

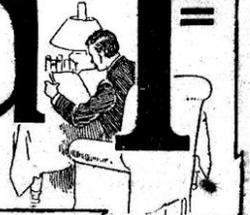
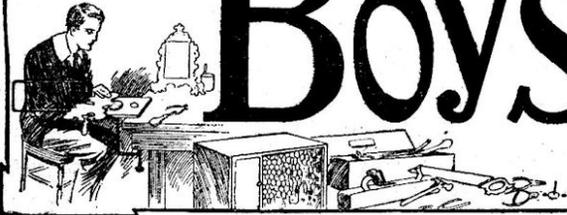
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# Boys' Herald 1<sup>d</sup>

EVERY BOY'S AND YOUNG MAN'S  
STORY AND HOBBY PAPER.



No. 235, Vol. V.

EVERY WEDNESDAY—ONE PENNY.

WEEK ENDING JANUARY 18, 1908.

## THE KING OF THE CARAVANS.



There came the fierce battle-trumpet of Siren the elephant, and a crash of wood—torn like paper. The figure of a wretched, flying man burst into view, and behind him came the vast form of the elephant with rags of canvas hanging from his tusks.

# Champions on the Ice

A Story of the Chums of Cliveden College, of Fun on the Ice, and of a Most Exciting Skating Match.



## The 1st Chapter.

### A Collision on the Line.

**L**INCOLN G. POINDEXTER looked out of the window of the Fourth Form dormitory at Cliveden, and gave a crow of satisfaction.

"Freezing hard! By Jupiter!" "Sure, and it feels like it," said Micky Flynn, as he sat up in bed and shivered. "How bawstly dark it is! Are ye sure that's the rising-bell, Pointhead?"

"Of course it is, lazybones! Get up!" "Ow, it's cold!" grumbled Micky, as he gingerly put one leg out of bed. "Dick Neville, ye lazy boulder, that's the rising-bell going. Wake up!"

"Gr-r-r-r!" was all Dick Neville replied. "Oh, I'll wake him," said Pankhurst, getting out of bed, and picking up the sponge off his washstand. "I say, Neville, it's time to get up."

"Gr-r-r-r!" Pankhurst, with a grin, squeezed the sponge over the face of the sleepy Fourth Former. Dick's eyes opened wide enough then, and he gave a jump as if he had been electrified. "Woohoo! Woohoo!"

"Time to get up," explained Pankhurst. "I couldn't let you, oversleep yourself, and get a wiggle, you know. As head of the Form, it's my duty—ow!"

Before Pankhurst could finish Dick Neville had seized his pillow, and, with a mighty swipe, he sent Pankhurst tumbling heels over head along the floor.

"Ha, ha, ha!" yelled Micky Flynn. "Sure, and that was what he was asking for intirely. Is that how you like it done, Panky?" Pankhurst jumped up.

For a moment he seemed inclined to "go for" Dick Neville headlong, and Neville stood ready with the pillow to receive the charge. But Panky altered his mind. His natural good-humour returned in a moment, and he grinned.

"I guess it's freezing as hard as it can," said Poindexter, coming back from the window. "The snow in the 'lose is as hard as a brick."

"Sure, and I'm freezing too," grumbled Micky Flynn. "I don't—"

"We shall get some skating, I guess," said the American chum. "The river will be frozen hard, I expect."

"Good!" exclaimed Dick Neville, as he broke the ice in his water-jug. "We haven't had much skating since you came to Cliveden. Puntdodger, and if the ice holds we can have a ripping afternoon on Wednesday."

"That's what I was thinking. We might get up a skating match, I guess, only there's nobody in the Form able to stand up to us—"

"What's that?" howled Pankhurst and Price together.

"The 'Old Firm' were up in arms at once at the suggestion that they, at all events, were not the equals of the 'Combine' in the skating line.

"Eh?" said Poindexter, turning round. "Did you speak, Panky?"

"Yes, I did," said Pankhurst wrathfully. "What the Dickens do you mean, you canned-beef fraud? There are fellows in this Form who could knock spots off you at skating, with their hands and legs tied and blindfolded."

"I guess I'd like to see them do it," Poindexter remarked. "If you two ginger-coloured scallywags think you can skate—"

"Think! I know we can skate you off your legs, and not half try."

"Then it's a go!" exclaimed the chum from Chicago. "We'll fix it up for Wednesday afternoon, and make a match of it."

"And we'll meet you willingly, and give you a lesson," said Pankhurst.

"Quite so," said Price.

"It's rather a good idea," Pankhurst remarked to his chum, as he towelled his face, glowing from the cold water. "Those kids have been thinking a lot of themselves since they beat us in the diabolio match, and it's time we put them in their place, you know. They're beginning to think they're the top of the Form."

"Quite so," said Price, his usual remark. Price was the faithful echo of his chief.

"We'll practise a bit first, to make sure of wiping up the ground—I mean the ice—with them," went on Pankhurst, "and if I don't take the tinned-beef masher for a football."

And the boys of the Fourth Form at Cliveden trooped down to breakfast, and when that meal was over, poured out into the quad, where they found a good many fellows of the Shell and the Fifth already out sliding.

"I guess we'll slide," Poindexter remarked, glancing up at the clock in the school-tower. "We've got twenty minutes before chapel."

"Right!" said Dick Neville. "Hallo! Where are you coming to, Pankhurst?"

"Out of the way!" roared Pankhurst. The chief of the Old Firm was careering along at a great rate, and the Combine were standing in the way.

Behind Pankhurst came Price, and a good many more of the Fourth Form.

But the Combine did not move. "I guess we're not going to stand aside for any red-headed boulder," drawled Lincoln G. Poindexter. "Not much."

"Hardly," assented Neville. "Sure, and we—mother av Moses!"

Right into the three chums came Pankhurst, and the impact was terrific. The three stood firm, and Pankhurst might have been hurled back, but behind came on the long column of sliders, and the combined weight was irresistible.

