

THE GREYFRIARS
AOLIDAY

1933

ANNUAL
FOR BOYS AND GIRLS

1933



The Greyfriars HOLIDAY ANNUAL 1933

Co all my friends, and all who look
At this delightful story book :

Take note : This book belongs to ME,
And when you've read it, you'll agree
That having bought the book so cheap, it
Is wise of me to try to keep it.

I think you know its owner's name.
But here I write it, all the same :

WILLIAM BUTTLE

Should you this book by chance to borrow,
Please let me have it back to-morrow.
Send it at once, and by express,
Straight to the following address :

12, CHAMBERS ROAD

FARRINGDON TOWN

But, if you're tempted, by and by,
To sneak this book upon the sly,
I don't mind giving you a tip—
I won a boxing championship !

Yet, if you come and say, "Old Pal,
Show me your 'HOLIDAY ANNUAL.'"
To lend it to you I've decided,
And may you laugh as much as I did.

In witness whereof, it is good
To set my hand and seal in blood—
At least, it looks like blood, I think,
But—keep it secret—it's red ink.



W. Buttle

(Signature in red ink.)

Issued from The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4.

The Editor to his Friends

IT has ever been my pride that the HOLIDAY ANNUAL gives its many thousands of readers the ideal variety-programme of entertaining fiction, and my bulky post-bag shows how widely the fact is appreciated.

And so it is with a great tradition behind it that the present volume makes its bow.

In the following two hundred and eighty pages will be found healthy and vigorous stories of school, sport and adventure which will make an instantaneous appeal to every manly boy, and to his sister. Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars, Tom Merry & Co., of St. Jim's, and Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood, are, of course, well represented in the wide range of contents, for the HOLIDAY ANNUAL would be quite incomplete without the adventures of these popular schoolboy characters.

Neither trouble nor expense has been spared in the preparation of this HOLIDAY ANNUAL, and I can say with complete confidence that for sheer reader-interest, this volume ranks higher than any of the long line of HOLIDAY ANNUALS which have preceded it. For thirteen years in succession the HOLIDAY ANNUAL has "topped the bill," and I look to this, our fourteenth volume, to break all previous records for popularity with British boys and girls.

THE EDITOR.

THE FLEETWAY HOUSE,
FARRINGDON STREET,
LONDON, E.C.4.

COKER'S CAPTURE!

By FRANK RICHARDS



THE FIRST CHAPTER Only Prout!

BANG! Coker, Potter and Greene jumped. It was a quiet, summer afternoon and the three Fifth-Formers had been taking it easy on a bench under one of the great elms in the Greyfriars quad. The sharp, violent explosion came to them like a bolt from the blue.

"Sounded like a gun!" remarked Potter.

"You mean it *was* a gun!" corrected Coker.

The great man of the Fifth stared across towards the school chapel, from the direction of which the noise had apparently emanated.

Coker was looking grim. He had just been reading an American monthly magazine called "Rough-Stuff Stories." It was a somewhat sensational publication, devoted to lurid accounts of conflicts between gangsters and

policemen in the United States. Coker took most things seriously, and he took "Rough-Stuff Stories" with exceptional seriousness.

Just before the interruption came he had been enlarging to Potter and Greene on the dangers of gang lawlessness penetrating Great Britain. He had also confided to his benchmen what steps he intended to take in the cause of law and order if that unhappy state of affairs came to

pass. Potter and Greene had begun to find it all rather monotonous, and the explosion from behind the chapel was quite a relief to them.

"Better look into it," Greene said, standing up. "You stay here, Coker, old chap. Potter and I can run over and find out what's on."

"Bosh!" was Coker's retort to that ingenuous suggestion.

He crammed "Rough-Stuff Stories" into his jacket pocket and stood up himself. At

Horace Coker captured a gunman bold
(At least—'twas his fond illusion),
But after events left Coker cold,
For he'd jumped to the wrong conclusion!

the same moment a second explosion occurred.

Bang!

"My hat!" Potter was beginning to look quite alarmed. "What the thump can it be?"

"Leave this to me, you men," said Coker grimly. "If I'm not mistaken, something pretty queer's going on behind the chapel!"

"Eh?"

"Funny if what I've been warning you about should come to pass so soon!" said Coker seriously. "It won't surprise me, anyway. The menace of the gunman is bound to spread to England, as I've just been telling you. Looks to me as if it's here at Greyfriars already!"

"Oh, great pip!"

Potter and Greene looked at each other, then looked at Coker. The suggestion that a gunman might at that moment be plying his nefarious trade at Greyfriars seemed to leave them a little dazed.

Bang!

It was the third explosion.

"Watch me!" said Coker. And he sprang into action.

His spring landed him on the gravel path near by. A sledgehammer was lying on the path, left there temporarily by Mimble, the gardener, who had been using it. Coker picked up the sledgehammer.

"Here, half a minute!" gasped Potter.

"What are you going to do, old chap?" asked Greene.

Coker didn't trouble to reply. He was already sprinting across the turf towards the chapel, sledgehammer in hand.

Five juniors were strolling in the same direction as Coker tore along. They fairly blinked at the great man of the Fifth.

"Hallo, hallo, hallo! It's come at last!" roared Bob Cherry.

"Ware lunatics!" gasped Wharton.

"Mind your eyes, you men!"

The Famous Five of the Remove scattered. Coker, unarmed, held no terrors for Harry Wharton and his chums; but Coker with a sledgehammer in his hand was a horse of a different colour.

Coker charged through the juniors, hardly heeding them in his anxiety to reach the scene of those three mysterious explosions.

"What the thump——" gasped Johnny Bull, as Coker flashed by.

"All serene, you kids!" Potter said, reassuringly, as he and Greene came following after. "Coker's not mad—at least, not more so than usual!"

"Well, that's not particularly comforting!" laughed Harry Wharton. "What's he doing with that fearful-looking hammer?"

"Hunting gunmen!" explained Potter. "He's just heard that din from behind the chapel. He thinks we're invaded by American gunmen and gangsters!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Harry Wharton & Co. seemed to regard Coker's brilliant suggestion as funny. They roared.

"Well, my hat!" gasped Bob Cherry. "We all heard the row, but not one of us thought of that possibility. American gangsters, you know! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Kim on," said Greene. "He'll be doing some damage with that hammer if we don't chip in. I'm after him!"

"Count us all in!" chuckled Frank Nugent. "We're game!"

And the Famous Five accompanied Potter and Greene, who, truth to tell, felt rather glad to have their support.

The two seniors and the five grinning juniors broke into a run.

Coker disappeared round the bend of the chapel.

His pursuers fairly tore after him.

In a matter of seconds they, too, turned the bend.

They were just in time to see Coker creeping up behind a preoccupied individual who was standing on the grass, his back to the newcomers, examining a revolver.

"Surely he's not——" gasped Greene.

He was not! Coker of the Fifth was, as most Greyfriars men were willing to testify, several sorts of an ass; but even he was not such an ass as to hit a man on the head with a sledgehammer on mere suspicion.

Instead of using the hammer, Coker used his tongue.

"Drop that gun!" he said suddenly, in ringing tones. "I've got you covered!"

The man dropped his revolver, though whether out of politeness or surprise could not be seen.

Then he looked round and a shuddering sort of gasp escaped Coker's lips.

For the man with the gun was not an American gangster, but Paul Prout, Coker's own Form-master !

THE

SECOND CHAPTER The Gunman !

"PROUT!"

Potter and Greene and the Famous Five said it in unison.

Then they roared. They couldn't help it.

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"Oh, my hat ! Obvious, of course !" gurgled Greene. "Prout—the one man in the school who goes in for guns ! Ha, ha, ha !"

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"Can it !" said Johnny Bull, *sotto voce*. "He's waxy !"

Undeniably Prout was waxy. He glared at Coker with a glare that almost cracked his spectacles.

"Coker !" he roared. "How dare you ?"

"I—I—"

"You have the temerity—the amazing impudence—to threaten me with a sledgehammer !" hooted Mr. Prout. "I repeat, sir ; how dare you ?"

Coker hastily disposed of the sledgehammer. Obviously that formidable weapon of war was not needed against Prout.

"It's—it's a mistake, sir !" he stuttered. "Quite a mistake, I assure you !"

Mr. Prout's glare became a little less truculent.

"I am prepared, Coker, to listen to a



With a sledgehammer gripped in his hands, Coker charged through Harry Wharton & Co., hardly heeding them as they scattered before his wild rush.

reasonable explanation, though what explanation there can be—"

"I—I thought you were a gangster, sir !" explained Coker.

"Gangster ?"

"Just that, sir !" said Coker cheerfully. "Of course, I should have remembered that guns are your hobby. But one doesn't expect the corner behind the chapel to be turned into a shooting gallery."

"What !" roared Mr. Prout.

"Can't term it anything else, when you start blazing away with a revolver—"

"Silence, sir !" snorted the master of the Fifth. Then he calmed down a little as he picked up the revolver he had dropped.

"Perhaps, though, there is something in what

you say, Coker. I do not want to be unfair."

"It did give us a bit of a start, sir," Potter ventured. "Nothing much, of course."

Mr. Prout nodded.

"Very well, Potter. In the circumstances, Coker, I may perhaps consent to overlook the matter on this occasion."

"Thanks!" grunted Coker, not too graciously.

"I assure you, anyhow, that I was not, as you seem to think, merely 'blazing away.' In point of fact, I was experimenting with a new type of trigger," said Mr. Prout, not without a touch of pride. "It is an invention of my own, and I think I may claim, without fear of contradiction, that it is an advance on anything previously known."

"Can we have a look, sir?" asked Wharton interestedly.

Mr. Prout smiled a smile of gracious condescension.

"I should be most happy, Wharton, but I am afraid—What is the time?" he asked, breaking off suddenly.

"Nearly three o'clock, sir!" answered Greene, glancing at his wrist-watch.

Mr. Prout hastily pocketed the revolver again.

"Dear me! In that case, I must postpone demonstrating the invention for I am already late for a most important appointment!" he said. "Pray ask me another time, my boys."

The master of the Fifth rolled off at express speed.

"Good old Prout!" chuckled Bob Cherry, as he vanished round the corner of the chapel. "And Coker actually took him for a gangster! Shame, I call it!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here—" said Coker, glaring.

"Like to show us some more?" asked Johnny Bull. "We're at a loose end; we'll follow you round, if you like, while you collect gangsters!"

"Why, you silly young ass—" Coker made a bull-like rush at the Removites.

"Back up, you men!" he roared.

But there were no men left to "back up." Potter and Greene had quietly withdrawn in the opposite direction at the same time as

Prout. Coker was left to mop up the turf with the Famous Five on his own.

He felt quite up to that task. Coker was never lacking in self-assurance. But the task was a little beyond him, for all that. Instead of mopping up the turf with the Famous Five, Coker had the unhappy experience of being bumped and rolled and dragged over the turf, himself.

"Yoooooop!" he roared. "Leggo, you little demons, or I'll —whooop!"

"And that's that!" remarked Harry Wharton, as he and his chums deposited the dizzy Fifth-Former on the path. "Good-bye, Coker!"

"See us again, soon!" begged Bob Cherry. "Always welcome!"

"The welcomefulness is terrific!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the Famous Five departed.

They departed under the impression that they had seen the last of the great man of the Fifth for that afternoon. But that impression, as things turned out, was quite erroneous.

Coker, after sorting himself out, shook his fist at the sledgehammer, for lack of a more suitable object, and tramped off in the direction of the school gates.

Disgusted with the unsympathetic treatment he was receiving at Greyfriars, he had decided to shake the dust of the school from his feet and seek some quiet meadow where he might finish "Rough-Stuff Stories" in peace.

But Coker was not destined to go beyond the gates.

As he drew near the porter's lodge his gloomy eye fell on the tall figure of a stranger who had just arrived.

"American" was stamped all over the newcomer, from the brim of his elegant Stetson hat to the tips of his heavy boots. He was an unusual kind of visitor, and Coker found himself regarding the man with a certain amount of suspicion.

"Mr. Prout, sir?" Coker heard Gosling, the porter, say as he came within earshot. "Can't say whether 'e's in, sir, but if you care to walk hover to the School 'ouse across there, you can soon find out. 'Ot day, sir!"

The visitor's response to that broad hint was to dive his hand into his hip pocket and



"Drop that gun!" cried Coker in ringing tones. He swung round, startled, and Coker gasped.

the sledgehammer raised threateningly. The man It was Mr. Prout, his own Form-master!

bring out a handful of silver from which he selected a tip for Gosling.

Coker started violently.

Just for one moment, as the American's hand withdrew from his pocket, he had caught a glimpse of something that glittered in the sun.

It was a revolver!

"My hat!" murmured the great man of the Fifth.

He knew he had not been mistaken. He had seen the weapon as clearly as if it had been held up in front of his nose.

All Coker's dampened enthusiasm concerning gangsters suddenly came back with a rush. The man was an American. That alone was a suspicious circumstance to Coker. Apart from that, he had a sinister look about him—Coker was sure of that, now—and, above all, he carried a gun.

To Coker the whole thing was as clear as daylight. The man was a gunman. The gang war had come to England, as Coker had foreseen!

The suspect walked up the gravel drive towards the School House, without so much as a glance at Coker.

Coker followed.

His rugged face grim and set, the Fifth-Former tramped behind the visitor.

The latter looked round once or twice. Coker responded on each occasion by scowling a ferocious scowl.

Eventually, the American halted.

Coker halted, too.

"Kinder following me, kid?" the suspected gunman called out.

"Suppose I can walk up the drive if I like, can't I?" Coker retorted. "Any objection?"

"Okay with me, Vere de Vere!" smiled

the visitor, with a sarcasm which was wasted on Coker. "I guess you can have the entire walk to yourself; I'm in no hurry."

And he proceeded to seat himself under the same elm beneath which Coker had previously been reading "Rough-Stuff Stories."

Coker, after a moment's hesitation, strolled off cautiously towards the playing-fields, looking back at frequent intervals to make sure the man was still there.

He spotted the Famous Five at one of the practice-nets on Little Side, and gave them a shout. Wharton & Co. looked up in some surprise.

"Hallo, hallo! Dear old Coker again!" exclaimed Bob Cherry. "Found that gangster yet?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dry up, you young idiots!" snorted Coker. "As a matter of fact, the answer is yes! I have!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"Fact!" said the great man of the Fifth, quite enjoying the sensation his announcement had caused. "A dangerous gunman is at present at large at Greyfriars. Prout's the man he's after, and by the look of him, he's out to kill!"

"What the merry dickens——"

"Don't jaw; I'm in a hurry!" snapped Coker. "I want you fags to ring up the police and get them to send a body of men at once. Meanwhile, I'm going to have a cut at him myself."

"Great pip!"

"If I win, all well and good," said Coker. "If I don't, then it's all U P with me!"

"Oh, crikey!"

"Hurry!" snapped Coker.

Then he turned on his heel and walked off, leaving the Famous Five looking after him quite dazedly.

After the first half-dozen paces, Coker broke into a run. He had suddenly noticed that his gunman had risen from the seat under the elm and resumed his interrupted walk to the House.

As he ran, a brain-wave smote him. He detached his fountain-pen from the breast-pocket where he usually kept it and transferred it to the side pocket, holding it there, as the

heroes of "Rough-Stuff Stories" often did their revolvers.

He caught up with his intended captive at the foot of the School House steps.

The American, at the sound of his scudding footsteps, looked round.

Coker wasted no time. He levelled the concealed fountain-pen through his side pocket.

"Put 'em up!" he said, just as "Rough-Stuff Stories" had taught him to say it. "I've got the drop on you!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER

Just Like Coker!

"For the love of Mike!"

Thus the American. Apparently he was taken completely by surprise. He regarded the menacing Coker with eyes that were wide open with astonishment.

"Put 'em up!" repeated Coker.

Still no response. Coker's quarry looked bewildered but that was all. Coker came to the conclusion that he had to make matters more clear.

"Horn in on this, big boy," he said, adopting the language of "Rough-Stuff Stories" for the sake of clarity; "I got a heater in this pocket. Put 'em up and make it snappy, or you'll get the works, see?"

"Holy smoke!" gasped the visitor.

His hands went up. Coker grinned.

"Not so dumb, huh?" he remarked, still talking in the vernacular. "Now, march!"

"What in thunder——"

"Up the steps, or I'll plug you!" said Coker fiercely.

The American decided to obey. He marched up the steps into the House, still holding his hands above his head.

Several juniors were in the Hall as Coker and his prisoner came in. They stared.

"New game, Coker?" asked Skinner.

Coker frowned.

"Don't be cheeky! I've just taken him prisoner!"

"Wha-at?"

Coker tramped triumphantly on.

Skinner and the others were left, staring open-mouthed.

Two minutes later Wharton and a crowd of Removites swarmed in.

"Seen Coker?" Wharton asked.

"Couldn't help it; he stands out a mile!" Skinner answered. "He's just gone upstairs, following a queer-looking cove who's holding his hands up. What's the idea?"

"Give it up! He just told us he was going to catch an American gunman who had come to slaughter Prout!"

"Here comes Prout!" said Bob Cherry at that moment, and there was a rush for the portly Fifth Form-master. A dozen excited juniors hastened to pass on the amazing news.

"Someone's called to shoot you, sir!"

"What!" roared Mr. Prout.

"It's all right, sir; Coker's got him!"

"They've just gone upstairs—"

"Coker's made him put his hands up—"

"He's a queer-looking chap—"

"Silence!" hooted Mr. Prout.

"Have you all taken leave of your senses?"

Wharton! You will kindly explain."

Wharton told what little he knew, and Mr. Prout listened almost in stupefaction.

"Extraordinary!" he exclaimed, when the Remove leader had finished. "The matter shall be investigated at once."

He brought out the revolver with which he had been experimenting earlier in the afternoon, and rolled up the stairs, followed by a buzzing crowd.

Coker met him on the landing. The great man of the Fifth was looking rather pleased.

"All serene, sir!" he said reassuringly. "I've got him in your study!"

"Bless my soul!"

"He's a desperate-looking criminal," explained Coker. "No doubt about it, sir, he'd have shot you down without compunction!"

"B-b-bless my soul! I will see this—this criminal, at once!" gasped the master of the Fifth, leading the way to his study. "I can hardly credit—"

"It's true enough, sir," Coker said. "I



"Leave the man to me, sir," said Coker, "and I'll—Ow!" Coker's chatter gave way to a sudden howl as Mr. Prout's thumb and forefinger closed over his ear.

heard him ask Gosling where you were, with my own ears! Here you are!"

He stepped into the study and pointed to a chair in the middle of the room, where his prisoner was sitting, trussed up like a chicken.

Mr. Prout blinked; then suddenly he gave a shout, while the juniors looked on with interest from the doorway.

"Dugan! My dear fellow—"

"Prout!" came an answering roar from Coker's prisoner. "I'll say I'm glad to see you!"

" You know the chap, then, sir ? " asked Coker cheerfully. " Jolly glad he's trussed up, then, I'll bet ! "

" Coker ! " roared Mr. Prout, taking a step forward.

" Leave him to me, sir, " said Coker confidently, " and I'll—— Ow ! "

Coker's confident chatter gave way to a sudden yelp, as Mr. Prout's thumb and forefinger closed over his ear.

" Coker ! " hooted Mr. Prout. " Utterly absurd youth ! How dare you ? "

" Ow ! Wharrer you doing ? " gasped Coker in amazement. " I tell you, if you leave him to me——"

" Silence ! " roared the master of the Fifth. " Are you aware, Coker, that the gentleman whom you have tied up, as you might a common thief, is a very old and esteemed friend of mine ? "

" Just where you're wrong ! " said Coker. " You may think he's a friend of yours, but the fact is, he came to shoot you. If he didn't, why was he carrying a gun ? "

" Dolt ! " snorted Mr. Prout, as he took out a knife and started hacking away at the cord round Coker's prisoner. " The 'gun,' as you call it, was undoubtedly the revolver which I myself sent him recently to enable him to test my new trigger ! "

" What ! "

" Mr. Dugan, the gentleman whom you have ill-used, formerly accompanied me on a hunting expedition into the Rockies. We have a mutual interest in firearms."

" M-my hat ! " stuttered Coker, his hair almost standing on end. " Then—then I've made a mistake ! "

" Looks like it, doesn't it ? " chortled Skinner, from the back of the crowd. " First

time it's ever happened ! Ha, ha, ha ! "

" Ha, ha, ha ! "

" Thanks ! " drawled Mr. Prout's American friend, as he stood upright at last. " I guess I'm glad it's nothing worse than a mistake. When I put up my fins for your young friend here, I allowed he was cuckoo ; he certainly gives a guy that idea ! "

" Ha, ha, ha ! " yelled the delighted crowd from the passage.

Coker stood in the centre of the study, shifting from one foot to the other. His face was almost green.

" Oh, dear ! " he groaned. " I——I——I——"

" Go ! " said Prout majestically. " I will deal with you later ! "

" I—I'm awfully sorry——"

" Naturally ! " nodded the Fifth Form-master. " Now go ! "

Coker went, followed every step of the way back to his study by the most uproarious, hilarious crowd that had ever invaded the sacred quarters of the Fifth.

Later, Prout dealt with him. Let it be said that the dealing in question, thanks, no doubt, to the good offices of Coker's gunman, was exceedingly light ; a brief but pointed lecture on the subject of jumping to conclusions, and it was over.

