

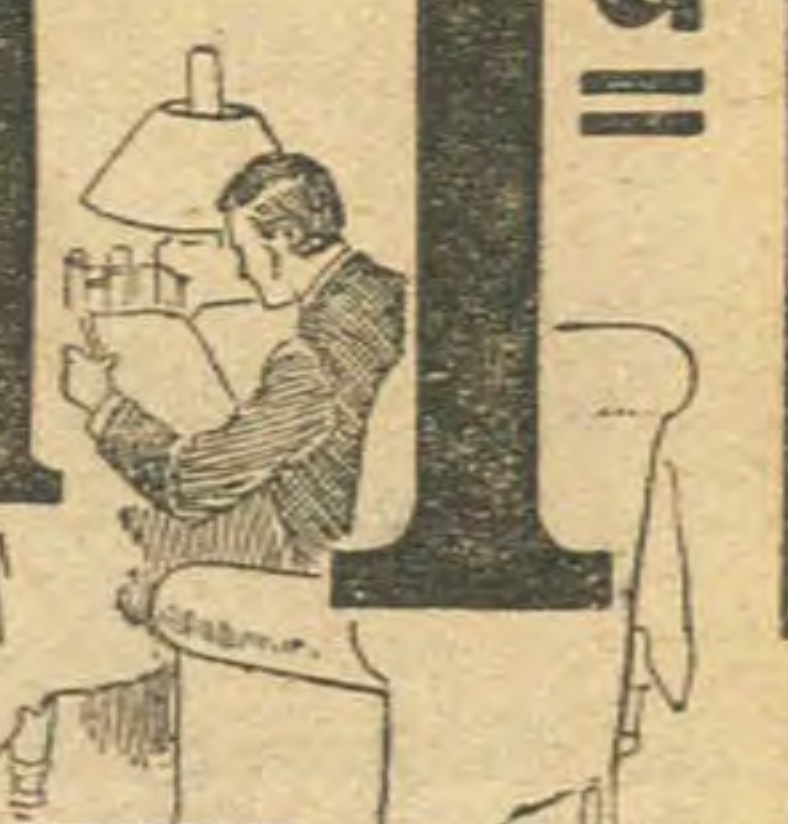
SEXTON BLAKE AT SCHOOL.

(See
Page
448.)

B.H. Watch Coupon,
No. 4.
Not available after
Jan. 28.

The **Boys' Herald** 1^d

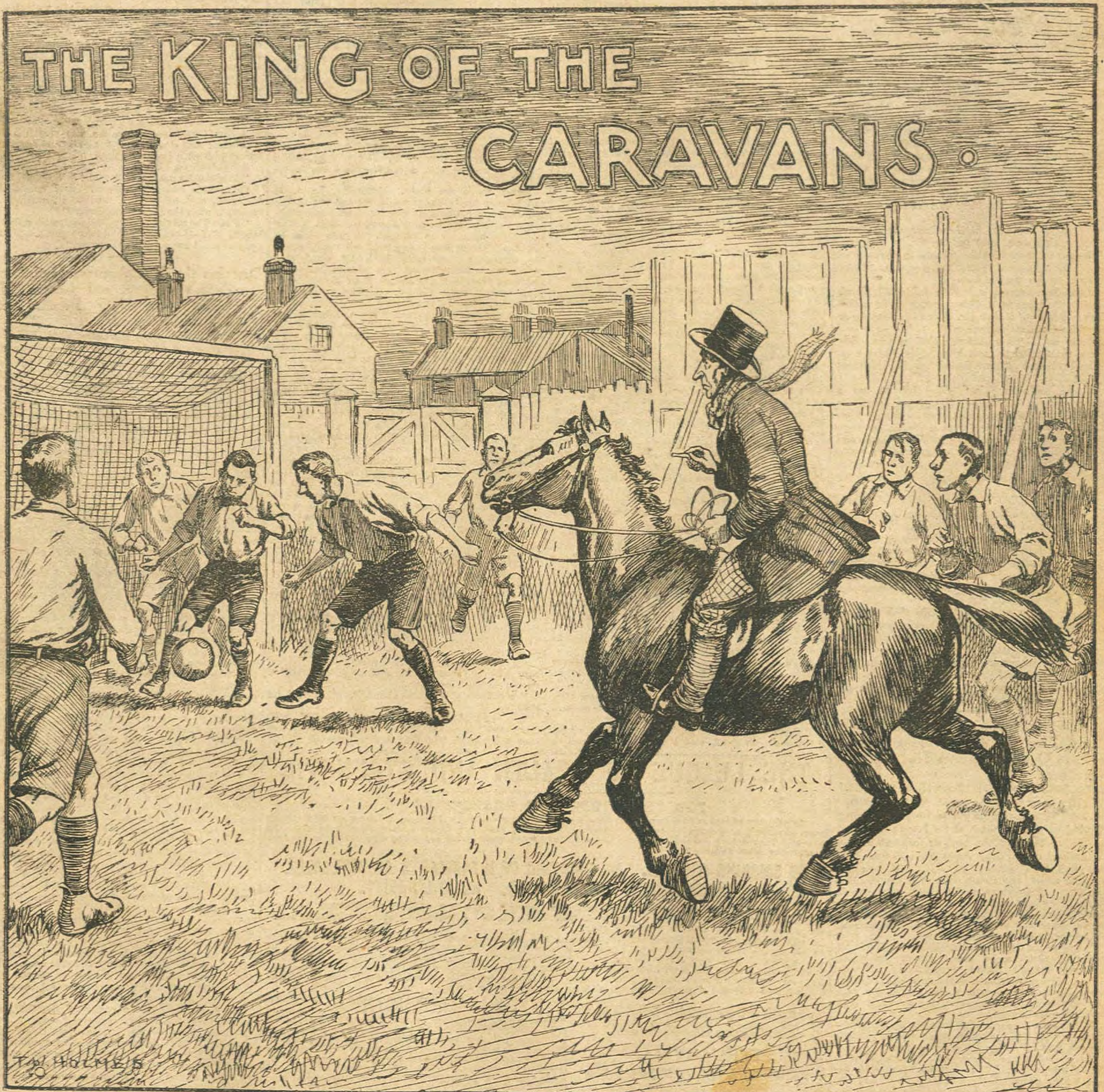
EVERY BOY'S AND YOUNG MAN'S
STORY AND HOBBY PAPER.



No. 236, Vol. V.

EVERY WEDNESDAY—ONE PENNY.

WEEK ENDING JANUARY 25, 1908.



Mr. Coffin remounted the mare, and cantered over the field. The leather boots that covered the plates made little or no impression on the turf. "Now, then," he said, "you just listen for a second. I don't know what sort of rubbish you are, but I want a team. This is a trial match, and mind you jolly well try, for I've got both eyes on you."



The Cliveden Toffee Makers

ANOTHER SCREAMINGLY FUNNY TALE ABOUT THE FAMOUS SCHOOLBOYS.

The 1st Chapter.

Neville, Poindexter, and Flynn, Toffee Manufacturers.

LINCOLN G. POINDEXTER came into No. 4 study at Cliveden with an expression upon his face which immediately showed Dick Neville and Micky Flynn that there was something in the wind.

Dick Neville laid down his pen, and Micky Flynn closed his book.

"Well, what is it?" asked Neville, with an air of resignation.

"Sure, and he's got an idea," said Flynn. "I can tell it by the gleam in his eye. Get it off your chest, Poindexter."

"I guess—" began Poindexter.

