afraid he is also unscrupulous," said Mr. Dalton, frowning.

"Muffin, unlock this box at once."

"You were thinking of what?"

"Nothing, sir!" howled Tubby terrified.

"I—I wasn't thinking of anything, sir—n-n-nothing at all."

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"Zat boy, he is foolish," said Monsieur Monceau. "Vat you call in English, one fathead!"

"That's why they wanted to see me open it! The awful cads!"

"Muffin, you utterly ridiculous boy, take this rubbish away from my study at once!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "You will take five hundred lines, Muffin. Go at once!"

"Oh dear!"

Reginald Muffin picked up the money-box, the contents of which were now his undisputed property, and limped dismally out of the study with his burden. Mr. Dalton did not laugh till the study door had closed on him. The hapless Tubby did not feel like laughing at all. He limped down the corridor with the money-box; and at the corner he found a crowd of the Classical Fourth waiting for him.

"Ha, ha, ha! Here he is!" roared Lovell. "How many banknotes did Dicky Dalton give you for that lot, Tubby?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Did Mossou thank you nicely for that token of esteem?" inquired Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the juniors.



**CHEERS FOR THE NEW FRENCH MASTER!**  
"Here he is!" exclaimed Arthur Edward Lovell, catching sight of Victor Gaston descending the stairs. The juniors, without paying Tubby Muffin further attention, dropped him at once. Tubby landed on the floor and roared, unheeded. Jimmy Silver gave the signal for the cheer, and the juniors cheered the French gentleman uproariously, much to his surprise.

"Yes, sir. I'll take it to my study—"

"You will unlock it here."

"Oh dear!"

"The money it contains," continued Mr. Dalton, "will be placed in the school poor-box. Unlock it at once."

Tubby Muffin fairly groaned as he fished out the key and inserted it into the lock. The lid of the money-box was raised.

Mr. Dalton glanced into it, and an extraordinary expression came over his face. Monsieur Monceau glanced into it and grinned. Tubby Muffin blinked at it as if he could scarcely believe his eyes, as indeed he scarcely could.

It was a remarkable collection. Trousers' buttons, perhaps, predominated. But there were other buttons, many and various. There were several old rusty keys; and there were innumerable broken penknives. There were links from an old dog-chain; there were pebbles; there were broken blades of penknives; there were all sorts and conditions of useless fragments and odds and ends. But there was no money! Not a solitary halfpenny was to be discerned.

"Upon my word!" ejaculated Mr. Dalton.

"Rotters!" howled Tubby Muffin, forgetting the presence in which he stood, in his amazement and wrath.

"Muffin!"

"Pulling my leg all the time!" howled Tubby. "I—I rather wondered at the way they rolled up and shoved it in! Beasts!"

"Boy!"

"Come along when you want another collection," chortled Putty of the Fourth. "I'll save up my old buttons for you, Tubby."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby Muffin meandered on his way, dismally, leaving the Classical Fourth roaring with laughter.

**The 4th Chapter.**  
**Just Like Lovell.**

"It's Muffin! I'll make him jump!"

Thus Arthur Edward Lovell.

It was a couple of days later, and a half-holiday at Rookwood. Jimmy Silver & Co. were coming home from a ramble in Rookham Woods, and their path lay across the bridge above Coombe. On the low stone parapet of the bridge a fat figure sat, slowly and methodically working a way through a bag of cherries.

Tubby Muffin was too deeply interested in the cherries to look up at the sound of footsteps, or even to hear them. He was enjoying his podgy self, and the rest of the universe was a blank to him till he had finished the cherries.

Arthur Edward Lovell tiptoed along the parapet of the bridge, with the playful intention of making his presence suddenly known, and making Tubby jump.

Jimmy Silver called out to him.

"Hold on, ass! He might fall!"

Lovell did not heed, except to wave his hand back to his chums as a sign to be silent.

Tubby's back was to the Fistical Four, as he sat with his fat little legs

astride the parapet. Deeply engrossed in the cherries, he was quite unconscious of Lovell's tiptoed approach.