From the point of view of the Remove, however, that was not the end. The references made in Coker's hearing by members of that celebrated Form, to "gangsters," "gunmen," and "racketeers" make Coker's ears burn for weeks after. And the great man of the Fifth, having burned his copy of " Rough-Stuff Stories," could only suffer in silence and long for the time when Coker's capture would be blessedly forgotten !

~~~~~ THE END ~~~~

# Song of the Summer.



SUMMER holidays—  
How they fly away !  
Breezily, easily,  
Busy all the day,  
Life goes "swimmingly"  
In the sparkling sea !  
Merrily, merrily  
As happy as can be.

Seaside holidays !  
In a sunny land ;  
Clattering, patterning  
Over golden sand.  
New vitality  
From the ocean air ;  
Scampering, clambering,  
Laughing everywhere.

Country holidays !  
On the breezy downs ;  
Cricketing, picnicking,  
Banishing the frowns.  
Sunlit skies above,  
Pasture-land below,  
Laughingly, chaffingly,  
On our way we go.

River holidays !  
On a placid stream ;  
Lazily, hazily,  
Resting oars abreast !  
Drifting peacefully  
With a sleepy tide ;  
Tastefully, gracefully,  
Silently we glide.

Mountain holidays !  
Climbing windy heights ;  
Busily, dizzily  
Seeing all the sights  
Toiling manfully  
Up the scented hill ;  
Lustily, gustily  
Struggling onward still.

Oh, summer days have  
come and gone ;  
But memories we can't  
forget  
Of life and laughter, joy  
and song  
Are lingering in our  
fancies yet.



# WHICH SCHOOL IS BEST?



".... Greyfriars, of course!"



Below, Harry Wharton, Tom Merry, and Jimmy Silver give their answers to this question. We leave readers to decide for themselves which argument is most convincing!

".... Give me St. Jim's!"

By HARRY WHARTON

WHY, Greyfriars, of course! Ask anyone at Greyfriars, and he'll tell you the same! Look at the position of it! Beautiful country, the sea a couple of miles away, and a town within easy reach; it's as good as a house-agent's advertisement! St. Jim's and Rookwood may have their points, but they haven't got 'em all, like that!

Nor is that everything. Without drawing invidious distinctions, I maintain that our Head knocks spots off any other headmaster extant. When he wields the merry old birch he'd knock spots off the back of a leopard, I truly believe!

Consider, too, the weird and wonderful language of old Inky, the gorgeous peculiarities of Bunter, the ponderous pomposity of Mr. Prout, and the hundred and one other interesting things at Greyfriars, and tell me frankly whether the other two schools can show anything like them.

They can't; it's just impossible. So, with all due respect to St. Jim's and Rookwood, I can only say that Greyfriars is far and away the best of the three!

By TOM MERRY

HOW on earth a chap in his right mind can answer anything else but "St. Jim's" is altogether beyond me. Without the slightest shadow of doubt St. Jim's is the best of the three!

Mind you, I'll admit at once that we don't boast so many freaks as they do at Greyfriars. I can, of course, point to Arthur Augustus



".... Rookwood's best!"

D'Arcy, Grundy, Mr. Ratcliff, and Skimpole; but I grant you that as a freak show we have to give Greyfriars best. I base our claims to superiority on other grounds. St. Jim's itself is better-looking than either Greyfriars or Rookwood. Even if I didn't belong to St. Jim's I should have to admit that much.

As to the surrounding country—well, Wharton may crack up Kent as much as he likes, but give me Sussex, all the time!

Another thing, there's a keener kind of atmosphere about St. Jim's than about the other two schools. I attribute this to the House rivalry which is such a feature with us, and which I think is another reason why St. Jim's comes out on top!

By JIMMY SILVER

PRATE not to me of Greyfriars or St. Jim's! I stand for Rookwood, now and for ever! Every fellow with an ounce of brain knows that Rookwood's best. Wasn't it William the Conqueror who said that the Battle of Bannockburn was won on the playing-fields of Rookwood? It wasn't? Well, never mind; he should have said it, anyway!

Have the other two schools got a Classical House? They have not! Have they got a Modern House? They have not!

As to scenery—well, if you can beat the view of Hampshire you get from the Clock Tower at Rookwood, your Uncle James will be very much surprised to hear it. Take it from me, you chaps, Rookwood stands supreme—the best school in all England!

# The FORTRESS in the FOOTHILLS!

By ROLAND HOWARD

*In search of his uncle, Rex Armitage at last finds him in a fortress in the Mexican foothills—held in bondage by bandits!*



## THE FIRST CHAPTER

After the Raid

**G**LAD-HAND" ROGERS shut off the engine of his six-seater bullet-proof saloon and transferred his gaze from the Mexican plain to Rex Armitage, who was sitting beside him.

"You're plumb crazy," he declared. "I got the capital to start the swellest gamblin' joint in La Taza an' I'm offerin' you a partnership. Where's your grouch?"

Rex Armitage, fair-haired, grey-eyed and unmistakably English, grinned at the tough-looking American.

"I'm not grousing, 'Glad-Hand.' It's a handsome offer, and I appreciate it. But quite frankly, the gambling business and I don't get on well together."

"Too good for it, huh?" snapped the American, eyeing the young Englishman resentfully through his keen, narrow eyes. "But you warn't so good that you'd turn me down when I took you in tow an' fed you a week ago."

Rex Armitage frowned.

"I've told you I'm grateful, 'Glad-Hand.' If there's anything I can ever do——"

"You know what you can do already. Join me as my pardner in this gamblin' racket."

Rex shook his head.

"I'm sorry; but it can't be done."

"Then I'm through with you. Beat it!"

"Just what I'm going to do!" said the Englishman coolly. "There's a colt I've been watching grazing over there. He's

saddled—but his rider's missing. I hope to make up the deficiency. Will you shake before we part?"

But "Glad-Hand" was not living up to his name. He turned to the steering-wheel.

"I got no use for the down-an'-out that figures he's too good to be my pardner!" he said harshly. "Adios!"

"Good-bye!"

Rex jumped off the car as she began to move off. He stood for a few moments, watching her as she travelled towards the purple hills that bounded the parched plain. Then he turned his attention to the saddled horse that was grazing on a patch of sparse vegetation near by. He was sorry to lose the companionship of the adventurous young American smuggler who had found the country of his birth too hot for him; but the choice had been his and there was no sense in bewailing it.

The colt had sensed his approach, and was walking away, ears pricked.

Rex followed the animal cautiously, calming its fears with a quiet "Steady, boy!" until he was near enough to touch it. Then he put a foot into the stirrup, swung up into the saddle and gripped the reins.

The colt reared and bucked, trying to regain his liberty, but the struggle was brief, and soon Rex had him under control.

"Leave it to you, now, boy!" Rex said, loosening the rein when he had got the animal going at a good trot. "You've got the whole of Mexico before you. See what you can find!"

His eyes left the horizon, where they had been vainly searching for signs of human habitation, and rested for a moment on the saddle. And there they found something that caused him to utter a shout of amazement.

It was the printed name and address of the owner of the saddle:

"Arthur Ward, *El Alqueria Azul, cerca de La Taza.*"

"Uncle Arthur! By all that's wonderful!" breathed Rex.

He leaned over in the saddle and examined the inscription minutely. Then he sat upright again and stared across the burning plain.

Where was the owner of the colt? What had happened to old Arthur Ward, his English uncle whom he had roamed Mexico to find? Why should his horse, saddled for riding, be wandering alone in this wild and lawless country?

Rex made up his mind that he would give himself no rest until he had answered those questions.

He realised, with a start, that the horse had found its way to a rough track which led to the foothills, now noticeably nearer.

"Seems to me you've got a dim idea where we're going, old son!" he remarked. "Get up, then!"

He gave the colt a flick with the rein and the animal broke into a trot, which quickly became a hard gallop.

At that speed they covered the miles that still lay between them and the foothills, until the rising ground forced down the pace to a walk.

They reached the brow of the first series of hills that led upwards to the great plateau at the top.

Rex stared. In front of him lay an alqueria—a small farm—which had previously been hidden by the hill.

A single glance was sufficient to tell him that something was wrong. Articles of furniture were littered about on the veranda, windows were shattered, fresh bullet marks bespattered the walls, and a wisp of smoke from the charred embers of what had been a wooden outhouse gave evidence that the fire which had destroyed it had been of recent origin!

Rex reined in his colt. At the same moment a swarthy peon made his appearance through the open door of the farmhouse.

"Señor! De quien es ese caballo?" he asked excitedly, pointing to the colt.

"I found it wandering below in the plain," Rex answered in Spanish. "You know the owner?"

"Señor! You are Ingleses!" the Mexican exclaimed joyfully. "Then you know my master—Señor Ward?"

"He is my uncle. Where is he?"

"Madre de Dios! That you should not arrive earlier! Señor, listen! You 'ave 'eard of Pedro Panza?"

Rex stared down grimly at the excited peon.

"You mean the bandit? I have heard of the scoundrel. Go on."

"This mornin' e attack!" said the Mexican with an expressive gesture. "We fight, but of what use? Panza enter—ees men take presonner my master, Señor Ward. Now—"

He pointed significantly to the frowning hills above. Rex regarded him with dilated eyes.

"They have made a prisoner of Señor Ward? For what purpose?"

The peon shrugged.

"Quién sabe, señor? I cannot tell."

Rex bit his lips. He had heard of Pedro Panza. Very few people in that part of Mexico had not heard of the outlaw who had brought death and desolation to many a small farm or scattered village.

"Then they have taken him to the hills?" he murmured. "Bueno! I will follow!"

The peon rolled his eyes.

"Señor, it is death—"

Rex smiled grimly.

"I do not expect to attack an outlaw band single-handed. I shall see how the land lies. Adios!"

He slapped the colt and started off again at a trot, leaving the Mexican staring after him with fear in his eyes.

A long and tiring journey followed over rugged land, rising, always rising, till great, beetling masses of rock before him seemed to cut off all prospect of further advance.

Rex struck a narrow track, leading under a veritable mountain of rock. His heart beat more quickly as he found that it led up through a gorge to a range of higher land.

The colt plodded on gamely to the top. They came out on to a ledge of rock overlooking the plain.

Rex looked upwards.

Too late, he saw a dark face peering at him from behind a boulder higher up the slope.

The red light of the setting sun gleamed for a moment on the barrel of a six-gun. There was a flash—the gun roared.

It was the colt that got the lead. Arthur Ward's gallant horse reared for a dizzy fraction of time. Rex found himself looking

downwards at the thousand-foot drop that lay beneath.

Then the colt hurtled over the top, and to Rex Armitage, earth and heaven flew 'round in a whirling kaleidoscope and the end seemed to have come.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### The Bandits' Lair I

REX came round from the nightmare to find himself clinging desperately to the lean trunk of a dwarf tree. It seemed ages since the bandit's shot had sent the colt to its doom. But time passes slowly on the borderline between life and death; in reality, not more than two seconds had elapsed.

His numbed brain hardly realised where he was or what had happened, at first. Then, as complete consciousness returned, he saw that he was only a few inches below the level of the rocky ledge from which he and the horse had fallen.

Rex could hardly repress a shudder. Below him, a sheer drop of a thousand feet. Above him, armed and merciless foes. The peon had spoken truly when he said that death lay up in the hills! But this was no time for gloomy reflection; action, cool and calculating, was what was wanted.

He had to get back to the ledge; and to do that with safety he could only wait for nightfall.

He held on grimly to the dwarf tree, concentrating his attention on the ledge and trying to forget the death-drop that was below him. For a time he was in an agony of fear lest the Mexican who had fired the shot should look over the edge to make sure that his work had been completed. But no one came; and, indeed, it was hardly to be wondered at that the would-be assassin had no suspicion of the miracle that had saved the life of his intended victim.

Mercifully, the red glow of the setting sun died away and the brief twilight was eclipsed by the darkness of night.

With a mighty effort of his aching arms, Rex lifted himself upwards inch by inch, till his eyes were above the level of the top. He saw at once the flickering light of a camp

fire at the higher level from which the Mexican had fired his shot.

He released his left arm, got a hold on a piece of rock that projected from the ledge, then, slowly but surely, hauled himself up till, panting with relief, he was lying on the ledge once more.

"Thank heaven for that!" he breathed, as he crawled to the shelter of the rock-face. "And now to investigate!"

After a brief rest he went down on his stomach and began to worm his way up the narrow path towards the camp.

Soon he found the gorge widening and when, at last, he stopped within a stone's throw of the fire, he could see that the camp had been pitched in a circular patch of ground surrounded by rocks, forming a veritable fortress in the hills.

His eyes took in the details of the camp. What he saw caused his muscles to stiffen and his flesh to tingle. The horses were tethered to stakes driven into the grassy land on the outskirts. The bandits, an evil-looking crew, were sitting around the fire. Their leader—and Rex picked out without difficulty the sinister, crouching figure of the notorious Pedro Panza—was standing, whip in hand, near the bound figure of a grey-haired man that lay on the ground.

Rex knew his uncle at once. He had last seen him years before in England, but there was no mistaking the aggressive jaw and clean-cut face of Arthur Ward.

Rex listened.

The bandit chief was speaking.

"Señor Ward! To-night you get your last chance. There is oil on your land—comprende usted? I, Pedro Panza, must know also where this oil lies!"

Arthur Ward laughed.

"So you want to give up the business of cutting throats and become a respectable oil millionaire, Panza! I understand!"

Pedro Panza uttered a guttural exclamation.

"Caramba! You mak' joke of me! You shall learn, my friend, that this is no joke—so!"

He raised the whip to strike.

But before the blow could descend Rex's six-gun was raised.

The young Englishman fired. Next instant the whip had fallen to the ground and the bandit chief was screaming with rage and fear. The bullet had grazed his hand just sufficiently to draw blood.

The bandits were on their feet in a flash, yelling.

Rex, running like the wind in the shelter of the great boulders that lay about the fringes of the camp, flew half-way round the camp as they swarmed to the spot from which he had fired. Then, pausing for a brief instant, he fired again, and one of the Mexicans toppled over limply, with a wound in the leg.

Rex made a dive for the spot where the horses were tethered. Again he fired and again there was a howl from one of the evil gang.

Another breathless run and another successful shot.

By that time the camp was in an uproar. The Mexicans were running wildly in all directions, firing indiscriminately at the shadowy outskirts of the camp.

Rex had hoped desperately for a chance of setting his uncle free, but that was not to be. Pedro Panza had already taken the precaution of setting three men to stand on guard round the prisoner.

Nothing could be done without help; that much was certain. Where he could obtain help in this lawless land was a puzzling question to answer. Wherever it might be, he could not obtain it by remaining any longer in this camp, where capture would now be only a matter of minutes.

Rex felt that he had done all he could do for the moment. He could only hope that his reckless tactics had given the bandits an impression that a small army was watching their movements, and that that thought would restrain Pedro Panza from further aggression against Arthur Ward that night.

Having reached his decision, Rex returned boldly to the horses, loosened the best-looking steed under the very noses of the furious Mexicans who were looking for him, and gave it a flick with his hat.

The frightened animal bucked, then made a bolt for the dark country beyond the camp fire; but not before Rex had leaped on to its back, saddleless as it was.

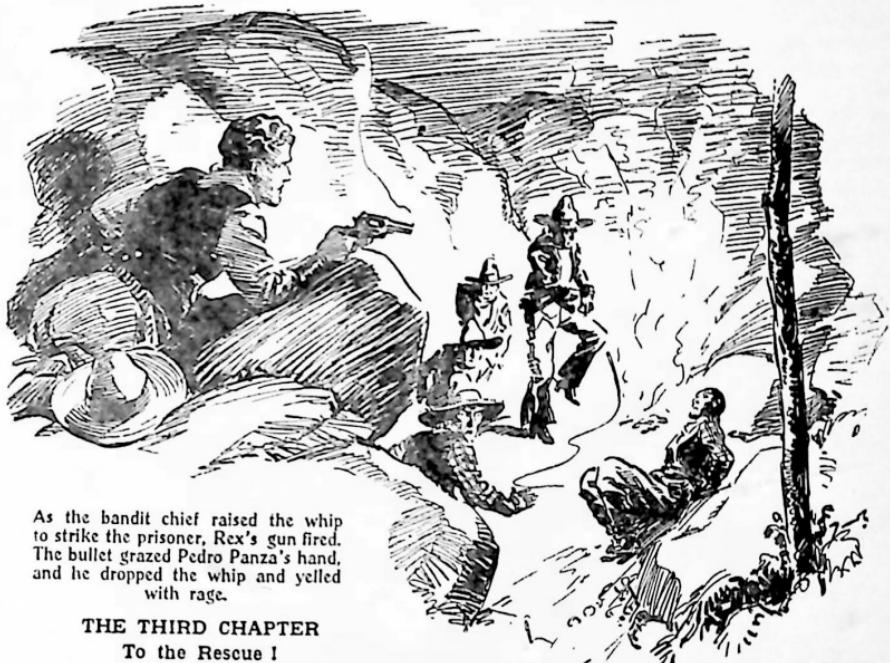
He heard a confused roar of voices behind him, and a score of shots rang out. But the bandits, fortunately, could not see their quarry in the blackness that was swallowing him up, and not a piece of lead found its mark.

With a furious clatter of hoofs on hard ground the horse galloped on, its human burden trying vainly to pierce the darkness before a false step sent them both plunging to destruction.

Lucky, indeed, that he had got the better of the argument when he did, for had the horse gone on they would have galloped straight on to the edge of a miniature precipice quite deep enough to have brought sudden death to horse and rider.

Rex mounted again and turned his steed's head to a slope which wound round the face of the rock to lower levels of ground.

As he came round the first projection he uttered an exclamation.



As the bandit chief raised the whip to strike the prisoner, Rex's gun fired. The bullet grazed Pedro Panza's hand, and he dropped the whip and yelled with rage.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### To the Rescue !

"STEADY ! Steady, boy, steady ! "

Rex felt himself quietening his terrified mount at last. Its gallop became less furious. Gradually it responded to its rider's soothing words and patting, till it slowed down to a trot and eventually stopped.

Rex dismounted and gave the horse a rest. And now the clouds which had been obscuring the sky began to thin out, and the coming of a dim starlight enabled him to take his bearings.

Below, almost down to the level of the plain, were the twinkling lights of a town, and though he had never seen that town before, he could see at once from the peculiar cup-shaped formation of the ground on which it was built that it was La Taza.

"The Cup—La Taza ! " said Rex thankfully. "Here's a chance, anyway ! "

La Taza ! The little Mexican town where "Glad-Hand" Rogers hoped to find fortune, if not fame, as proprietor of a gaming "joint" !

Eagerly now did the Englishman urge on his stolen steed down the broad path leading to the town. If only he could find "Glad-Hand" and his wonderful bullet-proof car! The local police, if any, were an unknown quantity; volunteers would probably prove to be spare-time bandits themselves. But with "Glad-Hand" Rogers and that car, Rex felt equal to a pitched battle with the combined forces of all the bandits in Mexico.

He reached level ground at last, and set the horse to a fast gallop for the remainder of the journey into the town.

Luck was with him, for a time at least, for he spotted the car in which he had spent one memorable week with Rogers, within a few minutes of his reaching the well-lit centre of La Taza.

But with that discovery the luck seemed to peter out. "Glad-Hand" was quickly found within the noisy hall of chance outside which he had parked the six-seater. But "Glad-Hand" was cold and distant, and listened to Rex's excited story with stony indifference.

"Nix!" was his only comment when Rex had finished.

Rex regarded the American almost incredulously. That he would decline to help when he heard what was on had not occurred to Rex, who did not know how deeply his refusal of the proffered partnership in the gaming "joint" had offended his late ally.

"But you don't understand—can't!" exclaimed Rex. "Surely you'll join in this scrap? There's an Englishman up there—a white man, my uncle—held prisoner by those dago cut-throats! You're not going to allow that?"

"I guess you had your chance to make a pardner of me!" was "Glad-Hand's" curt retort. "You turned it down, an' if you reckon you're gonna get me to help you now because you're in trouble, you're just crazy! Git it!"

"I'll 'git' all right, but you're coming with me!" said Rex, whipping out his gun and pressing it into the other's side. "Stick 'em up!"

"Hey, what's this?" asked the startled

American. "Listen, buddy! If you think you can pull this stuff on me—"

"This gun's fully loaded and I'm desperate! Put up your hands and step it out, before I plug you!" ground out Rex. "Now!"

Rogers made a move for his pocket, but the jerk of the muzzle of Rex's gun made him change his mind.

His hands went up. Simultaneously, there was a wild scramble from the surrounding patrons of the gaming-hall to escape as they realised that guns were out. Somebody fired a shot; the lights were suddenly extinguished. Yells and curses and the din of falling chairs and tables filled the air.

Rex almost instinctively dived for his opponent's gun, and gripped it just a fraction of a second before "Glad-Hand" got there.

"Too late!" snapped Rex. "Keep your hands up. And march!"

The American grunted and marched, his late colleague's gun pressed firmly against him all the time.

They passed out of the darkened hall, through the swing-doors, and on to the street, where "Glad-Hand" Rogers' car still waited. The owner of the bullet-proof saloon climbed sullenly into the driver's seat, and Rex sat in the rear.

"Now drive out of the town," Rex ordered. "Keep to the road that goes to the hills. I'll show you the way as we go along."

"Glad-Hand" pressed the self-starter and the big car glided off, quickly leaving far behind the excited crowd which was now streaming out of the gaming-hall.

Soon they were roaring up the rough road leading to the hills. Rex continued to sit in the rear, gun held ready for emergencies.

Dawn was breaking as they reached the spot where Rex had first dismounted after his wild ride away from the bandits' camp. In the grey light Rex saw an attentive figure silhouetted against the sky. He half-rose, with an excited exclamation.

"The peon! Stop the car!"

The American brought the car to a standstill, and the waiting man, whom Rex had recognised as the peon he had left on Arthur Ward's alqueria, came running forward.

"Señor! You 'ave return!" he cried.  
"You mus' lose no time!"

"You followed me, then?" asked Rex, opening one of the doors.

The Mexican nodded.

"Si, señor! I watch you shootin' at Pedro Panza's camp. I wait after an' leesten. I 'ear Pedro Panza tell Señor Ward to-day he flog heem till 'e geeve up what 'e call the secret of the oil. At dawn Pedro Panza begin!"

"Jump in!" commanded Rex.

"Glad-Hand" faced round in his seat.

"What's the dope this greaser's givin' you?" he asked. "Does he mean that dirty hoodlum Panza's gonna give a white man the works?"

"Just that! Are you still standing out?"

"Glad-Hand" suddenly grinned a huge grin.

"Say, what d'you take me for? I felt a

bit sore over you, buddy; but now we've come to the point, I'd sure bust if I didn't horn in on it. Gimme back my gat!"

Rex thumped his late partner on the back. He knew by "Glad-Hand's" tone that he was safe in handing over the gun again.

"Sounds more like the man I thought you were!" he said. "Here's your gun. Now drive like blazes!"

"Okay!"

And the big car started up again with a roar.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER

##### Beating the Bandits!

As they neared Pedro Panza's natural fortress in the foothills, a puff of smoke shot out from behind one of the great boulders, and the sharp "ping!" of a bullet sounded against the top of the windscreen.

"They've seen us!" exclaimed Rex. "Will

The bandits rushed forward as the car stopped at the stake, but Rex and Rogers held them off while the peon slashed at the cords that bound Rex's uncle.



you chance it and go right ahead?"

"You bet your sweet life!" chuckled "Glad-Hand." "This, buddy, is right where I live! Is there another exit from their dump besides the way we've arrived?"

"There is. It's dangerous——"

"I guess it may be more dangerous to reverse amongst this crush! Well, here we are, boys! Looks like they're getting ready to welcome us!"

The American was right. In the bandits' camp, which was now but a hundred yards away, a welcome was being hurriedly prepared for the unexpected visitors.

The welcome took the form of guns and revolvers. A regular fusillade was being directed at the car now, and it was evident from the Mexicans' excited gesticulations that they were filled with astonishment to find their bullets taking no effect.

"Glad-Hand" accelerated, and drove at hair-raising speed right into the centre of the fortress.

"Show 'em we're here, buddy!" he yelled, above the roar of the engine.

Rex nodded, and lowered the window sufficiently to enable him to use his six-gun. A moment later he was blazing away.

The bandits, howling with fear, scattered in all directions as the car bore down on them. As they ran, Rex's bullets rained among them and several dropped, wounded. Rex, who had no taste for killing, even with murderous bandits as victims, fired deliberately at their legs, hoping thereby to bring them down without inflicting vital damage.

"Glad-Hand" slowed down and pointed suddenly to a space between two great columns of rock.

"I guess that's our hombre tied to the pea-stick!" he snapped, lowering the window by the driver's seat and beginning to use his gun on the enemy. "What we gonna do? Get him?"

Rex looked in the direction his colleague had indicated. His eyes lighted up as he recognised the man tied to the stake as his uncle, Arthur Ward.

"That's our man!" he said, with a nod. "What's more, that's our way out! Listen! You drive right over to that stake, while I

keep the beggars on the run. When we reach him, we can both do a bit of gunning while our Mexican friend here opens the nearest door and cuts him loose. How's that?"

"Fine! Are you game, son?"

"Si, si!" responded the Mexican, producing a knife from his belt and joining Rex at the door.

"Glad-Hand" dropped his gun and released the clutch and the car rolled over the bumpy ground towards the captive.

Simultaneously, several of the bandits, headed by Pedro Panza himself, came running from the shelter of some boulders to get to the prisoner before the rescuers could carry out their intention.

They met almost to the second at the stake. There was a roar of guns from both sides—but it was the bandits who suffered.

Rex, throwing caution to the winds now that the decisive moment had come, flung open the door. The peon's hand flashed out and he slashed wildly down at the cord that bound Ward, while Rex and Rogers fired to cover him.

The bandits, terrified by their failure to penetrate the car and get at its occupants, fled for cover again. In a matter of seconds they were out of danger behind the rocks, and once more training their guns on the raiders. But in those few seconds Arthur Ward was freed.

The peon grabbed him almost bodily and hauled him into the car. A bullet seared his arm as he did so and another buried itself in the frame of the door.

Then the prisoner was lying on the floor of the car and Rex had slammed the door shut again.

"Full speed ahead!" he sang out.

The great car started off again down the steep pass up which Rex had crawled the previous night on his way to the bandits' fortress.

But the danger was not yet over. As they reached the ledge where Rex's horse had fallen over the precipice and almost carried its rider to destruction, a dark shadow hurtled through the air before them.

There was a crash, and "Glad-Hand"

jammed on the brakes just in time to avoid colliding with a huge boulder. Pedro Panza's men, from a vantage-point on higher ground, had blocked the way!

Rex and Rogers stared at that boulder for a second or two, almost stunned by the realisation that they could not advance another yard.

Then "Glad-Hand" turned round in his seat and pointed to the rear of the car.

"Why in tarnation didn't I think of 'em

we'll see," said "Glad-Hand." "That little stone there ain't fallen straight. Won't take a lot of shiftin', I guess; but we can't go for it till they're all around us, or one of 'em might shoot from a kinder favourable position. Sit tight."

They waited. They hadn't long to wait before they saw that Pedro Panza's men were closing round them, ready for a charge.

Nearer and nearer came the creeping, slithering figures of the bandits.

In quick succession "Glad-Hand" Rogers flung the tear-gas bombs into the midst of the advancing bandits. The attack stopped abruptly, and Pedro Panza's men reeled about, helpless.



before ! " he yelled. " Pull up those cushions, buddy ! I got a whole heap of tear-gas bombs underneath ! "

Rex tore up the cushions. Underneath, sure enough, was a box containing half a dozen sinister-looking cylinders which were obviously bombs of some kind.

"Here they are," Rex said. "Though how they're going to help us escape——"

"Wait till those greasers get around an'

Suddenly there was a shout of command, and the pass became alive with Mexicans racing towards the car.

"Now ! " said "Glad-Hand."

He opened the door and flung one of the bombs, then another, and a third.

Three explosions sounded in quick succession. "Glad-Hand" waited for a few moments, then he leaped out of the car.

Rex uttered a cry of horror, fully expecting to see him drop before a rain of bullets.

But the American knew his tear-gas. The bandits' advance had suddenly stopped, guns were falling out of their hands unheeded, and Pedro Panza's men were reeling about as though drunk, weeping copiously as the gas did its work.

Not a shot rang out. The bandits, temporarily blinded, seemed to have lost interest in all things but their own eyes. Meanwhile, the American who had so effectively routed them was running to the boulder, slipping goggles over his eyes as he went.

He fell on his knees as he reached the great stone, put a broad shoulder under a projecting point, and lifted with all his strength.

The boulder was imperfectly balanced. The anxious spectators saw, with relief, that it shifted—slowly, very slowly at first, then more easily, till suddenly the great weight of it heeled over, wobbled on the edge of the drop for a second, then disappeared from view over the side.

They heard a distinct crash as it landed below. Rex could not repress a howl of joy.

"Quick!" he shouted.

"Glad-Hand" Rogers did not need the injunction. He was returning to the car with all the speed his long legs could command.

"Now you're gonna see some drivin'!" he grinned, as he took the wheel again. "Sit back an' wait for the thrills."

He started the car, and they bumped away down the steep pass at a pace calculated to give heart-failure to the most hardened race-track enthusiast.

But if "Glad-Hand" expected his passengers to be thrilled, he was booked for a disappointment. In comparison with the thrills they had had already, the drive back to the

Alqueria Azul seemed like a cab drive in Mexico City.

"So that cut-throat was after oil! It is true, then, uncle, that there's oil on your land?"

Rex Armitage was the speaker. He and his uncle and "Glad-Hand" Rogers were sitting on the veranda of the farmhouse a couple of days later. It looked very peaceful in the hot afternoon sunshine—a vivid contrast to the bullet-raked habitation Rex had first seen.

Arthur Ward nodded in reply to the question.

"There is. And I fully intended that it should remain there. I came to Mexico on the oil game, and I've seen the bloodshed that followed many a strike of oil. I've got beyond it, boys, and it was my idea to live my days here in peace. But Pedro Panza has made a difference."

"You mean you're gonna shift to healthier parts?" suggested "Glad-Hand."

Arthur Ward's jaw set grimly.

"Not at all. I mean I'm going to develop this as an oil-field and make a fight of it with that scoundrel who wanted to take it over my dead body. What's more, I want you boys to be my partners in the venture. What do you say?"

"Why, uncle, that's great of you!" said Rex jubilantly. "But, 'Glad-Hand,' what about you?"

"Glad-Hand" grinned.

"Think there'll be any more up-and-a-downers with the greasers?" he asked.

"Plenty!"

"Okay, then!"

And the new partnership was sealed with a triangular handshake.





*What was Mr. Ratcliff, the sour-tempered New House master of St. Jim's, like in his own schooldays? A page from one of his old diaries makes startling reading*

MR. RATCLIFF, the present irascible New House master, was himself educated at St. Jim's, and in some mysterious manner Baggy Trimble has obtained possession of a page from one of Ratty's old diaries, evidently written when he was a humble member of the Fourth Form. It makes startling reading for those who have imagined the master as being studious, a weakling, and a spoilsport in his youth! Here are one week's entries:

**MONDAY.**—Up with the rising bell. Poured a jug of cold water down Swallow's neck. The fat young hog would have been late for brekker if I hadn't routed him out, so this counts as my good turn for the day. Beastly Latin this morning in class, and old Butterby slanged me for mucking up my construe—as if anyone could understand Virgil's tripe! French this afternoon. Slingsby and I played noughts and crosses while Mossoo was wagging his chin. After tea I was going to play cricket, but it started to rain in buckets and didn't clear up till prep-time. What a life!

**TUESDAY.**—Got into a row with Butterby for not doing my prep. last night. I was busy making toffee and you can't do two things at once, but old Margarine didn't seem to see

it. These Form-masters are a pretty thick-headed crowd, in my opinion. Had a postal-order from home, and stood treat to all comers in the tuck-shop. Swallow was in the first flight, of course! After tea I had a scrap with that big blighter Boggs for borrowing my bike without permission. Anyhow, I licked him, and then Margarine came along and gave us each 500 lines. I'm getting sick of Marge!