"Oh, go ahead," said Neville, "if you've got an idea there will be no rest for the weary until you have expounded it!"

"I guess—" began Poindexter.

"All right; we're listening."

"I guess I've got a ripping idea," said the American chum, with perfect good-humour.

"It came into my head only a few minutes ago, and I came here at once to tell you."

"Sure, and that was kind of ye, Puntbuster."

"Very," said Neville. "I wish you hadn't got the idea till after I had finished my prep, but that's my luck. Go on!"

"It came about like this. I ran across young Trimble just now—"

"Great Scott! I hope you weren't on your motor-bike."

"Oh, don't rot!" said Poindexter. "I ran across him as he was coming out of Rags's little shop, and he was eating toffee."

"Nothing remarkable in that, that I can see," said Neville, rubbing his forehead in a thoughtful way. "I've seen Trimble eating toffee before. In fact, I've often seen him eating toffee. He's fond of toffee. He thinks more of toffee than he does of his lessons. I've heard someone say that he can't play football for toffee."

"My only Aunt Jane! Are you wound up, Neville, or are you going to leave off presently?" asked Poindexter, in astonishment.

"Oh, rats—tinned rats! Go on with your thrilling tale."

"I guess—"

"As I said, I've seen Trimble eating toffee before, but I never noticed anything remarkable in the circumstance—"

"Oh, rats—tinned rats! Go on with your thrilling tale."

"I guess—"

"But you may have noticed something remarkable about it, and rushed off to tell us, like a good boy. Was he keeping his mouth clean? Had he failed to smear his cheeks with it? Did he offer anybody else any, or what?"

"I guess—"

"Sure, and ye're wastin' time, Poindodger. Why don't ye go on with the washin', ye long-winded spalpeen!"

"Have I had a chance?" roared Poindexter.

"Why don't you shut up and let me speak? I tell you I saw Trimble eating toffee—"

"And I tell you that there's nothing remarkable—"

"He was eating toffee Rags sold him in the school-shop, nasty, thick, black stuff, like cheap glue. You know Rags sells it at double the price of toffee in the village, and it's beastly stuff. He knows we can't get down to the tuck-shop often in this beastly weather we're having now."

"Yes, Rags is a fraud," said Neville.

Rags was the nickname of the school porter, who had the Head's permission to keep a little tuck-shop within the school walls, as is done at many public schools. Rags's quality and Rags's prices were equally objectionable to the boys of Cliveden College.

"Sure, and he's a measly thafe!" assented Micky Flynn. "But I don't see what ye're drivin' at, Puntbuster, at all, at all, though ye're so long-winded about it."

"You keep on interrupting me—"

"Well, why don't you come to the point?"

"I'm coming to it. Rags is a regular welsher. He makes that rotten toffee himself, and sells it at double the price of good toffee. He must be making a fortune out of it."

"Well, I dare say all that's right enough; but

I don't see the idea yet. You don't want us to make an example of Rags, do you—to set his lodge on fire, or to tie him up to the gates one night, or boil him in oil—"

"I guess I'll explain, if you'll give me a chance," said Poindexter. "My idea is to give Rags a lesson, to benefit the whole Fourth Form and the lower Forms, to take a rise out of the rival firm, Pankhurst and Price, and to turn an honest penny."

"Well, that's a pretty comprehensive programme," said Neville; "and if you can carry it out I'll admit that you are not such an ass as you look!"

"I guess I can work the raffle," said the American chum. "It's a wheeze that will get Pankhurst and Price's hair off, when they hear about it."

Neville and Flynn looked keenly interested at last.

No. 4 study, the dwelling of the Cliveden Combine, was on terms of deadly warfare with No. 10 study, where dwelt Pankhurst and Price, who called themselves the Old Firm, as a proud mark of distinction from any new-fangled Combines.

To take a rise out of Pankhurst and Price was a duty and a pleasure to the Combine, and they were ready to go on the warpath at a moment's notice.

"Expound!" said Dick Neville tersely.

Poindexter grinned. He saw that he had succeeded in getting his chums' attention at last.

"This is the wheeze," he said. "I know how to make toffee. We're in pretty good funds, and we can get the materials in the village. Why shouldn't we set up as toffee manufacturers, and supply the school with toffee at reasonable prices and first-class quality?"

Neville and Flynn gave a simultaneous jump.

"Arrah!" roared Micky. "And, sure, it's a broth of a boy ye are!"

"Ripping!" exclaimed Neville.

"You like the idea?"

"Splendid!"

"Good! We'll carry it out. We'll get in the materials to-day, and start making the toffee. We shall want sugar and butter and treacle, and I've an idea of flavouring it with spices—"

"As they flavour the canned horse in Chicago?" asked Neville innocently.

"Oh, leave the canned horse alone," said Poindexter. "I guess I know how to make toffee. We'll make a lot, first-rate quality, and sell it just above cost price in the hall. We'll have a sort of cheap-jack arrangement—see? It will go rippingly; and Pankhurst and Price will be ready to kick themselves for not thinking of the wheeze."

"Faith, and it's a janius ye are, Puntbuster."

"We'll call the firm Poindexter & Co., toffee manufacturers—"

"You'll call it what?" asked Dick Neville, with emphasis.

"Poindexter & Co., toffee manu—"

"Of course, you mean Neville & Co."

"No, I don't; I mean what I say."

"Faith, it's Flynn & Co. he means intirely," said Micky. "Don't you two fellows be so beastly conceited. Flynn & Co.—"

"Oh, rats!" said Lincoln G. Poindexter. "Make it No. 4 study, toffee manufacturers, then. I don't care."

"Better put the names," said Neville.

"Neville, Poindexter, & Flynn, toffee manufacturers. That sounds all right."

Neville and Flynn gave a simultaneous jump.

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"Ripping!" exclaimed Neville.

"You like the idea?"

"Oh, any old thing will do!" said Poindexter. "Call it what you like, so long as we carry out the idea, and put Pankhurst and Price in the dismal shade."

"We'll do that—rather! Better put a notice upon the study door that this firm has undertaken the job of supplying Cliveden with toffee at reasonable prices."

"Good wheeze. And when once the notice is up, and read by all the Form, Pankhurst and Price can't borrow the idea and palm it off as one of their own, as they did that time when we were starting a hobby club."

And Poindexter seized pen and paper, and was soon busy drawing up the prospectus of Neville, Poindexter, & Flynn, toffee manufacturers.

The 2nd Chapter

The Prospectus of the Toffee Firm.

PANKHURST and Price, the red-headed chums of No. 10 study, came down the corridor arm-in-arm. Pankhurst and Price were looking cheerful, feeling in very good form after a sharp practice on the football field.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Pankhurst, stopping suddenly. "What's the trouble at No. 4?"

Ahead of the Old Firm, in the passage, a crowd of juniors could be seen collected in front of the door of the Combine's study.

The door was closed, but over the heads of the juniors Pankhurst could see that there was a notice written on a sheet of foolscap, affixed to the panels.

"Oh, some rot of those kids!" said Price carelessly.

Pankhurst looked uneasy.

"Better go and have a squint at it," he said, "it may be some new wheeze; perhaps some beastly joke up against us."

"Quite so."

"Come on, then!"

The chums of No. 10 study walked on more quickly. The juniors made way for them with many a chuckle. About half the Fourth Form at Cliveden acknowledged Pankhurst and Price as their leaders. The rest followed the Combine. The looks of the youngsters showed Pankhurst and Price that the notice on the study door meant something up against the Old Firm.