Away went the three chums of the Fourth, simply flying.

Poindexter reeled in one direction, and sat down violently. Neville sprawled away on the other side helplessly. But Micky Flynn fared the worst. Micky had a way of coming in for the hardest knocks upon all occasions. He hopped

upon the ground like a sack, and Pankhurst hopped over him, and in a moment the long column of sliders was missing itself up in a confused heap over Pankhurst and Micky.

"Arrah!" howled the unfortunate Irish junior. "Get off me neck! You're squashing me intirely! Gurrup!"

"You—you ass!" gasped Pankhurst, exclaiming himself with difficulty over the struggling mass. "You—you howling mannie!"

"Faith, and it was your own fault intirely!"

"What did you stand in the way for?" roared Pankhurst.

"What did you come this way for at all?"

"You—you fathead—"

"You—you red-head—"

"Oh, come on!" exclaimed Gatty. "No good rowing. I can see those Fifth Form boulders making sheep's eyes at our slide. It's a better one than theirs. Let's get going."

It was good advice, and it was taken. The juniors sorted themselves out, and the Combine joined in the sliding, taking the head of the file with their usual coolness.

The making of slides in the Close was not permitted by the powers that were, but the juniors forgot all about that in the excitement of the game.

The Fourth Form slide was a long one, extending nearly the hundred yards, while the Fifth-Form fellows had not allowed themselves so much room.

The Fifth were sliding away, but when their slide had extended itself to a certain length it was blocked by the fountain, and Crane, the captain of the Fifth, was indeed casting his eyes upon the more convenient slide made by the Fourth Formers.

"I say, Cuffy," he remarked to his chum, "they've got a slide twice as long as ours, and it's merely rot, you know. We'd better change, as they're only kids."

Cuffy grinned. "At it, them changing."

"Oh, I'm not going to ask them. It's no good arguing about the matter. We'll just take one end of it when they're at the other, and warn them off."

"And if they come on—"

"Then they'll get swept off the earth, that's all."

"Right!" said Cuffy. "It's like their cheek to have a better slide than ours, anyway."

"Of course it is. Come on."

The Fourth Formers had swept along their slide, and the last one had reached the end, and Poindexter was about to lead the return, when

Crane and Cuffy, and a dozen Fifth fellows, arrived at the opposite end.

The intention of the Fifth was plain, and, as a meeting of two opposite parties in the centre of the slide would have been disastrous, Poindexter waved his hand across the Close, and shouted:

"Hallo, there!"

"Hallo to you, and many of 'em!" called back Crane.

"Keep off our slide."

"Whose slide?"

"Ours!" yelled Poindexter.

"Oh, yours! Haven't you made this slide for us?"

"No!" roared the Fourth, with one voice.

"You don't say so!" exclaimed Crane, looking distressed. "I really thought you had made this slide for us, like good little boys, properly attentive to their elders."

"Keep off our slide, you rotters!"

"Can't be did. You can have ours. We've done with it."

And Crane prepared to start, and the other Fifth fellows, laughing and grinning, made ready to follow him.

The feelings of the Fourth Form at this act of sheer brigandage were too deep for words. They looked at each other.

"I guess we're not going to stand this!" exclaimed Pankhurst, at last.

"Sure, and we wouldn't stand it from the Fifth, let alone the Fifth!" exclaimed Micky Flynn, indignantly.

"Good for you, old Ireland!" cried Pankhurst. "Who's coming after me?"

And, without a moment's hesitation, he launched himself along the slide, just as Crane let himself go from the other end.

"I am!" shouted Neville.

And in a second he was speeding after Pankhurst. Poindexter was next, then Price, then Micky Flynn, and then the Fourth followed to the last fellow there.

Crane, with Cuffy behind him, was speeding along the slide. He had not dreamed that the Fourth would have the temerity to take this resolute step, but it was too late to step now. The Fifth fellows were streaming on behind him.

"Get off the track!" roared Crane.

"Get off yourself!" roared back Pankhurst. "You'll get hurt!"

"We shall be the only ones!"

There was no time for more words. The opposing parties rushed down upon each other at full speed, and met, Pankhurst and Crane chest to chest, about the centre of the slide.

The impact was terrific.

Pankhurst threw his arms round Crane to save himself, and Crane did likewise to Pankhurst, and they rolled over together, locked in a loving embrace.

Over them went sprawling the rest, in an inextinguishable mass of arms and legs, and hands, and caps, and scarves.

## The 2nd Chapter.

### Cyrus K. Poindexter Visits Cliveden.

"Zat is terrible!"

Monsieur Friquet looked out of his study window, and his eyes grew wide and round as he saw the impact of the rival parties of sliders.

"Mon bleu! Zey will be keel! Zey will be cripple!" exclaimed the little Frenchman. And he rushed out of his study in great alarm.

To reach the door and dash out into the Close was the work of a moment; but all he saw when he got out was the mass of waving arms and legs and scarves we have described. The little man gave a gasp.

"Zat is terrible!"

He dashed to the rescue. Monsieur Friquet, was the best-hearted little man in the world, and he was sorely afraid that the juniors were hurt. Some of them undoubtedly were! And with the vague idea of rendering first aid to the injured, Monsieur Friquet dashed upon the scene.

He forgot all about the slide in his excitement. But he ran right on to it, and in a moment he was whizzing along at a terrific rate of speed.

This unexpected happening absolutely bewildered him, and he could not make the least effort to save himself.

His right leg came up into the air, and remained stuck out at right angles from his body, and his arms were outspread to their full extent, his mouth was wide open, and his eyes round with terror.

In this graceful attitude Monsieur Friquet shot along the slide. Shouts followed him in his wild career—shouts of encouragement and laughter.

"Go it, Mossoo!"

"Keep moving!"