**WEDNESDAY.**—A half-holiday. The junior side played Rookwood this afternoon, and I was in the team. Rookwood went in first and scored 160. Welland, our skipper, said I missed two simple catches, but the ball didn't come within yards of me. Welland's a fathead. Anyhow, I got a wicket—and I only had one over, too. It was a special delivery—a sort of swerving leg-break with a touch of googlie about it, and a dash of yorker. The Rookwood batsman thought it was a wide and didn't bother to strike at it, but the ball broke in and bounced off his bat into the wicketkeeper's hands. Welland said something about a "gigantic fluke," and wouldn't let me bowl again. Jealousy, I expect. The St. Jim's innings only totalled 99. So Rookwood beat us by 61. I went in first with Welland and got 2.



... I had a scrap with that big blighter Boggs for borrowing my bike, and licked him.

**THURSDAY.**—I am a mass of aches this morning, after the exertions of yesterday. Welland says I won't be in the team to play Greyfriars next week, and I told him I wouldn't be seen dead with his set of fumblers after the way they threw away the Rookwood match. I spent the rest of the day in writing impots. If I were a Form-master I'd abolish all lines, lickings and gatings, and treat my boys with gentle kindness. The days of these barbarous punishments ought to be over by now!

Ragged the New House dormitory at night. Welland said Westwood & Co. were putting on airs and it was time they were taken down a peg. We went over in force, armed with pillows and bolsters. Silently we crept up to our rivals' dormitory door, and then suddenly burst in on them. They were taken unawares by our onslaught, and we pasted them before they could even leave their beds. For five minutes we flogged the cheeky bounders all over the room, and then, at Welland's command, we slowly retreated from the dorm., leaving the New House wasters in a state of chaos.

**FRIDAY.**—Terrific excitement! I've had a grand flare-up with Margarine. I cut prep. last night because I was busy writing the lines so brutally inflicted upon me during the last day or two. Butterby got mad when I told him this, and gave me a stinger on each hand. He was going to give me some more,

but I jerked back my hand and he whacked his own ankle instead. Then he grabbed me by the collar and bent me over a desk. But when he started laying into me, I hacked his shins. After that, he took me before the Head, and the Beak said he would consider my case, and that I was to report to him in the morning. I hope it isn't the push!

**SATURDAY.**—Up before the Beak after breakfast. Butterby and the Head looked frightfully grim, and there was a chill in the atmosphere which I didn't like. The Head slanged me for ten minutes, and then gave me four wallops on each hand and said I could go. I'd expected a flogging at least. That fat sneak, Swallow, listened at the door afterwards and heard the Head tell Margarine that he had acted very injudiciously in losing his temper and trying to flog me off his own bat, and that it served him jolly well right to have his shins hacked. Those weren't the exact words, but that was what he meant. The Head's a decent old stick.

**SUNDAY.**—Peace once more. This afternoon Slingsby and I strolled along the banks of the Rhyl, chose a sunny spot and snoozed until tea-time. We had tea at a farmhouse. Strawberries and cream, hot buttered scones, two kinds of jam, jam-tarts, cake, and an apple-pie to round off with! Ah, well, life isn't so bad really.

Oh, Ratty, can we really think this of you!



Butterby was going to give me another stinger, but I jerked back my hand and he whacked his own ankle instead!



# TOM BROWN'S FOOTER REPORT!

When Tom Brown writes his footer report, chaps *will* drop in for a chat. So does the Editor—plus a stump—when he reads the report in print !

**T**OM BROWN was busy.

As the special reporter of the "Greyfriars Herald," he was working against time turning out a report of the match at Highcliffe that afternoon, where the Remove had beaten Courtenay's team in sensational style by seven goals to one.

And he did not want to be interrupted.

His pen raced furiously over the paper, transferring Browny's impressions of that remarkable game into black and white. His gaze was dreamy and abstracted; for he was at Highcliffe in spirit, although, in actual fact, he was in Study No. 2 in the Remove passage.

The door opened and the slim form of Fisher T. Fish was wafted into the study. Browny glanced up.

"Buzz off!" he said tersely.

"I guess I ain't going yet—no, sir!" replied Fisher T., with a shake of his Transatlantic head. "I reckon I'm hyer on business. Say, Brown, I guess you'd save a lot of time if you wrote that in pencil instead of pen-and-ink."

"Seat, you bony freak!"

Fisher T. Fish seated himself firmly on a corner of the table. Fishy was a business man, and he had come there to drive a bargain.

"I calculate that a pencil's gotta nasty habit of breaking, though," he said, eyeing the busy junior forcibly. "An ornery lead pencil is just punk—pure apple-sauce! What you want, Brown, is a propelling pencil, with a screw-barrel and a lead chamber in the cap."

"Will you go?"

"Nope!" Fisher T. Fish took a much-worn silver pencil from his pocket. "This is just the thing for you, Brown. Guaranteed solid silver—hall-marked. I calculate the shine's worn off it a bit; but for writing it's just as good as new. I guess I'm treating you on the level in offering this pencil to you for two-dollars fifty, Brown. Say ten shillings in your silly money. Ten smackers!"

Tom Brown glared.

"Will you buzz off, you footling freak?"

"I guess—— Yaroooooh! Wake snakes! I—I'll transmogrify you! Ooooooop!"

Browny, losing all patience, jumped up, stuffed the propelling pencil—screw barrel, lead chamber and all—down Fishy's neck, and knocked the American junior's head with a hollow thud on the wall.

Knock!

"Whoooooop!"

"There!" he breathed murderously.

"And if you don't get out of sight in five seconds——"

Fishy was out of sight in two.

The reporter resumed his description of the match. He resumed it for ten seconds. Then William George Bunter barged in.

"I say, Browny——"

"Ass! Fathead! Chump! Buzz off!" hissed Tom Brown, glaring up from his work.

"Oh, really, Browny! I say, old fellow, you haven't a spare five bob on you, have you?"

"No! Clear off!"

"As it happens," said Bunter pathetically, "I've been disappointed about a pos——"

"If you give me any of your rot about that silly postal order," said Tom Brown, in a low, desperate tone, "I'll bung this inkpot at you. Light out!"

"But this is rather important, old fellow! That beast Toddy is teasing with Vernon-Smith, and that awful rotter Smithy booted me out of his study when I went in."

"Good!" said Browny heartily.

"There's nothing for tea in my study," went on the doleful Bunter. "I'm hungry—actually hungry! I say, Browny, I could do with the loan of a bob till to-morrow."

"So could I."

"You see, my postal or—— Yaroooooogh!"

Whiz-z-z!

The ink-pot flew. It landed on Bunter's fat head, and cascaded a kind of negro Niagara down his podgy features. In one second Bunter was turned into a walking likeness of midnight in a coal-cellar.

"I warned you!" grinned Tom Brown. "Now hop it!"

"Groooooogh - hoooooh - groo!" Bunter gouged ink from his eyes and nose. "Ow! Beast! You awful rotter——"

"I've got another ink-bottle here," said Tom Brown, with deadly menace in his voice. "If you don't close my study door behind you before I've counted three——"

Slam! Bunter was gone.

Browny opened the other ink-bottle and resumed his work. A minute or two later the handle of his door rattled again.

Tom Brown breathed hard. He picked

up a Latin dictionary and took a careful aim. The door opened.

Whiz-z-z!

"Yoooop! Why—what—what——"

"Oh, scissors!" gasped Browny.

It was George Wingate, the captain of the school. The Latin lexicon had caught him full on the chin, registering a bull's-eye in one throw. The burly Sixth Former jumped.

"My only hat! Brown, you young ass, did you throw that book?"

This was a superfluous question, as Brown was the only other fellow in the study.

"Yes, Wingate!"

"If I had an ashplant here, you'd bag six, you young muff!"

"I—I didn't know it was you, Wingate——"

"Oh, all serene! I came to see you about Bunter! I met him a moment ago and he was smothered with ink. Did you do that?"

"Oh, crumbs! Yes!"

"Right! Then you can do me a hundred lines into the bargain. You ought to know by now that you aren't allowed to fling ink."

Wingate strode out, and Tom Brown settled down dolefully to work again. He had not written ten lines before Hazeldene came in with a bag of doughnuts.

"Clear off this table, Browny!" said he briskly. "I want to lay the tea. I've got some prime doughnuts for tea. Eight of them. One for you, one for Bulstrode and six for me!"

"Shove off! I'm busy!"

"What rot! I'm going to lay the tea. This is as much my study as yours!"

Tom Brown's eye rested on Hazeldene. There was such a homicidal expression in it that Hazeldene dropped the doughnuts and backed out of the study.

Browny picked out a doughnut and consumed it, and then his pen once more travelled over the paper. It was still travelling when Harry Wharton breezed in.

"Finished your copy, Browny?" he asked. "I must post the stuff off by the five-thirty post."

"Just finished now," replied Tom, blotting the last page.

Harry Wharton took the manuscripts and turned to the door.



As the door opened Tom Brown sent the dictionary whizzing across the study. It landed with no little force on the chin of George Wingate.

"I haven't time to read it," he said. "I suppose it's quite all right!"

"Oh, rather!"

"Righto, then!"

Harry Wharton went away, leaving Browny to start on a second doughnut.

The copy was posted to the printer, and a week later the printed edition of the "Herald" was sent to the school. Tom Brown was just going along to buy a copy, when Harry Wharton entered the study. There was a nasty look in his eye, and in his hand he held a cricket stump.

"I thought you said," Wharton observed fiercely, "that your footer report was O.K."

"Well, wasn't it?"

The youthful editor produced a copy of the "Herald," and flung it at the New Zealand junior.

"Look at it!" he said in grinding tones. Tom Brown looked at it blankly. It ran:

#### REMOVE'S SENSATIONAL VICTORY.

HAT-TRICK BY WHARTON.

HIGHCLIFFE 1—GREYFRIARS 7.

*The Remove scored a run-away victory at the expense of Highcliffe this afternoon, beating their near neighbours by seven goals to one. Highcliffe were unfortunate in being without Bates and Smithson, who are suffering from severe colds, and this so disorganised their defence that the Remove forwards had things all their own way.*

*Greyfriars played well throughout, Wharton at centre-forward and Brown at right-back being specially prominent.*

*"Blessed is he that bloweth his own trumpet," murmured Wharton at this point, while Browny grinned.)*

*The home team won the toss, and elected to kick with a slight breeze at their backs. The*



## A LITTLE VERSEFULNESS

By *Hurree Singh*

FROM India's coral strandfulness  
Across the wide Pacific,  
I come to this fair landfulness;  
The journey was terrific.  
I go to British schoolfulness;  
And learn the English lingo;  
I shiver in the coolfulness;  
The cold is hot by Jingo!

The Sahib Quelch has brainfulness  
To teach the grammar muchful,  
And sometimes grabs the canefulness  
And bellows " Hold toes touchful ! "  
Then comes the awful whackfulness  
Of bamboo smiting person;  
To canefulness or sackfulness  
I have the great aversion.

I learn the English chatfulness  
From the well-known Moonshee Bunda,  
And when I'd got it patfully  
He said I was one wonder.  
But Bobful Cherry's shriekfulness  
Whene'er I try to speak it  
Oft makes me seize his beakfulness,  
And when I've got it—tweak it.

I play the cricket gamefulness;  
A fair old knock-out I am;  
But it is not the samefulness  
As that I played in Siam.  
At footer, too, I shinefulness  
And score the goals prolific;  
My passes from the linefulness—  
They are—well, they're terrific !

ball was set rolling by Wharton, and Vernon-Smith immediately sold him a propelling-pencil with a screw-barrel and lead chambers in the cap.

("Oh, crikey!" murmured Browny.)

Wharton refused the pencil and shot hard at goal. Hollings, the reserve goalie, fumbled, and the ball rolled over the goal-line. Greyfriars were one up in the first five minutes.

Highcliffe, who were expecting a postal-order that evening, threw an ink-bottle at the referee, who told them to buzz off. The visitors' half-backs kept a tight hold of the Highcliffe forwards, who throughout the game tried hard to sell a propelling-pencil with screw-barrel and postal-orders in the cap.

Just before half-time Vernon-Smith scored a second goal, and the ref. gave him one hundred lines for ink-throwing. This disheartened the Highcliffe team, who until then had been eating doughnuts on an ink-pot. Hurree Singh made things worse still when he threw a postal-order at the ref. and hit him on his propelling-pencil with screw-barrel and doughnuts in the cap. The Greyfriars goalie did not stop one hundred lines all the afternoon, and the only doughnut scored by Highcliffe was the result of a delay in the post.

Harry Wharton scored his third goal amid applause, and immediately afterwards went to tea in Vernon-Smith's study, who kicked him out with a propelling-doughnut.

"Well?" asked Wharton.

"Gug-gug-great Scott!"

"That's all you can say for yourself, is it, you prize-chump?" exclaimed the enraged Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald." "This is the result of relying on the word of a fat-headed reporter!"

Wharton took a business-like grip of the stump and advanced into the study.

Immediately afterwards there was a terrific uproar in Study No. 2. It sounded like the bombardment of Quebec.

But it wasn't.

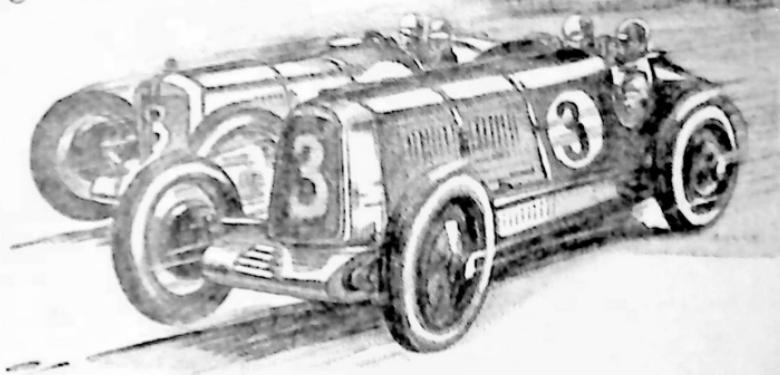
It was merely the Editor of the "Greyfriars Herald" having a slight "chat" with his reporter!

And great was the chat thereof.

THE END

# Storming Speed!

By ALFRED EDGAR.



## THE FIRST CHAPTER

### The Lame Racer.

JEFF GRAHAM lay flat against the oil-stained concrete, with an empty oil-can jabbing his ribs and with a pair of field-glasses clamped to his eyes.

Through the lenses he was watching a racing car come off the Brooklands banking, travelling at over two miles a minute.

As the hurtling machine left the slope, daylight showed under its spinning wheels; dust and concrete fragments slashed from the thrashing tyres when they bit home on the flat stretch which followed the banking.

"Here he comes!"

A voice bawled the words in Jeff's ear, and he felt his chum, Tom Moore, nudge him.

Both were sprawled beneath a replenishment pit at the side of the track, watching the world's fastest motor-race in progress—the annual 500-miles Brooklands event.

The chums' heads just stuck out from under the tool-laden plank of the pit—one of a row of little wood-built, open-fronted depots at which cars could call for repairs or replenishments during the long event.

Tom also had field-glasses, and the chums' job was to watch the tyres of the approaching car.

It came up with a shattering roar; a low-built, red shape that travelled like a fiery meteor. They heard the harsh whistle of its scuttering tyres, caught the power-filled drone of the super-tuned engine, and heard the baleful, howling whine of the supercharger rising above all else.

Into Jeff's glasses came a swift-passing picture of the front tyres; grey, dust-hazed shapes spinning so fast that they seemed hardly to move. All his attention was concentrated on them as he watched for the tell-tale white strip which would show that the rubber had worn through and that the tyre

*At storming speed the Red Ace thunders over mile after mile of the Brooklands track—with two worn-out tyres on the rear wheels lying between its victory and disaster!*

was down to the canvas—which meant danger for his brother, Phil, who was at the wheel.

That thundering red machine was running on dud tyres!

The race was not yet half run, but the Red Ace had been in for tyre changes every fifty miles, and every fresh stop was pushing the wonderful car farther and farther behind.

It was a wonderful car. Phil had built it, and beneath its engine-cover it carried a power-unit which was almost a miracle. Phil had been working on the car for a year, that he might run in this race and prove himself and what he had made.

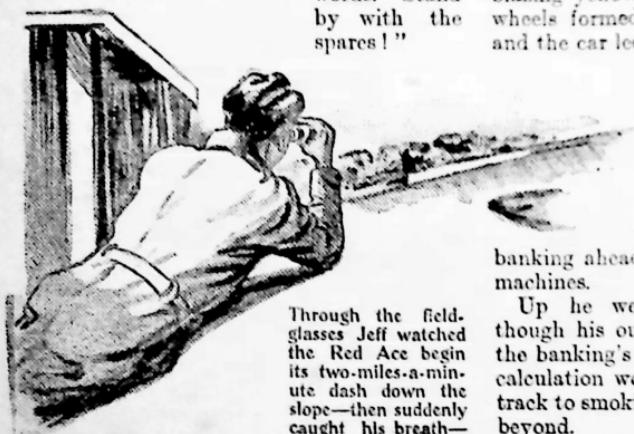
Everything that a man could conceive to make a car go fast he had done, and even the wheels were specially constructed of aluminium—and those wheels were the trouble. They were not standard size, and Phil had been obliged to get special tyres made for them.

Those tyres had faulty rubber. Instead of one set lasting for the whole race, as good tyres should have done, they were wearing out every twenty laps or so.

"O.K.!" Jeff yelled, as he squirmed back over the pit and stood up behind the plank, Tom following him.

Three mechanics were there; men who had been employed by Phil in the construction of the machine at his experimental workshop.

"You'll see canvas on them the next time round!" Bates, the foreman, bawled the words. "Stand by with the spares!"



Through the field-glasses Jeff watched the Red Ace begin its two-miles-a-minute dash down the slope—then suddenly caught his breath—

He called the order to his companions, and stubbed his thumb to where four spare wheels lay on the pit-plank.

"Is that all we've got left?" Jeff gasped.

The foreman nodded, and waved a hand towards the back of the pit. On the ground here lay other tyres which had been taken off the car; worn, stained circles of rubber. One had burst, so that canvas and rubber hung in tatters.

"He'll never finish on only four more tyres!" Tom exclaimed.

"It's all we've got!" the foreman said.

"And it's a wonder he's done so well. If he—"

"Here's Sanchis!"

One of the mechanics shouted through the rising howl of a car which was following a bunch now passing the pits. The chums looked out.

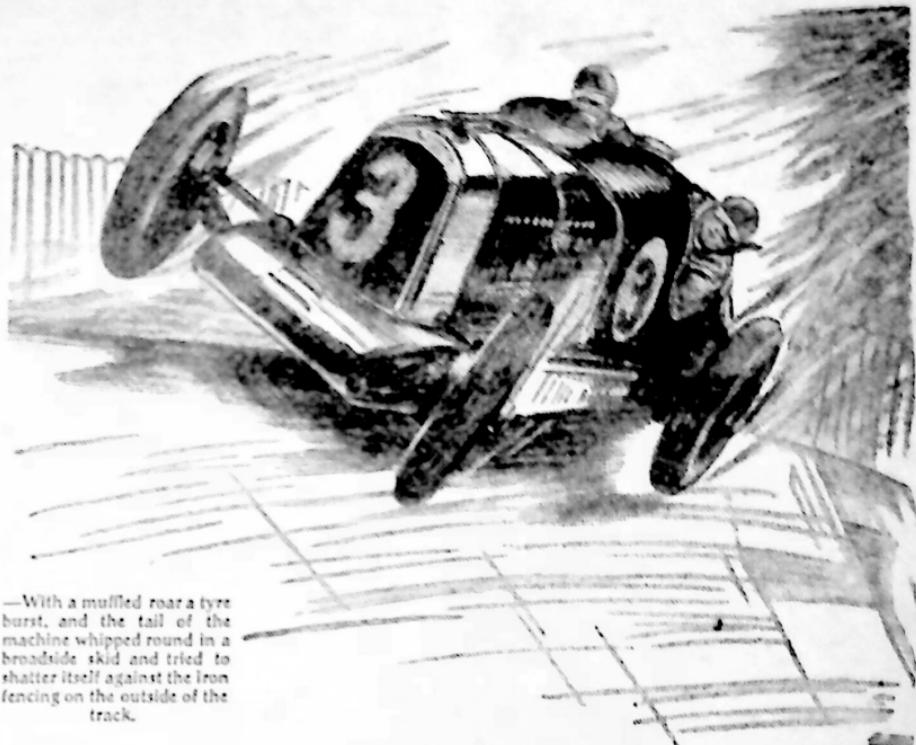
They saw a group of colourful machines streaking by. There was a white Mercedes, bellowing furiously as it hurled itself past. An efficient, stubby-tailed blue Bugatti, which had come over from France, was hanging on the German's tail, and duelling as France and Germany had always duelled.

Behind these was a great, green-painted British Bentley, running as if it was on rails; as stately as a battleship and as fast as a wheeled shell.

In rear of these three machines came a blazing yellow car. Its yellow body and red wheels formed the racing colours of Spain, and the car led the race!

At the wheel was Don Sanchis, handling his Fuerta car with all the verve and dash that had gained him victory in other big races. He was a black-eyed dare-devil, and the boys watched him climb to the brink of the banking ahead as he passed the other three machines.

Up he went—up!—until it seemed as though his outside wheels were flirting with the banking's lip, when one split inch of miscalculation would send him over and off the track to smoking disaster amongst the fir-trees beyond.



—With a muffled roar a tyre burst, and the tail of the machine whipped round in a broadside skid and tried to shatter itself against the iron fencing on the outside of the track.

"What a driver!" Tom breathed, as he watched.

"But Phil could lick him, if he had the tyres!" Jeff panted. "He's less than a couple of laps behind, as it is!"

"You're right—we're being beaten by tyres!" Bates growled. "A year's work going west!"

Jeff thought of the way his brother had worked. There had been days and nights of ceaseless experiment, and more days spent down here on the track, tuning up. The car had grown from drawings to a magnificent thing of tense steel and streamlined bodywork. If Phil could prove the machine by winning this race, there were men waiting to finance him and put other cars like the Red Ace on the market—which meant a fortune for Phil.

Jeff and Tom were interested because they knew that if Phil became head of a great

motor-works specialising in sports and high-speed cars, then they'd get a job there, too. Both could drive, as it was; in fact, Jeff had been allowed to handle this racer during the days when the engine had been "run in."

"Here's Phil again!" Tom shouted, and Jeff made ready to dive under the pit again, but saw that he would be too late to get into position; he remained where he was, lifting his glasses to survey the tyres once more.

He saw the machine taking the banked curve which led to the Fork. The sun caught it, changing the car, for just a moment, into a crimson meteor. Then the light left it as the machine swung around, again making its furious leap from the slope to the flat.

That slope had never been designed for more than two miles a minute, which some of

the cars were touching, and again Jeff saw the car charge through the air with all four wheels off the ground.

The wheels touched and, through his glasses, he saw one of them apparently swell out. A tread had been stripped clear away. Chunks of hot rubber streaked out on the air—and then the tyre burst!

Jeff lowered his glasses, catching his breath as he watched. He saw the tail of the machine whip outwards until the car was travelling almost broadside on the track, moving at terrific speed.

A shout went up from the horrified crowd in the near-by grandstand; then the car slithered straight, with Phil fighting over the wheel, holding the machine as it skimmed across the concrete and tried to shatter itself against the corrugated iron fencing on the outside.

He regained control, but not until he was almost up to the pits, and a second tyre had been wrenched clean off the rim of one rear wheel.

The boys heard the scream of brakes and, with wagging tail, the lamed car surged to the front of the pit and stopped, the mechanic fairly flinging himself out.

"Change all round!"

The shout came hoarsely from Phil's dust-smirched face. His mouth was like a black cavity against the grey on his skin, through which showed smudges of wind-blown oil.

"Only four spares left, sir!" Bates leaned forward, shouting the words so that Phil would hear them through the deafness engendered by the sustained roar of his engine.

"What?" Phil dived at the pit-plank, staring at the spares. "Then I'm beat!" he panted.

One hand gripped the edge of the plank, and about it was an oily old glove with the finger-tips cut away. The sleeves of his overalls were rolled high, revealing taut muscle and sinew.

He turned his head, gazing at Jeff, then suddenly leaned forward and grabbed at the boy's arm.

"Jeff, there's a set of old racing tyres back at the workshop!" he said hoarsely. "Get 'em—they may see me through! Get a plane and fly there!"

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### A Race Against Time!

FROM the aerodrome which stands in the centre of the mighty concrete oval at Brooklands, a plane took the air bare minutes later. It was a big, cabined craft with room for the pilot and three passengers.

This machine had as pilot a man who had been an airman in the Great War, and who was a friend of Phil's: as passengers it carried Jeff and Tom.

It went off the ground in one long zoom, throttle wide open, skimming hangar roofs and keeping fairly low as it rushed to hundred-miles-an-hour speed over the green countryside.

"It's twenty miles, dead straight, to Phil's place!"

The lined, set face of the pilot turned as he shouted the words to Jeff.

"We can do it in twelve minutes—if we can land close to the workshop!" he added.

"There's a field at the back!" Jeff yelled to him.

While he shouted, he calculated swiftly. The tyres Phil had just taken would last him twenty laps and that, at the speed he was making, would mean twenty-seven minutes of time.

Twelve minutes to the workshop, and twelve back with the old racing tyres! That was twenty-four minutes, so, if all went well, the old tyres would be ready by the time the dud ones were worn out.

Jeff knew the tyres Phil meant. He had used them while he was trying out the machine. They weren't worn badly, and they had been constructed by a famous firm specially for him; but he could not afford to buy from them all those he required in the race, because the final work on the car had left him almost broke.

With luck, he might be able to run through the rest of the race on the sound old tyres—and he might yet challenge the fleet Spaniard.

Flying low, the big monoplane shot across country like a homing bee, but the minutes seemed endless. Jeff watched fields and roads, houses and hedges, streams and wide highways flash beneath them.

It appeared an age before Tommy suddenly



ROLAND  
DAVIES

FIGHTING FOR THE LEAD!

*Facing page 32*

shouted and pointed through one of the shatterless windows. Jeff sighted familiar ground, and he felt the machine zoom upwards while the pilot craned his head to one side and looked out.

"That's the workshop, isn't it?" he yelled, then banked the craft round, and cut off the engine as he dipped the nose for a long, narrow field at the back of the tin-roofed building which stood behind the red-brick house that formed Jeff's home.

The boys heard the engine "blip" on as the landing wheels touched. They swayed and jolted forward, and the instant that the craft stopped Jeff loosened the latch on the cabin door and jumped blindly out, Tom at his heels.

They charged the hedge which cut off the field from the ground about the shed, and darted for the building, kicking the door open and plunging in. The shed was large and well lit, with lathes and delicate balancing instruments and benches on which lay discarded motor parts.

In a corner stood the old racing tyres on the original experimental wheels which Phil had first built; wheels which were very light in weight and with a resilience in their construction which helped to take the shocks that normally went to the springs.

Without a word, they grabbed two each, lifting them by the hubs. Outside they heard the pilot taxi-ing the machine round. They dashed out, forced the wheels through the hedge, helping one another, then ran for the plane as it came about.

The pilot helped them up with the wheels.

"Quick work!" he exclaimed, as the chums followed them in. The craft took off again before people on a near-by road hardly realised that it had landed.

They had staked the wheels in the spare seat, and the boys steadied them as the machine banked around and streaked back for Brooklands, with Jeff wondering all the while what was happening there.

He craned up in his seat, watching anxiously ahead until, at last, he made out the flat area of the track and sighted coloured streaks against the grey of its banking, and knew them for cars.

They climbed a little as the pilot made

ready to judge his landing, the boys scanning the concrete for a glimpse of Phil's machine.

"There it is—going on to the Byfleet banking!" Tom called.

Jeff saw it. The plane was then crossing above the railway-line, and they saw the River Wey like a ribbon of silver as it traversed the grassland in the centre of the track.

The car had left the railway straight, skating at storming speed along the banking, drawing away from the plane as it went.

Watching, the boys saw it rise up the bank to pass another machine, pulling high. It climbed to the very edge—and from one rear wheel there suddenly spurted a black streak that was like ebony spray!

"He's over!" Tom gasped the words involuntarily.

They saw the car slow and the other machine race ahead. Jeff expected to see the Red Ace disappear over the edge of the banking, but it did not.

The tail dropped, and the car turned a complete circle on the track, sliding broadside, then gradually slipping to the inside of the track and coming to a stop as the plane turned for its landing.

"A tyre gone again!" Tom yelled.

Jeff did not answer. He reached out for the latch on the door, releasing it ready to jump from the machine.

"They're all right, don't go to the car!" he heard Tom shout. "Take the wheels to the pit!"

His voice was loud as the aeroplane's engine died. They touched earth, with the pilot taxi-ing the machine as closely as he could to where a tarred road ran near the railings on the inside of the course.

Jeff pitched the door open and dropped out, dragging a wheel with him. He saw one of the pit mechanics running up, and this man took a wheel. Tom came out of the machine, and the pilot dropped two others to him, then followed himself with the fourth wheel.

"He's just burst a tyre on the banking!" the mechanic called, as all four raced towards the pits. "He skidded, then stopped!"

Jeff leading, they ran on. Officials opened gates for them and they tore into the enclosure

behind the pits, darted through another gate and reached the Red Ace depot just as a figure came staggering along the concrete from the turn and the halted Ace beyond.

"That's Phil—he's hurt!" Jeff panted.

He tried to clamber over the plank, but the foreman held him back. They saw officials catch at Phil's arms to support him, but he shook them off, staggering and reeling towards the pit, and finally stumbling there, holding on to the plank.

He was white under the mask of oil and dust on his face, and there was blood running from a cut at one side of his forehead.

"Two rear tyres went!" he said, and his voice was hardly more than a croak. "Mechanic—laid out. I'm—finished!" He swayed where he stood, then stared straight at his brother and at the old racing wheel that he held. "You—carry on—Jeff!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER Behind the Wheel!

THE crowds on the near-by stand and jammed along the rails of the enclosures suddenly saw Jeff's overalled figure appear, carrying a spare wheel under either arm—which, to those who knew nothing about the special lightness of those wheels, seemed a marvellous feat.

Behind him came Tom, similarly burdened. Both wore overalls, and Tom had snatched a couple of linen caps off the pit-plank as he crossed it, jamming them into his pocket.

In rear of the boys appeared the foreman and a mechanic, each carrying a big, quick-lift jack, a hammer and other tools. In this race, the driver and his companion as well as two mechanics were allowed to work on a car, and the four were now running back along the track to the stranded Red Ace.

The boys saw the machine a quarter of a mile around the bend by the banking, with a crowd on the grass beside it, and some people bending over the unconscious mechanic.

The chums raced up, Jeff making for the back of the machine and dropping his wheels there, while Tom remained at the front.

Jeff saw that both rear tyres were mere tatters of disintegrated rubber, and the wheel-rims were flattened and scoured bright

where they had rasped against the concrete.

Bates, the foreman, joined him and they started the wheel-change. Working together, he and Jeff wrenched off the lamed wheels, clearing the tangled rubber jammed about brake rod and axle, then ramming the fresh wheels home just as Tom and his companion finished those at the front of the car.

"Get going!" the foreman called to Jeff. "He only wants you to take the car through to the finish now!"

Jeff guessed that was what Phil wanted. As he leaped to the cockpit, the yellow Fuerta came up and went flashing past, its exhaust bellowing triumphantly back at the Red Ace.

Jeff slid over the side of the cockpit, grabbing a pair of goggles from the little net below the instrument board and slipping them about his neck as Tom came in beside him.

The two had handled the machine together during the test runs, and both knew exactly what to do now. The foreman and the mechanic hunched at the tail, rolling the car forward for a push-start.

The engine fired healthily and the Red Ace surged away, gathering speed as Jeff eased the throttle open, changing up, sweeping around the turn and then charging down towards the pits with the machine booming in third gear.

He saw Phil there, leaning against the front of the plank, first-aid men grouped around him. He raised his arm as they went by.

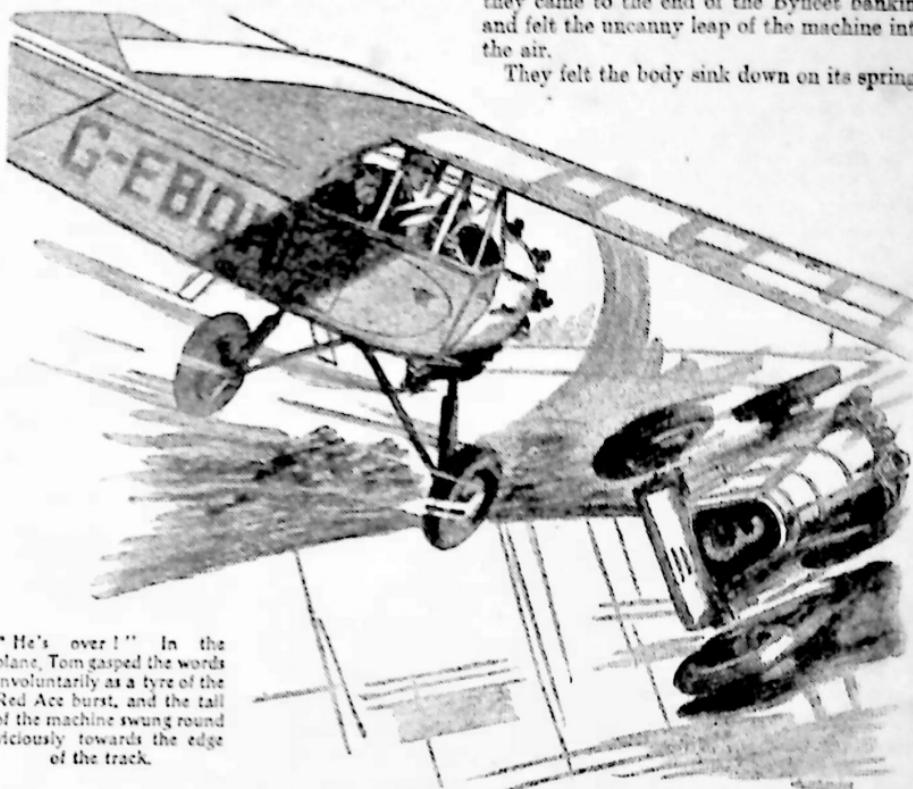
"Take it through to the finish be blowed!" Tom growled the words as he leaned close and adjusted Jeff's goggles. "Go after that Spaniard, Jeff—show 'em what you can do!"

That idea was in Jeff's mind. He knew that there was still two hundred miles to run, and that the car need not stop again—if the old tyres held out—because Phil had replenished when he pulled in at the pits the last time.

He saw the crowds on the inside rail of the steep banking beyond the Fork. Faces showed in a grey blurr as the machine zoomed on. They took the bend under the Members' Bridge, and he saw the drop to the railway straight ahead.

On the downward rush the Red Ace grew faster, and the chums settled down to it as Jeff slid into top gear.

He heard a snarl behind him, and the great white Mercedes drew level, then streaked ahead. Jeff put his foot down and sat on the big German car's tail, letting the white machine set the pace for three laps, until his own nerves and eyes had become attuned to the high speed.



"He's over!" In the plane, Tom gasped the words involuntarily as a tyre of the Red Ace burst, and the tail of the machine swung round viciously towards the edge of the track.

There were no corners in this race. There were only the sweeping bends on the track to negotiate, all of them permitting a car to get around at the limit of its speed—providing its driver knew how to place it on the bankings.

Jeff did know. He was recalling all the things that Phil had ever told him now. He remembered the hours he and Tom had spent watching crack drivers in action—and on his

third lap Jeff pulled out to pass the Mercedes.

The Red Ace went by, finding a sudden surge of fresh power as Jeff stamped the throttle pedal down to the steel footgrid.

The patched concrete of the track swept towards him in a sunlit grey blur, and they were well ahead of the German by the time they came to the end of the Byfleet banking and felt the uncanny leap of the machine into the air.

They felt the body sink down on its springs

as they landed. Jeff braced behind the wheel and kept the car straight. He saw the dark line of the pits, and glimpsed a signal flying there.

"They're flagging us to ease up!"