"Hallo! What's that?" said Pankhurst, with assumed carelessness.

"They're ahead of you this time, Panky!" said Philpot, the cad of the Fourth, with an unpleasant chuckle.

"Go hon!" said Pankhurst.

The Old Firm stopped before the study door and read the notice. It ran as follows:

"PUBLIC NOTICE TO THE JUNIORS AT CLIVEDEN!

"WHEREAS, the toffee supplied to the school by Rags is of the rottenest possible quality, and generally as hard as a brick;

"And whereas, the price charged for the aforesaid rotten toffee is very steep, and, in fact, quite prohibitive.

"We, the Heads of the Fourth Form at Cliveden, have decided to enter into business under the title of Neville, Poindexter and Flynn, toffee manufacturers, to supply toffee of first-class quality, and at a reasonable price, to all who wish to purchase the same for cash.

"An extensive plant having been laid down, and an adequate number of skilled workmen engaged, the business is progressing favourably, and the first supply of toffee will be on sale, in penny chunks, in the hall to-morrow evening.

"Signed, NEVILLE, POINDEXTER, AND FLYNN.

"P.S.—No connection with any other firm at Cliveden."

Pankhurst gave a whistle.

Then he looked at Price, and Price looked at him. The Old Firm could not deny that the Combine had got a little ahead this time.

"Of course," Pankhurst remarked casually, "it's all rot!"

"Quite so," said Price.

"The toffee will be nasty stuff—"

"Quite so."

"And as hard as a brick—"

"Quite—"

"I don't see why," said Trimble. "I've tasted Poindexter's toffee, and he makes it rippingly. The toffee he makes is better than Rags's toffee."

"That's so," said Gatty. "There's no getting out of that; and if the fellows make good toffee, and sell it at a reasonable price, I think they ought to be encouraged."

"And so they will be," said Greene. "I shall buy my toffee of the Combine, at all events. It can't be worse than Rags's, anyway."

"Righto; and so shall I!"

"You'd better start a rival show, Panky," said Philpot. "If you're short of tin, I'll lend you half-a-sovereign at sixpence a week interest—"

"Oh, go and eat coke!" growled Pankhurst.

"Not at all; I'm going to eat toffee!" grinned Philpot.

Pankhurst and Price walked away. The manly brow of Pankhurst was clouded. Price looked at his chief sympathetically.

"They've got ahead this time, Panky."

"Quite so."

"If they carry out that idea it will give them a leg-up in the Form, and there's no doubt that No. 4 will be top study."



A double handful of stickiness was wiped over the faces of Pankhurst and Price. The unfortunate Old Firm yelled and roared, and struggled, but the indignant Combine were one too many for them. "We haven't done anything with your rotten toffee!" shrieked Pankhurst,

"No doubt at all."
"So we've got to stop them," said Pankhurst emphatically.
Price stared.
"How are you going to stop them? You can't stop fellows from making toffee in their study if they want to, or selling it in the hall."
Pankhurst sniffed.
"I tell you, Pricey, the thing's got to be busted somehow, or we may as well go out of business, and admit that those rotters are at the head of the Fourth, as they pretend they are."

"Yes, I suppose that's so."
"I know it is! We've got to crib the idea—and I'll find a way! Where there's a will there's a way." Pankhurst was looking extremely determined. "By Jove! I'll bust up the business of Neville, Poindexter, and Flynn, toffee manufacturers, or I'll know the reason why!"
And forthwith the Old Firm put their heads together and plotted a plot.

The 3rd Chapter. The Toffee-Makers.

"GOT the treacle?"
"I guess so—a seven-pound tin!"
"Good! And the sugar—"
"Seven pounds of that, too."
"And the butter—"
"Two pounds of the best fresh."
"And a new saucepan?"
"Here it is, as large as life."
"Good!"

Lincoln G. Poindexter had come in with his coat up about his ears, and rain-drops running down the flaps of his cap.

He had been to the village of Clivebank, with a sum made up by the three chums of the Combine between them, and there he had done some shopping at the tuck-shop. He had returned wet and muddy, but with a cheery grin and a big parcel. All was ready for the commencement of the toffee-making.

The Combine were in deadly earnest over the new idea. It had caught on in the Form, and many of the juniors, who had tasted toffee of Poindexter's making, were anxious to get it in penny chunks.

As several of the juniors said, it couldn't be worse than Rags's toffee, and it would be half the price; so they stood to gain, anyway.

But the Combine were determined that it should not only be no worse than Rags's toffee, but immensely better. They meant to use the best materials only, and to see to it that the manufacture was carried on in a cleanly and careful manner.

"It's a good idea," said Poindexter. The son of Cyrus K. Poindexter, millionaire, of Chicago, naturally had a strong turn for business. "It's a good idea, kids, and if we put in good quality, combined with a low price, there's no reason why we shouldn't make a permanent business of it. Hang it all, we might start a regular tuck-shop and sell other things besides toffee!"

"Faith, and ye're goin' ahead, Punt-smasher!"

"That's American business," said Poindexter, with the sniff of superiority. "That's how we run things in Chicago."

"Rats!" said Dick Neville. "You said something about the best quality—and blowed it there's any best quality in Chicago canned rats!"

"Faith, I dare say there's good and bad rats like everything else!" said Micky Flynn.

Poindexter grinned as he took off his coat. He slung it with his cap across the study sofa; and Micky Flynn gave a shout.

"Ye spalpeen, ye've chucked that wet rag over my exercise!"

"Can't think about such trivial things as exercises now, at this important juncture in our business careers," said Poindexter. "You can hang the coat up if you like. Give the fire a stir, Neville."

"I say! Who's giving orders in this study?"

"Well, no good wasting time."

Neville stirred the fire, which had been made up to a good size. Poindexter slipped off his jacket and rolled up his sleeves. He was looking very business-like. Although Dick Neville was supposed to be the head of the study, it was, in fact, generally Lincoln G. Poindexter

who directed matters. Dick was easy-going; and there was no doubt that the smart American had good ideas.

"Rub the pan out with butter, Flynn!"

"Faith, and I—"

"Buck up! It will take some time to make this toffee, and we want to get it done before time's up. Get a move on you!"

"Look here, Poindodger—"

"Get a move on you!"

And Flynn obeyed.

The pan was rubbed with butter inside, and then some of the treacle was poured into it. The saucepan would not hold a third part of the supplies brought in by Poindexter, but, as Dick remarked, the first lot might not turn out a great success, and they wanted some material in hand.

Butter and sugar were added, and a ladle found for stirring. The toffee-makers were soon making good progress. The fire had been built up and the study soon became very hot, and the juniors, although they had removed their jackets, felt the heat considerably.

"It's warm," Dick Neville remarked, mopping his brow. "You can take a turn at looking after the toffee, if you like, Punt-buster."

"Well, I'm giving the directions, you know."

"You've given them all."

"Yes, but—"

"Rats! Take this ladle, before I give you a sprinkling of the stuff."

"Oh, I guess I don't mind!"

The post nearest the fire was the warmest. But the chums would have stood worse things for the good of the cause.

The door opened several times during the operations, and curious faces looked in, and voices inquired how the toffee was getting on.

"Getting on all right, I guess," was Poindexter's invariable reply.

"Couldn't you give us a little to taste?" asked King, the glutton of the Fourth Form at Cliveden.

"Rats! Get out!"

"Just a taste—"

"Oh, here you are, then," said Poindexter, reaching across with the steaming ladle, but King fled before it could reach his face.