"Bravo!"

"Other leg up!"

"Ciel!" gasped Monsieur Friquet. "Ciel! Zis is terrible!"

Then he went with a crash into the heap of sliders, who were trying to sort themselves out and scramble up.

The impact of Monsieur Friquet threw them into fresh confusion. Poindexter, who had just dragged himself off Cuffy's chest, was knocked down again, and the unfortunate Cuffy gave a fearful groan.

Monsieur Friquet sat down in the midst of the mixed sliders, and gazed about him with an expression of absolute bewilderment.

"Ciel! Vat has happen viz itself?"

Poindexter chuckled. He was considerably shaken up, but the American chum did not care for a few hard knocks. He gave a helping hand to Mossoo, as soon as he was on his feet, and helped the little Frenchman up.

"Hope you're not hurt, Mossoo!" he exclaimed.

"Hurt! I am fearfully hurt viz myself! My



The last stroke had carried Poindexter ahead like an arrow, and he breasted the tape a good couple of feet ahead of Pankhurst. The next moment the cheering was changed to a shout of alarm. Poindexter, in the excitement, had forgotten all about the ice being thin further down the river, and with a crack and a splash he was in the water.

## Champions on the Ice.

(Continued from the previous page.)

back is broken, and some of ze ribs, and I zink my head's not quite in ze right place."

"Ha, ha! I moan, I'm sorry!" grinned Poindexter. "I hope it's not quite so bad as that, sir. Shall I help you to the house?"

"Oui! Oh, yes, I fear zat I cannot walk." "Lend a hand here, Panky!"

Pankhurst lent a hand. They took an arm each of the little Frenchman, and helped him back towards the house. Monsieur Friguet's legs swept away from under him on the slippery grounds, and he hung a dead weight on the juniors.

"Hold me!" he gasped. "Ze ground walk away under my feet! I fall—"

"You're all right, sir," said Poindexter, reassuringly.

And the juniors ran Monsieur Friguet up to the house, and did not leave him till he was safely landed on the mat.

"Zanks!" gasped Monsieur Friguet. "Zank you, mes garçons! I have had a terrible experience."

Poindexter grinned as he went to the slide again. The fallen juniors had by this time picked themselves up, and matters were looking rather warm between Fourth and Fifth. There was the prospect of a Form row, when attention was diverted by the sight of a tall gentleman in a fur coat and silk hat entering at the gates.

Poindexter uttered an exclamation. "Popper!"

It was indeed Cyrus K. Poindexter, the Chicago millionaire, and the "popper" of Lincoln G., who had appeared at the gate.

"Hello!" said Crane. "Here's the old original head of the canned horse firm!"

"You want to look at Crane?" demanded Poindexter, wrathfully.

"Oh, rats—canned rats!" said Crane. And then he whispered to Cuffy, and started at a run towards the gate. Poindexter was making in the same direction, when Cuffy ran into him, and the two rolled on the ground together.

Consequently, Crane of the Fifth was the first to get anywhere near the gate to greet Mr. Poindexter.

He stopped and took off his cap respectfully to the millionaire.

"Mr. Poindexter!" he exclaimed. "I am so glad to see you here! We are all glad and honoured, sir, to see so famous a man!"

"What's that real palooka, I guess!" said Mr. Poindexter.

"Will you permit me to conduct you to the house, sir?" went on the polite Crane. "The Close has been so cut up into slides that it isn't safe for anybody to tread on it, really. It's dangerous to walk about here."

"Thank you, my little man!" Crane's eyes glistened.

To be called anybody's "little man" was distinctly exasperating, to the great and important captain of the Fifth Form at Cliveden.

But vengeance was at hand! "Is that my boy yonder?" asked Cyrus K. Poindexter, glancing in surprise and some amusement at Poindexter and Cuffy, who were rolling on the snow in a deadly embrace.

Crane grinned. "Yes, sir! They're fighting like tiger-cats. Perhaps you'd better stop them. This way, sir, and mind you don't slip!"

Mr. Poindexter followed the obliging Crane. He made some haste, too, for a Fifth fellow had come to Cuffy's help, and the two were rubbing Lincoln G.'s face in the snow. The chums of the Fourth were rushing to the rescue, and a regular melee ensued.

"Here, what are you up to?" exclaimed the millionaire. "Ease off, my lads, or you'll be hurting one another."

And he broke into a run. That was just what Crane wanted. It was his idea to repeat the

performance of the French master with Cyrus K. Poindexter as the principal attraction, and he succeeded.

Mr. Poindexter's foot slipped, and he reeled against Crane, who, under the pretence of helping him, gave him a terrific shove.

Away flew the millionaire at full-speed along the slide, upon which Crane's push had fairly landed him.

"Hollup!" roared Mr. Poindexter. "Help! Hellup! Oh, what the—who the—"

The juniors scrambled out of the way as the millionaire bore down upon them.

Mr. Poindexter had a clear slide before him, and he slid!

His feet did not leave the slide, but his knees bent, and he flew along in a half-sitting posture, his coat trailing behind, and his silk hat on the back of his head, an extremely undignified attitude for a Beef King and a millionaire, and it was no wonder that the spectators roared.

The use of the slide had extended it almost up to the house steps, and it was right up to the door that the amazed millionaire went sliding; and, as it happened, the chapel bell began to ring at that moment. Mr. Lanyon, the master of the Fourth, came out to cross to the chapel.

Mr. Lanyon stepped out into the Close, and then he stopped, transfixed with amazement at the sight of the figure bearing down upon him.

"My—my word!" he gasped. "What—what—"

The next instant the millionaire was upon him. Mr. Lanyon was swept off his feet, and the impact stopped the wild career of the millionaire. The two gentlemen sat up and stared at one another.

"My word!" gasped Mr. Lanyon again. "Really, my dear sir, I suppose boys will be boys, and I wouldn't like to see them anything else, either! I've come down to see the Doctor, Lincoln. I'll see you after morning school. That's the chapel-bell, isn't it?"