Tom leaned over and bellowed the words, and his voice reached Jeff's ears, torn by the wind.

"What a hope they've got!" Jeff grinned as he shouted back, his gaze on the track in

front--on a yellow shape just disappearing on the banking!

It was the Spanish Fuerta--and they were gaining on it!

Two laps later it was only a little way ahead of them when they came off the long banking, and Jeff took his Ace high, so that the slope of the concrete would lend him more speed.

They passed the yellow Spaniard as they went by the stands, the crowd applauding the sight--even though they knew that the British-built, unlucky Red Ace was yet three laps behind, and must pass Sanchez three times more before the car could gain the lead.

Jeff's numbed hands were clamped on the kicking wheel. His shoulders were fiery from bruises where bumps in the track had thudded his back against the hard leather of the squash.

He wore ordinary shoes, and his feet were burning on the pedals; they were numbed, and felt as though they had swollen enough to burst the leather which encased them.

His mouth was dry, and his lips were caked with dust slung back as he had passed other machines. Blood had dried on his cheek where concrete chippings, picked up from the track, had gashed his skin.

The roar of the engine and the screech of the supercharger had drummed his brain until it seemed impossible that he would ever hear any other sound. He felt sick, because he wore no abdominal belt to hold him together against the hammering of the machine.

But he had passed the Spaniard twice!

Now the yellow car was in sight, again--and there were but two laps to go before the race was ended. If Jeff could pass him again, the Red Ace would win!

Tom was huddled beside him, peering over the side of the cockpit with one goggled eye as they went by the stand. Up there, men were waving them on; and along the rails more arms were uplifted--but Jeff saw nothing of this.

He let the car ride on the steep banking--a banking so sheer that, at its centre, a man cannot climb up it.

The Red Ace flashed around it, the broken edge of the concrete all but under the outside wheels. The bushes and the slender trunks of young fir trees formed a black wall which seemed to echo the car's shattering blare of sound. Then the trees fell away and in front Jeff saw the width of the straight, with the Spaniard scuttling down its centre.

The British machine appeared to gather itself and went down the long slope to the straight in one colossal rush, with the revolution counter surging past the danger line, and the speed-born gale hissing a menacing song past Jeff's stunned ears.

They gained ground. On the long Byfleet banking Jeff could see the faint, spouting oil-smoke that came from the Fuerta's Brooklands muffler, and less than fifty yards separated the two when the Ace made its leap from the banking's end.

The crimson car was closer yet when they went past the stands and the crowds that cheered there. The Ace seemed to sway on the track under its storming speed.

Its wheels were stamping the concrete, flinging the car on, and they were at the Spaniard's tail as they rocked beneath the steel girders of the Members' Bridge--on the last lap.

Jeff saw that he had the speed to pass, but the yellow car was high on the banking, and Jeff forced the Ace beneath it.

With its mighty engine giving all its power, exhaust crashing a war-song of speed, the Red Ace shot level with the yellow Spaniard, and in that moment Tom craned up to shout in Jeff's ear:

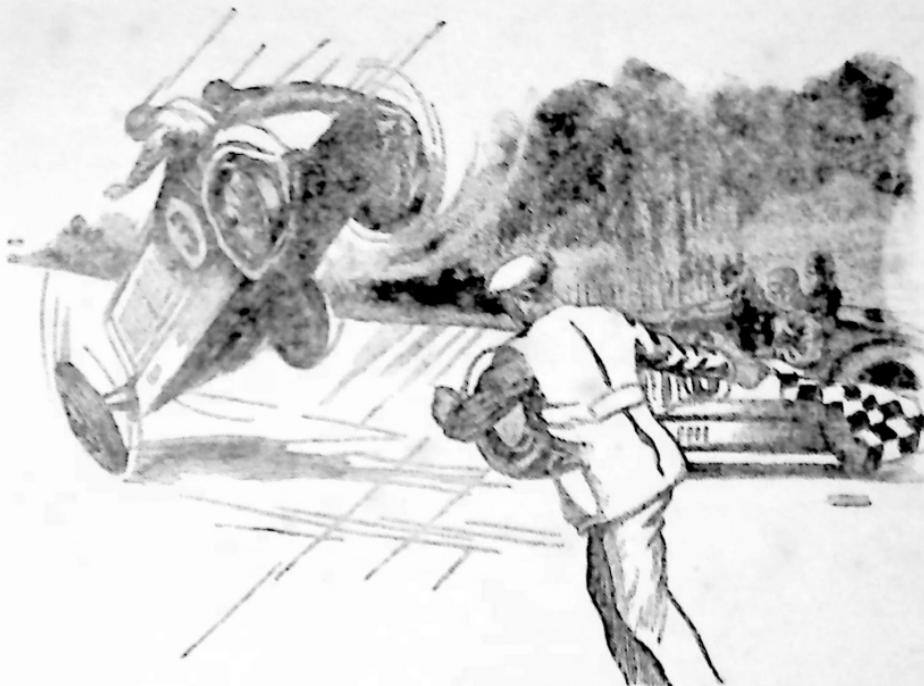
"Canvas showing on both rear tyres!"

Jeff heard him, and his heart leaped. The old tyres were worn through, and at any moment either of them might burst.

If that happened at this colossal speed, nothing could save them, because neither he nor anyone else would be able to hold a suddenly fanned car straight at that pace.

And the Fuerta was now matching their speed.

Its daredevil driver had his throttle jammed down to its limit. Every ounce of power that his engine could give was crowded to the wheels now, and he was keeping level with the Red Ace.



No sooner had the Red Ace crossed the finishing line than both rear tyres burst together. The crowd gasped as the tail of the car jumped high in the air.

Jeff could not slow. If he slowed they might run safely to the finish—but then they would not win.

If he held his speed the Red Ace might gain victory despite the handicaps it had surmounted. All the while the white streak in the spinning rear tyres was broadening; every moment the danger grew greater.

Down the straight they hurtled, the machines still level. A thousand field-glasses were watching from the stand and the enclosures, and on the roof of the Ace pit Phil was balanced, gazing at the two cars.

They neared the turn on to the Byfleet banking, and Jeff suddenly remembered how crack drivers cut the corner. They forced their cars close in, shortening the distance they had to travel—but they strained their tyres.

Jeff's tyres were weak, but he bored on the

wheel. The distance between the red machine and the Spaniard widened as Jeff cut the corner, fighting the juddering car and forcing it to his will.

If a tyre burst now—

He knew that they would stand no chance, and he heard the strained tyres shrieking against the concrete, while rubber sheared away and the thin wall of canvas that stood between the boys and oblivion grew yet thinner.

Yet the tyres held—and they gained from the Fuerta.

They hit the banking ten yards in the lead, hurtling around, and Jeff gritted his teeth as the turn off it came, with the winner's flag waiting for him bare yards ahead—if he could keep in front and if a tyre did not go.

Again he bored on the steering. Again he battled the machine down the bank, until its

near-side wheels were stirring the sandy dust where grass grew close at the inside of the turn.

He felt the car fighting against him, with the tail trying to slide outwards in a skid that meant utter disaster. He held it for the long seconds necessary to take him around the turn, listening for the flurried roar which would be the sound of the tyre bursting—and might be the last clear sound he would ever hear.

But it never came.

The Red Ace completed the turn, and Jeff dared a glance behind him.

The yellow machine was rocketing twenty yards in rear of them now, the driver's eyes flashing behind his goggles as he made one last furious effort to come level and shoot ahead.

In front, Jeff saw officials grouped. He saw the black-and-white of the winner's flag. He saw the top of the stand as a forest of waving arms, then the flag was dipping down as the Red Ace shot over the line.

They had won, but as the flag dropped, both rear tyres burst together.

The crowd saw the tail of the car jump in the air and come down again on tyreless back wheels. Through the roar they heard the screech of bared wheel-rims as they scoured the track; but Jeff held the car steady and straight, slowing.

He kept the machine under control, while the yellow car went past him, with its Spanish driver lifting one hand from the wheel and raising his arm high in salute to the victor.

Lamed, dust-smothered, oil-splashed, the Red Ace limped on, while from her rear wheels fell away bits of the old racing tyres.

There is a motor works now in the long, narrow field where the aeroplane landed, and Phil Graham's office is at the far end.

Jeff and Tom have the job of testing and passing out all Brooklands model Aces made by the thriving firm, which is the sort of job both had always wanted.

They alone are allowed ever to drive the first Red Ace, which is always kept spotless and in racing trim in a corner of the works.

Flanking the windows in Phil's office are two big glass cases, each of which contains a wheel with the remnants of an old racing tyre still clinging about its scored rim.

## POTTED HUMOUR

By MONTY LOWTHER  
(of St. Jim's).

*THERE is a young fellow named Gore,  
Whom you'll find in the study  
next door;  
But if Skimpole sees you,  
With rapture he'll seize you,  
And send you to sleep with his "jaw."*

According to Mr. Linton, in lessons on geology, "we are all beggars—living on the crust of the earth."

*G-o look for a youth with monocle neat,  
U-rbane and knuttish and so debonair!  
S-ports beautiful toppers, wears spats  
on his feet.  
S-uprising, however, when this fellow  
you meet,  
Y-ou'll find that he's not all there!*

Herbert Skimpole went around St. Jim's last half-holiday making frantic efforts to borrow a watch, but none of the fellows had any "time" to spare!

*A caddish Sixth-Former (that's Knox),  
Has a pair of remarkable socks;  
They're yellow and green,  
With light blue in between,  
And crimson embroidery clocks.*

We learn from the Rylcombe Gazette that a misguided yokel of the village was charged last week with stealing a mirror from outside a second-hand shop in the High Street, and got three months' "hard." He might have been let off more leniently if he had pleaded in his defence that he had "taken a glass too much!"

*There is a young rotter named Trimble,  
Whose brains would go into a thimble;  
He spends his time spying,  
And sneaking and prying,  
And for rotten behaviour's the symbol.*

# HANSOM'S "TWIN BROTHER"

By

Owen Conquest



## THE FIRST CHAPTER Not Nice For Hansom.

"I SAY, you chaps——" Tubby Muffin rolled excitedly up to the Fistical Four of Rookwood as they were coming out of Hall after dinner. Evidently Tubby had news of some kind. Tubby was never so happy as when he was imparting exciting and confidential news.

Jimmy Silver & Co. grinned.

"What's up, Tubby?" asked Jimmy. "Get it off your chest before you burst."

"I say, you chaps, Peele has got the local paper. I saw him showing it to Gower. They were sniggering about it no end."

"What the thump——"

"I say, Jimmy, do you think it's true?" asked Reginald Muffin eagerly.

Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome stared at the egregious Tubby.

"Think what's true, ass?" asked Raby. "That Peele has got a local paper?"

"Nunno. That it's Hansom's brother, you know. I say, Jimmy, what do you think?"

"I think you're talking out of the back of your neck, as usual, fathead. What do you mean—Hansom's brother? I didn't know

he had a brother. Does the paper belong to Hansom's brother?"

"No, of course not, you ass!" gasped Tubby.

"Then I'm blessed if I see what you're talking about."

"Well, it's Lattrey, you know. He said——"

"Eh? You don't mean that Lattrey is Hansom's brother?" asked Jimmy, amazed.

"Oh, corks!"

Hansom, the captain of the Fifth, was an exceedingly proud and aristocratic youth, and really it was not likely that Lattrey, the black sheep of the Fourth, was Hansom's brother.

"You—you—you potty ass!" hooted Reginald Muffin. "Of course Lattrey ain't Hansom's brother."

"Then what on earth are you burbling about? What has Hansom's giddy brother got to do with Peele, Gower and Lattrey?"

"Well, they saw it in the paper you know. About Hansom's brother getting three years for burglary."

The Fistical Four jumped.

"Wha-at?"

"He, he, he!" giggled Tubby breath-

lesally. "Do you think it really is Hansom's brother, Jimmy? I mean, Hansom ain't a common name, is it?"

Jimmy Silver gasped.

"You mean that somebody named Hansom has got three years for burglary?" he asked.

"Yes, exactly, old fellow. It was the Latcham Bank burglary, you know. He's just been tried at the Latcham County Court, and he got three years for it. Lionel George Hansom his name was. I say, Jimmy, do you think Gower's right? I mean it's not a common name—"

"You're a silly ass and Gower's another," laughed Jimmy. "Of course it's not Hansom's brother. Giddy old Hansom of the Fifth isn't likely to have cracksmen for his relations."

"My hat! I think not."

"Well, there's no harm in asking him, is there?" urged Tubby.

"No, if you don't mind being kicked," grinned Newcome.

"The fact is," said Tubby cautiously, "I don't care about asking him myself. You—you see, I ain't afraid of getting kicked, of course; but there's a chance that he might cut up rusty—"

"Just a possible chance," agreed Arthur Edward Lovell, with deep sarcasm.

"And—and the fact is, I don't want a shindy with the brute, so I thought perhaps you'd ask him, Jimmy."

"Think again," chortled Jimmy. "Second thoughts are best, old bean."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, look here, if you're funky all the four of you ask him at once. He couldn't wallop the lot of you."

"I fancy he couldn't wallop any one of us properly," agreed Jimmy; "but this Co. doesn't pull chestnuts out of the fire for fat and flabby porpoises. Try some other study."

Peele, Lattrey and Gower strolled up arm in arm. Peele had a copy of the "Latcham Chronicle" in his hand, and the black sheep were all wearing broad grins.

"Seen the report about Hansom's brother, Silver?" asked Peele.

"You silly owl!" laughed Jimmy. "You

know it's not his brother. Let's have a peep at it."

Peele exhibited the report of the trial. It was a lengthy report, for the little local paper did not often get such a startling story. The name of the criminal, as Tubby had said, was given as Lionel George Hansom, aged twenty-six, of London, and he had been sentenced to three years' imprisonment for the recent burglary at the Provincial and Southern Counties Bank in Latcham.

Gower wagged a wise head.

"My opinion is," he said, "that the merchant is some relation of old Hansom's."

"I'd like to know for certain," chuckled Peele. "My hat! What a lark!"

"Well, here's a chance for you," nodded Jimmy. "Here comes merry old Hansom. Why not ask him? We'll stand behind to catch you as you fall."

A silence fell on the group as Edward Hansom of the Fifth, accompanied by Lumsden and Talboys, his two chums, sauntered along the hall. There was an annoyed look on Hansom's aristocratic face. He glanced superciliously at the juniors and went on talking.

"Sickenin', you know," he was saying. "Of course, it's nothin' to do with me, but—"

The three Fifth-Formers had reached the group of juniors, and the Fistical Four waited with derisive smiles for Peele & Co. to ask Hansom if his brother was due for a "stretch." The three black sheep did not seem eager about the job, and Jimmy wondered if anyone would have the nerve to broach the subject.

There was someone.

It was said of old that fools rush in where angels fear to tread, and though Peele & Co. could not, by any stretch of imagination, be called angels, Tubby Muffin possessed qualifications for the other rôle.

"I—I say, Hansom—"

The lofty Fifth-Former deigned to pause.

"Did one of you fags address me?" he asked, raising his eyebrows.

"I say, old fellow—" gasped Tubby.

"Sheer off, you fat rascal! If you call a Fifth-Form man 'old fellow,' you're liable to be kicked. That's a tip."

"But I say, you know," gasped Tubby, "I'm sorry your brother is going to gaol, Hansom. It's really rather rotten for you—"

Hansom stopped dead. He turned his head, and he rested a gleaming eye on Tubby Muffin.

"What's that?" he rapped out.

"I—I—I was just sympathising with you, old fellow," Tubby gasped.

"It must be rotten to have a brother in chokey. We read about it in the paper, and Gower said—"

"Nothing of the kind," put in Gower, with great firmness.

Jimmy Silver grinned as he watched the expressions chasing each other over Hansom's speaking features. For a moment the Fifth-Former gurgled breathlessly, his eyes fixed on the cheerful Muffin as though he could not take them away. Lumsden and Talboys nudged each other and grinned.

"You—you cheeky fat fag!" yelled Hansom at length.

"Oh, really, old fellow—"

"I—I—I'll—My hat! I'll burst you! Take that!"

"Yarooooooh!" howled Tubby, as Hansom smote. The fat junior reeled against the wall, clasping a damaged nasal organ. Hansom charged at him and rammed his bullet head against the oak carving.

"You—you impudent little sweep! I'll teach you to give me any fag cheek. Take that and that!"

Rap, rap, rap!

Tubby shrieked desperately as his head was banged against the wood.

"Oooogh! Yow! Woooohooooh! Gerroff! Lemme alone! Dragimaway! Help!"

"Ease off!" said Jimmy Silver, butting in. "That's enough, Hansom, old scout. You don't want to knock out what little brains he has got."

"Sheer off! You fags can clear! I'm



As the wriggling mob of Juniors reached the stairs, Hansom flew out of the centre and made the descent on his head!

going to squash him to a jelly. Take that—"

"Yaroooooh!"

Jimmy looked round at his grinning chums.

"Line up!" he said.

"What-ho!"

The four juniors advanced and jerked Hansom away from the anguished Muffin.

"Nuff's as good as a feast, old bean," said Jimmy soothingly. "You can keep the rest."

"I'll smash you if you put your inky hands

on me," roared Hansom. "Clear off, you young sweep ! "

"Are you going to behave yourself ? "

"I—I'll—I'll—" Words failed Hansom. He proceeded to actions. He rammed a large fist in Lovell's chest, and Lovell sat down with a yell.

"Whooop !" he yelled. "Oh, my hat ! Rag him ! Go for him ! Ow ! "

Three pairs of hands grasped Hansom. Lovell's pair, a moment later, made a fourth—and a very fierce fourth, too.

To Hansom's utter astonishment, he was up-ended and strewn over the floor. A fag actually held his classic and aristocratic nose. A cheeky junior had actually ruffled his hair and jerked his tie out. This was, to Hansom, the same as if the world had suddenly come to an end.

Lumsden and Talboys stood grinning at the end of the passage. They did not offer to interfere, in spite of the fact that Hansom's voice could be heard urging them to do so.

A grinning, wriggling mob of juniors rolled down the passage towards the stairs. Hansom was out of sight, somewhere in the middle of that mob. Now that Hansom was down and done, even Lattrey, Peele and Gower had hold of him somewhere.

Lumsden and Talboys backed downstairs. A moment later the mob of juniors reached the head of the stairs. Suddenly a figure seemed to fly out of the centre of the mob and descended the stairs, wrong end upwards, to a chorus of bumps and yells.

Bump ! Bump ! Bump !

"Ow ! Yooop ! Oh, my hat ! Ooooch ! "

A ruffled, tousled figure hit the ground and lay gasping on the mat.

Lumsden and Talboys gathered the figure together and bore it away.

Really, all this was not nice for Hansom.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### The Escaped Convict !

HANSOM of the Fifth, having washed and brushed himself back into a comfortable state of loftiness, lounged in his study, talking to Lumsden and Talboys.

Lumsden and Talboys did not want to listen to Hansom. They wanted to get out

on the river that half-holiday. The sun was shining brightly, and the river was beautifully cool. But Hansom held them with his glittering eye.

"It's sickenin'," he averred. "Of course, the beast is no relation of mine, or anythin' like that. But it gives those fags an excuse to cackle and, in fact, it lets down the whole of the Fifth."

"Does it ? " asked Lumsden.

"Yes, it does. Directly I saw the fellow's name in the paper, I guessed what would happen. Those cheeky little rotters will try to make out that he's my brother, or somethin'. You heard what Muffin said just now. It shows you."

"What does it matter what Muffin, or any other fag, says ? " inquired Talboys. "This man Hansom is nothing to do with you."

"Well, it does matter," said Hansom obstinately. "It's not nice to be cackled at by a lot of inky little brutes in the Fourth. That's what I say."

"And what I say," yawned Lumsden, getting off the corner of the table, "is that I'm not going to fool away all the afternoon with silly talk. I'm going on the river. Coming Hansom ? "

"I've got to go down to Coombe ; you know that ! " snapped Hansom crossly.

"Oh, I forgot ! Its an important matter to have a suit pressed properly, isn't it ? "

"Awfully important," added Talboys, putting on his cap.

"Good-bye, Hansom ; see you at tea."

Lumsden and Talboys went out of the study. Lumsden paused at the door.

"By the by, old bean, if you want to see your brother——"

Hansom started and looked fixedly at his chum.

"It's visiting day at Latcham Gaol to-day. Just thought I'd mention it. Toodle-oo ! "

By the time the power of movement returned to Hansom, Lumsden and Talboys had vanished. Hansom glared ferociously along the passage, and then snorted and reached down his cap.

He sauntered down to the gates, bestowing a very severe look on Jimmy Silver & Co.,

who were idling in the lane outside the gates. A little farther down the lane Hansom had the satisfaction of meeting Tubby Muffin, alone and unattended.

He bestowed a couple of kicks on Tubby's fat person and wandered on, feeling somewhat solaced. It seemed, however, to bring very little solace to Tubby Muffin.

Hansom left the lane at the old turnpike and took the footpath through the wood.

It was a cool walk and a shady walk, and there were not many people about. Hansom met only one man on that journey, but that one man was enough.

As he passed a clump of hawthorns, the man suddenly jumped out and stood on the path before him.

Hansom gazed at him, his heart jumping.

It was not that the stranger was armed with a thick hawthorn club that startled Hansom so much. It was the man's clothes which horrified the dandyish Fifth-Former.

Hansom had a nice taste in clothes, and he very much disapproved of a suit made of dark grey cloth ornamented with broad arrows in black, with a round pill-box cap to match.

"Oh crikey! An escaped convict!" he gasped.

The man had evidently escaped from Latcham Gaol, situated about four miles across country. He was a pleasant-looking fellow, but he had a nasty glint in his eyes, and Hansom didn't like him at all.

"Pleased to meet you," said the convict. "Delighted, in fact. I was wondering if any man of my build would be wandering along this path."

"Wh-what do you want, you rotter?" gasped Hansom.

"Ah!" said the convict earnestly. "There you have it. What do I want? Well, to begin with, I shouldn't say no if you offered to change clothes with me. I'm sorry that this suit isn't in the best taste; but it's well made and it's warm, and I think it would fit you down to the ground."

"Look here—" gurgled Hansom.

"That's a very nice suit you have on," went on the prisoner. "Took my eye the moment I saw it."

"If you think you're going to steal my clothes, you villain—"

"Great Jupiter! I couldn't do it. Steal a man's clothes," laughed the convict. "Why, the very thought makes me shudder. But—follow me closely here—I have heard it said that exchange is no robbery. And all I want to do is to exchange my suit for yours."

Hansom panted desperately.

"Let me pass!" he bawled. "You're not going to pinch my clothes, and you needn't think it. You scoundrel."

A steely glint came into the young convict's eye; but his voice was still pleasant as he went on speaking:

"Come, come! We won't have any words about a trifling matter like this. You asked me what I wanted, and I gave you a candid answer—your clothes. Now I should like to ask you what you want? Do you want this little matchstick on your head or not?"

Hansom eyed the threatening club in horror.

"You—you wouldn't—dare—"

"Now listen to me," said the convict. "I'm in for a three-year stretch for burglary. But I'm not particularly keen on three years in gaol; and—I tell you straight—there are few things I wouldn't do to show a clean pair of heels."

His voice had a kind of grimness in it that convinced Hansom that he stood in great danger. For a moment the Fifth-Former had the hopeless idea of making a fight for it. But as his eyes travelled along the convict's sinewy frame, and as he realised that it would take only one blow with that cudgel to put him out, Hansom saw that it was hopeless. The convict noted his glance and shrugged his shoulders.

"What's the use of asking for trouble?" he said. "You might as well cave in. You look pretty wealthy on the whole, and that suit is nothing to you. But it would mean everything to me. Just come behind this bush and stage our quick-change act."

Breathing quickly, Hansom preceded the convict to the shelter of the hawthorn bush.

Five minutes later the convict stood up, clad in Hansom's natty lounge suit. He squinted down at himself luxuriously.

"A very good fit," he said. He emptied

the pockets and threw various articles to the utterly dismayed Fifth-Former. When he hauled out a handful of silver, he paused. "You wouldn't like to give me a few shillings, I suppose?" he asked anxiously.

"You beastly thief——"

"Oh, hang it! I'm not going to take it, if you say not. I only asked if you would care to give me any. Here—take your mouldy money."

He threw the coins on to the pile in front of Hansom. The Fifth-Former, almost dumbfounded, gurgled out:

"You can help yourself to a quid, if you like."

What made him say it, Hansom could not imagine—unless it was that he hated the thought of being mean. The convict scooped up a pound gratefully and, after bidding the demoralised Fifth-Former an affectionate farewell, he vanished through the wood.

Hansom gazed almost petrified at the suit of broad arrows and the pill-box cap. He hated that suit already. The thought of putting it on made him positively writhe. But the alternative—appearing in public in undergarments of a light woven silk—was not at all congenial. Really, it would be better to appear in broad arrows.

With many groans, Hansom dressed himself in the convict's clothes, and the fact that they fitted him like a glove only intensified his loathing. He stood erect, dressed as a convict, and pondered.

How was he to get back to Rookwood? Even Hansom had now abandoned the idea of calling at Coombe. Somehow or other, he had to slide unobtrusively into Rookwood and change those awful clothes.

He made his way cautiously through the wood towards Coombe Lane. The lane seemed to be empty, and Hansom emerged stealthily from the trees.

Then he jumped.

Coming along, immediately facing him, was a junior. There was only one junior at Rookwood with a figure like it. It was Tubby Muffin. Hansom's jaw dropped.

"Oh, corks!" he gasped.

As for Tubby Muffin, his eyes nearly started

out of his head on beholding such a fearsome figure. He let out a terrified yell.

"Yaroooooh!"

Hansom awoke to action. He dashed back into the wood, and crept, quaking, behind a bush.

Really it was getting worse and worse for Hansom.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

Hansom in a Hole.

JIMMY SILVER & Co. continued to idle at the gates after Hansom had passed on his way to Coombe. There was no cricket match on that afternoon, and Uncle James and his companions were rather at a loose end.

Lovell was mainly the cause of their idling. Jimmy, Raby and Newcome had thought of walking down to Coombe and getting some ices and lemonade at Mrs. Wicks' shop. But Lovell had other plans.

"Let's go and rag the Moderns, I tell you," he said. "We haven't ragged Tommy Dodd & Co. for ages. They are giving themselves airs about it."

"Too warm for raggings," said Raby.

"Rot!"

"Besides, Tommy Dodd can keep until a wet afternoon. We want to make the most of the sun."

"Rubbish! You fellows are too lazy—that's what it comes down to. I never saw such a slacking, lazy, idling——"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Jimmy suddenly. "What do these merchants want?"

The Fistical Four gazed with surprise at two men, dressed in official blue uniform and with rifles in their hands, who were walking up the lane.

"Great gophers! They look like warders from the gaol," said Lovell, quite forgetting the Moderns in this new diversion. "I wonder if a prisoner has escaped."

He hadn't to wonder long. The men came up to the juniors and touched their caps.

"Beg your pardon, young gentlemen," said one of them. "You haven't seen a man dressed in prison clothes about, have you?"

"Oh, my hat! No fear!"

"Or seen a man like this photograph?"

The warder produced a photograph of a

young man with a rather pleasant face. The juniors studied it.

"Fraid not," said Jimmy, at last.

The warder grunted.

"What's up?" asked Lovell. "Convict escaped?"

"Yes," nodded the warder. "Only came in two days ago for a stretch of three years."

"Oh, my sainted aunt!" exclaimed Jimmy. "Not giddy old Hansom--the Latcham Bank man?"

"That's the man," agreed the warder.

"You might keep your eyes open and let the police know by telephone if you come across anything. We have traced him in this direction somewhere."

"Oh, right-ho! We'll do that, of course."

The warders touched their caps and went on down the lane. Newcome grinned.

"That man didn't mean to stay in gaol long," he remarked.

"Ha, ha--no! Perhaps he'll call on old Hansom in the Fifth."

"I don't think," grinned Raby.

"Yaroooooh! Whooooop! Keep off! Help!"

An anguished voice floated along the lane, accompanied by the pounding of two swift-moving feet.

"Hallo, hallo! That sounds like Tubby Muffin," remarked Jimmy.

"Here he comes. What on earth is the matter with him?"

Tubby appeared in sight around the bend in the lane. He was rushing desperately towards Rookwood, yelling as he went. There was certainly nobody pursuing him; but Tubby, to judge by his yells, seemed to think there was.

"Keep off! Yaroooooh!" he roared, as the Fistical Four dawned on him.

"Fathead!" said Jimmy. "What's the matter with you?"

"Yooooop! Gerraway!"

"What's the matter?" roared Lovell. Tubby blinked.

"Oh!" he gasped. "Is that you fellows?"

"I fancy so. But what on earth--"

"I say, Jimmy, keep him off," gurgled Tubby, clutching Silver by the arm.



Stealthily, Hansom, dressed in the convict's clothes, emerged from the trees, to meet Tubby Muffin, who let out a terrified yell at sight of him.

"Keep him off?" asked Jimmy puzzled.

"Keep who off?"

"The--the convict! Hansom's brother!"

"Wha-a-at?"

The Fistical Four jumped, and gazed at Muffin in wonder.

"Have you seen a convict, Tubby?" asked Jimmy, with a penetrating look.

"Oh, crumbs, yes! He jumped out of the wood at me. An awful beast. Hansom's brother, you know!"

"How did you know the convict was the man Hansom?" demanded Lovell.

"Eh? You could see it, old chap. He was as much like Hansom as one pea is like another. Exactly like him, only dressed in kid-convict's duds."

The juniors jumped again.

"What's that?" they yelled. "Like Hansom of the Fifth?"

"You couldn't have told them apart—except for the togs," nodded Tubby.

"Phew!" gasped Lovell, with a long whistle. "Fan me, somebody. Oh, great jumping crackers! The giddy convict must be Hansom's brother. Tubby didn't know the man Hansom was the convict who had escaped."

"Mum-my only aunt!"

"What awful luck for Hansom," gasped Raby.

Jimmy looked thoughtful.

"The question is—ought we to help capture that convict after this?"

Lovell shook his head.

"Nothing to do with us," he said. "We can't butt in in the cires. We simply can't help to shove Hansom's brother back into chokey."

"You know," said Newcome, "I simply can't believe it. I mean to say, if it was known—"

His voice died away. He was staring down the lane with an almost incredulous look in his eyes.

His chums gazed in the same direction, and they remained as if petrified.

Creeping along the shady side of the lane was a figure in a costume of broad arrows, and it needed only one look to see that Tubby had been right.

It was Hansom's brother—not a doubt of it. He was as like Hansom as if he had been Hansom. In the circumstances, this was not wholly surprising.

"He's not much like the photo, is he?" said Newcome.

"Well, it was a rotten photo," replied Jimmy Silver. "It might have been anybody

for all you could see. But—but—but—"

"We'll have to warn him," said Lovell decidedly. "Those warders are hanging about. We must get him away for old Hansom's sake."

"Ye-es, but—"

"I say!" bawled Lovell, starting into the lane at a run.

Hansom, clad in the prison garb, started convulsively. He looked at the Fistical Four wide-eyed, and then turned to make a bolt for it. He dared not let those cheeky fags see him in all his glory. He would be chipped to death.

He turned and started to bolt down the lane.

"Stop!" bawled Lovell. "Oh, crikey! Stop! We're friends. We want to help you. Stop! Oh, dear!"

Hansom did not stop. He ran.

But before he had covered many yards, he was forced to stop. For approaching him from the other direction was a group of juniors who had been down to the village. Mornington, Erroll, Conroy, Putty Grace and one or two more were there, and they gaped blankly at "Hansom's brother."

"It's him," yelled Putty, ungrammatically. "It's Hansom's brother. Oh, my hat!"

"Stop him!" bawled Lovell.

Hansom looked about him desperately. He dared not face the juniors in that garb. At the end of his tether, he grasped an ancient tree by the Rookwood wall, swung himself into it, clambered up and dropped over the wall into the quad.

"He's gone into Rookwood!" yelled Lovell. "He's gone to see his brother. Oh, crikey! Stop him!"

"After him!"

The Fistical Four and several others raced back to the gates and around into the quad. Mornington and Conroy clambered up the tree and dropped over the wall.

The convict had vanished.

As soon as Hansom had dropped into the quad, he saw that he had been lucky. The quad was deserted at that moment, and the frantic Fifth-Former had been able to race to the side of the building and climb in through the open window of the Fifth Form class-room.



At the end of his tether, Hansom swung himself into a tree by the Rookwood wall as the Juniors raced towards him. "Stop him!" bawled Lovell. "It's Hansom's brother!"

At that moment there was a scudding of feet in the Fifth Form passage, and his study door was flung open. A mob of flushed and excited juniors stood on the threshold.

"What the thump—" bawled Hansom.

"Is he here?" gasped Jimmy Silver, looking into the study.

"What—what—what—"

"Have you seen your brother, Hansom?" said Lovell.

Hansom stood rooted to the ground.

"Not here," said Mornington. "He must be hiding somewhere. Rely on us, Hansom. We'll keep him mum. Come on, let's root through the passages."

The juniors scuttled away breathlessly.

Hansom tottered to the window.

He could see groups of breathlessly excited juniors in the quad outside, discussing the startling news.

The Fifth-Former gurgled and boiled with fury. That the juniors should think that he, Hansom of the Fifth, owned a cracksmen for

He dashed breathlessly to the Fifth Form passage without meeting anybody, but when he reached the Fifth Form precincts he had the misfortune to be seen by Mr. Greely. Fortunately, however, Mr. Greely fell downstairs before he recognised the convict.