"We haven't heard anything from those bounders Pankhurst and Price," Dick Neville remarked presently.

Poindexter grinned.

"Oh, they're out of it this time! They know we've done them, and they don't want to own up. They'll pretend to take no notice of the affair at all, I guess."

"Well, whether they take notice of it or not, it will be one up to us," chuckled Neville.

"We're the old original firm of toffee makers in the Fourth Form at Cliveden, and they can't ignore that fact."

"Faith, and it's right ye are!"

In the interest of the manufacture, the chums hardly noticed how the time passed. The American examined and tasted the toffee from time to time, and pronounced that it was getting on excellently.

"I guess it's done," he remarked, at last.

"We had better pour it out and let it cool now, chaps, I think."

"Right you are; I've got the tin ready!"

"Mind ye don't spill it, Puntodger. Sure, and ye know it's clumsy ye are."

"Get out of the way, fathead, or you'll get some on your toes!"

Micky Flynn jumped away, and the liquid toffee was poured out into a wide flat tin to cool.

Poindexter set the saucepan down in the grate, and rubbed his perspiring brow with his handkerchief.

"By Jove, it's hot!" he said. "We shall have to wait till the toffee's set a bit, before we make the grooves in it to break it into cakes. I guess we'll go and get a sniff of fresh air in the Close."

"Faith, and it's a janus ye are! I feel about suffocated."

"Right-ho!" said Neville. "Put your coat on, though, or you'll catch cold, after being so jolly hot in here. It's still raining a little."

The chums donned coat and cap, and left the study, turning the gas low, the corridor seemed cool and grateful after the hot study, and the open air in the Close was sweet and refreshing.

"My hat! This is better!" exclaimed Neville.

"Faith, and it's right ye are!"

"I guess so. I say, we'll have a little trot right round the Close, and then go in. It will take us ten minutes."

"Right-ho! Trot along!"

And the chums trotted off. Rain was still falling in light drops, and ten minutes in the open air was enough to refresh them, and to allow the study to cool a little. They came back in sight of the lighted windows when about ten minutes had elapsed, and then Lincoln G. Poindexter uttered a sudden exclamation.

Flynn and Neville looked at him quickly.

"Faith and what's thrublin' ye, Poindexter?"

"Look at our study!"

Poindexter's hand rose and pointed to the window of No. 4 study. It was brightly lighted from within.

"You know we left the gas turned down," said Poindexter, "I guess somebody's in that study, after the toffee, most likely."

"Come on!" muttered Neville.

A shadow crossed the blind of the study-window. It was evident that there was at least one strange intruder in No. 4 study. The juniors did not waste time in words. They broke into a run, and darted into the house.

The 4th Chapter. Too Much Toffee.

POINDEXTER was the first to reach the study door.

He heard the scuttling of footsteps in the passage, and guessed that the unknown visitors to the study were escaping, having doubtless heard the chums coming. But he did not think of pursuit just then. He was too anxious to know what had happened in No. 4 study during his absence.

The study door was shut, and Poindexter grasped the handle to open it.

Then he gave a yell.

"What is it?" panted Neville and Flynn, hurrying up and joining the American chum.

"Look here!"

Poindexter's hand was sticking to the door-handle. He dragged it away, and a string of half-dried toffee with it.

"Toffee!" shrieked Neville and Flynn.

"I guess so."

"Then—then—"

"Panky and Price!" said Poindexter, with a groan. What fools we were not to guess that they would be up to some game of this sort."

He jerked open the door, and the anxious chums sprang into the study.

The gas was still turned full on, and they could see at once what had happened. It was evident that an enemy had been there!

The Combine looked at one another with sickly faces.

Toffee was everywhere—everywhere, excepting in the flat tin where the manufacturers had left it to cool.

There was very little left in that tin, but there was plenty everywhere else!

The table, the door, the mantelpiece, were clammy with toffee.

The clock on the mantelpiece no longer showed its dial, a great slab of stickiness concealing it. The neat little curtains at the window were stuck to the blind with toffee.

There was toffee on the hearthrug, toffee on the table-cover, toffee on the carpet, toffee on the books and papers. The very inkpots had been emptied and filled with toffee.

And as the chums stood staring in blank dismay, a squealing under their feet warned them that they had walked into a sea of toffee, and were standing in it.

"Faith!" gasped Micky Flynn. "Howly Hokey!"

Dick Neville could not speak. He could only look.

"Look there!" grunted Poindexter. On the glass over the mantelpiece were streaky trails of toffee, which, as the chums looked more closely at them, were evidently meant to be letters. In a sprawling hand, written in toffee, were the words:

"With the compliments of the Old Firm."

"I knew it!" muttered Dick. "Pankhurst and Price."

"Oh, what asses we were!" groaned Poindexter. "We might have guessed that they were on the look-out for a chance to chip into the little game."

"They've wasted all our toffee."

"They've ruined the study."

"Faith! They've done us all along the line," chuckled Micky Flynn, who, with a true Irish sense of humour could take a joke against himself, though it was rather a rough joke.

"Done us!" said Poindexter. "Well, I guess they have."

"And now we'll go and do them!" said Dick Neville.

"Yes, rather; I think we ought to smite the Philistines for this," said Poindexter. "I suppose there's no doubt that it was Panky and Price. It's a bit rough for a joke, you know. They've wasted the toffee, and that's nothing, but to stick our books and papers and window-curtains is a bit thick."

"Be jabbers! Look here!"

It was a yell of dismay from Micky Flynn. A long imposition, which had cost the Irish junior an hour's hard work that afternoon, was sticking to the carpet in a mass of toffee.

Micky Flynn pulled it up, and it tore across. "Howly St. Patrick! This is a bit more than a joke," exclaimed Micky. "That means a row in the morning, if I don't show up the lines to ould Lanyon."

"Hang it all!" said Neville. "They might have drawn the line at that—"

"I guess I'm rather surprised at Panky having—"

"Oh, they wanted to bust up the toffee making—"

"I guess so—"

"Let's go and hunt them out, and bring them here, and roll 'em in it," said Neville. "That's about the proper caper for a joke like this."

"Ha, ha, ha! Come on!"

The Combine looking extremely warlike and determined, sallied out of No. 4 study. As it happened, Pankhurst and Price were just coming out of their study in the same passage to go down to the common-room.

"There they are!"

The Combine made a sudden rush.

The Old Firm ought to have been on their guard, after what had happened in the study, and Poindexter was rather surprised by the ease with which they were caught. But it was no time to think of that. Vengeance was the order of the day just at present.

"Got 'em!"

Pankhurst and Price were rolled over in a second, and went down helplessly with the Combine on top of them.

The chums were three to two, and in the excitement of the moment they seemed to have the strength of two boys a-piece.

Pankhurst and Price, not knowing whether they were on their heads or their heels—and being, as a matter of fact, on their backs—were whisked along the passage and dragged into No. 4 study in a twinkling.

"Got 'em!" yelled the Combine triumphantly.

The 5th Chapter. A Little Mistake!

"LEGGO!"

"Lemme gerrup!"

"Ow!"

"Oh!"

"Ger-r-r-r-rooh!"

"Pah-h-h-h!"

Such were the intelligible remarks made by Pankhurst and Price as the Combine rolled them bodily into the study, and over and over in the spilt toffee.

There was plenty of toffee on the floor, and it was not yet dry. Most of it was wiped up by Pankhurst and Price as they were rolled in it.

"Here's some more!" exclaimed Neville, scraping his hands round the tin and the saucepan. "They may as well have the lot!"