"Yes, popper."

"Then be off!"

And Lincoln G. Poindexter joined the stream of setting towards the chapel, and his respected parent entered the house.

### The 3rd Chapter.

#### Grahame Discovers a Mare's Nest.

THE Combine came out of the Fourth Form class-room together after morning school. They linked arms and marched off to No. 4 study.

Poindexter's brow was thoughtful. "I wonder what brings the popper down here to Cliveden," he said. "He's come in good time, anyway, as I am getting into the stony state financially. He said he would see me after morning school, and—Hullo, here he is!"

Poindexter had opened the door of the study, and the first things he saw were the feet of his parent reposing on the study table.

The lengthy form of Cyrus K. Poindexter reposed in the only armchair, and the atmosphere

of the study was thick with the fumes of his strong cigar.

"Hallo, pop!" said Lincoln cheerily. "Hallo, Lincoln G.!" said the millionaire.

He gathered up his long legs, and his feet ceased to adorn the table. Mr. Poindexter looked good-humouredly at the boys.

"I was told this was your study," he said, "so I came here and waited after my business with the Head was finished."

"Right, pop! I hope Dr. Rayne gave you a good report of me."

"He did. He said you were the most mischievous young limb in the school."

Poindexter laughed. "I'm keeping up the family reputation for lusty, pop," he said cheerfully. "The first thing I did on coming here was to form a Combine, and we're at daggers drawn with the Old Firm—that's the rival establishment. We're getting up a skating match for Wednesday afternoon."

"Sure and we wish ye could be here to see it, sir," said Micky Flynn. "I know ye'd be after offerin' a prize to the winner—"

"No, I don't want to," smiled the millionaire. "It's a good idea to have a prize to be competed for, and I'll offer one. What are the terms of the match?"

"Oh, each side will select a champion. I expect it will be Pankhurst against myself, as I'm the best skater in this study."

"Howly Moses! It's second-best ye may be, Pointpusher."

"Or third," said Dick Neville. "Oh, well! I shall see that somehow!"

"What are you say to a five-pound note?"

"Ripping!"

"Then that's what we'll make it," said Mr. Poindexter, blowing out a thick cloud of smoke. "And, as it happens, I can manage to come down on the Fifth, and I'll see the match. Who'll be the time-keeper?"

"We'll ask Trevelyan. He's the captain of the school. But, by Jove, dad, I guess we should get hauled over the coals if a prefect happened to put his head into this study this afternoon!"

"Why?"

"He's thick, and no mistake. Kids smoking at this school are always hauled up before the Head."

"And a good thing, too."

"Exactly. A twinkle came into Poindexter's eyes, and his chums knew that a "wheeze" had flashed into his mind at that moment. "I say, you're not going, dad?"

Mr. Poindexter had risen to his feet. "Yes, I guess so, Lincoln. I only stayed to exchange a few words with you before going. I shall see you again on Wednesday."

"We'll see you to the gate," said Poindexter. "You'll have to take care of the slides."

"Yes, I will not let Crane guide me again."

They went out into the Close. Grahame, the prefect, was coming from the direction of the gymnasium, and as the chums came out, they saw Grahame take a sudden slide, and sit down on the ground. The prefect had stepped upon a slide, and the juniors grinned as they passed him. Grahame, the prefect, was an old enemy of the Combine.

The prefect scowled at them as he gained his feet. But in the presence of Mr. Poindexter he could say nothing. The millionaire perted with the boys at the gate, with a handsbake all round, and the chums turned back towards the house.

"Grahame came a cropper just now," grinned Poindexter. "He looked as if he would like to eat us. I say, I've got a wheeze."

"Sure and I thought ye had, Pointbuster. What is it intirely?"

"I'll tell you in the study. Come on! Sliding's quicker than walking."

"Right you are, Lincoln."

And the chums went at a spinning rate across the Close, right up to the door of the School

House, and as they came to a breathless halt, Grahame the prefect popped out on them. He had evidently been lying in wait, and was glad of so good an excuse for pouncing upon the Combine.

"You young rascals! You know you are not allowed to slide in the Close!" he exclaimed. "I guess I saw you sliding a few minutes ago," said Poindexter innocently.

The prefect snapped his teeth. That slide of his had been quite involuntary, and the fall had given him a nasty jar. He did not waste time in words, but made a rush at Poindexter. The chum from Chicago was too wary to be easily caught, however. He dodged, and the prefect blindly stepping upon a slippery place, sat down again with uncomfortable suddenness.

"Come in!" gasped Poindexter.

The Combine ran into the house and up the stairs. In a few moments they were in the study. Poindexter sniffed about him with great satisfaction.

"My word!" said Neville. "Your popper smokes strong cigars. Poin! The place is a bit thick, and no quite voluntary."

"All the better, old son."

Neville stared at him. "Eh? What do you mean? I'd better open the window and let out some of this giddy smoke, I think, or—"

Poindexter stopped his chum as he was going to the window.

"Don't do anything of the kind," he grinned. "Didn't I tell you I had a wheeze—a real, first-class, ripping, double-back-action, non-skidding wheeze?"

"What's that got to do with the tobacco smoke?"

"Let's my young friend! My idea was to play off a little jape on Grahame the prefect, and lo and behold, the enemy hath played into our hands!"

"Oh, stop rotting, and come to the point!"

"Why, Grahame is certain to follow us here, to take vengeance for that little tumble of his just now."

"Sure and I'll look the door."

"Don't! Leave it just as it is."

"Mother av St. Patrick! Do you want him to come in?"