The Fifth-Former changed into another suit and then, when he was Hansomised again, so to speak, he sat down to consider what to do.

Obviously he had to make a report about it to the Head; but Hansom suddenly realised that he must be very careful. If it got out that he had given the convict any money, he would be liable to prosecution. Hansom shuddered.

his brother was, to Hansom, the thing too much. It was the last straw.

Tearing his hair with rage, the Fifth-Former seized a cricket-stump and tore madly out of the study. Higgs of the Fourth was at the head of the stairs, looking with wondering and awe-stricken eyes for the convict. Hansom seized him and brought down the stump across his back.

Whack!

"Why—what—what! Yoooooop!" yelled Higgs.

Hansom rushed on his way downstairs, leaving Higgs sprawled and blinking dizzily.

Scores of eyes dwelt on him as he reached the hall. Mr. Greely was talking to Dicky Dalton—obviously about the convict. The words "Hansom's brother" were upon every lip. Hansom saw that at a glance.

Mr. Greely rolled up to Hansom ponderously. The dismayed Fifth-Former, taken aback, gazed at him.

"Hansom," said Greely in a deep voice, "it seems that the—the convict I saw with my own eyes in the Fifth Form passage is a relation of yours—a—a brother, I believe?"

"Just so," nodded Mr. Dalton.

Hansom panted.

"It is monstrous, unthinkable, that a convict should be at large in this school!" went on Greely, boozing out the words. "I require you to tell me, Hansom, if you have seen or assisted to conceal this person."

It was a minute or two before Hansom spoke, but at length he said, with a nasty gleam in his eye:

"Yes, sir. He is behind the sofa in my study, sir."

There was a breathless gasp from the crowd. Mr. Greely pursed his lips.

"I suspected as much. This person must

be discovered and captured. You will follow me to your study, Hansom."

"Certainly, sir!" snarled Hansom.

Treading ponderously, Mr. Greely marched to the Fifth Form passage. Hansom followed him, and a large crowd followed Hansom. The master flung open the door of Hansom's study and rolled inside.

"You may come out, sir!" he boomed, glaring at the sofa. "Your presence is discovered! Emerge!"

But the convict did not emerge.

"You'll have to go and root him out, sir," said Hansom with a savage grin. "He's not used to company. It makes him shy."

Mr. Greely, with a snort, rolled behind the sofa. Then, with an extraordinary expression on his face, he picked up a convict's suit and a pill-box cap.

All Rookwood learned the explanation after Hansom had seen the Head, and all Rookwood howled over it.

"No wonder the giddy convict was like Hansom!" yelled Arthur Edward Lovell. "A chap is usually like himself, ain't he?"

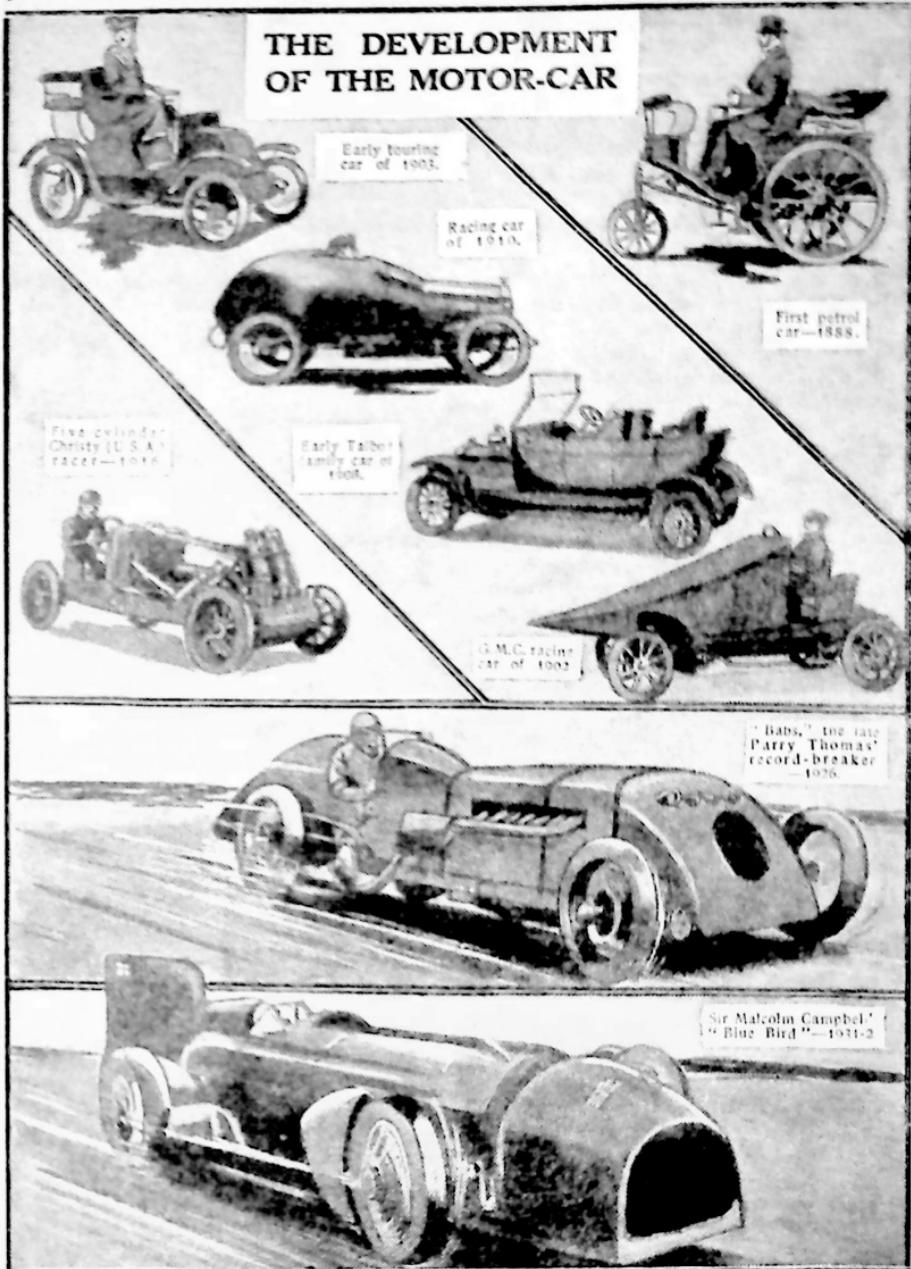
"Ha, ha, ha!"

To Hansom's regret, they did not recapture Lionel George Hansom, the escaped convict. Every day Hansom looked for the news of his capture. He yearned, pined and longed for the news; but it never came. Perhaps in some distant country that young man had seen the folly of his ways and was trying to make good. And perhaps, in that case, his escape did him more good than the three years would have done.

Hansom, however, was often reminded of his queer namesake for some time afterwards. Rookwood was not likely to forget so soon the amusing affair of Hansom's "twin brother."



## THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE MOTOR-CAR



# A DAY IN THE LIFE OF A SCHOOL NURSE

By Marie Rivers

*The life of a school nurse is far from being a long holiday. Marie Rivers, of St. Jim's sanatorium, explains the "whys" and "wherefores" in this chat.*

SOME people imagine that the life of a school nurse is one long holiday. All that she has to do is to sit by the bedside of a schoolboy patient, holding his hand, and reading stories aloud from THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL.

A very pleasant and touching picture, but very far from being the fact!

Of course, there are slack times in the "sunny," but they do not come very often. Seldom have I known the sick-bay to be deserted. St. Jim's has over three hundred scholars, and it would be too much to expect them all to be in a constant state of fitness. There are such things as influenza epidemics—seldom a winter passes without one—and common colds and chills, and strains and sprains, and a host of minor ailments.

There are five patients in the sunny as I write. Here is a list of them:

| Name.             | Complaint.                         | Probable length of detention. |
|-------------------|------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| D'Arcy minor ..   | Mumps                              | Three weeks                   |
| "Curly" Gibson .. | Measles                            | Three weeks                   |
| Jack Blake .....  | Leg injuries sustained at football | One week                      |
| G. A. Grundy ...  | Swollen head (result of fighting)  | Two days                      |
| Bagley Trimble    | Overfeeding                        | Five minutes!                 |

It is strange that D'Arcy minor should contract mumps at the same time as his bosom friend "Curly" Gibson, contracted measles. What you might call a "queer" coincidence!

Blake is progressing favourably, and Grundy will soon be out and about again, though he will not be cured of his "swollen head." Grundy's vanity is incurable!

Trimble is suffering from a slight bilious attack—the result of too many meals



There is a good deal of work to be done in the sunny—beds to be made, and temperatures to take twice daily, and rooms to be kept spick and span.

between meals! He declares he is at death's door, and he wants me to keep him in the sanny for a month. But I know Trimble of old; he is an artful malingerer. I shall give him a mixture that will make him grimace, and send him packing!

There is a good deal of work to be done in the sanny. Special meals have to be prepared for the patients. Some are on full diet: others have to be content with "slops." They don't like it a little bit, but I tell them it is "gruk to be kind." There are beds to be made, and temperatures to take twice daily, and rooms to be kept spick and span. Then there is a

parade of "out patients" each morning; that is to say, boys suffering from trivial ailments which do not warrant their detention in the sanny. My cough-mixture is extremely popular with the juniors, and I have a shrewd suspicion that in some cases their "bark" is worse than their plight!

At all events, they keep me very busy in the dispensary. And when you have read this article you will realise that a school nurse has no time for the pleasant occupation of holding the hands of her patients, and reading to them extracts from *THE HOLIDAY ANNUAL*!



#### *An Extract from the History of Greyfriars.*

IT is now slightly over one hundred years ago since the first bicycle arrived at Greyfriars. A Fifth Form boy named Renny was the happy possessor of the queer-looking machine.

The "Dandy Horse," as the bike was known, consisted merely of two wooden wheels, a crude wooden frame and a hard, narrow saddle. The rider propelled the whole contraption by thrusting at the ground with alternate feet, for there were no pedals.

Naturally, when Renny of the Fifth appeared at Greyfriars on this weird machine he created a tremendous sensation. Half the school flocked into the old Close to see him and his friends making trial runs.

Within a few hours Renny's "Dandy

Horse" was the one topic of conversation throughout the school, from the captain down to the smallest fag.

Poor Renny was overwhelmed with requests for the loan of his "jigger," and, although his was the only bike at Greyfriars, a cycling craze swept over the school. Indeed, a few enthusiastic spirits in the Remove attempted, without much success, to make their own "Dandy Horses"!

Possibly the masters of that day were none too pleased at all the excitement, but they had no grounds for interference—at least, not at first.

A few weeks later, however, the new craze received a sudden and complete check.

Leslie Graham, a Second-Former, having been refused the loan of Renny's bicycle, decided to take matters into his own hands and borrow it without permission.

The fag carried out his plan one summer evening and all went well until he reached the brow of the steep hill near Friardale, and here he lost control of his clumsy mount—for the "Dandy Horse" had no brakes.

The runaway bike dashed down the hill and crashed headlong into a farmer's cart at the bottom, the terrified Graham receiving very severe injuries from which, happily, he recovered. The "Dandy Horse" did not recover—which was, perhaps, fortunate, cycling being prohibited for Greyfriars boys for several years after because of this accident.



*"The Greyfriars Parliament is a first-rate affair," says TOM REDWING.  
Judging by his comments it's a tenth-rate parliament!*

**T**HIS is a first-rate affair. Everybody can take part in Parliament; but the whole proceedings are conducted with such decorum and gravity that rows and shindies are greatly looked down upon. Wonderful to state, the Remove takes its Parliament very seriously.

Parliament meets once a week in the Form-room, which is used by special permission of Mr. Quelch. All kinds of questions are discussed there, and they are discussed seriously for the most part.

Every fellow in the Remove is entitled to a seat in Parliament, and he may select whatever town he likes of which to call himself the member. He may also select which party he likes to represent.

Any member of the House is allowed to ask questions of the ministers; but he must put in a notice of such a question at the previous meeting. All members of the House—even Bunter and Fish—must be addressed in the proper way; such as, "The honourable member for Gluttonsville," or "The honourable member for Colney Hatch."

And now for the Ministers of State, etc. The SPEAKER is Mr. Johnny Bull, who is responsible for everything that happens during the meetings, and must keep Parliament in order. The PRIME MINISTER is Mr. Harry Wharton, the Form captain.

The Prime Minister's job is an important one. He is responsible for the policy to be

pursued in all cases by the Remove, and he dictates the course of action of his ministers.

The HOME SECRETARY is Mr. Mark Linley, who is in charge of all the activities inside the walls of Greyfriars, and on the home sports grounds.

The FOREIGN SECRETARY, Mr. Vernon-Smith, is responsible for the doings of the Greyfriars fellows in the village, in Courtfield, at other schools, at other sports grounds and during the holidays.

The WAR MINISTER is Mr. Bob Cherry, and he deals with Highcliffe rags, pillow-fights, Form combats, boxing matches, snow-fights and rags generally.

The CHANCELLOR OF THE EXCHEQUER, Mr. Frank Nugent, deals with all money questions, and is Treasurer to the Remove Sports Club, Remove Amateur Dramatic Society and Remove Publishing Society. He is responsible for getting in the footer and cricket subscriptions—some job!

The SOLICITOR GENERAL is Mr. Peter Todd. He represents the Law in Parliament, and all law questions are settled by Toddy.

There is no opposition to support. All members are free to please themselves how they vote on any question. Each position in the Cabinet is voted for separately, and the best men for the jobs elected.

We have had many lively debates in the Greyfriars Parliament. May we have as many more.



## THE FIRST CHAPTER

From the Jaws of Death!

**I**t's all up with her!"

Harry Wharton, of the Remove Form at Greyfriars, muttered the words between his clenched teeth as he looked seaward from the rocks.

Crash! Crash!

The thunder rolled with a thousand deep echoes among the cliffs.

With a roar almost as deep as that of the thunder-crash, the surf broke upon the great rocks of the Shoulder. The crowd on the beach surged back from the waves as they raced up the shingle.

It was a wild night. From the blackness of the sea gleamed a light—like a faint and feeble appeal for help where no help was possible. The ship that was so close to the rocks was doomed beyond hope. On the shore the fishermen of Pegg were crowded, and a swarm of fellows from Greyfriars.

By FRANK RICHARDS

It was past bedtime at Greyfriars, but in such a storm no one could think of sleep, and at the news that a ship was driving ashore the whole school had turned out. The Head himself was there, with most of the masters; and the boys had been allowed to crowd down to the bay on the bare chance that

they might be of some service.

**Harry Wharton & Co., of Greyfriars** "It's all up with her," Harry Wharton repeated, as the roll of thunder died away. "Oh, Bob, it's horrible to stand here—able to do nothing."

Bob Cherry nodded glumly.

"I know that, Harry. But we can't help them. They've tried to get a boat out, and it's been smashed on the rocks. Old Trumper has been hurt. We can't do anything. It's the worst storm I've seen since I've been at Greyfriars."

"Look!" exclaimed Frank Nugent. "The light's out!"

"That means the finish!"

The single light that flickered from the sea had suddenly vanished.

Blackness swallowed up the vessel.

The juniors listened for the crash when she struck; but the roar of the surf and the deep roll of thunder drowned all other sounds.

"Wait for the lightning again!" muttered Harry Wharton.

It came—a vivid gleam that blazed across the black expanse of the heavens. It showed the turbid, froth-flecked sea, the great looming rocks of the Shoulder, and the disabled steamer that was drifting to doom. In the bright blaze Wharton could see figures on the vessel—he even thought that he distinguished one of them as a boy's. Then blackness again swallowed up ship and sea and sky.

"It is terrible!" muttered Dr. Locke, the Head of Greyfriars. "And nothing can be done? Nothing?"

Old Dave Trumper shook his head. His right arm hung stiff at his side, hurt by a crash on the rocks in the attempt to launch a boat. The fragments of the boat were tossing about in the surf.

"Nothing, sir. It will be over soon."

"Is it an English ship—can you tell?"

Trumper shook his head.

"It's a German, sir. There's a lifebelt washed ashore, and the name of the ship is on it—the Adler. That's a German word, ain't it, sir?"

Dr. Locke started.

"The Adler! Yes, certainly—good heavens!" The doctor's face had grown paler. "Is it possible that this is the Adler of the Indian Line?"

Trumper nodded.

"I 'ope you haven't friends on that craft, sir," he said.

"This is terrible. There is a boy—a new boy for Greyfriars—who is being sent home from India on board the Adler!" the Head exclaimed, greatly agitated. "The ship is due to arrive in the Thames to-morrow."

Trumper shook his head again.

"Then I'm afear'd that boy won't see Greyfriars, sir."

"Heaven help him!"

The fellows who were standing near the Head had heard what was said. Their glances turned with renewed anxiety towards the black waters. A new boy for Greyfriars on board that doomed craft—the thought of it gave them an icy thrill. Dr. Locke turned to Mr. Quelch, the master of the Remove, but his words were drowned in the roll of the thunder.

"Oh, it's rotten!" groaned Bob Cherry.

"If we could only get to him—"

Wharton's face was very white.

"I saw a kid on the deck," he said. "I saw him in the lightning. A new kid for the school—it's horrible. I remember now hearing that a new kid was coming into the Remove—his name's Cholmondeley—Clive Cholmondeley. And he's on that craft!"

The juniors shivered. The knowledge that a Greyfriars fellow was there, in the shadow of death, brought the tragedy nearer home to them.

Crash, crash, crash!

Amid the roll of thunder, the raging of the surf, Wharton thought he heard another sound—the sound of a vessel grinding on iron-hard rocks.

The lightning blazed again.

"She's struck!"

Blackness swallowed up the tortured vessel, grinding to pieces on the sharp rocks. Still the fishermen and the crowd of Greyfriars fellows watched the sea. There was a chance—a vague chance—that yet some survivor might be cast ashore in a lifebelt, and they were ready to risk anything to help him.

Only when the lightning blazed could anything be seen. By the vivid flashes, they watched with aching eyes.

Bob Cherry gave a sudden shout.

"Look! What's that?"

He dashed forward into the surf.

"Cherry! Stand back!" shouted Mr. Quelch.

But the thunder rolled again and drowned his voice. Bob Cherry was neck-deep in water, and the surf would have swept him away; but his chums were after him in a twinkling.



The juniors, clinging to each other, formed a human chain, and Bob Cherry was able to reach the unconscious form floating in the water.

Wharton's grasp was on his arm, Nugent was grasping Wharton and Nugent was gripped by Johnny Bull and Mark Linley. Hurree Singh and Tom Brown dashed to their aid and grasped them, and the whole body of juniors, clinging together, surged towards the shingle amid the tossing surf.

There was a rush of other fellows to aid them. Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, was on the spot in a moment. Coker, of the Fifth, was as quick. They grasped the reeling juniors and helped to drag them out. Clinging together, they staggered up the beach, hammered at and thundered on by the tearing surf. And in Bob Cherry's grasp there was a dragging form circled by a lifebelt.

Out of reach of the hungry surf at last!

"Got him!" panted Bob Cherry.

It was a boy Bob Cherry held in his grasp—

a lad of about his own age. The lad was quite unconscious, but he still breathed. His white, stony face was handsome in outline, the lashes of the closed eyes long and dark. He was half-dressed, as if he had been in his bunk when the alarm of danger roused him out.

"He lives!" said Mr. Quelch, bending over the still form. "Thank heaven one at least is saved. Take him to the Anchor—quick!"

The unconscious boy was carried quickly into the inn. The Greyfriars juniors followed—they were in need of dry clothes. All who helped in the rescue were soaked to the skin.

On the beach many still watched; but from the doomed vessel, grinding to pieces on the rocks of the Shoulder, there came no more alive. In a warm bed in the inn the rescued lad lay—tucked up in blankets, with a doctor looking after him. Before a blazing fire the

rescuers sat wrapped in blankets, too, while their clothes were drying. Bob Cherry blushed very much as the Head laid a hand upon his shoulder and gave him a word of praise for his prompt action.

"Only one life, I fear, has been saved," said the Head, "and that has been saved by a Greyfriars boy. You are a brave lad, Cherry, and I am proud of you."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Bob, as the Head moved away.

"Hear, hear!" said Harry Wharton. "It was jolly plucky, Bob—if I hadn't caught hold of you, you'd have gone out to sea holding that chap; and I should have gone after you, if somebody hadn't collared me."

"Jolly plucky!" said Johnny Bull. "Bob, old man, you're a giddy hero."

"Oh, rats!"

"He blusheth!" said Nugent. "That's right—true heroes are always modest."

"Shut up!" growled Bob.

"Jolly plucky of you, Cherry!" said Coker, of the Fifth. "I must say so."

"Look here," said Bob Cherry sulphurously, "I've got to stand it from the Head; but I won't stand it from you chaps. Shut up!"

And the chaps grinned and shut up.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

Touch and Go!

"I WONDER," said Harry Wharton, after a pause, "who the chap is."

"I was just thinking of the same thing," Frank Nugent remarked, with a nod. "I wonder if he is the new kid for Greyfriars School?"

"The wonderfulness is terrific," said Hurree Jamset Ram Singh. "I shall be very pleased if he turns out to be the newest kid from my own esteemed country!"

"It's very likely," said Bob. "He wasn't dressed like a ship's boy, anyway. He had only his bags on, with his pyjamas, and a coat. I suppose the poor kid was roused out of bed, and hadn't time to dress. But his bags aren't sailor bags. I shouldn't wonder if he's Cholmondeley—what a giddy name! Lucky it isn't pronounced as it's spelt; life's too short."

"I suppose we shall know soon," said Wharton thoughtfully. "Queer thing if the

Greyfriars chap is the only fellow saved from the wreck. Of course, others may be saved; they may have got a boat away. The boats were gone."

"Washed away, most likely."

"Yes, most likely; but it's possible some may have got off. I hope so, anyway. The Head's with the kid now. I wonder if a chap might ask whether he's Cholmondeley. He belongs to us, you know; Cholmondeley is coming into the Remove. He's been prepared for the Lower Fourth by a tutor in India, same as Inky was. Did you know any Cholmondeleys in India, Inky?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the Nabob of Bhanipur, looked thoughtful.

"There is a Sahib Cholmondeley who has a plantation in Bhanipur," he said. "I have seen him when I was at home."

"Might be the same family," said Bob. "Poor kid! He's a long way from home, and this is a rotten way to arrive at school—if he's Cholmondeley. I'd like to know!"

"Go in and see him," said Nugent. "As the heroic rescuer, you're entitled to ask how he is going on."

"Oh, rot!"

"That's right," said Harry Wharton. "Our clothes are nearly dry now, and we shall have to be getting back to Greyfriars. We want to know whether Cholmondeley has been saved. You can ask, Bob, as the heroic—"

"Shurrup!"

"Well, go in and see if he's Cholmondeley."

Bob hesitated, then rose to his feet. The juniors were naturally curious to know whether the rescued boy was their new schoolmate. It was terrible to think of the boy who had come so far to Greyfriars having met his death so close to the school—in the surf raging on the rocks of the Shoulder. It would be a great relief to their minds if the rescued lad turned out to be the junior expected at the school.

The clothes were dry now, and Bob Cherry dressed himself and slipped through the open door into the adjoining room, where the rescued lad lay still unconscious in bed. Dr. Locke and Mr. Quelch were there, with the medical man, speaking in low voices. Bob coughed slightly, and Dr. Locke turned his head.

"If you please, sir," stammered Bob, "we—we should like to know whether that chap is the new Greyfriars chap, sir?"

Dr. Locke nodded kindly.

"I understand, Cherry," he said. "And I am glad to say that such is the case."

"Has he spoken yet, sir?"

"No; he has not yet recovered consciousness. But his name has been found on his linen, and letters addressed to him in his pocket."

"Oh, good, sir! And—and is he in danger?"

"Not at all. Dr. Pillbury assures me that he will be quite restored after a few days' rest. You may be quite easy about that."

"I'm jolly glad to hear it, sir!" said Bob. "Thank you, sir!"

And he returned to his companions.

"Well?" asked all the juniors together.

"He's Chummy—I mean, Cholmondeley—and he's not in danger," announced Bob. "So everything in the garden is lovely!"

"Good egg!"

Wingate looked into the room.

"Time you kids were back at Greyfriars," he said. "Come along!"

And the juniors dressed and quitted the inn. The hour was late when they reached Greyfriars, but sleep was impossible. The storm was still raging with fearful violence, and every window in the old school was rattling, and the branches of the old elms in the Close groaned and crashed.

"What a giddy night!" said Bob Cherry, as he rolled into warm blankets in the Remove dormitory.

"Anybody saved?" asked Billy Bunter, waking up and blinking at the juniors as they turned in.

Billy Bunter was one of the fellows who had not gone down to the bay at the alarm of a shipwreck. Billy Bunter preferred a warm bed to a storm-swept shore.

"One chap," said Harry Wharton. "Bob pulled him out. He's the new chap for Greyfriars—Clive Cholmondeley."

"Oh, good!" said Bunter. "When is he coming here?"

"To-morrow, most likely."

"I say, you fellows, considering what he's been through, we ought to give him a bit of a welcome," said Bunter.

"We're going to, Tubby."

"I mean, we might stand him a feed," said Bunter. "I suggest raising a subscription all round for a really first-class, spanking spread, and placing the money in my hands—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Blessed if I can see anything to cackle at! You could leave all the arrangements to me. I'd take care of everything—"

"Especially the grub!" remarked Vernon-Smith.

"Oh, really, Smithy, I think it's up to us to look after the new chap a bit, considering the circumstances. But you fellows always were selfish!"

"What?"

"If there's one thing I can't stand, it's selfishness," said Billy Bunter loftily. "I never was selfish; I can say that."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"How much are you going to subscribe, Wharton, if I make a whip-round?" asked Bunter.

"Nothing—if you make it," said Wharton.

"How much, Cherry—?"

"Nix!"

"What will you shell out, Johnny Bull, considering that the chap has been nearly drowned, you know?"

"I don't see that his being nearly drowned is a reason for feeding a fat, greedy porpoise!" growled Johnny Bull. "You won't get anything out of me! Precious little Cholmondeley would see of the feed!"

"How much, Bulstrode—?"

"Rats!" said Bulstrode.

"I suppose you'll hand out something, Toddy?"

"I'll hand out a thick ear, if you don't shut up!" grunted Peter Todd.

"Oh, really, Toddy! Look here, you fellows, in a case like this you ought to rally round, you know. Make it a tanner each. Yaroooooh!"

Two pillows whizzed through the air from different directions and caught Billy Bunter on either side of the head.

Biff ! Biff !

"Ow ! Ow ! Beasts !" roared Bunter. "Who threw those pillows ? I'll smash him ! Own up, you rotter, if you're not a funk ! I'll—"

"I threw one," said Bob Cherry. "Come and begin the smashing !"

"I threw the other," said Tom Brown, the New Zealander. "I'll take my turn after Bob when the smashing begins."

"Ahem ! If it was only a joke, I—I'll let you off," said Bunter.

"But it wasn't a joke," said Bob.

"It wasn't a joke," said Tom Brown.

"Well, I—I'll let you off, anyway ; it's too cold to get out of bed and lick you," said Bunter.

And he rolled over and went to sleep again. The roar of the storm outside did not interfere with the slumbers of the Owl of the Remove, and his deep and steady snore was soon rivalling the growl of the thunder.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### The Sole Survivor.

THE clear, bright winter sunlight streamed in at the diamond-paned window.

The boy moved restlessly in bed, and opened his eyes.

His face was healthier now. In his long, deep sleep the colour had come back into his cheeks, and the haggard, drawn look had gone.

The boy who had been through the valley of the shadow of death had awokened again to life, and he lay silent, with blinking eyes in the sunshine, wondering.

Where was he ?

His last recollection was of a reeling deck, a raging sea, cruel rocks looming up through the surf like savage teeth. Then darkness and the deep had engulfed him. He had gone to death, but now he awokened to life. Dimly he remembered fastening on the lifebelt ere he slipped from the shattered wreck. Had it brought him ashore, then ? Was he alive and safe ?

He moved his head, and looked round him. He was in a little bed room of the inn, with the sunshine gleaming on the diamond panes in the old-fashioned window. He was alive—

he was safe—and there was a sense of comfort and ease in all his tired limbs as he stretched in the warm bed.

A little, bald-headed man, in glasses and a black frock-coat, came towards the bed as the boy looked round again.

"Well, and how do you feel this morning ?" Dr. Pillbury asked genially.

The boy gazed at him without speaking.

"Quite safe and sound !" said the medical gentleman. "Right as rain, Master Cholmondeley ! Do you feel better ?"

A look of surprise came over the boy's handsome, clear-cut face.

But still he did not speak. He was fully conscious now—keenly, sharply conscious—but he was too weak to talk.

"You were saved last night by one of your future schoolmates," said the doctor kindly—"one of the boys from Greyfriars !"

"Greyfriars ?" the boy murmured in wonder.

"Yes. You will go there to-day, if you are sufficiently recovered ; but do not talk now. Go to sleep, my lad."

"Cholmondeley !" murmured the boy. "Greyfriars !"

Then his eyes closed again.

"He is wandering a little, I think," Dr. Pillbury said in a low voice to the stout, kindly dame who had come in to look after the rescued lad. "But he will be all right. I will look in again this afternoon."

It was hours later when the boy's eyes reopened.

He glanced round him dazedly, and then seemed to remember. His eyes moved, and he murmured :

"Cholmondeley ! Greyfriars !"

The red-faced dame turned towards him. She was a kind fisher-wife, who had taken charge of the young invalid, nurses not being available in Pegg.

"Woke up, dearie ?" she said. "Do you feel hungry ?"

The boy nodded.

He was propped up on pillows to eat broth. He ate with a keen appetite, and he looked stronger and better when he had finished. Dr. Pillbury came in, and gave a nod of approval as he saw him.



Two pillows whizzed through the air and caught Bunter on either side of his head. Biff ! Biff ! " Ow ! Ow ! Beasts ! " roared Bunter.

"Good—very good," he said. "Another night's rest, and you will be able to go to Greyfriars, Master Cholmondeley."

"To go to Greyfriars ?" repeated the boy.

"Yes. The doctor smiled pleasantly, wondering whether the terrible shock of the shipwreck had affected the boy's mind. "Don't you remember ? You have come from India to go to school at Greyfriars."

"Oh !"

"Your schoolfellows are all ready to welcome you."

"Are they ?"

"You were rescued by one of them last night—a lad named Cherry. He has come over to see you, and I think you are strong enough to see him, if you do not talk too much. Would you like him to come up ?"

"Yes. But—"

"Well, my dear boy ?"

"You—you have called me—me—Cholmondeley !"

"Yes, quite so," said the doctor soothingly.

"Ah, perhaps you are surprised that we know your name ? Is that it ?"

The boy nodded.

"Your initials were on your linen, and your name on some things," the doctor explained, "and you had letters on you in your coat pocket, addressed to you on board the ship, and which you must have received at some port of call. That is how we knew your identity."

"Oh, I see !"

"Quite clear now ?" smiled the medico.

"Yes. But—but—I—"

"You are thinking about your father ? He has already been cabled to," said the doctor reassuringly. "He will receive the cable announcing that you are safe a considerable time before the news of the wreck of the Adler reaches him. He will suffer no alarm. Dr. Locke thought of that at once."

"My—my father !"

"Yes, Mr. Cholmondeley !"

"Mr. Cholmondeley ! My father !"

Dr. Pillbury gave the red-faced dame a significant glance.

"He is still dazed," he murmured. "No wonder, considering what he has been through. Don't let the Greyfriars boy stay more than ten minutes. Now, Master Cholmondeley, good-bye, and your friend is coming up to see you for ten minutes."

"But—but I must tell you—I must tell you—"

"Yes, what?"

The boy's voice died away. He did not reply.

"You have something to tell me?" asked the doctor, puzzled.

"No, nothing."

"Then good-bye."

The doctor left, and a couple of minutes later Bob Cherry entered the room. Bob had ridden over on his bicycle from Greyfriars to see how the invalid was getting on. He came to the bedside, and the boy's eyes turned to his inquiringly.

"Feeling pretty fit, eh?" asked Bob Cherry cheerily.

"Yes; I am getting better. I have had a shock. I hardly know where I am, or who I am," said the boy, with a strange smile.

"No wonder," said Bob sympathetically. "You must have gone through a fearful time. Jolly glad we were there to pull you out."

"You pulled me out?"

"All of us did—the Remove chaps, you know," said Bob. "You're coming into the Remove. That's the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars, you know. We shall be jolly glad to see you there, Chummy—I mean, Cholmondeley."

The boy smiled.

"I suppose they call you something for short, eh?" asked Bob, with a smile, too.

"You can call me Chummy, if you like. I always—I mean, I should like it. I hope you will be friends with me if I come to Greyfriars."

"Of course I will!" said Bob heartily. "And there's no 'if' about it. You're coming to Greyfriars right enough, kid. You belong to us."

The boy was silent for some moments.

"Has anybody else been saved from the wreck?" he asked.

Bob shook his head sadly.

"Nobody's been heard of," he said.

"But they have come ashore by this time?"

"Only dead men," said Bob in a low voice, "and not all of them. There must have been a good many on board, but only six bodies have been recovered so far. There are a lot of under-currents round the Shoulder, and a man drowned there hasn't much chance of floating ashore afterwards.

"Only men?"

"Yes, no women," said Bob, "or kids either."

"Then I am the only one saved?"

"The only one."

The boy closed his eyes for a moment. Bob Cherry watched him curiously. The fact that he was the only one saved did not seem to grieve the lad very keenly. He seemed to be thinking of something else.

"And Mr. Cholmondeley has already been cabled to that his son is safe?" the boy muttered at last, opening his eyes and looking strangely at Bob Cherry.

"Yes, rather. The Head thought of that at once. If your father had heard of the shipwreck first, it would have made him feel pretty bad, I should think. Now he'll get the Head's cable first."

The boy smiled.

"Well, it was not my doing," he said.

"Of course it wasn't," said Bob, in surprise. "You were fast asleep. But—but you wanted the cable to be sent, surely?"

"Yes—yes, of course. I—I am rather dazed now. I hardly know what I say," the boy muttered, the colour flushing into his cheeks.

Bob Cherry was remorseful at once.

"Of course, and here I am jawing to you like a silly ass, when I ought to be gone. Would you like me to come over and see you again?"

"Yes, very much."

"Then I'll bike over this evening. I can easily get leave. Give us your fin."

And Bob Cherry cordially squeezed the hand of the rescued lad and left him. The boy lay back in bed, his eyes half-closed, looking at the diamond panes in the window. Strange thoughts were passing in his mind—thoughts that would have amazed the red-