And a double handful of stickiness was wiped over the faces of Pankhurst and Price.

The unfortunate Old Firm yelled and roared and struggled.

But the indignant Combine were too many for them.

Not until they had been fairly caked with half-dried toffee did the chums of No. 4 study release them.

Then the Old Firm staggered up, dazed and breathless, and sticky and bewildered.

"What the—"

"How the—"

"Why the—"

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"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Poindexter. "You look nice! You match the study now! Perhaps you wish you had left the toffee alone now that you've had so much of it!"

"What are you talking about?" shrieked Pankhurst. "We haven't done anything with your rotten toffee!"

"Too thin, my boy! Look on the glass." Pankhurst looked at the glass, and read the inscription there in dried toffee. Then he looked about the study, and as he saw its condition he grinned through the dirt and stickiness on his face.

"Yes, and it was you two rotters did it?" "Ass! If we had done it we should have been a little more watchful, and you wouldn't have caught us so easily."

"Quite so," said Price. Poindexter started.

"Do you mean to say that you didn't do it, honour bright?"

"Of course we didn't, you Chicago potted idiot. You've smothered my clothes—"

"And made me sticky all over!" growled Price.

"And all because—"

"Somebody mucked up your study." "You frabious asses!"

"You howling lunatics!" "You confounded grinning jackasses!"

The Combine stared at one another. They knew that Pankhurst would not tell a lie, and that if he said he had not handled the toffee, he had not done it.

"My hat!" said Poindexter, at last. "We've made a little mistake, I think!"

"A little mistake!" yelled Pankhurst. "A big one, I think, you blithering cuckoo! You've made me sticky and dirty all over, and spoiled my clothes!"

"You made me dirty and sticky and—"

"I guess we're sorry—"

"Faith, it was a little mistake—"

"We thought it was you, really!"

Pankhurst and Price were angry, and they had reason to be. But they were not angry for long. The scene in the study, with everything reeking with toffee, helped to restore them to good-humour.

"Well, you are a set of unspeakable idiots, and you had better think twice next time before you start rolling anybody in toffee," growled Pankhurst.

"There was your sign-manual on the glass, you know—"

"That was shoved there, of course, by the chap who did this, to make you think it was us," said Pankhurst.

"I thought it was unlike you, Panky, to spoil our books and papers," said the American chum. "The joke was taken too far, and it was beastly mean. That inscription on the glass was a rotter's trick, too. Who could it have been?"

"Somebody who doesn't like either party, I expect," said Dick Neville, "and wanted to set us by the ears about it."

"He's succeeded," grinned Pankhurst. "I think I'll turn that over in my mind, and see if I can light on the rotter, and we'll make him sit up for that dirty trick. I fancy I'll go and get cleaned now."

"No malice, I hope, Panky? It was all a mistake."

"No; that's all right. Of course, we are going to bust up your toffee business if we can. That's understood."

"Quite so."

"I guess you won't be able to, old kid. If you can bust up the firm of Neville, Poindexter, and Flynn, toffee manufacturers, you'll be a lot more sly than I take you for, I guess."

"Well, we shall see what we shall see," said Pankhurst. And with this undeniable assertion, Pankhurst marched off with Price.

"We were a bit too previous, and no mistake," said Poindexter, with a grin. "I wish I knew the scallawag who mucked up our study like this. We shall be weeks in getting it clean, I guess. Better set to work at once."

"You can," said Neville. "I'll make some more toffee. We ought to have it made overnight, you know, and it will be ready in the morning. If we leave it till to-morrow—"

"Right-ho! Never put off till to-morrow what you can do to-day," said Poindexter, with a nod of approval. "Well, you know the proportions to mix, and here's the materials. Micky and I will start cleaning."

And this division of labour having been arranged, the chums set to work. Dick Neville soon had another pan of toffee simmering on the fire, while Poindexter and Flynn did their best to clean up the stickiness that pervaded the study.

By the time they had done it, as well as they could do it—much remaining to be done at a future time—the toffee was in a satisfactory state, and Dick Neville poured it out into the flat tin once more.

"I hope nothing goes wrong with the second lot," he remarked, as he watched it settle. "We've only got enough materials for one more lot like this."

"I don't see that anything can go wrong with this," said Poindexter. "We'll take care not to leave the door unlocked when we go out again. It's cooling nicely."

"Yes. Hallo! What's that?"

"That" was a loud bump at the door of No. 4 study. It sounded like a body being pushed heavily against the panels.

"Come in!" shouted Micky Flynn.

Flynn pulled open the door, and Philpot, the cad of the Fourth, rolled in on the carpet, and after him came Pankhurst and Price.

The 6th Chapter.

More Toffee for Philpot!

THE Combine stared at their unexpected visitors in amazement. Philpot picked himself up, and made a break for the door.

But the Old Firm stood in the way. Pankhurst seized the cad of the Fourth and slung him back into the study, and Philpot sat down violently in the easy-chair. As the seat of the easy-chair had not yet been cleared of the toffee that adhered to it, Philpot stuck fast where he sat.

"There, you rotter!" said Pankhurst. "Shut the door, Pricey! I say, you chaps, we've brought that cad to you—"

"Thank you for nothing!" said Poindexter. "I guess we've got no use for him. Wrap him up and take him away."

"You don't catch on!"

"Philly has caught on!" grinned Neville, as Philpot tried to jerk himself free from the thick toffee that was sticking him to the seat of the chair.

"Ha, ha, ha! But I say, you wanted to know who it was mucked up your study like this—"

"Was it Philpot?" shouted the Combine, with one voice.

"Yes, it was, I suspected the bounder, when I came to think over it, for it was just one of his cad's tricks to play a jape and sign another fellow's name to it."

"Thru for you, Panky!"

"So we went to his study, and found him as sticky as you like," said Pankhurst. "He was washing the toffee off his hands, wasn't he, Pricey?"

"Quite so."

"He had a lot on his clothes, too, and you



"You'll want a meat-axe to eat that toffee with," laughed Pankhurst. "Eat this," roared Greene, thrusting a chunk in Poindexter's face. Poindexter tried, but his teeth made no impression upon the toffee. It was as hard as a brick.

can see there's some there now, for the matter of that."

The Combine looked at the cad of the Fourth. It was true enough; he had not done the extensive damage in No. 4 study without getting a considerable amount of the liquid toffee on his person.

"We knew then that he was the rotter we wanted," said Pankhurst. "We couldn't bring him then, as we had to get ourselves cleaned, so we locked him in his study."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Till we were ready. Now we've brought him along, and you can do what you like with him. I should advise skinning him."

"Or wringing his neck!" said Price.

Philpot cast a scared and guilty glance round. There was no doubt that he had been the perpetrator of the "jape" in No. 4 study. He had carried what might have been a pardonable joke to an ill-natured excess. And he had caused the Combine to come to blows with the Old Firm by what amounted to a lie. He deserved punishment, but as they looked at him the chums thought he didn't seem worth it.

"He didn't want to come," continued Pankhurst. "We brought him along on his neck, so to speak. Better rub his head in the ashes for a start."

"If you touch me—" howled Philpot.

"My dear kid, I wouldn't touch you with a barge-pole if I had my choice!" said Panky. "What about daubing him with toffee, Poin?"

"I guess that's a good wheeze," said Poindexter. "He's not worth thrashing, and he hasn't the pluck to stand up to any of us!"