Jimmy Silver frowned. Lovell was not much given to reflection, and such a practical joke was not without an element of danger. Jimmy decided that he had better call out to Muffin, though that step was certain to bring upon him the vials of Arthur Edward Lovell's wrath. But before he could call, Lovell made a run forward and gave the fat Classical a slap on the back.

"Hallo!" he bawled, just behind Tubby's head.

Startled almost out of his fat wits, Tubby Muffin whirled round, forgetting where he was; and at the same moment he over-balanced. Lovell made a clutch at him, and caught his collar. The collar came away in his hand as the fat junior shot downward towards the river.

"Good heavens!" panted Raby. Jimmy Silver tore forward.

"Lovell! Oh, you ass!"

Arthur Edward Lovell stood transfixed, with Muffin's collar in his hand. He was utterly overwhelmed by the sudden happening. There was a gurgling howl and a splash below.

"He—he—he's in!" stammered Lovell.

Jimmy rushed to the other side of the bridge. Tubby Muffin had been swept under the old brick arch by the current, and as Jimmy reached the opposite parapet and looked down the fat Classical was swept out from under the bridge. His fat hands clawed at the air, and he went under, rushed away by the fast current before Jimmy Silver could even think of diving in for him. He came up again a score of yards or more from the bridge.

"Come on!" panted Jimmy.

He rushed across the bridge to get down to the towpath. Muffin was a feeble swimmer even in a swimming-bath; in the river he was utterly helpless. It seemed almost a certainty that he would be drowned before the juniors could get anywhere near him. But Raby gave a sudden shout.

"Look!"

A man on the towpath had stopped, and was looking out at the river, his eyes fixed on the feebly-struggling junior. He was a man of rather foreign-looking aspect, with keen black eyes and a black moustache, and very handsome features. He stood for a second, his eyes fixed on Muffin, and then, staying gaily to throw off his hat, he plunged into the river, and swam out with swift, vigorous strokes.

The Fistical Four stopped, and watched him from the bridge. Muffin was far beyond their help if they had run their hardest. All depended on the foreign-looking stranger.

"He's got him!" panted Lovell.

"Good man!"

"Some swimmer!" said Newcome.

The stranger was evidently a powerful swimmer. The current of the river was swift and strong, but he struck across with powerful strokes, and was in the way of Tubby Muffin as the half-conscious junior came sweeping down. He grasped at Tubby and caught him, and the fat Classical's face was above the water again, white and set.

Then, burdened with Tubby Muffin, the stranger swam for the bank, yielding a little to the current, and slanting his way towards the willows on the towpath.

"Come on!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. tore down to the bank. They were ready to plunge into the water and help the rescuer, but he did not need help. By the time they reached the towpath the stranger had dragged himself and Tubby Muffin ashore to safety.

He was drenched to the skin, and the water ran down him as he stood. Tubby Muffin sat in the grass and puffed and blew.

"Muffin—he's all right!" panted Lovell, almost sobbing with relief.

"No thanks to you, you ass!" growled Raby.

"I—I never thought—"

"No, you never do!"

"Ow! I'm wet!" gasped Tubby Muffin. "Ow! I'm nearly drowned. G'y! My collar's gone! Wow!"

"Thank goodness you're not drowned!" said Jimmy Silver. He raised his straw hat very respectfully to the drenched stranger. "You've saved this chap's life, sir. He belongs to our school, and we'll take charge of him. Get up, Muffin! You'll catch cold."

"Ow! I'm wet!"

"It was awfully plucky of you to go in for him, sir," said Lovell. "The river's dangerous about here."

(Continued overleaf.)



## Under False Colours?

By  
Owen  
Conquest

(Continued from previous page.)

The stranger smiled. "Rien!" he said. "I mean, it is nothing. I could not see the boy drown. Mais, ma foi, I am wet! Can you boys tell me if it is far to Rookwood from here?"

"Rookwood!" exclaimed Jimmy. "We belong to Rookwood, sir. You're going to Rookwood?"

"Ah, you are Rookwood boys!" said the stranger, with a pleasant smile that made his handsome, dark face seem handsomer. "Mais, oui, I am going to Rookwood. I shall be your French master."

"Oh, you are Monsieur Gaston!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, remembering that he had heard the name of Mossoo's substitute, who was booked to arrive at the school that afternoon.