"I guess so. I want him to sniff this lovely smoke, and I want him to jump to the conclusion that we've been breaking a law of the college, and smoking in our study. He's just had enough to suspect us of that, and rotter enough to show us up to the Head, and be glad of the chance."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Mind, not a word! Let him jump to any conclusions he likes, and we'll say nothing for or against. He's always jumping on our noses for nothing and getting us into rows, and it's time he had something serious to complain about."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I hear his fairy footsteps on the stairs."

The prefect's boots could indeed be heard on the stairs, but they did not sound much like fairy footsteps. They were the heavy steps of an avenger in hot haste.

"I say, that was a jolly strong cigar," said Poindexter in a loud voice, as the steps of the prefect were heard approaching the study. "It's made the study niff more than a little. It would look suspicious if anybody came along."

"Better open the window," said Dick Neville, faking his cue from Poindexter and speaking in the same tone. "Wave the door to and fro, Micky! If a prefect happened to come along—"

"Sure and it's caught we'd be," said Flynn, taking hold of the door, which was half open, just as he heard the prefect on the other side of it. "I'll wave it to and fro."

There was a loud bump. Micky Flynn, with malicious aforethought, had dashed the door full upon the prefect as he was coming in, and Grahame staggered back.

Micky pulled the door open again and gazed at Grahame in great astonishment.

"Sure and is it ye, Grahame? I—"

"You young scoundrel!" roared Grahame,

## A GREAT MONEY-MAKING

To the Principal of "THE BOYS' FRIEND" CORRESPONDENCE COLLEGE, 2, Carmelite House, London, E.C.

Dear Principal,

I have resolved to improve my position in life before the 1st of January, 1909. I am going to work hard in the position I now occupy. At the same time I am determined to gain some expert knowledge; so that, for every shilling I have earned in 1908, I will earn two shillings in the New Year. I mean to try and double my income. I have written my name and address at the foot of this Resolution, and I ask you to send me, without charge, a letter of advice to help me to carry it out, together with your illustrated booklet dealing with your system of postal tuition. The booklet I refer to is the one recently issued by you, showing how to make more money, and how to rise to the top of the tree. I am at present\*

(Signed)

\* Fill in here any special information you wish to give the Principal about your present position in life.

(Address)

## RESOLUTION FOR 1908!

flushing into the study. "You know I was there. You have been smoking!"  
The Combine were silent.  
They exchanged one startled glance, which to Grahame's eyes was as good as an open confession of guilt, and then looked at the floor.  
The prefect seemed to expand with satisfaction as he looked at them.  
Often enough he had been "down" upon the Cliveden Combine, but never once had he had a real excuse for finding fault with them. Boyish tricks and practical jokes he could lay to their account, but any real unmanly exploit he had never been able to trace to them.

There was not the slightest doubt about it. The study simply reeked with smoke, and not merely cigarette smoke, either, but the smoke of a strong cigar. On the table, where the inkstand had apparently been used as an ash-tray, could be seen the ash of a cigar where it had been carelessly knocked.  
The evidence was complete.  
Grahame had come there to inflict corporal punishment, but a better vengeance was in his power now. The Cliveden thums were caught at last.

"You have been smoking!"  
Still the Fourth Formers were silent.  
The prefect looked round the study. He sniffed with satisfaction. Then he gazed again at the three guilty faces.  
"Smoking!"  
"Oh, Grahame," said Micky Flynn, in a broken voice, "sure and ye'll say nothing about it, like a good boy as ye are."

"I guess you'll do the nice thing, Grahame," said Poindexter coaxingly.  
"Please—please don't report us to the doctor!" whined Dick Neville. "You'll be sorry for it afterwards if you do, Grahame!"  
Grahame smiled grimly.

"I must do my duty as a prefect," he replied. "This is too serious a matter for me to deal with myself. I must take it before the Head."  
"Oh, Grahame!"  
"Please don't!"  
"Have mercy!"  
"Come, follow me!"  
"Grahame, you'll be sorry—"  
"Follow me!"

Grahame stalked from the study. The three juniors exchanged a smiling glance, but as Grahame looked round their faces became long and woe-filled again.

"Are you coming, you young scoundrels?"  
"Ye-e-e-s, Grahame, but please—"  
"Oh, sure and ye won't be hard on us, Grahame!"

"Let us off this time!"  
Grahame declined to make no reply to these appeals. He marched on, and the juniors followed. As they went along the passage a score or more of eyes were fixed upon them in amazement. Pankhurst and Price looked out of No. 10 study.  
"Hallo, what's the matter?" exclaimed Pankhurst.

"It's—it's all up with us!" sobbed Micky. "Grahame has discovered that there's been smokin' in our study, and we—we're being taken before the Head."  
Pankhurst snorted, and then grinned. As it happened, he had seen Mr. Poindexter in No. 4, and guessed the truth, and knew that the Combine were pulling the prefect's leg.

"You'll be sacked!" he exclaimed, looking solemn the next moment, for Grahame's benefit. "You'll be sacked as sure as a gun!"  
"Quite so!" grinned Price. "Expelled, and no mistake!"

"How can you grin at their misfortunes, Price?" demanded Pankhurst. "I am going to weep. Get me a soapdish to weep into immediately."  
"Look at Grahame!" whimpered Price.

"See, he's doing his duty like a Roman father, but his heart is breaking for pity of these misguided wretches!"  
"Oh, oh! Boo-hoo-boo-hoo!" came from Pankhurst.

Grahame scowled and marched on angrily. The Combine followed, with preternaturally solemn and dismayed faces, and the prefect knocked at the door of the doctor's study.

"I have a most serious matter to report to you, sir," said Grahame, "but if you are busy I can wait."  
"Oh, no, pray get it dealt with, as you are here!" said the Head. "What is it? Some complaint against Poindexter, Neville, and Flynn, I presume!"