"Shove him over!" said Neville, dipping the ladle into the half-cooled toffee. "This is cold enough not to hurt him, but warm enough to stick like glue. Come hither—come hither, my little Philpot, and do not tremble so, and I will give you the stickiest toffee that ever you did know!"

"Sure, and it's a good idea!" said Micky Flynn. "Come on, you bastards!"

And he jerked the cad of the Fourth towards the table whereon lay the flat tin of toffee. Philpot came away from the chair with a jerk, and began to struggle. But Poindexter lent his aid, and he was heaved towards the table.

There was a crash. Philpot crashed into the table, and it reeled. Poindexter and Flynn sprang to save it, and Philpot went staggering. The cad of the Fourth fell forward helplessly, and the next moment there was a choked yell.

Pankhurst and Price gave a roar.

"He's got it now!"

Philpot had it with a vengeance. His head had gone fairly into the pan of toffee, and his face, his hair, his ears, his whole features, were simply smothered.

He jerked his head back with a muffled yell.

"Ow-w-w-w-w-w!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Pankhurst and Price, in ecstasies.

"The toffee!" yelled Poindexter.

But it was too late to think of the toffee. Half of it at least was adhering to Philpot, and it was really a question how much was Philpot and how much was toffee.

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The 7th Chapter.

Pankhurst's Raid!

ALL Cliveden soon knew of the two successive failures of the great toffee firm, and chuckled over them. But those who expected the firm to go out of business were disappointed. The toffee manufacture in No. 4 Study was flourishing.

In the morning the Combine were asked on all sides if the statement of the prospectus still held good, and the toffee would be on sale in the evening—questions to which the chums of the Fourth returned an unhesitating answer in the affirmative.

And after the midday dinner of the juniors, curious eyes peeping into No. 4 study could see the Combine engaged in the task of manufacturing more toffee.

Pankhurst and Price were among those who looked in.

"Still at it, I see," remarked the chief of the Old Firm.

"I guess so, Copper Top!" said Poindexter cheerfully. "Don't you feel like kicking yourself for not thinking of the wheeze—eh?"

"Not at all! Of course, we can't allow you kids to keep up this rot," said Pankhurst, with a patronising smile. "If there's any toffee-making to be done on a big scale we're the firm to do it. As Heads of the Fourth Form—"

"Rats! Travel along!"

"We're going to bust up your show for that reason!" said Pankhurst. "You youngsters take too much on yourselves, you see, and we—"

A lump of half-dry toffee whizzed through the air, and Pankhurst gave a jump as it plumped on his nose and stuck there.

"You rotters! We'll bust up the show for you!" he shouted.

But the Old Firm hastened to retreat out of range, and the Combine only laughed, and went on with their work.

The toffee was finished, and it was as great a success as the previous lots. It was poured out into the flat tin to cool.

"I'll come up in a quarter of an hour to cut it," said Dick Neville, taking up his cap. "Let's get a run before lessons now. Mind you lock the door, Poin."

"You bet!" said the American.

The Combine went downstairs, and passed the Old Firm in the hall. Poindexter grinned at them, and held up his study door key as he passed. A new lock had lately been put on the door of No. 4 study at Poindexter's expense, and there was not another like it in the house. The study was impregnable when the door was locked.

"Oh, rats to you!" said Pankhurst.

The Combine grinned and passed on. They went down to the fields to punt a football about for a while, and soon forgot Pankhurst and Price. But Pankhurst watched them with a broad grin on his face.

"They're safe for a bit, kid," he said to Price. "Come along."

"What's the wheeze?"

"Come with me and you'll see."

Somewhat mystified, Price followed his chum upstairs to the box-room. Pankhurst closed the door when they had entered, and opened the window. Along the old stone wall of the house ran an ornamental ledge, passing under the window of the box-room, and under several adjoining windows.

"What the dickens are you going to do, Panky?"

"Can't you see that ledge passes under the window of No. 4 study?"

"Yes, I know it does; only—"

"Well, I'm going along it."

"I say, that's jolly risky, and—"

"Blow the risk!" said Pankhurst coolly. "I've got a steady head. I'd run a risk, too, for the sake of this howling jape on those cocky bounders. They're going to sell the toffee in the hall this evening, are they? Ha, ha!"

"What's the little game?"

"Do you see this?" Pankhurst drew several sheets of hard glue from his pocket.

"Yes, it's glue. What's the good of it?"

"Ha, ha! Suppose it were melted—"

"Yes." A gleam came into Price's eyes.

"And mixed in the toffee—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"When it hardened I'd like to see the chap who could get his teeth into it!" said Pankhurst, with a grin.

"My only hat! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Quiet, old kid, or you'll alarm the house! Help me out of the window, and I'll soon have the job jobbed!"

Pankhurst replaced the glue in his pocket, and was soon crawling along the ledge towards the window of No. 4 study. It was dizzy work, but the chief of the Old Firm had a nerve like iron.

He reached the study window and stood up before it. The chums had left it open, on account of the heat in the study from the fire, never dreaming of danger from that quarter. In a few seconds Pankhurst was in the study.

The fire was still burning red. Pankhurst whipped the saucepan upon it, poured some hot water in from the kettle, and dropped the glue into it. He pounded it into small pieces, and by dint of continual stirring, and raking up a fiery heat under the saucepan, he soon had it melted.

Then he took the pan of toffee, and coolly poured the greater part of it back into the saucepan, and stirred it up with the glue.

When the two sticky substances had quite amalgamated, the grinning junior poured back the improved toffee into the flat tin, and replaced the saucepan where he had found it.

The Cliveden Toffee-Makers.

(Continued from the previous page.)

The toffee had been somewhat increased in bulk, but by leaving a little in the saucepan, Pankhurst left it at the same level in the tin.

Satisfied with his work, the chief of the Old Firm scrambled out of the window, and crawled back along the stone ledge.

Price met him with an anxious face at the window of the box-room.

"Thank goodness you've got back safely!" said Price, as he helped his chum in. "Have you fixed it all right?"

"First-rate!" chuckled Pankhurst. "The chaps who buy that toffee to-night will deserve gold medals if they're able to eat it."

The Old Firm left the box-room, very pleased with themselves. A little later the Combine came in, and Dick ran up to No. 4 study just before afternoon lessons commenced. He found the toffee apparently just as he had left it, though he was rather surprised not to find it cooler.

It was cool enough, however, for his purpose. He drew deep gashes in it at right angles with a knife, so that it would be easily broken into chunks when it was cold. And then the ringing of a bell summoned him to afternoon school.

The 8th Chapter.

The Failure of the Great Toffee Firm.

THERE was a crowd of juniors in the common-room after lessons that day.

The Combine had made the toffee, and they announced that it was to be ready immediately after school, and on sale in the common-room. Upon reflection, Poindexter had fixed upon the juniors' room as the appropriate place for the sale. Though seniors were not barred from participating in the benefits of the new scheme of home-made superior toffee, by any means, all who had cash were welcome.

Pankhurst and Price, of course, were on the spot in great expectation.

"Hallo, here they are!" exclaimed Pankhurst, as the Combine came in, marching together with a great deal of dignity, as befitting a great manufacturing firm.

"Here they are!" said Gatty. "But where's the toffee?"

"Yes, that's the question!" exclaimed King. "Where's the toffee?"

"The toffee is here, I guess," said Poindexter, laying a paper package on the table and unfastening it, "prime and fresh—"

"It doesn't come out of a tin, I hope!" said a voice.

"I'll tin you if you don't keep your head shut," said Poindexter. "Walk up, gents, and inspect our splendid new home-made toffee."