"That is my name."

Lovell picked up the Frenchman's hat and handed it to him. Monsieur Gaston ran his hands rather ruefully through his thick, dark hair, which was dripping with water.

"Thank you, my boy! I think I will run," he said. "My baggage will not yet be at Rookwood. But I must get some dry clothes. Ma foi! I am very wet. You will see that that pauvre garçon does not catch cold?"

"We'll look after him, sir. Straight on to Rookwood."

"Bon!"

The French gentleman, with a graceful salute, hurried up the towpath. He broke into a run, and was very soon out of sight. Jimmy Silver grasped Tubby and jerked him to his feet.

"Come on, fatty!" he said. "You've got to trot, or you'll be catching cold."

"Where are my cherries?"

"What?"

"I hadn't finished my cherries," persisted Tubby Muffin.

"You silly owl!" roared Jimmy. "Your blessed cherries went in with you, and they don't matter."

"Don't they?" ejaculated Tubby indignantly. "They jolly well do! That silly ass might have got my cherries out while he was about it! He grabbed me by the hair, the silly duffer—and jolly well hurt me. Just like a silly foreigner!"

The Fistical Four stared at Tubby. This, apparently, was the Muffin brand of gratitude.

"Well, you fat frog!" exclaimed Lovell. "Get a move on before I kick you!"

"You jolly well made me fall in, Lovell, and you'll have to pay for the cherries—"

"You silly ass! Get a move on!"

"There was nearly a shilling's worth left. Ow! Leggo my ear, you beast! Wow!"

The question of the cherries was left unsettled. It was necessary for the drenched Tubby to get into active motion, and the Fistical Four got him into active motion. They grasped him, and ran him up the towpath, and, in spite of Tubby's loud and indignant expostulations, they did not allow him to halt, or even to slack down, till they reached the Rookwood boathouse, and then they walked him up to the school, still expostulating.

### The 5th Chapter.

#### A Startling Denunciation!

Mr. Dalton raised his eyebrows. A foreign-looking, rather handsome and athletic young man, arrived at the doorway of the Rookwood School House, with a face flushed pink with exertion. He was a stranger at Rookwood, and evidently he had been deep in water. He was wet all over, and the summer dust of the Hampshire lanes had clung to the wet, covering him as with a garment. A dozen fellows in the quadrangle looked curiously at the young foreigner, and old Mack, the porter, was staring after him blankly from the gates. Mr. Dalton, who was looking out of the big doorway, was surprised, but polite.

The young French gentleman raised his hat—the only dry article about him—in courteous salute to the Fourth Form master.

"Bonjour, monsieur!" he began. "Good-afternoon, sir!" said Mr. Dalton politely. "May I ask if you are Monsieur Gaston, the new French master?"

"Mais, oui," M. Gaston smiled. "I arrive in a peculiar way, and I give you surprise, n'est-ce-pas? But it is not my fault that I am so wet. I walk from the station, and take the path by the river, and a boy fall in from the bridge. Voila tout!"

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "You jumped into the river to get out a boy?"

"Exactly. I explain this because I am so very wet." The French

that his face was familiar. I am almost sure that I have seen him before."

"Indeed, sir!" said Bulkeley politely, but without much interest. "Certainly he resembles someone whom I saw in Paris in a certain vacation some time ago," said Mr. Greely.

"Indeed!"

"But, of course, it is impossible," said Mr. Greely, speaking to himself rather than to Bulkeley.

He walked on to Masters' Common-room without waiting for Bulkeley to make any rejoinder, leaving the captain of Rookwood considerably surprised.

Meanwhile, Mr. Dalton had taken the French gentleman to his room and hospitably supplied his wants. He left Monsieur Gaston to change, and came downstairs again. From the big doorway he had a view of five juniors coming up the path to the House—the Fistical Four, with Tubby Muffin in their midst. Tubby was red and perspiring and spluttering, expostulating loudly as he was hurried on. Jimmy Silver & Co. were determined that he should not catch cold by hanging about in wet clothes, and they were keeping him in active motion—extremely active motion—and Tubby was more than fed up with it. He would have preferred a bad cold and a week in sunny to all this exertion. But Reginald Muffin was not given his choice in the matter.

to give an account of what had happened.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were emphatic in their admiration of the French gentleman's promptitude and courage in the rescue of Tubby Muffin. Evidently Victor Gaston was something of a hero in their eyes. Mr. Dalton listened to the recital with interest, the juniors judiciously forgetting to mention Lovell's obtuse practical joke which had caused the accident.