"Yes, sir. They have been smoking in their study."  
The Head started.  
"Impossible!"  
Grahame turned very red.  
"Very well, sir, if you say that, I can only—"  
"Wait a moment. I mean to say that I can scarcely credit such an accusation against these boys. Mischievous and sometimes unruly, I know them to be, but that they have fallen into bad and disreputable habits I can hardly believe. But since the accusation is made, I shall look into it thoroughly. You say that they have been smoking in their study?"

"Do you deny it, boys?"  
"Certainly, sir," said three voices in unison. The doctor drew a breath of relief.  
"You hear that, Grahame?"  
"I hear them, sir, and I must say that I never expected so bold a lie even from them," said the prefect. "I went to their study by chance a few minutes ago, and found it simply reeking with tobacco-fumes."  
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the audacity to tell me that you have not been smoking, when the study is simply sickening with the smell of tobacco."  
"We haven't been smoking, sir."  
"Then how comes it," thundered the Head—"how comes it, that your room is reeking like a tap-room, sir?"

"I think somebody else has been smoking here, sir," said Poindexter demurely.  
Grahame gave a sneer.  
"It is like that boy to lay the blame upon another," he said.

Poindexter's eyes flashed.  
"I guess you've never known me do anything of the sort, Grahame!" he exclaimed. "And only a cat would dare to say that!"  
"You must not speak to a prefect like that, Poindexter. But you were wrong to taunt him, Grahame, very wrong. Leave this matter to me, please. If these boys are guilty of such flagrant, bad conduct and of deliberate untruthfulness, they will be expelled from the college. But the matter will be thoroughly sifted first. Poindexter, you say that some other person has been smoking here?"

"Yes, sir."  
"Give me the name of the boy?"  
"It wasn't a boy, sir, it was a man."  
The Head started.

"What! One of the masters smoking in a junior study?"  
"No, sir. It was a visitor to the school."  
"What visitor? Tell me at once!"  
"My father, sir."

"My father, sir,"

follow me to my study, Grahame. I have something to say to you."  
As the prefect stalked off majestically, Grahame followed him with evident reluctance. The Combine looked at one another with seraphic smiles.

"Ha, ha, ha!" howled Pankhurst and Price, looking in at the door. "It was great!"  
Poindexter bowed.

"I guess we've succeeded in pulling the august leg of his serenity this time," he remarked. "I don't envy Grahame the next five minutes. Perhaps he'll be a little more careful next time before he accuses us of smoking in the study."  
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Grahame was looking quite pale when he came out of the Head's study. Nobody knew that Dr. Rayne had said to him, but it was certainly something very much to the point. And for some considerable time afterwards Grahame showed a strong desire to avoid further skirmishes with the Cliveden Combine.

"The 5th Chapter.  
On the Ice.

"WOULD the frost last?"  
That was the question that was chiefly troubling the Fourth Form at Cliveden the next couple of days.

The river was as hard as iron on Tuesday, where it bordered the grounds of Cliveden College, and to the great satisfaction of the skaters, it was still freezing on Wednesday, a half-holiday at the school.

Poindexter looked out in the morning, and grinned cheerfully. The ice would be harder than ever. The day was bright and cold, the sky like steel—an ideal day for a skating-match.

Poindexter had been selected as the champion of No. 4 study. Each member of the Combine was secretly convinced that what he didn't know about skating was worth knowing. But, after some practice on the ice, they had decided upon Lincoln G. as the champion.

And well-fitted was Poindexter to uphold the honour of the Combine. He was a splendid skater, and more than one admiring eye had watched him at practice on the frozen surface of the Combine.

Pankhurst was the champion of the Old Firm, and he had as many backers in the Fourth Form as Poindexter had. Philpot, the Slybook of the Fourth, was tempted to make a "book" on the match, as he had on the diabolical match the previous week, but he thought better of it. The eyes of the Combine were upon him, and those dutiful regulators of Fourth Form morals were heavily down on betting in any shape or form.

"The ice will hold to-day," said Poindexter; "the weather's splendid. It will be a ripping match."  
"Sure, and I hope ye won't rip the ice," said Micky Flynn, looking alarmed. "Don't forget that the Coombe is mighty deep, Poindexter."  
"Oh, rats!" said Poindexter. "It's thick enough where we shall be; though further down towards the willows it's very thin, and there's a danger-point there."

"You won't want to go as far as that, though. The match will take place just opposite the school ground."  
"I guess so."

Shortly after morning school on that eventful Wednesday, Mr. Poindexter arrived at Cliveden. The Fourth Form turned out to welcome him with a cheer as he drove up in the station cab. The man who was offering a five-pound note as a price to the champions of the Fourth was a man to be made much of. And the Cliveden juniors made much of him accordingly.

The skating match was attracting a great deal of attention at Cliveden, partly from the known qualities of the two skaters, and partly from the fact that the sum of five pounds was the prize to be won. Trevelyan, the captain of the school, had willingly consented to act as starter.

After dinner there was a general movement to the bank of the frozen Coombe. The deep stream that sang through the rushes in the summer-time was frozen now as hard as a rock, and opposite the school grounds there was a wide, hard expanse of ice. A finer spot could not have been chosen. Further down the stream were dangerous shallows, coated with thin ice; but there the juniors had no intention of straying.

There was a cheer as Mr. Poindexter and Trevelyan were seen walking down to the river with the doctor. It was a great honour for the Head to come down to see the match, and the juniors appreciated it keenly.

The licensed spectators were accommodated with seats, while the rest stood about on the banks or on the ice, and prepared to watch the start.