The toffee was revealed.

The juniors crowded round, looking at it. It certainly looked very nice, and the squares were joined by the merest wafer, easily broken to separate them.

"Looks nice!" said Greene.

"And it is nice, my son!" said Poindexter. "Walk up, gentlemen. I guess you'll think you like this better than old Rags's old toffee, black and nasty stuff, and the chunks are bigger at half the price."

"You allow tick, of course," said Greene.

"Of course, we don't," said Poindexter promptly. "We haven't expended all our ready cash, and taken a lot of time and trouble

for the purpose of allowing you tick, Greene, my boy. The pleasure of obliging you would be great, but not great enough."

"Terms, net cash," said Dick Neville, tersely.

"Faith, and it's cheap!" said Micky Flynn. "It would be cheap at half the price—I mean it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Walk up, gents! Who wants home-made, clean, spicy toffee at half the market rates?" shouted Poindexter.

"I do!" "And I!" "And I!"

Most of the juniors wanted some. There was a crush of customers, only Pankhurst and Price standing aloof with superior smiles upon their faces.

"Won't you kids have some?" asked Poindexter. "The supply's running down."

Pankhurst shook his head.

"No, thanks! I have an idea that it is hard."

"Hard! Of course it's hard! All toffee's hard—"

"I think this is a bit harder than most toffee," said Pankhurst blandly. "I think you will find it so. Only an idea of mine, of course."

Poindexter looked at him suspiciously. He could not quite make out what the chief of the Old Firm was driving at. But he was soon to know.

The toffee sold out rapidly. But almost before the last chunk was gone, loud complaints were rising from the earlier purchasers.

"I say, this is awfully hard!"

"I can't get my teeth into it."

"I can't break it with this poker."

"It's no good."

"It's not toffee—it's plaster of Paris."

"It's cement."

"It's giddy glue!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Pankhurst and Price. "It's a fraud! The great toffee firm is a humbug. You'll want a meat-axe to eat that toffee with."

The Combine looked at one another.

"It's all rot!" exclaimed Poindexter, angrily. "The toffee is all right—"

"Have you eaten any?"

"Not yet, but—"

"Well, eat this!" roared Greene, thrusting a chunk into Poindexter's face. "If you can get your teeth into it, I'll admit it is all right."

Poindexter tried, but his teeth made no impression on the toffee. It was as hard as a brick. Gatty was trying to break his piece with a poker, but in vain. Another fellow was using a cricket stump to no better purpose—or rather to worse—for with a terrific swipe, he cracked the stump, while the toffee remained intact.

"It's a fraud!"

"It's not toffee—it's masonry."

"I want my money back!" howled Philpot.

The cad of the Fourth was the first to raise the cry, but it was speedily taken up by others. The Combine were utterly amazed and stricken with consternation. They knew they had made the toffee all right, and what had made it harden so terrifically was a mystery to them.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Pankhurst. "Give them their money back, Pointpusher. You can have the toffee and use it to pave your study with."

"Quite so," said Price. "Ha, ha, ha!"

Poindexter glared at them with quick suspicion.

"You—you rotters!" he shouted. "You've got at the toffee somehow, and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You've—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Poindexter, Neville, and Flynn looked inclined to rush upon the Old Firm and wreak summary vengeance there and then. But they were surrounded by a clamorous crowd demanding their money back. The Combine had no objection to them, but the utterly ridiculous ending to the great toffee-making scheme overwhelmed them. Pankhurst and Price marched out of the room arm-in-arm, yelling with laughter, in which most of the Fourth Form joined. And as the story spread, all Cliveden joined in the laughing.

It was a fall for the Combine, and there was no getting out of it. For once in a way, the Old Firm had scored, and scored heavily. It was some time before Poindexter knew how Pankhurst had done it; but that the Old Firm had brought about the failure of the great toffee concern he knew from the first.

"They've done us, I guess," said Poindexter, with a ghastly grin as he finished paying over the money lately received for the toffee. "Done us brown, and we shall be the joke of the school."

Neville and Flynn smiled in a sickly way. The Combine disconsolately left the room. There was a roar in the passage as they emerged.

"Here come the toffee-makers!"

"What price toffee?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

With scarlet faces the Combine walked on. They bore it pretty well, but the laugh was on the side of the Old Firm this time, and it was long before the Combine were allowed to forget the great toffee fiasco.

THE END.

(Next Wednesday's complete tale,

"POINDEXTER'S GHOST,"

is absolutely ripping. Order your copy now.)

OUR WORKSHOP CORNER.

A Collection of Instructive Articles Written by Members of the Hobby Club.

An Amusing Experiment.

Here is a very interesting and amusing experiment. Procure a large cork, and cut off from the top a circular piece, about a quarter of an inch in thickness. Now cut the remaining piece of cork into four squares or oblongs of the same thickness and size. Obtain four large needles, and stick these four pieces of cork on to them, and in their turn stick them into the circular piece of cork, as shown in the illustration. Now glue or gum to one side of each of the four pieces of cork a small piece of camphor—each piece must be of the same weight. Place them in position on the cork as shown.

Place the whole in a bowl of water, and it will begin to spin round and round for several



THE WONDERFUL COIN.—How it can be made to spin on the point of a needle.—See article on this page.

hours. If small figures—e.g., a lady and gentleman dancing—be now cut out of stiff but lightweight paper, and be fixed on to the centre piece of cork, some very life-like movements can be produced, which will last sometimes for a day or more continuously.—A. Mansell, 122, Vicarage Road, Wolverhampton.

The Wonderful Coin.

First procure a bottle with a cork in it. Stick the eye-end of a needle into the cork, so that the point will be upwards.

Now get a coin and two ordinary dinner forks, and press them by means of the prongs across the face of the coin one each side, and you can with the greatest ease make it balance on the point of the needle.—Edwin Martin, 68, West India Road, Limehouse, E.

How to Make "Potato Ivory."

Procure a good sound potato, and see that it is not bruised at all. Wash it in diluted sulphuric acid till the surface is perfectly clean, then boil it slowly in the same solution used for washing till it becomes quite solid and dense. Wash thoroughly in tepid water, followed by cold, till quite free from acid, and then place in a warm cupboard or some such place to dry.