"It was no end plucky of him, sir," said Lovell. "The river's jolly dangerous below the bridge as you know, sir. But he went right in as soon as he saw Muffin. He had him out by the time we got down to the bank. It was ripping, sir!"

Mr. Dalton smiled.

"It is very fortunate that Monsieur Gaston walked from the station by the towpath," he said. "Very fortunate indeed for Muffin!"

He dismissed the juniors, and as soon as the Fistical Four came out they found a crowd of the Classical Fourth curious to know what had happened. The chums of the Fourth gave a graphic description of Tubby Muffin's rescue to a crowd of fellows in the corridor. The general opinion of the Fourth was that Monsieur Gaston was a jolly good fellow, as well as some swimmer.

"We'll jolly well give him a cheer when he comes downstairs," said Mornington.

a fellow ought to be grateful," said Tubby. "I'll tell you what. Suppose we present him with a token of our esteem—"

"Eh?"

"I'm ready to take a collection," said Tubby. "Not in a money-box—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I don't want any more of your rotten jokes," said Tubby. "But if the chap saved my life, and all that, we ought to give him a—a—a testimonial. I'll take round the hat. If I had a testimonial I should prefer it in the form of cash. So, of course, he would. You fellows can trust me with the money—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell.

"I think it's a jolly good idea," exclaimed Tubby warmly. "Now, what are you fellows handing out?"

"Mine's a boot," said Jimmy Silver. And he suited the action to the word, and there was a roar from Tubby Muffin.

"Mine's a thump," said Newcome.

"Yaroooh!"

"Bump him!" exclaimed Mornington.

"I—I say! Whoop! Stoppit! I say! Yaroooh! I—I was only j-j-joking! I'm not going to take a collection! Yow-ow! I wouldn't, you know! Leggo! Mmmmmmm!"

"Mon Dieu!" murmured a surprised voice on the stairs. Monsieur Victor Gaston, the "new Froggy," was coming down, and he stared at the hilarious scene going on at the foot of the staircase.

"Oh, here he is!" exclaimed Lovell.

The juniors dropped Tubby Muffin at once. Tubby landed on the floor and roared, unheeded. Jimmy Silver gave the signal for the cheer, and the juniors cheered the French gentleman uproariously, much to his surprise.

Mr. Dalton came along from his study.

"Hurrah! Bravo, sir! Vive la France!" The Fourth-Formers were yelling with great enthusiasm.

"But what is all this? What does it mean?" exclaimed Monsieur Gaston.

"It was a Fourth Form boy whom you pulled out of the river, monsieur," said Mr. Dalton with a smile. "This is apparently an ovation from his Form-fellows. Come, my boys, that will do. Shall I take you to Dr. Chisholm, monsieur?"

"Thank you!"

The juniors still cheered as Monsieur Gaston walked away with Mr. Dalton to the Head's study.

"He's a jolly good fellow, and he knows what we think of him now," remarked Jimmy Silver.

Monsieur Gaston, dressed in a suit of Mr. Dalton's clothes, and looking none the worse for his ducking, walked away cheerfully to interview the Head of Rookwood. He was already on quite cordial terms with Mr. Dalton.

"Come to my study when you have seen the Head, and if you wish, I will introduce you to the other members of the staff in Common-room," said Mr. Dalton, as he left the French gentleman.

"You are very kind."

Mr. Dalton returned to his study. It was close on tea-time, and the Rookwood staff generally had their tea in Common-room, in a select company by themselves. It was a good opportunity for Monsieur Gaston to make the acquaintance of his future colleagues. Monsieur Moneau had not been considered of much account in the school, and indeed had generally been rather patronised by the other masters. But the "new Froggy" was obviously a man of different calibre, and looked like a man to hold his own quite easily in Common-room. Even the majestic Mr. Greely was not likely to put him out of countenance.