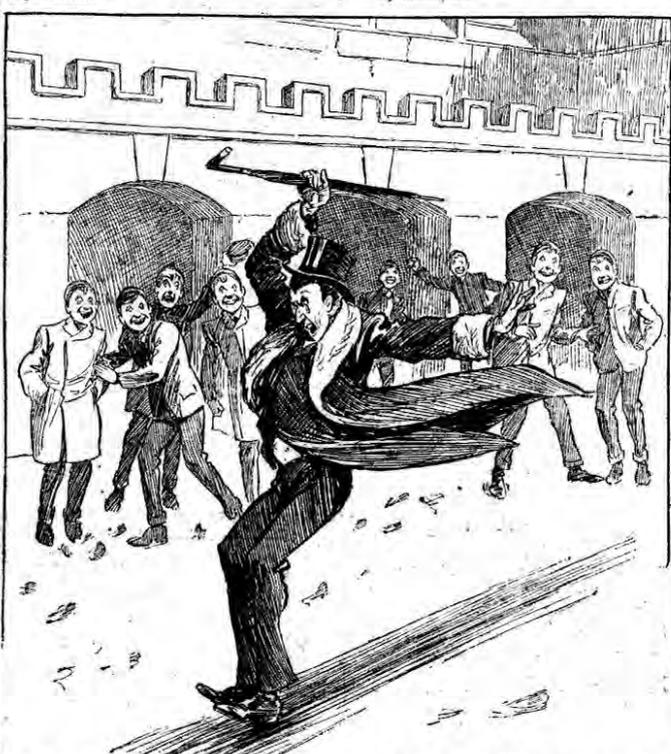
"Here they come!"  
The cry was raised as Pankhurst and Price were seen approaching. Pankhurst was in a Norfolk suit and cap, and carried his skates in his hand. The Combine were not long in following. They sat down on the bank to don their skates.

Mr. Poindexter beamed on the competitors. The crisp five-pound note had been handed to Trevelyan to be awarded to the successful champion.

Trevelyan looked at his watch.  
Poindexter sidled out on the ice, and Pankhurst was on his feet—rather, on his skates—a moment later.

Every fit and fine the two juniors looked as they stood waiting for the signal. The deep stream of Cliveden waved his hand for the course to be cleared, and Micky Flynn jangled a bell in the old Fen fashion.

The spectators crowded back from the ice. The course lay up the river, and Trevelyan had been over it himself before the race. It was a course similar to those used for racing in the Fen, it lay for a quarter of a mile up the river, when the competitors were to turn round a flag and come



Mr. Poindexter had a clear slide before him—and he slid. With his coat trailing behind, and his silk hat on the back of his head, he did not look a bit like the Beef King and a millionaire, and it was no wonder the spectators laughed.

His faith in the Combine had been great, but now it was rudely shaken. The prefect's assertion was so positive that he was fairly staggered.

"I am quite sure, sir, if you would take the trouble to walk to No. 4 study you would be able to ascertain the fact for yourself."  
The Head looked at the juniors sternly.

"Do you still deny that this accusation is true?"  
"Yes, sir."  
"You have never smoked in your study?"  
"Never, sir."

"I cannot understand this," said the Head. "I have never known one of these three boys to lie before. Let us go to the study."  
The Head led the way from the room. Grahame, with triumph in his face, followed. The three juniors brought up the rear.

A crowd was waiting for them in the passage. There was a general gasp at sight of the doctor. The Fourth Form had all caught on to the joke now, and were enjoying the coming surprise for the prefect. They scattered as the doctor came down the passage with stately tread, but as soon as the study was reached, a crowd of juniors gathered again outside, eager to see what transpired.

Dr. Rayne sniffed as he came to the door, and sniffed again as he entered. Grahame looked at him. There was no need for words. The study was still simply reeking with the scent of strong cigars. As a matter of fact, the millionaire had smoked three while he was waiting there for his son.

Dr. Rayne fixed his eyes sternly on the three chums.

"Poindexter! Neville! Flynn! You have

Grahame changed colour. The doctor drew a deep breath.

"Your father, Poindexter?"  
"Yes, sir," said the American chum calmly. "He waited here some time, sir, to speak to us after morning school; and he smoked some cigars to pass the time, I suppose."  
"It is untrue!" exclaimed Grahame furiously.

"It is only—" The Head stopped him with a gesture.  
"On the contrary, Grahame, I am convinced that this is true,

**Champions on the Ice.**

(Continued from the previous page.)

back the other side. To prevent the skaters from encroaching on each other's territory, heaps of snow had been made on the ice up to the centre of the course, from the starting-point to the flag which marked the end.

Pointdexer and Pankhurst stood ready at the mark awaiting the signal.

"Are you ready?"  
 "Yes!"  
 "I guess so!"  
 "Go!"

In a moment the skaters were away! Pointdexer had the slightest advantage in the start, but in a little more than Pankhurst. But the chief of the Old Firm did not lose much.

With a swift and steady stroke the two juniors went whizzing down the course, Pankhurst on the right and Pointdexer on the left of the river.

Away they went, and a score of active lads started running along the bank to keep them in sight; though they were, of course, far from able to keep pace.

"By Jupiter, they skate well!" exclaimed Mr. Pointdexer, rising from his seat to stare after the two juniors.

"Very well indeed," said the doctor.

"I guess they won't be long in getting back to this spot," Cyrus K. Pointdexer remarked, as he lightly waved his hand.

"Faith, they're making the fur fly, and no mistake!" gasped Micky Flynn, as he glanced along the rough bank in vain pursuit of the skaters.

"Panky has the advantage," said Dick Neville. "He has to turn to the left to come down the other side of the course, while Pointdexer has to turn to the right, and that's harder. A second may mean a lot."

"Thru for ye; it was just like Puntbuster to give that advantage to the inimy."

"Oh, he'll do it," said Dick.

"Who'll do it?" demanded Price, coming up with them.

"Pointdexer!"

"Rats!"

"They're at the flag!" shouted Micky, halting on a knoll and staring up the river.

From the point they had reached the chums could see the end of the course. The bank of the river was dotted with spectators, and there were a group of them on the shore opposite the flag.

A cheer greeted the skaters as they came whizzing up along the ice.

Pointdexer still maintained the slight advantage he had gained at the start; but, as Neville had pointed out, Pankhurst had the advantage at the turning-point, and though not enough to enable him to equate his lead.