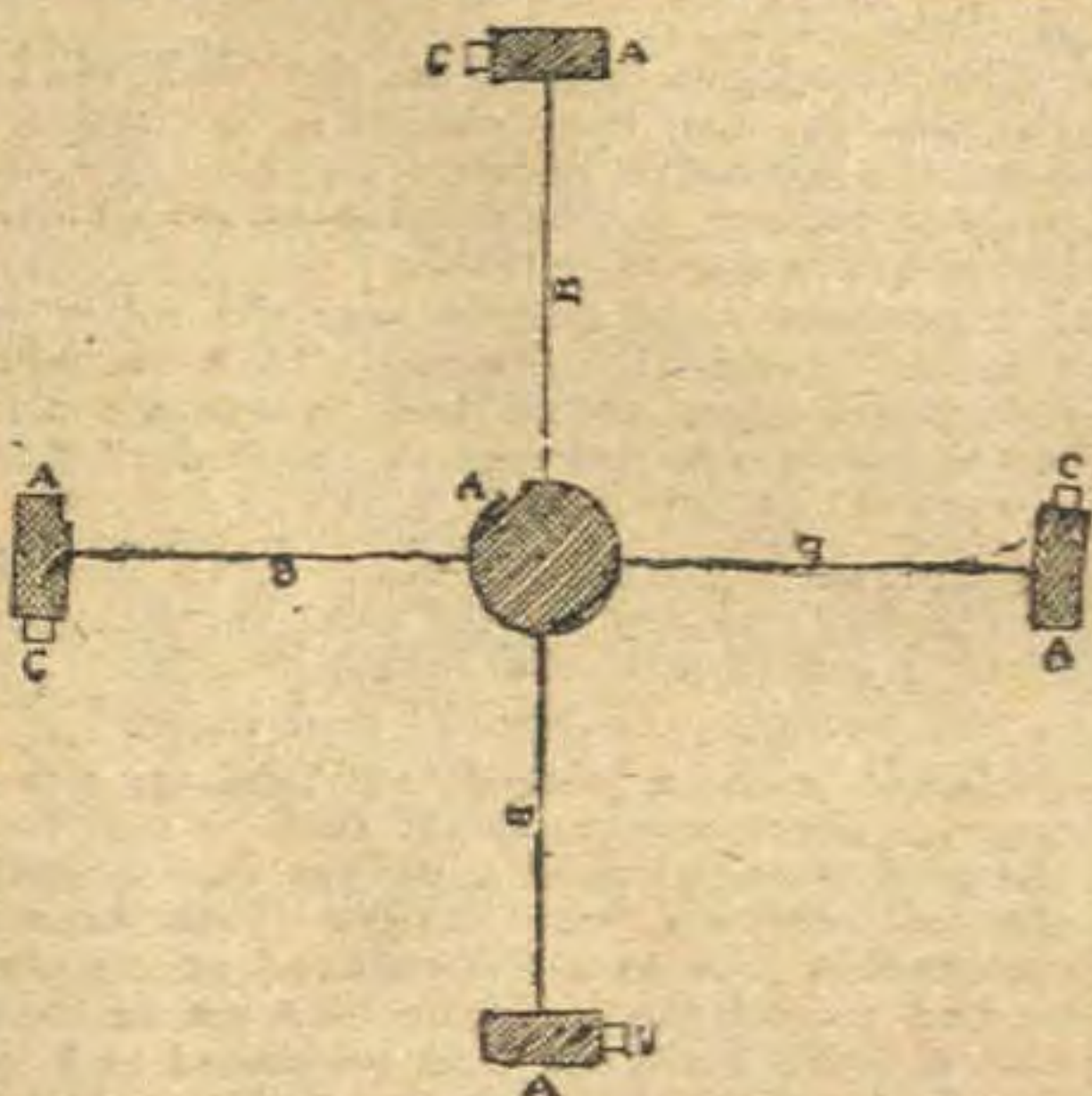
After this treatment, it will carve splendidly, and take almost any dye.—A. S. Russell, Huish Episcopi, Langport, Somerset.

The Art of Step-Dancing.

The art of step-dancing must take several months, at least, to learn properly. In the first place, a number of joints must be loosened, namely, knee-joints, ankle-joints, and toe-joints.

There are several other anatomical tissues which must be loosened, but these must not yet be detailed, until we have thoroughly loosened all joints necessary. I will now endeavour to give a few hints as to how, in the easiest manner, you can obtain these first abilities.

Keeping the knees as close together as possible, take a jump, and try to make your heels touch



AN AMUSING EXPERIMENT.—See the clever article on this page.

your back. If you do this about twenty times in succession every day, you will gradually loosen the joints already mentioned.

After you have practised this—say about a week—you will be ready to proceed to the first steps in dancing.

In learning the first process, we must bear in mind that a good step-dancer's heels never touch the ground, except on particular occasions, where,

for instance, the dancer wants to get five beats with one foot.

I would advise beginners to begin by proceeding to the step, where three beats with each toe is put into use.

If when the dancer has learnt this step, he has any instinct, seeing other dancers, probably at music-halls, or any other place of amusement, he will be able to copy, or, in due course, he will be able to make up steps even of his own invention.

This talent, when properly used, is very much appreciated, as there are a very great number of admirers, who like this clever art.—S. Harris, Lyndhurst, Buller Road, Longsight, Manchester, who is awarded this week's special prize of five shillings.

How to Stuff Birds.

Preserving and setting up birds is a very engrossing hobby, and it is not by any means difficult to reach a stage of considerable dexterity at the work.

In the limited space to which we are restricted, it will not, of course, be possible to do more than touch upon the more important features; but with such hints, added to the care and intelligence of the worker, good results should ensue.

Take the bird, which should be a fresh specimen, and not too large for the first attempt, and stuff the mouth with cottonwool, and laying it on its back, make an incision running from the breastbone, downward, to near the root of the tail. It should cut through the skin only, and this, of course, demands care. Any bleeding may be arrested with a sprinkling of dry plaster of Paris.

Commence to skin the body, working round and downward. The legs are then pushed into the body, as it were, and the joint is cut through, and all flesh removed.

The severing of the tail follows. After this work up to the head, breaking off the wings close to the body as you proceed.

The head requires special care. The bill and part of the skull attached to it are, of course, retained.

When the skinning is done rub the following mixture over every internal part: Whiting, twelve ounces, soft soap, eight ounces; chloride of lime, one ounce.

Then wrap round a piece of wire, sharpened at both ends, modelling it into the body, the top extremity of the wire passing through one nostril and the lower piercing the flesh near the tail.

The legs are secured by the passage of wire through them behind. The vacuities are filled with tow, and the incision is sewn up. The insertion of artificial eyes in a putty bed follows the operation of pinning the wings to the body and the arranging of ruffled feathers. Mounting in a natural attitude concludes the work.—G. W. Foster, Potter Hill, High Green, near Sheffield.

The Disappearing Sixpence.

This is a very easy and simple trick. Ask someone in the room to lend you a sixpenny piece, and, in order that he may recognise it again, request him to mark it. You must exchange this coin, when returning to your table for one of your own, which should be put where it can be seen by everybody. Take a handkerchief from your pocket and spread it out on the table; but, before starting this, one corner of the handkerchief should be soaped, placing it so that this corner is the right-hand bottom corner, the soaped side of the handkerchief being uppermost.

Take the borrowed sixpence, and put it in the middle of the handkerchief, then fold over all four corners, so that they overlap the sixpence about an inch. Take the right hand corner first and lay it on the coin, being very careful to cover it with the soaped portion of the handkerchief; then fold over, and press down hard, in order to make the sixpence stick to the handkerchief.

Ask the person who lent you the sixpence to step up to the table and find out, by feeling the handkerchief, whether the sixpence is there or not. Drop the borrowed coin into his pocket without letting him see you, then, when he says that the coin is really in the handkerchief, send him back to his seat. Take hold of the handkerchief by the uppermost corners, draw them apart quickly, and shake it well.

The sixpence will remain fast to the corner, and cannot be seen by the audience, but can be quite easily taken off by the performer without being seen.

When you have shown the audience that the coin has really disappeared, ask the gentleman who lent you the sixpence if he would mind feeling in his pocket where, to his surprise, he will find the marked sixpence.—W. J. Conlan, Town Hall, Limerick, Ireland.

To Prevent Heat Blisters.

Soak the feet nightly for about a quarter of an hour in alum and water (cold for preference). Do this for about ten days, and then use salt and water for about another week. If possible let the feet dry themselves without using a towel.

To Cure Heat Blisters.

Apply methylated spirits for two or three nights. Relief will be felt after the first application. When cured, prevent a recurrence by following out the first recipe.—S. Webb, 16, White-stile Road, Brentford, W.

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