faced, good-natured fisher-dame if she could have guessed them. But she did not guess them, and she went on calmly knitting, while the boy lay there and thought—and thought—and thought, till at last he fell asleep again, and his thoughts merged into dreams.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER Cholmondeley Arrives !

"**B**IT queer still, but getting on all right," was Bob Cherry's verdict to the fellows who asked for news when he returned to Greyfriars.

"What sort of a chap is he?" asked Vernon-Smith.

"Seems very decent; speaks nicely, too. He's a bit dazed still, no wonder. He's been through enough to turn a chap's hair grey," said Bob feelingly. "He'll get over it all right, though; and we'll go easy with him when he gets here."

Bolsover major grunted.

"I don't believe in coddling new kids, whether they've been shipwrecked or not," he said.

Bob Cherry turned towards the bully of the Remove with a gleam in his eyes.

"I don't care twopence what you believe in or don't!" he exclaimed. "But if you begin any rot with Cholmondeley you'll get into trouble. That kid isn't going to be bullied just after escaping from a shipwreck. You remember that!"

"Oh, rats!" said Bolsover major.

"And if you say rats to me again, I'll begin on you now!" exclaimed Bob angrily.

"Easy does it," said Harry Wharton. "Bolsover won't bully the new kid. We'll scalp him if he does. It's up to us all to make things easy for him after what he's been through. We all know that."

"Yaas," said Lord Mauleverer, the dandy of the Remove, "if you worry him, Bolsover, my dear fellow, I shall really be driven to takin' a hand and lickin' you myself, don't you know."

The juniors chuckled, and even Bolsover grinned at the idea of Lord Mauleverer licking him. Even Bob Cherry, the great fighting-man of the Remove, had to go "all out" to accomplish that difficult feat.

"Oh, if you're going to lick me, Mauly, I'm done!" said Bolsover, with a grin. "All the same, I don't believe in coddling new kids."

And Bolsover walked away.

"I say, you fellows, what about the idea of standing the new kid a feed?" asked Billy Bunter anxiously. "I'm quite willing to undertake all the arrangements."

"Rats!"

"But I say, you fellows, don't walk away while I'm talking to you!" roared Bunter. "Where are your manners—eh? I say—beasts!"

Bunter finished his remarks to the desert air.

The Removites waited with considerable interest for the arrival of Cholmondeley at the school. The fellows in the other Forms were interested in him, too. His arrival was dramatic, to say the least. The sole survivor of a big shipwreck was an interesting personage. And it had come out, too, that Cholmondeley was a rich fellow, his father being a very rich planter in Bhanipur, the native state of which Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, of the Remove, was Nabob. He was sent home to Europe for his education, after being prepared up to a certain point by a tutor in India.

He would probably be rolling in rupees, or in their English equivalent, and that idea made Snoop and Skinner and Bunter very keen to make his acquaintance.

On the following day, in the afternoon, Cholmondeley arrived.

It was a half-holiday at Greyfriars, being a Wednesday, and football was going on strong on the playing-fields. All traces of the late storm were gone, and the day was bright and sunny. Cholmondeley came over in a trap from the Anchor Inn at Pegg. He was dressed in the regulation school kit, sent over from Greyfriars for him, belonging to a lad his size.

All his property of every kind had gone down in the Adler, of course, and he required a new outfit for Greyfriars, and the Head ordered it for him. Meanwhile, he was arrayed in Frank Nugent's Sunday best, and looked very well in them. His face had lost its paleness now, and was bright, keen, and healthy, though there was a thoughtful cloud

on his brow. But it was natural that a lad who had been through such terrible peril should remain in a somewhat subdued mood afterwards.

Cholmondeley left the trap at the gates, and walked into the Close with an easy, springy gait. A shout from the direction of the football-field came to his ears.

"Goal!"

"Bravo, Bob!"

The boy's face lighted up, and he walked towards the football ground. The Remove were playing the Upper Fourth, and Temple, Dabney & Co. of the Fourth were having all their work cut out to keep their end up. It was an inspiring scene, the nimble figures in footer shirts and shorts flitting to and fro, and the crowd of fellows round the field shouting and clapping. Bob Cherry had just put the ball in, and the Remove fellows were cheering him loudly.

Clive Cholmondeley's face lighted as he looked at Bob Cherry. This was the boy who had saved his life, never pausing for a moment to think of the risk to himself. The new junior's look, as his eyes rested on Bob, showed that there was deep and sincere gratitude and regard in his breast. As Cholmondeley stood looking on at the restart of the game after Bob Cherry's goal, he felt a touch on his elbow, and glanced down at a fat junior, whose plump little nose was adorned by a big pair of spectacles. The fat junior nodded to him with great cordiality.

"You're Chumchum, ain't you?" he asked.  
"Cholmondeley."

"Yes, that's it. Glad to see you," said Bunter affably. "Not feeling any bad effects after your swim—eh?"

Cholmondeley smiled.

"Thanks. I'm feeling fit enough now," he said.

"I'm Bunter," went on the fat junior confidentially. "William George Bunter, of the Remove, a leading chap in the Form. I've been looking for you, Cholmondeley. I want to make you welcome to Greyfriars, in the name of the Form."

"You are very kind," said the new junior.

"Not at all," said Bunter graciously. "I should like to look after you a bit, and show

you the ropes, you know. I'm always very kind to new chaps. New chap myself once, you know, though I soon got on to things. Force of character, you know."

"Yes," said Cholmondeley, eyeing the fat junior in surprise. From appearances, he would never have suspected Billy Bunter of possessing much character of any kind.

"I want to look after you a bit, considering what you've been through," said Bunter. "I suppose you're hungry—what?"

"Thank you, no."

"I was thinking of standing you a feed at the tuck-shop to begin," explained Bunter. "Mrs. Mimble has some new pies in to-day."

"You're very kind, but I'd rather watch the footer, thanks."

"Play footer?" asked Bunter.

"No; but I want to learn. I've always wanted to play, but never had a chance."

"S'pose you don't get many chances of footer in India, on plantations and things?" agreed Bunter.

The colour crept into Cholmondeley's face for some reason, but he nodded. But Billy Bunter was too short-sighted to notice the new boy's flushed face.

"I'll tell you what," said Bunter. "I'll take you up and teach you footer. I'm not a chap to brag, but I'm about the best footballer in the Remove. I'm not in the Form Eleven. Wharton's got all that into his hands, you know, and he plays only his own friends, and they keep out a player like me. Sheer jealousy, you know."

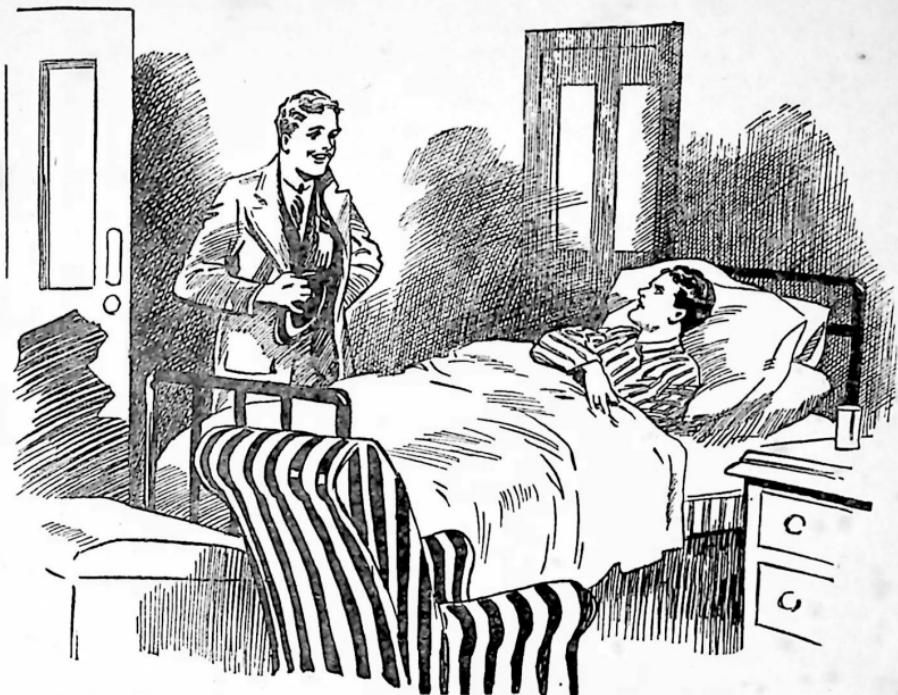
"Who's Wharton?"

"Captain of the Remove. Every Form has a captain here, you know. That chap running after the ball now. Fellow with dark hair."

Cholmondeley glanced towards Harry Wharton. The handsome, frank face of the Remove captain did not bear out Bunter's description of him; and Cholmondeley was already beginning to have his own ideas about Bunter's veracity.

"In fact, you can depend on me to see you through," said Billy Bunter kindly.

"By the way, Cholmondeley, old fellow I'm in a bit of a hole just now. I'm expecting a postal-order; but there's been some delay



"Feeling pretty fit?" asked Bob Cherry, as he came to Cholmondeley's bedside. "Yes," replied the boy. "But I hardly know where I am or who I am."

in the post, and it hasn't arrived yet. It will be for five shillings. I suppose you wouldn't mind handing me the five bob now, and taking the postal-order when it comes?"

"Sorry, but—"

"Of course, I shall hand you the postal-order immediately it arrives," said Bunter. "You may rely upon that."

"Yes, but—"

"Well, suppose you make it half-a-crown, and I'll settle up out of the postal-order this—this evening," said Bunter. "That won't hurt you, old chap."

"No, but—"

"Now, look here, Cholmondeley, I'm really in want of a little loan for a few hours. I'm not a borrowing chap, and this is, in fact, the first time I've ever asked any fellow to lend me money. If you can let me have

half-a-crown till my postal-order comes—"

"I would with pleasure, but—"

"I suppose you can trust me," said Bunter, with a great deal of dignity.

"Oh, yes, but—"

"Then why can't you make me a little loan?" demanded Bunter.

"I haven't any money," Cholmondeley explained.

"Eh!"

"Everything I had went down in the steamer. I haven't a coin of any sort about me. Otherwise, I should be pleased—"

"Oh, rats!" growled Bunter.

And the fat junior rolled away. He had wasted a quarter of an hour on the new fellow, and without succeeding in extracting the smallest financial assistance from him. Bunter's feeling of disgust was too deep for

words. He had no further time to waste upon a fellow who had come to Greyfriars without a coin in his pockets, and he rolled off grumbling. Cholmondeley grinned, and resumed watching the football, untroubled by any further kind attentions on the part of the Owl of the Remove.

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

Mr. Quelch is Surprised !

“ **S**TORIDINARY thing ! ” said Temple of the Fourth.

The extraordinary thing that surprised Temple was the fact that the Remove had beaten the Fourth Form by three goals to one. But the Removites did not regard it as being in the least surprising ; they would have been surprised if the match had turned out otherwise. Harry Wharton & Co. came off the football field feeling very satisfied with themselves and things generally. And as Wharton was coming away from the ground, with a coat and muffler over his scanty attire, he caught sight of the new junior.

“ Hallo, here’s Cholmondeley ! ” he exclaimed.

“ Hallo, hallo, hallo ! ” exclaimed Bob Cherry in his hearty, powerful tones, as he ran up to the new fellow. “ So you’ve arrived.”

“ Yes, here I am.”

“ Looking pretty fit, too,” said Bob, scanning the face of the shipwrecked schoolboy. “ Glad to see that. Quite pulled through—what ? ”

“ I hope so,” said Cholmondeley.

“ These chaps have seen you before,” said Bob, presenting his friends. “ You haven’t seen them, because you were in the arms of Murphy when we dragged you out ! ”

“ Morpheus, you ass ! ” roared Nugent.

“ Well, you had your peepers shut, and couldn’t see anything,” said Bob. “ This ass is Harry Wharton, captain of the Remove ; this duffer is Frank Nugent ; the chump with the broad shoulders is Johnny Bull ; and the individual with the beautiful rich complexion is Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, Nabob of Bhanipur, Great Panjandrum of Boggle-wollah, Lord High Rajah of the Black Hole of Calcutta and First Cousin of the Sun and Moon. We call him Inky for short.”

“ Ha, ha, ha ! ”

“ Bob, you ass ! ”

Cholmondeley grinned as he shook hands with the chums of the Remove. Bob Cherry’s breezy introduction placed them on a friendly footing at once.

“ We’re going to have tea in the study as soon as we’ve changed,” said Harry Wharton.

“ Will you join us, Cholmondeley ? ”

“ Thank you, I shall be glad,” said Cholmondeley.

“ You haven’t reported yourself to Quelchy yet ? ” asked Nugent.

“ Quelchy ? ” said Cholmondeley, puzzled.

“ Mr. Quelch, you know, the master of the Remove—our Quelchy. You’ll have to jaw to him first thing. Trot along, and I’ll show you his study ! ”

“ Thanks ! ”

Cholmondeley accompanied the juniors into the School House. A good many other fellows came up to speak to him—to congratulate him on his escape, or to give him a word of welcome to Greyfriars, or both. The new junior’s first impression of Greyfriars was decidedly a pleasant one. Most of the fellows seemed kindness itself—especially Harry Wharton & Co. Even Bolsover major, in spite of his stated objection to the “ coddling ” of new kids, did not make himself disagreeable just then.

And Mr. Quelch, when Cholmondeley entered his study to report his arrival, was very kind, too.

“ I must assign you to a study in the Remove passage,” he added, after a little talk with the new junior. “ Let me see——”

He reflected.

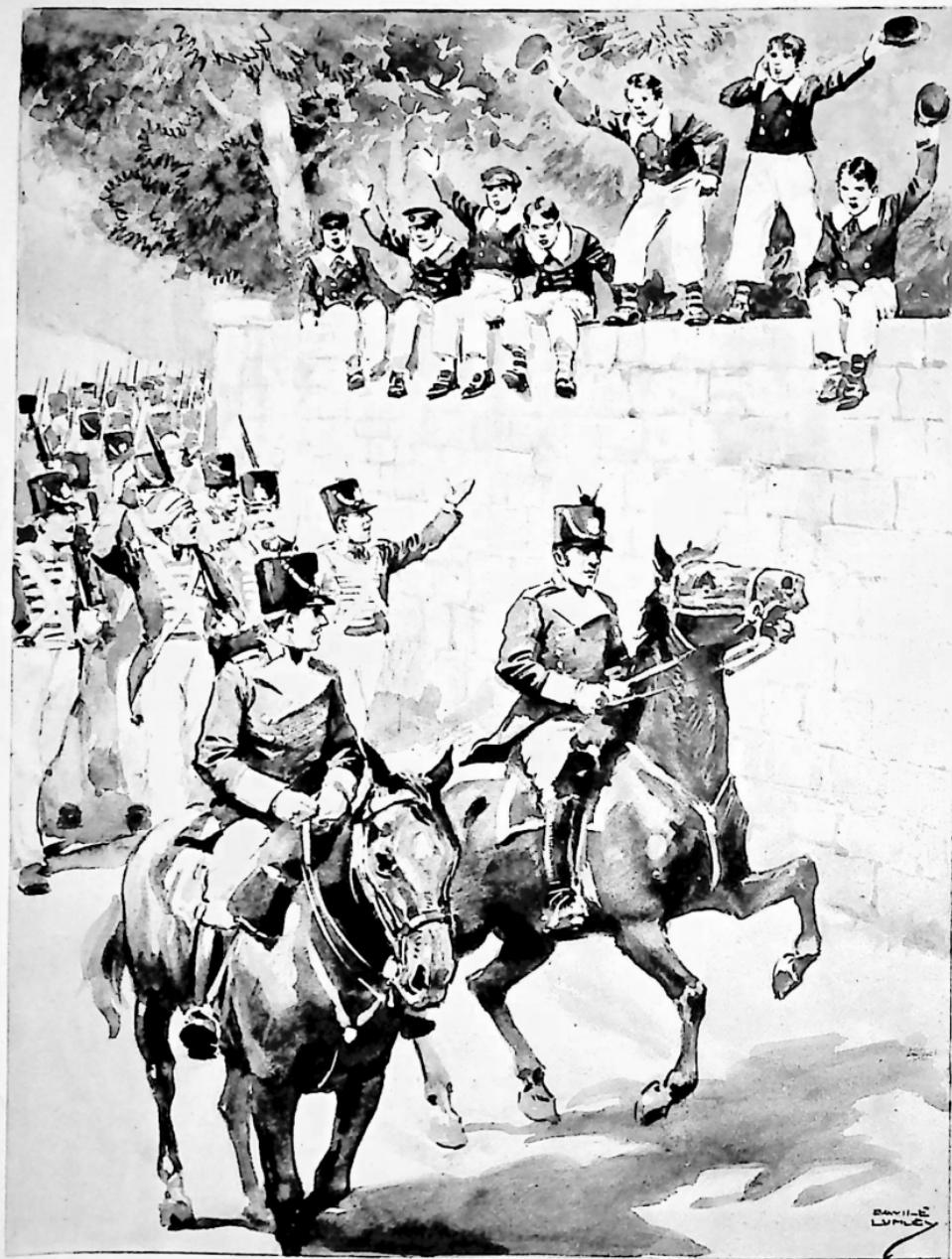
“ If you please, sir——” ventured Cholmondeley.

“ Yes ? ”

“ If there isn’t any objection, sir, I should like to be put in the same study with Cherry ; he is in the same Form, I think.”

Mr. Quelch smiled.

“ The lad who saved your life,” he said. “ I am glad to see that you have a regard for Cherry, my boy. He is a very manly and wholesome lad, and his friendship would be worth a great deal to you. I am sorry I cannot put you into his study, as there are four boys in



## Cheering the Victors of Waterloo!

**G**REAT excitement and joy prevailed in England in 1815 when it was learned that the Duke of Wellington had defeated Napoleon Bonaparte at Waterloo. Prior to the battle the British had retreated before Napoleon's army to the Belgian village of Waterloo. At eleven o'clock on June 18th the French Emperor ordered his cavalry to attack, and for ten hours the stubborn squares of British infantry held them at bay. But then the tide of battle turned, and the French forces were beaten back and began a retreat, which finally became a rout. The defeat of the French was so decisive that Napoleon, four days later in Paris, signed his second abdication.

The great victory brought a two-fold joy to the boys of Greyfriars School, for to commemorate the memorable occasion the Head, Dr. Fryer, gave all the scholars a day's holiday.

A few weeks later boys of Greyfriars were again reminded of Wellington's victory. It was on a Wednesday afternoon, when most of the fellows were out of doors. But a few were within the school when a fellow rushed in at the gates and passed the word round that a column of soldiers were approaching. All the juniors within gates clambered on to the school wall, the better to view the soldiers passing by. Such a sight was a rarity and was not to be missed.

At last two mounted officers appeared in sight, followed by rank after rank of soldiers in their war-worn scarlet uniforms. They were Infantry of the Line, and, as the juniors soon learned, had just landed in England fresh from their victory at Waterloo. The men were marching to London from the coast.

The juniors cheered wildly as the soldiers passed. Many of them were still wearing bandages over their wounds received in battle, but all were in happy mood and greeted the boys cheerily. Column after column went by, and the fellows cheered and cheered again until the last had disappeared along the lane. To the end of his days, every Greyfriars boy who saw it treasured the memory of this sight of the Iron Duke's invincible infantry, the finest fighting soldiers in the world !

No. 13 now—Cherry, Linley, Hurree Singh, and Wun Lung. I must put you into No. 14."

"Very well, sir."

"Another matter. It appears that everything you possessed has gone down in the steamer. Nothing is likely to be recovered. The headmaster has ordered a new outfit for you, the bill for which will be sent in due course to your father. As you will require pocket-money, that will be advanced by the Head."

Cholmondeley started.

"Money, sir !"

"Yes. I understand you have none."

"None, sir."

"What amount of pocket-money did your father arrange for you to have ?" asked Mr. Quelch.

"I—I—I don't know."

Mr. Quelch looked surprised.

"You do not know ? It does not appear that your father arranged it with Dr. Locke, as the Head asked me to speak to you about it. Perhaps the matter was overlooked."

"Yes, sir, that is it."

"You will require something," said Mr. Quelch. "Five shillings a week is a sufficiently large allowance for a boy in the Lower Fourth. If your father wishes you to have more, or less, he will tell us so when he communicates with Dr. Locke. Meanwhile, I shall hand you five shillings every Saturday."

"If you don't mind, sir, I—I'd rather not."

"What do you mean, Cholmondeley ?"

"I—I'd rather leave it till—till my father sends me money, sir," stammered the new junior, flushing. "I don't want any, really. If my father wants me to have an allowance, he will say so, and—and then—"

Mr. Quelch nodded. Cholmondeley's agitation surprised him a little ; but there might be many reasons to account for his unwillingness to take the money. Mr. Quelch knew nothing of the boy's father. He might be a stingy man, who declined to make his son an allowance at all, wealthy as he was, for all the Remove-master knew. That would account for Cholmondeley's embarrassment on the subject.

"Very well, Cholmondeley ; we will leave it till your father has written," said the

**Form-master.** "Now, considering what you have gone through, I shall be very easy with you at first in the matter of lessons. But I think we had better go over your work a little, so that I can see where to place you."

"Certainly, sir."

And Cholmondeley went through a brief but keen examination at the hands of the Remove-master. Mr. Quelch was a little surprised by the result. It was understood that the Anglo-Indian junior had been specially prepared for the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars. But, if so, the preparation left a great deal to be desired in some respects. Upon some points Cholmondeley was much better informed than the best scholar in the Remove.

Of history and general literature he knew very much and his knowledge of mathematics was up to Fifth Form standard. His knowledge of English was thorough, and his geography was on a level with Mr. Quelch's own knowledge of the subject. But of French and Latin—both compulsory subjects at Greyfriars—he hardly knew anything. In French the fags of the Second Form could have beaten him easily, and of Latin he knew hardly as much as a "babe" in the First Form still struggling with Balbus and the wall that Balbus was building.

Mr. Quelch looked very thoughtful indeed. Cholmondeley looked uncomfortable and self-conscious, evidently quite aware of his deficiencies.

"This is very peculiar," Mr. Quelch said at last. "I understood, certainly, that your tutor had specially prepared you for entrance into my Form, Cholmondeley. In some respects you are suited for a much higher Form; but in two subjects, at least, it will be very difficult for you to take your place in the Lower Fourth. In French and Latin the Form work would have no meaning to you, as you do not seem to have grasped the very elements of them. Yet I cannot put you into a lower Form, considering your age and your proficiency in other subjects."

"I—I mean to pick up, sir," stammered Cholmondeley. "If you'll give me a chance, sir, I'll work like anything. I'm a good worker!"

The Form-master smiled.

"Well, that is the right spirit," he said. "If you are willing to work very hard, Cholmondeley, you may recover lost ground. I should be willing to give you some extra coaching in Latin, and Monsieur Charpentier will be kind enough to help you with your French, I am sure. I will speak to him if you wish."

"Oh, thank you, sir! You are very kind."

"I hope I shall always be willing to take trouble for a boy who wishes to progress," said Mr. Quelch. "That is arranged, then. For the present, you shall have some easy exercises to occupy you during the lessons you are not yet fitted for, and we will do our best in our spare time to improve your knowledge of those subjects. Now you may go, Cholmondeley."

And Mr. Quelch shook hands with the new junior, and dismissed him.

Cholmondeley drew a deep, deep breath when he was outside the Form-master's study.

"Safe through that!" he murmured. "But how long—how long is it going to last? Is it worth while? Is it worth while?"

Unconsciously the boy had muttered the words aloud. He started as another voice broke in:

"Hallo—hallo—hallo! Talking to yourself, old son? Tea's ready!"

Cholmondeley flushed crimson as he faced Bob Cherry. Bob took his arm and walked him away to No. 1 Study, where the festive board was spread. And during that merry meal the new boy recovered his spirits, and he was soon very lively and cheerful.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER A Tough Customer!

STUDY No. 1 was crowded for that little tea-party.

The study belonged to Harry Wharton and Frank Nugent, but it was the headquarters of the Famous Fiye, and when the chums of the Remove stood a "brew," it generally took place in No. 1. Johnny Bull and Bob Cherry and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh and Mark Linley were present, as well as the owners of



"I say, Cholmondeley, old fellow," said Bunter, "I'm in a bit of a hole just now. Can you lend me five shillings till my postal-order comes?"



the study. Billy Bunter had dropped in; but Wharton had dropped him out again, and the Owl of the Remove was not now visible. Clive Cholmondeley was the guest of honour, and the juniors made much of him.

They had a natural kind desire to make his arrival at Greyfriars as pleasant as possible, after the terrible experience that had greeted his arrival on the shores of the Old Country.

For that reason, Hurree Jamset Ram Singh chatted to him about India, Bhanipur, plantations, rupees, ghauts and nullahs, and other things with weird and fearsome names. But, somehow or other, the new boy showed a disinclination to talk about India.

It was understood that Clive Cholmondeley had been born in India, and brought up there till his present age, and so India must have seemed like home to him. But it was not a subject to his taste, as soon became clear.

"I think I have had the esteemed pleasure

of seeing your honourable and august father, my worthy Cholmondeley," Hurree Singh remarked pleasantly in his wonderful English.

The new junior looked at him.

"My father!" he repeated.

"Yes; the esteemed Sahib Cholmondeley. Is he not the owner of the Mahalja plantation in Bhanipur?"

Cholmondeley nodded.

"Then it is the sameful sahib. He has a concession granted by my esteemed father, the late Nabob of Bhanipur, many years ago," said Hurree Singh. "I have ridden over his honourable plantation."

"You have!" exclaimed Cholmondeley.

"Oh!"

"You didn't expect to meet here a chap who'd seen your quarters at home, did you?" Bob Cherry grinned. "It's a giddy small world, you know, after all!"

"Yes, it seems so," said Cholmondeley,

upon whom a strange depression seemed to have fallen. "Are there any other chaps here from India?"

"No; Inky is the solitary specimen. But we've got a Chinaman in the Remove," said Harry Wharton. "Why, it might have happened that you'd have known Inky, you know. Queer to meet an old acquaintance, wouldn't it be?"

"Very queer!" said Cholmondeley.

"I did not have the pleasure of seeing our esteemed friend," said Hurree Singh. "He was away at school in Calcutta, I think, when I ridefully beheld the plantation. It was a great misfortune for my esteemed self!"

Cholmondeley laughed.

"You can have the pleasure of seeing me now," he remarked.

"I suppose you get a good time out there?" Johnny Bull remarked. "Lots of sport—tiger-shooting, and things?"

"Not for kids like me," said Cholmondeley. "I don't like India. By the way, I was watching your match this afternoon—"

Cholmondeley's wish to change the subject was so evident that the juniors politely dropped India at once.

"You play footer?" asked Harry Wharton.

"No, but I want to. I've never had a chance to play, but I should like to, very much, if I have a chance here."

"Games are compulsory here," said Wharton. "Every chap is bound to take healthy exercise, whether he wants to or not. If you are keen on footer, we'll back you up. You can start practice to-morrow, and we'll all rally round and give you points."

"Thanks! I shall be jolly glad!"

"If you'd like to put down your name for the Remove footer-club, I'm sec.," said Frank Nugent, taking out a note-book.

"Yes, rather!"

"The subscription can stand over for a bit. You didn't bring any rupees ashore from the Adler, I suppose?"

"Nothing at all."

"Quelchy will fix up that for you if you ask him," said Wharton. "It will take some time to get letters to and from India. You can't go without pocket-money all the time."

Cholmondeley flushed.

"I—I'd rather leave it till I get money from home," he said, pausing a little before the last word. "I don't like borrowing, or anything of that kind. Don't put my name down yet, after all."

"Oh, I'll put it down!" said Nugent. "So long as the subscription comes in before the end of the term, that will be all right. Lots of the fellows leave theirs over; in fact, I have to chase them sometimes for their subs. If you don't like to ask Quelchy for any tin, we'll raise a loan for you, if you like, in this study, to be repaid when you get your giddy rupees from India."

"Oh, no, no!" said Cholmondeley hastily.

"But you can't go round with nothing in your pocket, for weeks on end?" exclaimed Nugent, in surprise.

"I—I don't like borrowing, if you don't mind. Thanks all the same!"

"Well, that's all right; but you'll find that you'll want some tin," said Harry Wharton. "If you change your mind, the offer's still open, unless we happen to be stony at the time."

"Right-ho!" said Cholmondeley.

When tea was over, Johnny Bull walked off with Cholmondeley, to take him to his study, the new junior having informed him that Mr. Quelch had assigned him to No. 14.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

### Not Rolling in Money!

CHOLMONDELEY had started well in the Remove.

The fellows made many variations upon his imposing name, but Cholmondeley only laughed. He did not mind in the least. As Bob Cherry remarked, the world generally had found life too short to pronounce that name as it was spelt, and it was therefore pronounced Chumley. But the Removites were not content with Chumley; they varied it with Chump-chump, and Chew-chum, and Chin-chin, and Chew-gum, and many other fearsome varieties, all of which the new junior took in good part.

He was a good-natured fellow, and his chief drawback, from the point of view of most of the fellows, was a queer and

inexplicable liking for study. Chew-gum, as Bob Cherry remarked, seemed to have the extraordinary idea in his head that school was a place where you came to learn things.

Under the influence of that extraordinary idea, Cholmondeley swotted over his work, especially French and Latin.

Mr. Quelch, who afforded him every aid in the classics, was delighted with his keenness, and more than satisfied with his progress. Monsieur Charpentier, who gave him extra French, was more than delighted with him. The new junior seemed to devour French, which Mossoo took as a great compliment to his language, and he was willing to render the new boy any amount of assistance. German was not a compulsory subject, and the new boy did not take German in class; but he had let fall a remark indicating that he would have been very glad to be numbered among the pupils of Herr Gans.

"A rotten swot!" said Bolsover major, in utter disgust.

Bolsover major certainly was never accused of swotting, or of doing any work at all if he could help it.

If Cholmondeley had been nothing but a swot, the juniors would very soon have come to regard him with feelings like Bolsover major's, but he was almost equally keen on outdoor games of all kinds.

He tackled football, under the tuition of Harry Wharton & Co., with a keenness that was very surprising in a fellow who was also a "swot."

And not only footer, but at running, jumping, rowing, and swimming the new junior was very keen, and remarkably proficient. He could pull a boat against the current on the Sark with perfect ease, and he could swim wonderfully well; and he did not shrink from a dive into the river in cold weather, when the hardest of the Remove fellows considered it judicious to let swimming alone. He seemed as hard as iron all over, and able to stand almost anything; and so they understood how it was that he had been saved from the wreck. He had gone through experiences that terrible night which would have killed any other fellow at Greyfriars,

probably, but they had left no lasting effect upon him.

"Blessed if I quite make the chap out!" Frank Nugent confessed in No. 1 Study. "He's a blessed swot, but he's as keen on games as we are. He's coming on wonderfully with his footer. If he keeps on like this, you'll have to find him a place in the Form eleven, Harry."

"Glad to," said Wharton. "Just the fellow for a back."

"He's as strong as a horse. It's queer, very queer. I heard that the chap was sent home from India not only for his education, but because he was rather delicate. He couldn't stand the climate. Why, this chap could stand the climate of the North Pole and the Equator rolled together!"

Harry Wharton laughed.

"He certainly is jolly tough," he remarked. "It must be a mistake about his having been delicate in India. That chap never was delicate."

"But Dr. Pillbury comes to see him regularly on account of it," said Nugent, "and I heard old Pills saying that the sea voyage must have improved him marvellously if he had been delicate only a few months ago. I can't quite get on to it; he puzzles me."

Cholmondeley was, indeed, puzzling in several ways.

The fellows noticed that he did not like talking about India. He avoided the subject as much as he could, and he answered very shortly if he was questioned. He never gave any details of life on the plantation or the school in Calcutta, and he showed an utter ignorance of any Hindustani language. That was the greatest surprise of all, but it was an undoubted fact, for Hurrec Jamset Ram Singh had tackled him on the subject.

Notwithstanding his own wonderful knowledge of English, the nabob would have been very glad of an opportunity of speaking his native tongue. Naturally, he would have been glad to chat to the Anglo-Indian in the language of India; but Cholmondeley knew not a single word, and he had to admit it. For a boy who had lived more than fourteen

years in the country that was simply astounding. He must have spoken to the native servants. He must have come into constant contact with natives, and yet he had not picked up a word of any native language. If he had, he had forgotten it in so short a time.

The Nabob of Bhanipur was amazed, but he said little about it to the other fellows. But at times Hurree Jamset Ram Singh's dark eyes would rest upon Clive Cholmondeley with a peculiar expression in their depths, an expression that caused Cholmondeley to start when once he caught it by accident. It was not an expression of suspicion, but it was a perplexity that was very akin to suspicion.

Yet of what was there to be suspicious? It would have puzzled Hurree Jamset Ram Singh to answer that question, yet he was not satisfied.

There was also the question of the pocket-money. For several days Cholmondeley had no money in his pockets, owing to his repugnance to accepting an advance from Mr. Quelch, and his steady determination not to borrow in the Form.

He found it somewhat awkward.

The juniors generally had their tea in their studies when they were in funds, and they pooled funds for the purpose. In No. 14 Johnny Bull, who had plenty of money, was quite willing to make Cholmondeley a loan, or to stand the "feeds" until the new fellow's money came. But Cholmondeley did not want to sponge on Johnny Bull, and in any case he had to have money sooner or later, to stand his share, the only alternative being to have tea in Hall, and avoid the study at meal times. That thought crossed his mind, but he knew the remarks that would have been passed if he had done it. It would have been taken as proof that he had no money, or any prospect of getting any and the fellows would have wondered and surmised endlessly at such a circumstance, considering that Clive Cholmondeley was the only son of a rich planter.

After a couple of days Cholmondeley was driven to accepting Mr. Quelch's offer to advance him pocket-money, and all the

fellows were surprised that he had refused it in the first place.

Billy Bunter was already sniffing emphatically on the subject. Bunter had looked forward to the arrival of the rich planter's son as a certain harvest for himself. The impecunious Owl of the Remove, who was a borrower of wonderful skill, did very well out of Lord Mauleverer and Hurree Singh, and some other fellows who had plenty of money. He had expected to do equally well out of Cholmondeley, but he was disappointed.

"That chap Chum-chump has taken us in," Bunter confided to the fellows in the common-room. "He's not rich at all. Hasn't had a penny in his pockets for two days, and now he's only having five bob a week from Quelch. Five bob! And he made out that he was rolling in money."

"He hasn't said a word about his money," said Harry Wharton.

Bunter snorted.

"Well, we all understood that he was a rich chap, so it amounts to the same thing. I regard him as having deceived us. He's nearly as poor as Linley and Penfold, and I don't believe his father's got a plantation in India at all. More likely some poverty-stricken Civil Servant with three hundred a year."

"Inky's seen his father's plantation," said Nugent.

"Well, if his father's got money, why doesn't he send Chew-gum some?" demanded Bunter.

"Better ask Chew-gum."

"Five bob a week's not bad for a kid in the Lower Fourth," said Bulstrode. "Your pater doesn't send you so much as that, Bunter."

"But I get postal-orders from my titled relations."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Besides, my pater ain't a rich planter," said Bunter. "I don't believe the fellow's rich at all. He refused an invitation to Loder's study—"

"We advised him to do that," said Harry Wharton. "Loder would have got him into playing cards for money. We all know Loder."

"Loder won't ask him again. He knows now that he's as poor as a church mouse."

"All the better for him if Loder lets him alone. But what the deuce does it matter to you whether he's got money or not?" exclaimed Bob Cherry.

"Well, I don't like being imposed upon!" said Bunter virtuously.

"Oh, rats!"