Victor Gaston rejoined Mr. Dalton in a quarter of an hour. Then the two young men proceeded together to Masters' Common-room. They chatted cheerfully on the way.

In Common-room were gathered the Rookwood masters; Mr. Greely, of the Fifth, Mr. Mooney, of the Shell, Mr. Bohun, of the Third, Mr. Wiggins, of the Second; Mr. Bull, the maths master, Mr. Flinders, the German master, and two or three others. Mr. Dalton presented the new arrival, and he was received politely. But Mr. Greely, laying down his newspaper, stood as if rooted to the floor, his eyes fixed on the face of the Frenchman, uttering no word.

The expression on Mr. Greely's face was strange. His eyes seemed almost to be starting from his head as he stared blankly at the French gentleman. Monsieur Gaston could not

(Continued on page 800.)

## BOYS' FRIEND FAVOURITES!

### GAN WAGA.



If there is one fellow aboard Ferrers Lord's palatial yacht, the Lord of the Deep, who adds to the gaiety of existence for all hands, it is portly old Gan Waga, the Eskimo.

Gan is more a guest than anything else on board the yacht, and well does Prince Ching Lung, Ferrers Lord's great friend, know it! Still, in spite of the fact that the fat Eskimo seldom does any work on the ship, he is liked very much by all Ferrers Lord's friends and employees.

The Eskimo, who is never more happy than when he is up to some mischief or other, has but a small idea of the value of things, especially

money. Much to Prince Ching Lung's consternation, Gan has been guilty many times of helping himself to the prince's cash, and also to cigars from his cabinet. And another old failing of the Eskimo's is that he has frequently pledged Ching Lung's name for credit in the shops in Portsmouth, the yacht's usual port of call when on a visit to England. Recently, however, Prince Ching Lung put up the bar to Gan, and consequently, the Eskimo has not been able to obtain his wants when ashore.

The age of Gan Waga is unknown. The reason for this is that the Eskimo has no idea when he was born. However, to look at Gan and take stock of him, one would say that he is nearer forty than thirty years of age. As to his weight, he turns the scale at about seventeen stone, which no doubt says much for his enormous appetite and his special love for oysters. Oysters, without doubt, comprise his favourite dish, and he thinks nothing of devouring four dozen of them at a sitting.

gentleman smiled again. "Excuse moi. Perhaps you can tell me whether my baggage has arrived from the railway. I must change my clothes. You are a master here, n'est-ce-pas?"

"I am the master of the Fourth Form," said Mr. Dalton. "My name is Richard Dalton. I am very pleased to make your acquaintance, Monsieur Gaston." He shook hands with the young Frenchman. "Your baggage cannot have arrived yet; but certainly you must change your clothes. Will you come to my room? I can lend you a few things, with pleasure."

"Oh, you are too kind, too hospitable!" exclaimed M. Gaston.

Mr. Dalton smiled, and led the stranger into the House.

Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth, glanced at them as they went up the staircase, and started a little. He came to the foot of the staircase and looked up after them, but he had a view only of their backs. He turned away, and found Bulkeley of the Sixth at hand.

"Bulkeley," said Mr. Greely, "can you tell me who that young gentleman is who has gone up with Mr. Dalton?"

"The new French master, I think, sir," answered the captain of Rookwood.

"Ah! I remember that Monsieur Gaston was expected this afternoon," said the Fifth Form master thoughtfully.

"That is he, I think, sir."

"Dear me!" Mr. Greely looked perplexed. "I had only a glimpse of the young man, but it seemed to me

"Buck up, Muffin!" exclaimed Lovell, as he propelled the fat Classical up the steps of the House.

"Ow! Rotter! Lemme alone!"

"You'll catch cold, you fat duffer!"

"All your fault, you dummy. Let a chap alone!" gasped Tubby. "I'm nearly dropping now. Ow! Wow!"

"What does this mean, Silver?"

exclaimed Mr. Dalton.

"Muffin fell in the river, sir," said Jimmy Silver. "He toppled off the bridge. We've brought him home."

"It was all Lovell's fault—"

began Tubby, with breathless indignation.

"Shut up!" murmured Raby.