He went down the turning-point like an arrow, and came whizzing back on the left side of the course, and Pointdexer turned a second later.

And now they came on the homeward lap, skating for all they were worth. Neck and neck for a hundred yards; then Pankhurst forged ahead. Price clapped his hands and yelled:

"Bravo! Panky wins!"  
 "Duck up, Pointdexer!"  
 "Duck up, Tinned Beef!"

Pointdexer was bucking up! He was a foot behind Pankhurst now; but Dick Neville, watching him, believed that he had something in reserve, while the chief of the Old Firm was going full blast.

"Duck up, Pankdodge!"  
 "Go it!"  
 "Hurrah for Pankhurst!"

They came, past the spot where Neville, Flynn, and Price stood, and the juniors waved their caps and shouted as the skaters flew past.

Then they began to run along the bank, back the way they had come, to be near enough to see the finish. The skaters dashed on! Pankhurst was putting all he knew into it now, and he entered on the last hundred yards still ahead of the rival.

But now Lincoln G. Pointdexer brought his reserve force into play. His pace impetuously quickened, and he gained inch by inch upon Pankhurst. Dick and Micky saw it, and they shouted themselves hoarse.

"Go it, Poin!"  
 "Buck up!"

The winning-post was in sight now! The doctor, the captain, and Cyrus K. Pointdexer could be seen standing on the bank, with eager and excited faces.

Pointdexer put on a spurt. There was a ringing cheer as he was seen to draw level with his adversary.

"Bravo!"  
 "Pointbuster wins!"  
 Level now—a dead level! Was it to be a dead-heat?

No! Another effort—a terrific burst of speed, and Pointdexer shoots ahead—ahead and ahead—and Pankhurst strives in vain to overtake him.

"Pointdexer wins!"

Another shout—and a true one this time! The last stroke had carried Pointdexer ahead like an arrow, and he breasted the tape a good couple of yards ahead of Pankhurst.

"Hurrah!"

The next moment the cheering was changed to a shout of alarm! Pointdexer shot onward past the winning-post with great velocity, and in the excitement of the race he had forgotten all about the thin ice further down the river. Had he thought of it he could have passed the danger point easily; but he did not think of it. There was an ominous creak as he shot on, and a loud, grinding crack!

Crash!

**The 6th Chapter. For Life or Death.**

"INCOLN! My boy!"  
 Cyrus K. Pointdexer cried out the words in utter horror and dismay. In the ice a black gap showed, with black waters surging and gurgling. Lincoln G. Pointdexer had disappeared.

"Pointdexer! He's in!"  
 Neville and Flynn were rushing madly to the spot. But before them was Pankhurst! The defeated champion of the Old Firm saw Pointdexer go in, and he went whizzing on like an arrow.

"Look out, Panky!"  
 But Panky was looking out. He went into the gap with his wits about him, and in a moment the water closed above his head.

"My Heaven!" gasped the doctor.  
 The next moment there was a shout of relief! Pankhurst's head appeared above the water again, and a second head rose beside him, with his clutch in the hair of it. It was the head of Pointdexer!

"Bravo! Hurrah!"  
 The Chivoden fellows crowded to the bank closest to the gap in the ice. Pankhurst was white as death from the batter down to the bank again, and now it was ruder down to the bank and laid along the ice. Trevelyan crept out along it, and drew Pointdexer from Pankhurst's hands, and drew him back along the ladder to terra firma.

"Help!" gasped Pankhurst.  
 Help was speedy in coming. Not a fellow there but would have gone in to help, if need had been. But it was not needed.

A few fellows had dashed off for a ladder, and now it was ruder down to the bank and laid along the ice. Trevelyan crept out along it, and drew Pointdexer from Pankhurst's hands, and drew him back along the ladder to terra firma.

Pankhurst remained swimming in the gap. The water was freezing his limbs, and he was exhausted from the hard race. He had plunged under the ice in search of Pointdexer, reckless of himself, and he had found the American chum. Only his quickness had saved Pointdexer's life, for he would have been swept away under the ice before any other aid could have reached him.

Pankhurst was too exhausted to crawl out on the ladder, but he was not long left unaided. Trevelyan passed the unconscious American into the arms of Neville and Flynn, who dashed off to the school with him at top speed. Then he crawled out on the ladder again, and gripped Pankhurst by the collar. A minute more, and the chief of the Old Firm was safe ashore.

"Thank Heaven for its mercies!" gasped the doctor.  
 "Quick, and get him to bed!" cried Mr. Pointdexer.

And Pankhurst was rushed off as Pointdexer had been.

The doctor and Mr. Pointdexer followed, both somewhat agitated. Not a second was lost in getting the juniors to bed. Pointdexer recovered consciousness to find himself in bed under a pile of blankets, with a roaring fire within a couple of yards. Pankhurst was in a bed on the other side of the fire, and he gazed smilingly at his rival.

"I—I—did you fish me out?" gasped Pointdexer.  
 "Rather!"

"You—you saved my life!"  
 "Well, I suppose so," said Pankhurst. "You won the race, you know, and I was bound to do something to show that the Old Firm was still a flourishing concern."

Pointdexer laughed.  
 "I sha'n't forget this, Panky. And I sha'n't take the prize, either. You ought to have that, if anybody ought."

"Rats! I won it."  
 "I don't care! I won't take it! Oh, I've an idea! We'll blue the siver in a feed for the whole Form, to celebrate the occasion. How does that strike you?"

"Flipping!" said Pankhurst enthusiastically. The whole arrangement which was approved by the whole Form. And the feast, when it came off—as it duly did—was presided over by Cyrus K. Pointdexer, the millionaire, and the health of the heroic rescuer, as he termed the blushing Pankhurst, was drunk over and over again in currant wine and ginger-pop!

THE END.

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