But other fellows, as well as Bunter, regarded it as curious. They had expected the rich planter's son to have valuable possessions, and to cut a figure in the Form with his money. But Cholmondeley evidently had no more money than he needed, and had not the slightest desire to cut a figure in any way. His chief desire seemed to be to work hard at his lessons, and to play hard at footer, and that was enough to make him liked by both masters and boys. Although there were one or two points about Cholmondeley that puzzled them, Harry Wharton & Co. liked him well enough, and considered him a really decent fellow.

Cholmondeley was not at all effusive. He was friendly with everybody who cared to be friendly with him, and that was all. Only towards one fellow did he show any special regard, and that one fellow was Bob Cherry. And Bob was quite willing to meet him half-way, and pal with him, and in a few days the two were great friends.

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

Another Survivor!

BOB CHERRY burst into No. 14 Study on Saturday afternoon with an excited face.

Cholmondeley was there, sitting at the table with his books, with the keen interest of an arduous student in his face. The Remove were playing footer that afternoon, and Chew-gum was to act as a linesman, but he was filling in the time before the match with another grind at French. He looked up with a pleasant smile as Bob came in.

"Ready?" he asked.

"Oh, no; match isn't for half an hour yet!" said Bob. "Got to shake down our dinner first. I've got news for you."

"News for me?" repeated the new junior.

"Yes. You're not the giddy sole survivor, after all," said Bob. "There's a man saved from the steamer."

Cholmondeley rose from the table, gazing at Bob with wide-open eyes that were almost glazed.

His face went so white that Bob sprang towards him, thinking that he was ill.

"Chummy, old chap!" exclaimed Bob, in alarm.

Cholmondeley gasped for breath.

"You—you startled me," he muttered thickly. "Did you—did you say there was another saved from the wreck?"

"That's it. Jolly good news, ain't it?"

"Oh!"

"You're ill, Chummy," said Bob. Bob had dropped into the habit of calling Cholmondeley by that affectionate abbreviation of his name. "You look as white as chalk."

"Do I?" muttered the junior, passing a hand across his brow, and wiping away big beads of perspiration. "It—it was a shock."

"I don't quite see why," said Bob. "But I suppose you haven't really got over that night yet. Your nerves are out of order, kid. Anyway, it's a jolly good thing they weren't all drowned after all, isn't it?"

"Oh, ripping!" said Cholmondeley, with a strange, bitter smile. "I should be a scoundrel if I wished they were all drowned, certainly."

Bob was puzzled and vaguely distressed by the strange words.

"Who is it?" asked Cholmondeley, in a low voice. "A—a boy?"

"No, a sailorman."

"It's very strange nothing's been heard of it for nearly a week," said the junior. "Why didn't the man make it known before?"

"He was chuck'd ashore a long way down the coast hanging on to a spar," said Bob. "He was more than half dead when he crawled out of the sea at a fishing village a good distance from here. He's a German, you see, and speaks only a little English, and so he wasn't able to explain, and he was ill, too, and he's lain several days in a fisherman's cottage. They looked after him, you know. Only yesterday it came out that he had been one of the crew of the Adler."

"Yesterday!" said Cholmondeley. "How do you know about it? It's in the papers, I suppose?"

"I suppose it is," said Bob; "but I

haven't seen it. I don't read the newspapers, of course."

"Then how do you know?"

Bob grinned.

"I've seen the man!" he explained.

Cholmondeley started violently.

"You've seen him!"

"Exactly!"

"You don't mean to say he's anywhere about here," said the new junior, his face going white again.

"Yes, I do; he's at Greyfriars now."

Cholmondeley sank into his chair.

"Here!"

"Yes."

"In heaven's name, what has he come here for?"

"To see you!"

"To see me!" said Cholmondeley, speaking in a strange, low voice—a voice so strained and weak that it seemed to proceed from some cunning mechanism, and not from a human throat at all.

Bob Cherry was more and more amazed. He had rushed to the study to tell his friend that good news—that all his ship-companions had not fallen victims to the hungry sea. He had expected Cholmondeley to be pleased. He must be pleased, surely? But what did the utter dismay in his face mean? More than dismay—fear! Bob Cherry felt that he could hardly trust his eyes; but it was fear, livid fear, that he saw in the white, strained face of Clive Cholmondeley.

"I—I say, Chummy, I don't quite catch on to this," said Bob. "Don't you want to see the man?"

"I—I—yes—no—of course!" stammered Cholmondeley. "You haven't told me what he wants to see me for? Why should he come here and trouble me?"

"You'll understand when you know who he is. His name's Fritz Lasker. He says that he was treated very kindly by you when you were a passenger on the Adler, and he waited on you, and looked after you when you were sick. He wants to see you. I suppose he's got some sort of liking for you, Chummy, and that's the reason."

"Fritz Lasker!"

"Yes; you remember him, I suppose, if he

looked after you on the steamer—a little dark chap with a pointed nose. He's downstairs now," said Bob.

"I remember him," said Cholmondeley, in a strangled voice.

"Is it true about his looking after you when you were sick?" asked Bob, in wonder. "I must say the man's looks ain't very—well, very up to the mark. He may be piling it on. I suppose he knows you're a rich chap, and may want to get something out of you. I suppose he's lost his kit in the shipwreck, and he may not get it back from the company very easily—sailormen often get done in. Still, it wouldn't hurt you to give him a leg up, if you've got lots of tin."

"I—I—yes! Quite so!"

"You don't look over pleased at his coming," said Bob. "Look here, Chummy, if the man's an impostor, and you don't want to see him, say so, and we'll send him off. If he's not what he makes out, he's not going to bother you for money. Now I come to think of it, I suppose that's what he's after."

"That's what he's after," said Cholmondeley recovering himself. "The fact is, this man Lasker was a slacker in the crew, and wasn't worth his salt. He was given the job of helping the steward because he was no use forward. He had no claim on me at all, and I don't see why I should see him. He is utterly good-for-nothing, and he has simply come here to get money out of me."

Bob Cherry whistled.

"That alters the case," he said. "If he's a rotter, we'll buzz him out. But don't you think you'd better see him? He can come up here if you like."

"No, no!" exclaimed Cholmondeley hastily. "I refuse to see him! I will not see him! I don't like the man! He's a rascal!"

"Oh, ho!" said Bob. "If that's the tune, we'll fire him out."

"Don't let him come up here," said Cholmondeley, with feverish nervousness. "Get him out of the school. I can't see him—I won't! It—it brings back all I went through that night. I haven't really got over it—my nerves, you know—"

"I understand," said Bob Cherry sympathetically.

"I dream about it at night sometimes," muttered Cholmondeley. "The storm—the ship going down—the men drowning under my eyes—I want to forget all about it! Oh, why wasn't I drowned that night along with the rest?" the boy broke out suddenly, in a passionate cry, as he covered his face with his hands and burst into tears.

Bob Cherry gazed at him in deep distress.

"I—I say, I'm sorry, Chummy!" he said. "I—I didn't

know you felt about it like that, you know. I say, don't blub, old chap; it makes me feel rotten. I suppose your nerves were rattled by the strain of it, though I'm blessed if anybody would take you for a nervous chap. I—I say, Chummy, don't, old man."

"Get that man away!" said Cholmondeley miserably. "Get him away—out of the school. I can't see him! Make him go!"

"You bet!" said Bob. "You shan't see the bounder, rely on that. Pull yourself together, Chum, old man."

And Bob Cherry left the study, greatly distressed. That the scene of the shipwreck, fearful as it had been, had left such an impression upon Cholmondeley's mind was a startling discovery to Bob.

Bob Cherry descended the stairs and came out into the Close, where a crowd of juniors were collected round a small, dark, lithe man in sailorman's garb. The man was evidently

Without more ado Win-gate grasped the seaman by the collar and ran him down to the gates and out into the road.



a foreigner. The juniors were all talking to him at once. As a survivor of the shipwreck he was a very interesting object to them. His desire to visit Clive Cholmondeley, the only other survivor of the shipwreck, was natural enough. The fellows guessed that he was not wholly disinterested in wishing to see Chew-gum; but, after all, there was no harm in a poor wrecked sailorman getting a little monetary help from the rich planter's son who had been a passenger in his ship.

Lasker had asked to see Master Cholmondeley, whom he had heard had been saved from the wreck, and was at the school. He was waiting for Bob Cherry to come back, and meanwhile he talked in broken English to the curious juniors, answering their questions as well as his imperfect command of the language would allow.

"So you looked after Chew-gum when he was sick?" said Bolsover major.

"Dat is so, sir!"

Bolsover chuckled.

"Then what a liar the fellow is! He says he's never been seasick in his life. I heard him say so myself. Didn't you, Skinner?"

"That I jolly well did," said Skinner.

Harry Wharton listened with a clouded brow. He remembered that in some talk about sea-voyages and sickness Cholmondeley had mentioned that he had never been sick at sea. But he was not prepared to believe that Cholmondeley had lied upon so trivial a matter. He did not like Lasker's looks. The man had a cunning face, and little shifty eyes that never met a glance directly. It was far more likely that the man was "piling" on about his services to a rich planter's son in order to make out some kind of a claim upon him.

"He was ver' seeck," said Lasker, shaking his head. "Delicate poy—ver' seeck!"

"Not much delicacy about him now," grinned Johnny Bull. "Why, he's as strong as a giddy elephant!"

Lasker, although he spoke English very imperfectly, appeared to understand it quite well. He glanced curiously at Johnny Bull.

"Not strong," he said, with another shake of the head. "Ver' weak—feeble. Seeck for a week after leafing India. And it is great vunder tat he is safed from te shipwreck, because it is tat he cannot schwim!"

"Can't swim!" roared Bolsover. "Why, he swims like a fish!"

"Vat!"

"I've seen him swim!" howled Bolsover. "What are you giving us? I don't believe you know the chap at all! Can't swim! My hat! He could beat any fellow in the Remove at swimming, I know that."

The German sailor shook his head.

"Looks to me as if you don't know him at all," said Harry Wharton abruptly.

"Me know him ver' well. Me look after him on schiff. He give me sometimes tips. He ver' generous young gentleman. I tink tat he help me on my vay now, ain't it, tat I have lose everyting in te shipwreck."

"Had lots of money, had he?" said Billy Bunter.

"Ver' mooch—ver' mooch; always plenty

banknotes," said Lasker. "He was ver' generous, also. I tink he help me now."

"Bit of a change since he came to Greyfriars," sniffed Bunter. "He jolly well hasn't any money now, or if he has he keeps it jolly dark. You jolly well won't get any money out of Chew-gum, I know!"

"Tried yourself, haven't you?" grinned Nugent.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bob Cherry rejoined the group. The German sailor's eyes turned upon him inquiringly. Evidently he had expected Cholmondeley to come back with the junior.

"Vere is mein young master, sir?" he asked.

"Cholmondeley doesn't want to see you," said Bob shortly. "I've asked him, and he says he'd rather not see you."

Lasker looked astounded.

"Not see me! Vy not, sir?"

"As a matter of fact, he doesn't think much of you, and he refuses to see you," said Bob bluntly. "You'd better clear off, my man!"

The man's dark eyes gleamed.

"I know not vy he refuse to see me," he said. "I hear it from his own mout, or I do not go. Master Cholmondeley he like me on der schiff. I vas alvays to look after him, as he was seeck. Me nurse him, and also I vas only man on schiff tat could speak to him in Hindu language, vich he like mooch to speak, because tat I have in India worked."

"Why, you blessed Ananias!" exclaimed Bob indignantly. "That settles your case. You hear him, you fellows? He says he's talked to Chummy in Hindustani, and we all know that Chummy doesn't know a giddy word of it."

"Awful liar, I call him," said Johnny Bull. "He's an impostor! Clear out!"

"Buzz off!" said Harry Wharton. "You're a spoofa, and Chummy doesn't want to see you. You can travel."

The German seaman looked amazed and bewildered.

"I speak der troof!" he panted. "Master Cholmondeley not say tat I not speak to him in Indian language. Many time—many time on steamer. Der troof—der troof!"

"Rats! Chummy can't speak the lingo, I tell you."

"He speak him!" shrieked Lasker. "I tell you that, yes, yes! Ja, ja! Ja wohl! He speak him many time mit me in schiff. He like to speak him—he learn from his ayah when he small knabe—little boy in India—so he like to speak him!"

"What an awful liar the man is!" said Bob. "Look here, Cholmondeley won't see you, and you'd better travel, or you'll get pushed out! Savvy?"

"Niemals!" shrieked Lasker. "I go not—I go not mit me! It is vun lie—you have not tell my young master tat I am here!"

Bob Cherry flushed crimson.

"You confounded rascal! Do you dare—"

"I go not—I will not go! I will see mein young master tat I have serve!" The man waved his fists excitedly in the air. "I will not go! It is vun lie!"

"You'd better clear off!" said Bob.

"I will not go! I say tat I will go nicht—nicht—Niemals!" shouted Lasker. "Mein young master he not say so—I know tat! It is vun lie!"

"Look here," shouted Bob, "I'm fed up with you! Get out, or I'll put you out! Do you understand that? You're a liar and an impostor, and if you don't go, I'll make you!"

And Bob strode at the man with flashing eyes and clenched fists. There would have been a scrimmage the next moment, for the man evidently did not mean to go, and Bob Cherry was in deadly earnest. But just then Wingate, of the Sixth, strode up, and his sharp voice broke in:

"Hold on, Cherry! Stop that! Now, what's the row?"

#### THE NINTH CHAPTER

#### Cholmondeley Refuses!

WINGATE strode between the German sailor and the excited junior. Bob Cherry dropped his hands. Wingate was head prefect and captain of the school, and he had to be obeyed.

"The rotter's called me a liar!" snorted Bob. "He's come to worry Cholmondeley for money, because he was on the ship that went down, and Chummy says he's only a

cadger, and he doesn't want to see him."

"It is vun lie!"

"Stop that my man!" said Wingate sharply, pushing back the enraged Bob as he spoke. "If you call a fellow a liar, you'll get hit—and hard!"

"My young master will see me, ven he know I come mit me!"

"Who are you?" demanded Wingate.

"Mein name is Fritz Lasker. Tat young gentleman he no tell Master Cholmondeley tat it is Fritz Lasker, or he no send me avay!" shrieked Lasker. "I tell you I have walk here, many mile, to see him. He help me. I am ruin in te shipwreck, and Master Cholmondeley is fery generous. I serve him on te schiff. I am his servant dere. He alvays call me Fritz. I say tat I will see him!"

"I don't see why Cholmondeley shouldn't see him, if what he says is true," said Wingate

"But it isn't true!" growled Bob.

"How do you know?"

"He says he talked Hindustani to Chummy on the ship, and we all know that Chummy doesn't know a word of it. Inky knows it—don't you, Inky?"

Hurree Jamset Ram Singh nodded assent.

"The knowfulness is terrific!" he said. "I have thinkfully reflected that perhaps the esteemed Chew-gum would speak to me in my own august language, but he does not know an honourable word."

"And he says he looked after Chummy when he was seasick," growled Bob, "and Chummy himself told us that he never was seasick in his life."

"It is vun lie; he not say so!" yelled Lasker.

"You confounded rotter—"

"Hold on!" said Wingate. "This is jolly queer. The man looks as if he were telling the truth, and Cholmondeley may have forgotten. Anyway, why can't he see the chap; it can't be much trouble to him just to see him?"

"He doesn't want to," said Bob. "It upsets him to hear anything about the shipwreck. He was jolly near in hysterics just now in his study, because I spoke to him about it. He's just a bundle of nerves on that subject."

Wingate stared.

"I've seen him about, and he never struck me as being much afflicted with nerves," he said. "That sounds to me like rot! Let Cholmondeley see this man—it can't do any harm. He can send him about his business fast enough."

"He won't," said Bob.

"He will," said Wingate. "Go and tell him he's to come here—that I've sent for him!"

"I tell you he's upset."

"Oh, rubbish! I'll see how upset he is. I'll go and tell him myself." Wingate turned to the German seaman. "Wait a minute or two, my man!"

"Ja, ja!" said Lasker. "You are ver' kind to a poor sailorman, mein Herr. All tat I ask is tat I see mein young master. If he send me avay mitout anyting, I go at vunce—I do not ask him twice. But I know him—I know him vell. He was ver' kind to me."

"Well, that's reasonable enough," said Wingate. "I don't see why Cholmondeley can't see him. We'll see about it."

The captain of Greyfriars strode into the School House. Bob Cherry hurried after him. The crowd round the sailorman was increasing now—the news of his arrival had spread, and the fellows had forgotten even football in the curious interest excited by the dispute.

The general opinion certainly was that Chew-gum should see the man—there could surely be no harm or trouble in a couple of minutes' interview. If the man was a worthless character, it would be easy enough to send him away—Chummy was not bound to give him anything. Why Cholmondeley should refuse even to see him was a puzzle, which only Bob Cherry understood, or thought he understood. Bob, who was very disturbed and distressed, caught up with Wingate on the stairs, and stopped him.

"Look here, Wingate," he exclaimed, "it won't do! I didn't like to bring it out before all the chaps, but Chummy is frightfully upset. He's haunted by what he went through, and he quite broke down when I told him about this chap—in fact, I left him blubbing."

"Blubbing!" exclaimed the Greyfriars captain, staring.

"Yes; he was quite knocked over. He says he dreams about that shipwreck at night, and goes through it all over again. His nerves are just in rags."

"I don't see why he can't see this man for a minute, all the same. However, I'll speak to him."

The Sixth-Former went on to the end study. He knocked and entered, and found Clive Cholmondeley sitting at the table. The junior's elbows rested upon the table, and his face was buried in his hands. He started up as Wingate came in, and turned upon him a face so white and haggard that the senior started in alarm.

"Cholmondeley! What's the matter with you?" Wingate exclaimed.

"Nothing," muttered the boy thickly; "nothing. I—I'm upset, that's all."

"What are you upset about?"

"Oh, I suppose you can't understand. It haunts me—that terrible scene, and—and I can't bear to think of it."

"Well, I don't wonder at that," said Wingate, gazing at the boy's haggard face. There was certainly no doubt that Cholmondeley was upset; his looks showed that plainly enough. "It must have been pretty bad. But—"

"I don't want to see that man—I suppose that's what you've come about? I don't want to think about it at all. I want to forget it."

"But now, surely you can see that man for a minute? He says he's tramped here to see you, and it's rather hard—"

"He's a rotten, worthless rascal!" said Cholmondeley fiercely. "He hasn't any claim on me—not in the slightest. He was the worst man in the crew of the 'Adler,' and was dishonest, too. He knew how to butter up a silly kid and get tips out of him—"

"Out of whom?" asked Wingate, as Cholmondeley broke off in confusion.

"Oh, I don't want to talk about him. He's a rascal, and I won't see him! I can't be forced to see him if I don't want to, I suppose? He's come here for money, and I haven't any to give him."

Wingate paused.

"Well, if you're determined not to see him,

# **BUNTER THE HUNTER!**



When Billy Bunter went a-hunting Master Reynard his horse refused to carry his heavy weight for long. Bunter was tossed this way and that until he came a cropper—and landed on the fox! But Bunter had had enough of horses and fox hunting, and promptly took to his heels. He's going to stick to tuck hunting after this!

1 don't want to force you," he said at last. "But it'd settle the matter much better if you'd just go down for a minute, and tell him to go about his business."

"You can tell him! Let the servants throw him out! I tell you he's a dishonest rascal! I can answer for that. Doesn't he look one?"

"Well, he doesn't look over-honest, I know; but he's very much in earnest about wanting to see you, and he says he will go away at once if you tell him to."

"Tell him I said so, then!"

"Very well; I think you ought to see him, but you can please yourself. And, for goodness' sake, try to pull yourself together, Cholmondeley! I know you went through a rotten experience; but you oughtn't to allow your nerves to run away with you like this."

"You don't quite understand," muttered Cholmondeley.

"No; I don't," said Wingate.

He left the study, and shut the door after him.

Cholmondeley sank back into his former attitude with a groan.

Wingate descended to the Close, and found half Greyfriars gathered round the shipwrecked seaman. Gosling, the porter, had arrived upon the spot, and was evidently ready to undertake the task of "firing" the German sailor out. Lasker ran towards Wingate as he came out of the House.

"Vat does he say?" he exclaimed. "Mein young master—he vill see me?"

The Greyfriars captain shook his head.

"He won't see you, and he says he will give you nothing. You must go!"

Lasker gritted his teeth.

"It is vun lie! He not say tat—I know he not say tat!"

"What!" exclaimed Wingate. "Look here, I don't want to handle a shipwrecked man roughly; but if you don't go this minute I'll take you by the neck and run you out!"

"Hear, hear!" said Bob Cherry.

"I not go—niemals—niemals!" shouted Lasker. "I vill see him pefore tat I go! It is vun lie to say tat my young master no vish see me!"

"Are you going?" demanded Wingate.

"Nein, nein, nein!"

"Then I shall shove you out!"

And without more ado, Wingate grasped the seaman by the collar, and ran him down to the gates. The man struggled for a moment, but he was powerless in the grasp of the muscular captain of Greyfriars, and he was run out into the road in a few seconds. There Wingate released him, and shook a warning finger at him.

"Now clear off!" he said. "You're not wanted here. Gosling, if that man tries to get inside the gates again, set the dog on him."

"Yessir," said Gosling.

Lasker gave Wingate a furious look, and seemed about to rush upon him. But he thought better of it, and turned away, and tramped down the road.

#### THE TENTH CHAPTER

Quite a Surprise for Bolsover!

"WELL," said Bolsover major, "if that doesn't take the cake!"

"The whole giddy cake factory!" said Skinner.

"Begad!" Lord Mauleverer remarked. "I don't see why Cholmondeley couldn't have spoken a word to the poor beast—even if he is a cadger."

"After all, the poor brute's been through the shipwreck, same as Chew-gum," said Tom Brown. "Might have seen him, I think."

Most of the fellows thought so.

Cholmondeley's obstinate refusal to see the German sailor excited surprise and comment on all sides. The fellows didn't understand it, and most of them disapproved of it. The man might be a cadger; he might be a bad character. But he was the only survivor of the shipwreck besides Cholmondeley, and that fact might have made the junior treat him with some slight consideration. Whatever he was, and whatever he wanted, it was not right to turn him from the door like a dog.

Even Harry Wharton & Co. found little to say in defence of Cholmondeley. Bob Cherry, even, was a little uneasy in his mind. Only he had seen Cholmondeley break down in his study and burst into passionate tears. But

why should the remembrance of the shipwreck, after all, affect the junior so strangely ? It had been a terrible experience, but the boy had recovered his health ; he was strong and well. It was amazing that mere mention of the wreck should overcome him in that way. Was there some other reason for his emotion, then ?

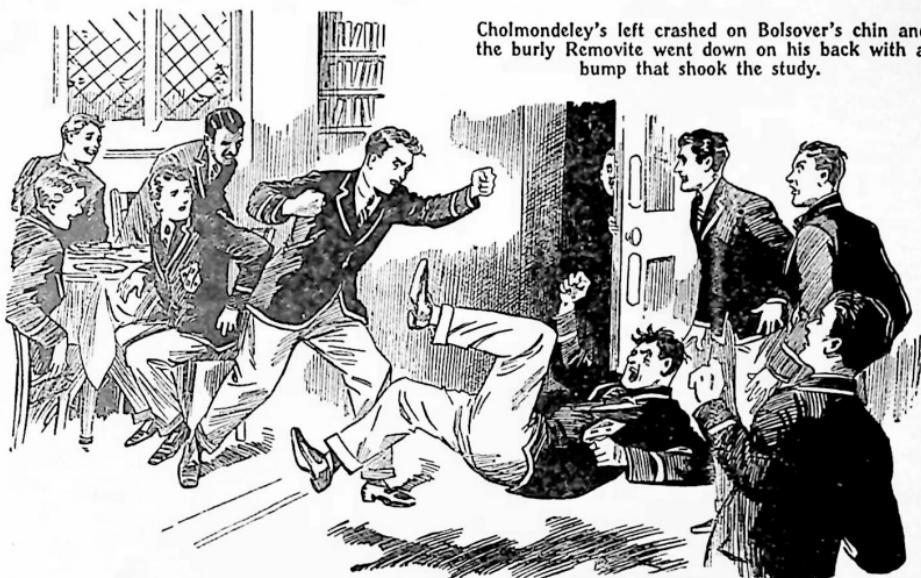
Bob Cherry found himself asking that question almost unconsciously. Then he smiled at the thought. What could a fellow like Cholmondeley possibly have to conceal ?

And yet—and yet—

than Cholmondeley's declaration that he did not know a word of Hindustani. Yet if Cholmondeley knew anything of that language, why should he conceal the fact ? He could have no possible motive.

Then Bob blamed himself for allowing a doubt to creep into his mind for a moment of the fellow he had made friends with. Lasker was a rascal, and a fool, and a rogue—anything, in fact ; but Cholmondeley was not deceiving him. Why should Cholmondeley deceive him ? No possible motive could be assigned.

Cholmondeley's left crashed on Bolsover's chin and the burly Removee went down on his back with a bump that shook the study.



Bob had looked on Lasker as a liar—and a foolish liar at that—for making statements that it only needed a word from Cholmondeley to disprove. And yet, when Bob came to think over it calmly, Lasker had certainly seemed to be telling the truth, from his manner, from his rage and excitement even. Besides, why should a man make statements he knew could be instantly disproved ? It was idiotic. He had said that on board the Adler, on the voyage from India, he had talked in Hindustani to Cholmondeley. That was, in itself, a far more likely statement

Yet, in spite of himself, a trace of uneasiness remained in Bob's mind.

After Lasker had been run out by the angry captain of Greyfriars there was a rush of the Removee fellows to see Cholmondeley. They wanted to know what he meant by it, as Bolsover major remarked. But they found the door of the study locked, and in reply to thumps upon it Cholmondeley called through the keyhole that he was at work and didn't want to be interrupted.

“ Why didn't you see the German ? ” bawled Bolsover in return.

"I didn't choose to."

"You cheeky rotter! If you talk to me like that, I'll give you a thick ear!" shouted Bolsover angrily.

"Oh, rats!"

"Let us in!" howled Skinner.

"I won't! Clear off; I've got work to do!"

"You're going to be a linesman, and the match is just going to begin!" Vernon-Smith called out.

"Wharton can find somebody else. I'm going to work instead."

"Johnny Bull, this is your study as well as that rotter's! Call to him to open the door!" exclaimed Russell.

"Rats!" said Johnny Bull promptly. "Let him alone."

"Look here, Chum-jam, you cad, if you don't let us in, I'll lick you!" Bolsover major roared through the keyhole. "I'll lick you the minute you come out. Savvy?"

"Rats!"

Whether the junior suffered from "nerves" or not, evidently he was not afraid of the burly Bolsover, the bully of the Remove. Bolsover turned crimson with wrath at that disrespectful reply, and the other fellows chuckled. They were not sorry to see the overbearing Bolsover taken down a peg.

"Well, wait till you come out, that's all!" said Bolsover; and, bestowing a final, furious kick upon the study door, he departed.

And after that the new junior was left in peace, to work, if he felt so inclined. But after the juniors were gone there was no sound of a pen from the study. Any fellow who had listened outside the door might have heard hurried, irregular footsteps, and that was all.

Cholmondeley was not working.

He was pacing the study, tirelessly, restlessly, with white face and gleaming eyes, his hands clenched, his fingers working and twisting.

Fear, anger, despair were in his drawn face. Bob Cherry would have been astonished and shocked if he could have seen him then, and, in spite of his trust, he would have realised that there was something more than a matter of "nerves" here.

Harry Wharton & Co. dismissed the matter from their minds as they went down to the football. Cholmondeley was not wanted particularly; linesmen galore could be found.

But the other fellows did not forget, especially Bolsover major.

The bully of the Remove had let the new junior alone hitherto, but that was at an end now. Cholmondeley could not remain locked up in the study all the afternoon, and when he came out Bolsover meant to have a little talk with him. Bolsover major declared that Chum-jam had acted caddishly towards the shipwrecked sailor, and that he ought to explain, and that he ought to be jolly well ragged for his heartlessness if he had nothing to say for himself. A good many fellows agreed with Bolsover, though, as a matter of fact, it was pretty clear that the Remove bully was only justifying in advance his fixed intention of picking a quarrel with Cholmondeley.

When the footer match was over and the players came off the field, Harry Wharton & Co. remembered Cholmondeley. They learned that Bolsover major meant to "go" for him.

"I suppose we can't interfere," said Harry Wharton, as he changed. "Chum-jam is big enough to look after himself. But we'll see fair play, and we'll see that Bolsover doesn't take it too far."

"We jolly well will!" growled Bob Cherry.

The Co. were to have tea in No. 14 that afternoon with Johnny Bull. They arrived at the end study in a body, and Cholmondeley unlocked the door at Johnny Bull's knock. He was calmer now—and though his face was a little pale, otherwise he seemed quite himself. The juniors could not help looking at him curiously, and Cholmondeley flushed under their gaze.

"Well, now for tea," said Johnny Bull. "I suppose you know Bolsover major is looking for you, Chummy, on the giddy warpath?"

Cholmondeley laughed.

"Well, he can find me now, as soon as he likes," he remarked.

"You don't feel nervous, eh?"

"Hardly."

"He's a big beast, and awfully strong,"

hinted Bob Cherry. "We'll see fair play, and stop him when you've had enough; but I'm afraid you're going to be licked, Chew-gum."

"We shall see!"

"Yes, we shall jolly well see, you rotten funk!" said Bolsover's voice at the door, and he strode into the study with Skinner and Stott and Snoop and half a dozen other fellows behind him. "Now you come down to the gym, you cad, and I'll take some of the cheek out of you. If you don't come, I'll lick you here!"

"You'll be civil in my study, Bolsover," said Johnny Bull, his eyes beginning to gleam.

"Let that rotter come out, then!"

"I'm not coming to the gym," said Cholmondeley coolly. "It's not worth while going so far to lick you. If you fellows don't mind waiting for tea for a couple of minutes, I'll give Bolsover all he wants, and get done."

"Oh, my hat!"

"You hear him?" roared Bolsover. "He's asking for it. Now I'm going to give it to him."

The bully of the Remove rushed at Cholmondeley.

The other fellows cleared back. Cholmondeley had certainly "asked for it," and he could not complain if he got it.

All expected to see the Anglo-Indian crumple up under the furious rush of Bolsover major. But that did not happen. The surprise of his life was waiting for Percy Bolsover. His lashing fists were knocked into the air, and Cholmondeley's right came crashing upon his nose, and his left followed it up, catching Bolsover on the point of the chin. The burly Removite went down upon his back with a crash that shook the study.

"Oh!"

"Gentleman to see you, sir," said Trotter. "What!" Cholmondeley, with a white face, sprang to his feet as the German sailor appeared in the doorway.



It was a gasp from all the juniors. They had observed before that Cholmondeley possessed uncommon strength. But they had never dreamed that he could hit like that.

Bolsover lay dazed on the floor. His nose was streaming red, and every tooth in his head was aching. His chin felt as if it had been hammered off. It was a full minute before he sat up. Skinner helped him to his feet and he stood unsteadily, leaning on Skinner's shoulder. Cholmondeley regarded him calmly.

"Do you want another round?" he asked.

"No," said Bolsover huskily; "that's enough!"

And he went unsteadily from the room.

"My hat!" said Bob Cherry, with a deep breath. "Poor old Bolsover didn't know he was waking up a giddy prize-fighter. Chummy, old man, you ought to be in the ring. I don't fancy you will have any more fights on your hands."

"I didn't want that one," said Cholmondeley. "All you fellows will witness that I wasn't looking for a row with Bolsover."

"No; Bolsover was looking for it, and he found it," grinned Johnny Bull.

The chums of the Remove gathered round the tea-table in No. 14, talking football and

other indifferent matters, but as a matter of fact thinking of what had just happened. This junior, who knocked the mighty Bolsover about as if he had been a punching-ball, was the delicate boy who had been sent home because he was not strong enough to stand the Indian climate. What did it mean ?

### THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

#### Cholmondeley Stays In !

"THAT German isn't gone ! " Tom Brown remarked, a few days later, as he came into the common-room.

"Isn't gone ? " said Wharton. " Where is he ? "

"He's staying at Pegg ; I've just seen him," said the New Zealand junior. "I've been over there on my bike. He was smoking outside the Anchor. I knew him at once. And old Trumper told me he's a fixture there."

"What is he hanging about for, I wonder ? " said Nugent. "Does he still want to see Chummy ? "

"That's it ! "

"The silly ass ! He can't expect to get any money out of Chummy, after what happened here the other day."

"It's jolly queer," said Tom Brown thoughtfully. "I asked Trumper about him. It seems that he's put up at the Anchor, and he confides to the men in the tap-room every night a tale of woe—all about Chew-gum. Piles it on about how he looked after Chew-gum when he was sick at sea, and how Chew-gum promised to do something for him after the steamer got to England. Of course, it wasn't expected to arrive in little pieces."

"He's lying," said Bob Cherry indignantly. "If Chummy had promised to do anything for him, he'd do it like a shot."

"Chummy is a decent chap," said Harry Wharton. "I don't believe for a minute that he'd either break his word or forget a promise. He's not that sort."