"Oh!" exclaimed Mr. Dalton. "Is Muffin the boy whom Monsieur Gaston pulled out of the river?"

"Yes, sir."

"Take him to the dormitory at once. I will ask the House dame to come up to him immediately."

"Very well, sir."

The Fistical Four propelled the breathless Tubby up to the Fourth Form dormitory, where they gladly handed him over to the care of Mrs. Maloney. Then they came down, and were called into Mr. Dalton's study

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"Good egg!" said Conroy. "It will show him what Rookwood thinks of pluck."

"Yes, rather!" agreed Jimmy Silver. "Where is he now?"

"Changing his clobber in Dicky Dalton's room," said Putty of the Fourth. "Let's wait for him."

"Hallo, here's Tubby!"

Tubby Muffin came downstairs in dry clothes, with an extremely cross expression on his fat face. He blinked morosely at the juniors.

"You owe me a bob, Lovell," he said at once. "It was all your fault. My cherries—"

"For goodness' sake shut up about those dashed cherries!" exclaimed Lovell impatiently. "Aren't you thankful that you haven't been drowned?"

Tubby Muffin sniffed.

"Oh, I wasn't in any danger," he said.

"What?"

"I'm a splendid swimmer, you know. Any of you fellows would have been in danger. I admit that. Not me!"

"You silly owl!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "You would have been drowned if the new Froggy hadn't gone in for you!"

"Rot!" said Tubby.

"And you ought to thank him for saving your life," said Raby warmly.

Tubby Muffin looked thoughtful. A cunning gleam came into his little round eyes.

"You fellows think he saved my life?" he asked.

"Of course he did!"

"Well, then, in that case, of course,

# In Your Editor's Den



Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers upon any subject. Address your letters to: Editor, "Boys' Friend," The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

### IN THE FIRST LINE.

You cannot really estimate the value of stories in terms of money, but a chum who writes to say that the BOYS' FRIEND gives hundred per cent value does get to the heart of the matter. Of course, good stories represent something far more than cash, which, after all, is but a medium of exchange. But the real life-inspired yarn lives for years, and acts as a spur and a cheerer-up to thousands.

### "THE PRIDE OF THE COUNTY!"

By A. S. Hardy.

This great new cricketing serial by the prince of cricket writers starts off with a bang next Monday. You can bank on it. The excellence of the yarn will be recognised from the first line. It has got the right magic sort of summer atmosphere we all doze on, and, what's more, it shows in a perfectly natural style what good fortune may come to the fellow who is all in to succeed. There is better fortune in a golden chance which allows anyone to launch out in his own special line than in, say, the sudden acquisition of a bag of diamonds or a chunky sack bulging with gold dust. It is the jewelled chance which is wanted. Jim Lyle, the hero of Mr. Hardy's spiffing new romance of the cricket field, gets his priceless opportunity. How, when, why, and where he obtains the Open Sesame you will see if you will wait till Monday. Book your copies early. There is always a run on the BOYS' FRIEND, and the rush will be extra marked next week. You will be keen on all the characters, including the "Terror" and George Mead. But the best of the bunch is Jim. This youngster comes straight out of the grand picture gallery of lifelike characters, which is the author's own creation.

### "THE MYSTERY MASTER!"

By Owen Conquest.

Next Monday's Rookwood story brings a full-size mystification into the field of vision. It all concerns Victor Gaston, the new French master, who has come to take over temporarily the onerous duties of Monsieur Monceau. The author knows France well. He often writes to me from the other side of the Channel, and his knowledge of the French character is all round. In the coming yarn we get a regular network of a plot, and lots of the irresistible humour for which Mr. Conquest is noted.

### "A STRAIGHT DEAL!"

By Richard Holt.

Look out for this grand Wild West tale in our next issue. It shows Kid McBride in a new role, and a topping fine one at that, for the splendid fellow is seen requiting in glorious style a good action on the part of a certain outlaw.

### "THE PRICE OF FREEDOM!"

By Victor Nelson.

Our coming number is stuffed with notable attractions, and this is one of them. It need fear no rivalry, for it shows Don Darrel and Harry Holdfast busy again. It is their taking job this time to thwart the doings, or misdoings, of a gang of fraudulent self-styled "crusaders."

### "CURING THE BO'SUN!"

By Sidney Drew.

When the Lord of the Deep headed for the Amazon we knew there would be happenings. In the new hilarious yarn of the picked company of adventurous spirits there is high pressure fun without end. It is this way. Benjamin Maddock, the trusty bo'sun of the well found ship, stuffs himself with giddy lore about the Amazon country, and he sails in with his encyclopedic information in and out of season. As we all know, it is easy enough to get fed up with other fellows' book learning. So it is here. Gan Waga and his pals do not want to have chunks of knowledge hurled at them, so they proceed to put Benjamin in his place.

### HEALTH AND SPORT.

Mr. Percy Longhurst has an especially good contribution next Monday. Don't miss it, for you will find good luck in the straight tips from the training expert.

### A SENSE OF HUMOUR.

It may be taken for granted that the ability to see the funny side of things is invaluable. This does not, of course, mean the cutting of jokes or the continual wearing of a broad smile. I gather from many letters to hand, dealing with grievances of one sort and another, that some chums have no notion of the real power or humour. A sense of humour is a sense of the proportion of things. It prevents a fellow brooding over a trouble which more often than not is just so much imagination. In a week a worry is usually forgotten and done with for ever. But the over-

serious individual sits on it and magnifies the vexation. The wretched microbe of doubt and suspicion, and the germ of jealousy get busy. The advice is as old as the hills, but "don't worry" remains the sagest counsel. Things are never as bad as febrile fancy paints them, and in numberless cases will vanish like smoke if they are faced the right way.

### "BOYS' FRIEND" FAVOURITES.

"Your new series of biographies," writes a correspondent, "are the finest ever written. Please let us have more." Well, a plain request, when so courteously tendered, can only be met one way, and I hope to maintain this agreeable little feature for some time yet.

### THAT COUNTRY TRAMP.

Please do not misunderstand me. I am not referring to the fat-faced personage in a rugged coat who beams out of a hedge where he has been dossing and asks for money to help him on his way to Timbuctoo, where his mother lies ill. I expect all of us who have footed it through the country sides have encountered this cheerful wight with the husky voice which gives him away. No, I was thinking of the wonderful pleasure to be derived from a spell on Shanks' pony through the lanes and over the commons. The idea came to me because of a letter from a reader who takes his holidays this way and has the best time possible. For there is endless variety in the country. There are new views, bright, fresh impressions, and the cobwebs get blown away as one pads on comfortably, trying to take in all the beauties of Dame Nature's grand summer show.

### "THE AMATEUR AQUARIST."

All interested in aquatic life and the hobby of aquarium keeping should get a copy of this little monthly magazine, issued by A. E. Hodge, F.Z.S., at 14, Astonville Street, Southfields, London, S.W. 18. It tells the student just what he wants to know about sea urchins, starfishes, silver water beetles, etc., including that fascinating creature, the black salamander. Aquarists will find here just what they are looking for.

### BEARERS OF THE BURDEN.

A letter to hand tells its own tale, one of heroism. It is marked "Private," so wild horses of the friskiest description would not drag the subject matter from me. A slight point of difficulty was inquired about. But that letter in its way was as full of good cheer as anything could be. The writer is a bearer of the burden, and he has shouldered his responsibility in grand style. A duty was put on him which cut him off from a chosen career, but he did not hesitate. It is only incidentally that he refers to the business at all. I thank him for writing, and I congratulate the BOYS' FRIEND on having him as a thick and thin supporter.

Your Editor.

## UNDER FALSE COLOURS?

(Continued from page 788.)

help observing his strange look—it was obvious to every man in the room. Mr. Dalton frowned slightly.

"Mr. Greely—you did not seem to hear me," he said, rather sharply. "This is Monsieur Victor Gaston, who is taking Monsieur Monceau's place here for the rest of the term."

Still Mr. Greely did not speak. Still his startled eyes were glued upon the handsome rather surprised face of the Frenchman.

"Mr. Greely—" murmured Mr. Mooney.

"Good heavens!" ejaculated Mr. Greely at last.

He strode towards the Frenchman. There was a hush in Masters' Common-room.

"What are you doing here?" thundered Mr. Greely. "Felix Lacroix, what are you doing here?"

Victor Gaston looked at him calmly, coolly, not a muscle of his handsome face twitching.

"Vous vous trompez, monsieur," he said quietly. "You mistake. My name is Victor Gaston—I am a French master."

Mr. Greely's reply astounded Masters' Common-room.

"Your name is Felix Lacroix, and you are a French criminal!" he thundered. "I myself, in Paris last year, saw you sentenced to prison in a court of law for a robbery of a bank."

You are here under a false name, and for some lawless purpose!"

"Mr. Greely—are you out of your senses?" exclaimed Mr. Dalton, in dismay and amazement.

"No, sir, I am not. I know that man as well as I know my own brother!" exclaimed Mr. Greely. "If he denies his name, I am going to the Head to denounce him!"

Victor Gaston shrugged his shoulders.

"You will please yourself, monsieur," he said. "I can only repeat that my name is Victor Gaston, that my testimonials are in the hands of Dr. Chisholm, and that you are mistaken—deceived, perhaps, by some resemblance."

"Nothing of the kind!" Mr. Greely snorted with wrath. "I am going to the Head!"

With ponderous footsteps, the Fifth Form master stalked out of the room, purple with wrath and excitement. He left a dead silence behind him in Masters' Common-room.

THE END.

"The Mystery Master!" is the ripping story of Jimmy Silver & Co. of Rookwood School for next Monday. Don't miss it whatever you do! Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance and avoid disappointment!

## SCOBBER'S SWINDLE!

(Continued from page 797.)

"Look out, Tommy! He coming 'yo' ways, old bean!"

The giant wasp was buzzing down the alleyway. The Eskimo made a spite at it with a bolster, missed, and dodged back into the cabin.

Then Prout had a go with a pillow, and did no good. It was Barry O'Rooney's turn. Boldly he leaped into the alleyway, gripping a framed picture he had taken from the wall, and boldly he leaped into the air and struck hard at the flying monster. There was a crash of breaking glass and woodwork and a bump as Barry O'Rooney fell flat among the ruins, but he gathered himself together and rolled into the cabin like a human ball.

Maddock had a try to slay the monster with a rubber bath mat, but the giant wasp turned back before it reached him. Then, Prince Ching Lung, grasping a tennis-racket, made a brisk run, a swift leap, and one downward smash with the racket.

"Goals! goals! A butterfuls goals, Ching!" cried Gan Waga.

The giant wasp was as dead as a nuttin chop, and there was not a soul to shed a tear over its sad and early death.

"A brave lot, you are!" said Ching Lung. "A courageous crowd! Noble fellows to run away from a wretched wasp!"

"Bedad, sir, wid all due respect, we didn't notice your highness loitering about admiring the scenery or picking primroses," said Barry O'Rooney. "Phwat are we going to do wid the bastes in the school-room?"

Ut's all Scobber's doings, the hairy spalpeen! So Oi suggest we foind the weevil, pop him inside, lock the door, and let him dale wid them. That would be all fair and square, for ut's his job."

Unfortunately nobody knew where the captain was or when he would return. They could hear the wasps buzzing about and catch occasional glimpses of them through the glass panels of the door.

"When we've got rid of these fellows you have my full permission to do what you like with Captain Scobber, boys," said the prince. "A fitting punishment would be to give him a shave and a haircut with a lawn-mower. Let us prepare for the slaughter."

Ten minutes later the assassin burst into the room of tragedy and slaughter. They were clad in sting-proof leather coats and leggings, and wore fencing masks on their heads. Tennis rackets tied to sticks to give them a longer reach were the weapons. And at last when they had biffed and hit the air and each other and fallen over the furniture, the deed was done and the carpet was strewn with dead.

"Now, I wonder, by honey," said Prout, "if there's such a thing as a lawn-mower aboard, for we must give Scobber that shave and haircut."

"Ay, ay, souse me," said the bo'sun. "And to be sure of making a good job of it, we'll try it on teacher first."

THE END.

(Don't miss "Curing the Bo'sun!"—next Monday's rattling fine story of Prince Ching Lung and Gan Waga & Co. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance and thus make certain of securing it!)

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