"It's just gas ! " said Johnny Bull.

"I suppose it is," said Tom Brown. "Only the queer thing is, he seems to have an idea that Chew-gum is being kept somehow from seeing him. He tells everybody who will listen to him, in broken English, how devoted

he was to Cham-jam, and how kind Cham-jam was to him, and swears that Cham-jam wouldn't have sent him away without a word. He thinks that Chew-gum is being prevented from seeing him somehow."

"What rot ! "

"Well, we know that isn't the case," said Bob Cherry. "We all know that Chummy says he's a rascal, and won't have anything to do with him."

"What is he hanging on for ? " asked Wharton.

"To see Chew-gum ! " grinned Tom Brown.

"What ! "

"When he's tipsy—the longshoremen and the fishermen stand him a lot of beer, you know, on the strength of the shipwreck—he weeps in the tap-room at the Anchor, and swears that he'll never, never go till he's seen Chummy."

"He ought to be cleared out," growled Bob.

"I don't see how he could be. He can stay at the Anchor as long as he likes, I suppose. And Trumper told me that he takes a walk round the school every now and then, looking for Chew-gum outside the gates, hoping to meet him walking out some day."

"It's rotten ! " exclaimed Bob Cherry, knitting his brows. "The rogue hasn't any right to pester Chew-gum in this way. He ought to be stopped. If I catch him hanging round the school, I'll jolly well give him a dot on the boko."

"No danger of Chum-jam meeting him," said Bolsover major, with a sneer.

"How do you know ? "

"Because Chum-jam takes jolly good care not to."

"Rot ! "

"I know what I've noticed," sneered Bolsover. "Since that man was here, Chum-jam hasn't been once outside the school gates. He was booked to walk out with you fellows on Sunday—and did he go ? "

"He didn't feel fit," said Bob.

"And he had arranged a pull on the river with Russell for Monday—and he made some excuse, and didn't go," went on Bolsover.

"That's so ! " said Russell. "Said the weather was too cold for river bizney. So it

is—but he never noticed it before Monday."

"And I heard you fellows asking him to go for a spin on the bikes yesterday," grinned Bolsover, "and he refused."

"He hasn't a bike."

"Didn't you offer to lend him one?"

"I suppose he's not bound to go biking if he doesn't want to," grunted Bob Cherry.

"Oh, he wanted to, right enough. He's sticking inside gates because he's afraid of meeting the sailorman."

"Afraid!"

"That's the word!" said Bolsover major. "He's afraid to meet him. Why should a fellow take the trouble to skulk about inside gates to avoid a man unless he's afraid of him?"

"He doesn't want to be bothered with him!"

"So he's making himself a prisoner. Would any of you fellows stay inside gates for three days on end to save being bothered, as you call it? Why should he be bothered? The man would clear off if Chum-jam told him to go, and if he didn't, it would only need a word to a policeman. Lasker wouldn't be allowed to bother him, if he was made to stop it. It would be easy enough. But Chum-jam prefers to stick in the school; and I'll bet you that he doesn't go outside gates till Lasker has cleared out of the neighbourhood."

Bob Cherry sniffed.

"And why should Cholmondeley be afraid of that German seaman?" he demanded. "As you know so much, perhaps you'll explain that, too."

Bolsover shrugged his shoulders.

"I don't know that," he said. "I know the fact, though; he's afraid of the German. I'll answer for that!"

"Faith, and it looks like it entirely," said Micky Desmond. "All the same, Chum-jam is a broth of a boy."

"He isn't afraid of you, anyway, Bolsover," grinned Snoop.

Bolsover scowled. His easy defeat at the hands of the new junior rankled bitterly in his breast, and it had cost him much of his prestige in the Remove. Small boys whom he ragged and cuffed threatened to tell Chum-

jam, and get Bolsover another licking, and that was bitterly exasperating to the bully of the Remove. He had talked among his friends of having another try with Cholmondeley; but they observed that he made no movement whatever towards carrying out that scheme. He knew, and all the Remove knew, that Clive Cholmondeley was too much for him.

"I didn't say he was afraid of me—I said he was afraid of the German," snarled Bolsover; "and I bet you he won't go out of gates to-day, though it's a half-holiday."

"Rats!" said Bob Cherry. "We're going over to tea at Cliff House, and we're going to take Chum-jam. Hazel's gone to ask him this minute."

"He'll say no!"

"Bosh!"

"See what Hazel says, then!" said Bolsover major.

The juniors waited rather curiously for Hazeldene. Hazeldene, whose sister Marjorie was a pupil at Cliff House, was taking the chums of the Remove over with him to tea, and most of the juniors would have been very glad to go. The juniors had agreed to ask Cholmondeley to accompany them, partly because they liked him, and partly because Marjorie and Clara wanted to see the lad who had survived the shipwreck. Hazel had gone to No. 14, where Cholmondeley was swotting over his books as usual, to ask him, and the juniors did not suppose for a moment that he would refuse.

But the grin on Bolsover's face showed that he was not in any doubt of the result. Hazel came into the Common-room.

"You fellows ready?" he asked.

"Quite ready," said Frank Nugent. "Is Chum-jam coming?"

"No, he says he's got some exercises to finish for Mr. Quelch—extra toot, you know."

The Removites exchanged glances; Bolsover's grin became more pronounced. He had been right—Cholmondeley had declined the invitation. Was it for the sake of grinding at Latin, or because, for some mysterious reason, he did not dare go outside the school gates while Lasker was in the vicinity?

"Did you tell him Marjorie has asked

him ? " said Bob Cherry very uncomfortably.

Hazel nodded.

" Yes ; but he can't come. It doesn't matter, does it ? What are you looking so jolly serious about ? He can come another time, I suppose ? "

" Yes ; when the sailorman's gone away ! " chuckled Bolsover.

" I'll go and speak to him," said Bob Cherry.

" You can speak to him till you're black in the face, but he won't come ! " said Bolsover sneeringly.

Bob Cherry quitted the room without replying. He found Cholmondeley busy with his Latin grammar. He was writing away at a great rate. Bob tapped him on the shoulder.

" Won't you come over to Cliff House, Chummy ? " he asked. " Marjorie Hazeldene would like you to come—and so should we. You might come."

" I—I promised Mr. Quelch to have my lesson ready," said Cholmondeley. " He's giving me an extra hour to-night—and I can't disappoint him. He's doing it all for nothing, you know, and it's very kind of him to help me in this way."

" That's right enough," said Bob. " If you really can't come. Only Marjorie would like to see you. I've told her about your being saved from the wreck, you know. She is a ripping girl, and most of the fellows are jolly glad to go over to Cliff House. We shall have a jolly tea."

" Yes, I'm sorry," said Cholmondeley. " Don't think me an ungrateful beast, but I really can't come."

" We're going over again next Wednesday," said Bob. " If I can arrange it with Marjorie, will you come then ? "

Cholmondeley hesitated.

" Next Wednesday ! " he repeated.

" Yes ; that's a week from now."

" I—I'd like to come, if you want me to ; but—but I think I'd better not," said Cholmondeley, his face reddening. " You see, I'm really imposing on Mr. Quelch's kindness by—by being so behind in my Latin, and he's very patient with me. I think I ought to put in every spare hour at my Latin."

" Is that your real reason ? " asked Bob Cherry bluntly.

Cholmondeley avoided his eyes.

" I don't quite understand you," he muttered.

" I'll tell you what some of the fellows are saying. You ought to know, anyway," said Bob. " They think you're afraid to go out."

" Indeed ! Why ? "

" Because that German chap is still hanging about the school."

" Is he ? " said Cholmondeley.

" Didn't you know ? "

" How should I know, as I haven't been out of gates since he was here ? "

" Why, of course, you couldn't know," said Bob, greatly relieved. " We didn't know till Tom Brown just told us. He's seen him in Pegg."

Cholmondeley's lips quivered.

" Then the man is really staying about here ? "

" Yes ; and looking for a chance of meeting you, from what Tom heard. But, of course, it's all silly rot about your being afraid to meet him. I know that. But as the fellows have got the silly idea into their heads, you'd better come out, Chummy, just to show them that it's piffle."

" I don't care what they think."

" N-no—no ; but—"

" They can think what they like. I'm not going out while I've got swotting to do. On the whole, I won't come next Wednesday ; thank you all the same."

" But look here, Chummy—"

" I've made up my mind about it," said Cholmondeley.

" Oh, if you put it like that, that's all right," said Bob Cherry, and he left the study at once, considerably huffed.

His chums were waiting for him downstairs. Bolsover & Co. were waiting, too, curious to know whether Bob had succeeded in persuading Chum-jam to go out. Bob Cherry's clouded face brought a chuckle to Bolsover's lips.

" So he won't listen to the voice of the charmer ? " said Bolsover, and the other fellows grinned.

" He's got work to do," said Bob curtly ; " and he didn't know till I told him that the German was staying in the neighbourhood

# LAUGHABLE LIMERICKS

*By The Greyfriars Rhymester.*

A STURDY young boxer named Russell  
Was the winner of many a tussle.  
And the fags in the Third  
Paid a tanner, I've heard,  
For the pleasure of feeling his muscle !

\* \* \*

I know a young fellow named Cherry  
Who is chock-full of energy—very !  
In an argument keen  
At St. Jim's, this young bean  
“Squashed” Manners and D'Arcy and  
Merry !

\* \* \*

Coker started, with harmless intent,  
On a motor-bike journey through Kent.  
He killed a fat boar  
And chickens galore—  
There was slaughter wherever he went !

\* \* \*

A foolish Fourth-Former named Scott  
A fierce burst of energy got.  
“Fetch some cakes !” ordered Fry,  
So he murmured “Ay, ay !”  
And instantly “went for” the lot !

\* \* \*

I'm sorry for Gosling, the porter.  
He wished working-hours were made  
shorter.  
“For I'm lazy,” said he,  
With a sly wink at me,  
“An' I never does more than I oughter !”

\* \* \*

The fellows all chuckle and snigger  
At Bunter's preposterous figure.  
He's as lazy and fat  
As an overfed cat,  
And he hasn't a ha'porth of vigour !

\* \* \*

A frivolous fag named Hop Hi  
Endeavoured to hop to the sky.  
But his pigtail, you see,  
Got caught in a tree,  
“Well, I'm 'hanged' !” he exclaimed,  
with a sigh.

at all. So that knocks your silly rot on the head, Bolsover.”

“Not at all. He was staying in, in case the man was hanging about to see him,” said Bolsover coolly.

“Oh, rats !”

Bob Cherry swung away. The chums of the Remove cycled over to Cliff House, and as they came up to the school they caught sight of Lasker. He was plodding along the lane with unsteady steps, evidently under the influence of drink. He stopped as he saw the schoolboys, and scanned them with keen eyes, and they knew he was looking to see if Cholmondeley was with them. A disappointed look came over his face, and he tramped on towards Greyfriars.

“Looking for Chum-jam again !” grinned Nugent. “Why, in the name of the dickens, doesn't Chummy see him and tell him to clear off ?”

But that was a question none of the juniors could answer.

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER

*Face to Face !*

DR. LOCKE was in his study when Trotter, the page, presented himself, with a peculiar expression upon his round, chubby face.

“If you please, sir, that man has come !” said Trotter.

“What man ?” asked the Head.

“The German, sir.”

“Whom ?”

“The German man wot was saved, arter all, from the shipwreck, sir,” said Trotter. “He came 'ere last week to see Master Cholmondeley, sir, and Master Cholmondeley, 'e wouldn't see him. Now he's askin' to see you, sir.”

“Indeed !” said the Head. “I was not aware that he had been here. Does the man state what his business is with me ?”

“No, sir; only he wants to see you. Shall I tell Gosling to turn him out, sir ? He says he won't go till you see him, but Gosling already—”

“Indeed, this is very importunate,” said the Head. “But I should not like to have a shipwrecked sailor roughly used here. I will

certainly see him. You may show him into my study, Trotter."

"Yessir!"

Trotter departed, and came back in a few minutes with Fritz Lasker. The man's flushed face showed that he had been drinking, but he was quite in control of himself. He had his cap in his hand, and his manner was very respectful, and indeed cringing. He crept rather than walked into the room, and stood fumbling with his cap.

"You wished to see me?" said Dr. Locke, eyeing the man. "What can I do for you?"

"I tank you to have seen me," said Lasker humbly. "I am ver' poor sailorman, dot have on te coast shipwreck been."

"If you are in want of assistance—"

"It is not tat, sir. I am not ein beggar. It is tat I wish to see mein young master. On der schiff I serve him—Master Cholmondeley—and he was ver' kind to me, and he promise tat he do somet'ing for me after te voyage. Now I am shipwreck, and I am save, and he is save, and all te odders trown mit demselves. Vy is it tat I see him not? Mein young master vould see me—I know tat. Tey keep him from speak a vord to poor Fritz."

The Head was surprised.

"You wish to see Master Cholmondeley—is that it?" he asked.

"Ja, ja, mein Herr—tat is it! And it is tat he see me if he know. I come, but tey vill not let tat I see him."

"That is very curious," said the Head. "There can be no objection to your seeing Master Cholmondeley that I am aware of. You say you served him on the steamer?"

"I look after for him ven he is sick, mein Herr, and he was fery fond of Fritz, and he say he nefer forget. I know tat he see me if he know I come."

"Certainly you may see him," said the Head kindly. "Have you asked to see him before?"

"Ja, ja! But te poys say he von't see me—tat is vun lie! Dey like to play joke on a poor shipwreck sailorman who speak little English."

The Head frowned.

"I hope nothing of the sort has happened. Perhaps you did not rightly understand, as

you speak so little English. But certainly you shall see Master Cholmondeley. I am sure he would not refuse to see you, under the circumstances. Wait one moment."

Dr. Locke touched the bell, and Trotter came in.

"Trotter, do you know whether Master Cholmondeley of the Remove is indoors?"

"Yessir!" said Trotter. "In his study, sir."

"Take this man to his study, then."

Trotter looked dubiously at the sailorman.

"There appears to have been some misunderstanding, and the man was refused admittance to see Master Cholmondeley," said the Head. "Did you know of this?"

"It was the young gentlemen kept him out, sir," stammered Trotter. "Master Cholmondeley said he wouldn't see him, sir."

"Indeed! Are you sure of that?"

"So the young gentlemen were saying, sir. Master Cholmondeley did not speak to me about it, sir."

"It was some mistake, I suppose," said the Head, frowning. "I am sure Master Cholmondeley would not be so hard-hearted. Take this man to his study."

"Yessir!"

"Follow the page, my man," said the Head kindly. "He will take you to Master Cholmondeley."

"Ich danke Ihnen—I tank you much, mein Herr!" said Lasker, his face lighting up. "I have know tat it vas a mistake. Mein young master neffer refuse to see poor Fritz."

And Lasker followed Trotter from the study. Several fellows came round to look at him in the passage. Harry Wharton & Co. were away—at tea at Cliff House. All the fellows were out of doors, as it was a half-holiday, but several had followed the German in.

"Going to chuck him out, Trotter?" asked Snoop.

"No, Master Snoop. The Head has ordered me to take him to Master Cholmondeley's study," said Trotter.

"Gee whiz! Then Chum-jam's going to see him, after all?"

"Yes, sir."

Lasker followed Trotter upstairs, and along

the Remove passage. Trotter knocked at the door of the end study.

"Come in!" called out Cholmondeley.

Lasker gave a sudden start as he heard the voice.

He caught Trotter by the arm, and pulled him back as he was about to open the door. The page stared at him.

"Who is tat?" muttered Lasker. "Who is tat speak?"

"Master Cholmondeley, o' course," said Trotter. "Don't you know his voice, arter torkin' so much about your young master, and the rest of it?"

"Mein Gott!"

"What's biting you now?" said Trotter pleasantly.

"Ach! Mein Gott! You say tat tat is te voice of Master Cholmondeley?"

"Yes, I do. Don't you know it?"

"Mein Gott! Und is dere another Master Cholmondeley in dis school?"

"Course there ain't," said Trotter. "We don't grow Cholmondeleys on the bushes 'ere. There ain't but one, and that's 'im!"

"Mein Gott!"

"If you've done swearing, and if you'll leggo my arm I'll take you in!" suggested Trotter.

The German seaman stared at him dazedly. He seemed overcome with astonishment at the mere sound of Clive Cholmondeley's voice.

"Mein young master, deu he is dead!"

Trotter stared at him.

"His voice don't sound as if he's dead, do it?" he demanded.

"Ach!"

"Look 'ere, you're squiffy!" said Trotter. "That's wot's the matter with you! Do you want to get into this 'ere blessed study, or don't you want to go into this 'ere blessed study? I can't stand 'ere all the arternoon."

"I vill go in, mein poy."

Trotter opened the door of the study. Cholmondeley was sitting at the table, with his back to the door, but he turned his head.

"What is it?" he asked.

"Gentleman to see you, sir!" said Trotter, with a grin.

"What!"

Cholmondeley sprang to his feet as the

German sailor appeared in the doorway. Trotter stared at them blankly.

The new junior's face had gone as white as chalk, and the face of the German seaman was strange in its look—astonishment, admiration, envy, and a devilish cunning all seemed to be blended there, and triumph!

"Well, my honly 'at!" said Trotter. "If this don't beat it!"

Cholmondeley did not speak or move. He stood as if rooted to the floor. his eyes fixed upon Fritz Lasker. Lasker, with a horrible grin overspreading his face, came into the room, his eyes fixed in turn on Cholmondeley. Cholmondeley broke the tense silence at last with a painful gasp.

"Lasker! You!"

"I haf come to see mein young master!" said the seaman, still grinning. "It is so great a bleasur to see mein young master."

Cholmondeley started, and drew a deep breath. He looked as if he had feared some terrible blow, and the blow was averted. He turned quickly to Trotter.

"You can go!" he said.

Trotter was not willing to go. He would have liked to see more of that curious scene. But Cholmondeley took him by the shoulder and pushed him out of the study, and closed the door after him, and locked it. Trotter heard the key click in the lock. Curiosity was overwhelming the page, and he might have succumbed to the temptation of applying his ear to the keyhole; but there were two or three juniors in the Remove passage, and that was impossible. So Trotter reluctantly went his way, with a marvellous tale to relate to the cook and the maids in the regions below.

In the locked study Cholmondeley turned again upon Lasker. He was still fearfully pale, but something like firmness had returned to him.

Lasker was grinning with malicious triumph.

"So you've found me!" said Cholmondeley.

Lasker nodded and chuckled.

"Mein Gott! De vat you call cheek!" he said. "I know now vy it is tat mein young Master Cholmondeley refuse to see poor Fritz. I know vy he never come outside te school. I know. Ich weiss! Ich weiss! Ha, ha, ha!"

The man's laughter was not pleasant to hear.

"Quiet!" muttered Cholmondeley. "They may hear you from the passage."

"Vat do I care?" sneered the German seaman. "Mein Gott! It is you tat must fear, not Fritz Lasker."

"Silence!"

"Mein young master!" chuckled Lasker. "Oh, himmel! Tat it is you—you! Tat is vy it is tat I may not see mein young master. Ho, ho, ho!"

Cholmondeley bit his lip till the blood came. His glance wandered round the study, as if in search of some weapon with which to silence the mocking tongue of the rogue. Lasker chuckled and chuckled again.

"Vat a surprise for te young gentleman!" he said. "Oh, mein Gott! I come to see mein young master—Master Cholmondeley—and I find—you! But fear noting. I am not a fool! Fritz Lasker knows his pizness. He knows vat a secret may fetch. He, he, he! Tom Handley, stewards' poy, ship's brat, tief, and liar, vat you pay me to keep tat secret, and keep you out of te prison, hein?"

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER

### A Change of Front!

QUITE a crowd of fellows had gathered in the Remove passage. The news had spread that Fritz Lasker, the shipwrecked seaman, had succeeded in penetrating to the presence of the new junior, who had so long denied him. The determination Cholmondeley had shown to keep the seaman away from him had excited much remark, and now the juniors were very curious to know what would come of the interview. After what he had said of Lasker, Cholmondeley could only order him out, of course. He had excused his treatment of the shipwrecked German on the grounds that Lasker was a liar, a rascal, and a cadger without a claim on him. It followed, therefore, that he must order the man out at once, and if he would not go quietly, Gosling was quite prepared to run him out by force. The juniors would not have objected to lending a hand for that matter. And they expected every moment to hear the study door thrown open, and to see the German come forth, or, at least, to hear

Cholmondeley call for aid in ejecting him.

As the interview lengthened, the surprise grew among the Removites. Fellows who went near No. 14 Study heard a murmur of low voices, but even those who were least scrupulous could not listen at the door with the other fellows looking on. Only Billy Bunter was sufficiently dead to a sense of shame as to be capable of playing the eavesdropper under the eyes of a crowd. Bunter rolled along the passage to the door of No. 14, and Tom Brown promptly collared him and rolled him away again.

"No, you don't!" said the New Zealand junior grimly.

Bunter wriggled in his powerful grip.

"Let me alone, you beast! I suppose a fellow can stoop to tie up his shoe-lace without you chipping in, can't he?"

"You can tie your shoe-laces at this end of the passage, you spying rotter!" said Tom Brown, dumping the fat junior down at the head of the stairs. "You're not going to spy on Chum-jam."

"I wasn't thinking of spying on him," said Bunter indignantly. "I was just going to—to hear what they said."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I consider this jolly suspicious," said Bunter. "Chum-jam has been telling whoppers. If what he said about Lasker is true, why doesn't he turn him out?"

"Some blessed lies somewhere," said Bolsover major; "but you're not going to listen at the door, all the same. That's a bit too rotten!"

"It's no business of ours, anyway," said Tom Brown.

"It's jolly queer, though," said Ogilvy. "I say, I suppose the man can't have done Chum-chum any harm, can he? He was a bit tipsy."

"They were talking," said Bunter. "I heard their voices when that New Zealand beast collared me. I think I'll go and—"

"The New Zealand beast will collar you again if you go along the passage, and he will bump you next time," said Tom Brown.

"I say, you fellows—"

"Shut up!" said Bulstrode. "You're not going to spy. But I say, chaps, I don't

Billy Bunter sat up in the passage, blinking in wild alarm and surprise. Bob Cherry raised his boot again to help him on his way farther. "Owl! owl! owl! Stoppit, you beast!" howled Bunter.



'know if it's safe for that rough-looking customer to be all this time with Chum-jam. He may do the kid some harm. Suppose we look in."

"Might knock at the door and ask Chum-jam if he's all right," said Vernon-Smith. "It's a jolly queer business altogether, and I don't trust that German chap's looks."

The juniors agreed upon that, and they went down the passage in a body, and Bolsover major thumped on the door, and turned the handle. But the door did not open. It was locked on the inside. The juniors were really alarmed now. If the German was the bad character Cholmondeley had represented it was quite possible that he was doing some harm, that he might have robbed or injured Cholmondeley, and locked the door to prevent interruption. Bulstrode knocked at the door.

"Are you all right, Chum-jam?" he called out.

Cholmondeley's voice came back.

"Yes. What's the matter?"

"Oh," said Bulstrode. "We thought that German chap might have cut up rusty, as the door was locked."

"I'm all right."

"Do you want him thrown out?"

"No, no!"

"Oh, all serene!" said Bulstrode. "We may as well clear off, you fellows. They seem to have made friends, after all."

The amazement of the Removites was at its height now. Cholmondeley was evidently getting on all right with the seaman, whom he had termed a rascal and an impostor, and whom he had denied admission so long as he could help it. What it meant, the juniors did not know, and could not guess; but the whole business was so strange that they could not help wondering and surmising.

"May as well clear off," said Tom Brown. "No need to hang about here."

"Clear off if you like!" sneered Bolsover. "I'm going to stay. Chum-jam is waiting for us to clear off, to let the man out, I

believe. He'd rather we didn't see him."

Tom Brown thought the same, as a matter of fact, and that was why he had suggested clearing off. He walked away without replying, and several of the fellows followed him; but a dozen or more remained to see the German sailorman when he came out. Lasker had been more than half an hour in the study when the door opened at last, and Cholmondeley looked out into the passage.

Bolsover major grinned as he saw him.

"Looking to see if the coast is clear!" he jeered.

"But it isn't!" chuckled Snoop.

Cholmondeley looked at the juniors, and bit his lip. Perhaps he guessed Bolsover major's intention, and saw that it was useless to wait. He turned back into the study, and the next moment Lasker came out. There was a grin of satisfaction upon the man's hard, bronzed face.

Evidently the interview with Cholmondeley, now that it had been brought about at last, had turned out quite satisfactorily from Lasker's point of view.

Cholmondeley came down the passage with the sailorman, and the wondering Removites made room for him to pass.

"So you've made friends—eh?" said Bolsover major.

Cholmondeley did not reply, but walked straight on. Bolsover tapped the German seaman on the shoulder.

"So you've found your young master—hey?" he asked. "Glad to see you, wasn't he?"

"Tank you; ja, ja, mein Herr!" said Lasker. "Mein young master is ver' kind to me. I did say tat he would see me ven he know tat I come."

"He refused to see you before!" growled Bolsover.

"Tat was a mistake," said Lasker calmly.

"Oh! So you're satisfied, are you?" said Bolsover, somewhat taken aback.

"Ja, ja! Tat is so."

And the German seaman followed Cholmondeley downstairs. Some of the juniors kept them in sight, and saw Cholmondeley conduct the man to the school gates, where they parted.

"The fellow's an utter liar!" Bolsover confided to his friends. "He wouldn't see Lasker, I suppose, because he'd made the man some promises, and didn't want to keep them. Lasker must have some hold over him, to make him toe the line like this. It looks fishy to me. I think Chum-jam's antecedents want inquiring into!"

Cholmondeley had gone into the School House. He knew that the attention of all the juniors was concentrated on him. He knew that they were making all sorts of surmises about his inexplicable conduct; but he knew, too, that they could never hit upon the true explanation of it. If nothing fresh occurred, the talk would die away in the long run, no doubt. But the new junior knew that he was walking in slippery places.

He knocked at Mr. Quelch's door, and the Remove-master bade him come in. Mr. Quelch was engaged upon the literary work that occupied most of his spare time, but he gave the new junior a kind nod and a smile as he entered. Cholmondeley had won golden opinions from the masters by his keen devotion to work. It was not only that he worked hard, but he loved his work—he pursued knowledge for knowledge's sake, and such a pupil was sufficiently rare at Greyfriars.

"Well, Cholmondeley, you have not finished your exercises yet?" the Remove-master said.

"No, sir," said Cholmondeley. "I have come to see you about another matter. If you can spare me a few minutes—"

"Go on, my boy!"

"I have just had a visit from a seaman who was saved from the wreck of the Adler. He is in want, sir, and I want to help him."

Mr. Quelch looked rather sharply at him.

"I have heard of a bad character, a German seaman, coming here and trying to force himself upon you, Cholmondeley," he said.

"Is that the man?"

Cholmondeley coloured.

"That is the man, sir. I'm afraid he is not a very good character; but he was of a lot of service to me on board the steamer, and I told him I would do something for him when we reached England. Now he is destitute—he has lost everything in the wreck, and it will be

## THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER

### Remorse !

BOB CHERRY came into No. 14 Study when the chums of the Remove returned from Cliff House. He expected to find Cholmondeley there; but the study was empty. But he soon heard the story of the sailorman's visit, for it was the talk of the Lower School.

Bob Cherry heard the chatter and strode into Study No. 1, where he found Wharton and Nugent. His ruffled looks drew their attention at once. Billy Bunter was in the study, and he had just been giving them a graphic account of the visit of Fritz Lasker and its curious outcome.

"Why the frown, Bob?" asked Wharton and Nugent together.

"I've just been hearing lies about Chum-jam," growled Bob. "Snoop had the cheek to tell me that he was friendly with that German rotter, and—"

"Bunter's just been telling us the same!"

"Oh, he has, has he?" said Bob, with a glare at Bunter, which the Owl of the Remove was too short-sighted to see.

"Yes, rather," said Bunter. "Jolly queer, I call it. After saying that the man was a rogue and a cadger, and so on, to have him in his study jawing to him for half an hour, and then to walk down to the gates with him, as friendly as you please. And now he's gone out—first time since Lasker showed up here. Not afraid to go out any longer—he, he, he! I—I say, what are you doing, you idiot? Ow! Help! He's gone mad! Ow! ow! ow!"

Bump!

Billy Bunter descended into the passage outside with a loud concussion. As he sat up, blinking in wild alarm and surprise, he saw Bob Cherry's boot raised to help him along, and he picked himself up in frantic haste and ran for his life.

"You don't believe what that fat rotter has been saying, I suppose?" demanded Bob Cherry gruffly, as he swung back into the study.

Wharton and Nugent were silent. They did believe it, as a matter of fact; it was evidently quite true. Even Billy Bunter, Ananias as he was, would not have told untruths that could immediately be disproved, and with no object

a long time before he can get any compensation from the Adler Company. I have promised to help him, sir, and I want some money. If you would be kind enough to make an advance to me, my father will repay it."

"H'm!"

"My father is very rich, sir, and he always lets me have as much money as I want," said Cholmondeley, the flush deepening in his cheeks. "If you sent him a cable, sir, he would pay for it, and he would authorise you to advance me money to any amount."

"How much do you wish to give this man, Cholmondeley?"

"I have promised him five pounds now, sir, and some more later."

Mr. Quelch looked very grave.

"That is a large sum for a schoolboy to give away, Cholmondeley."

"It is not much to me, sir. My father gave me a hundred pounds when I left India, but it was lost in the wreck."

"Indeed. Well, I will speak to the Head about it, Cholmondeley. I could not hand you such a sum on my own responsibility. A cable to India, too, would be very expensive, and the Head must decide. When do you want the money?"

"To-day, sir, if possible. The poor fellow has run up a bill at the Anchor, and the landlord is pressing him for the money."

"I will speak to the Head presently, Cholmondeley, and you may come to my study at six o'clock."

"Thank you, sir!"

"One word more," said the Remove-master, as Cholmondeley turned to go. "It is very right of you to be generous to a shipwrecked seaman, but you must now allow generous impulses to carry you too far. If you give the man five pounds, he should be satisfied with that, and should not ask for more. If he should pester you for money, you had better speak to me, and I will see him and send him about his business."

"Very well, sir."

And Cholmondeley left the study. His face was calm and steady as he went back to his own room—till the door was closed upon him. Then he strode to and fro, with clenched fists and haggard looks.

to serve. Bob looked quickly at his chums, and his face flushed redder.

"Can't you see what this means?" he exclaimed angrily. "If Cholmondeley had allowed that man to see him, and treated him in a friendly way, it shows that he's been lying—or jolly near it! He can't have done it!"

"I'm afraid he has, Bob!"

"So you take that fat beast's word against Chum-jam's, do you?"

"I wouldn't take Bunter's word against a cockroach, but it's true, Bob. You say Snoop has told you the same thing. Besides, it's easy enough to prove. Ask any of the fellows. Bunter says there was a crowd of them round when Lasker came. Ask Tom Brown or Ogilvy—you'll get the truth from them!"

Tom Brown was in the passage, and Bob put his head out of the door and called to him.

The New Zealand junior came up.

"What's Bunter been doing this time?" he asked. "He's yelling out downstairs that you've gone mad and jumped on him!"

"I'll jump on him again!" growled Bob. "He's been telling lies about Chum-jam! He says that that German chap has been here, and Chum-jam has seen him, and been friendly with him, and rot like that—"

"Well, that's true!" said Tom Brown.

"True!" yelled Bob.

"Quite true! I don't know how Bunter came to tell the truth, but he's done it this time! I saw it all—so did half the school for that matter!"

Bob stared at Tom Brown aghast. He knew that Brown would not lie—and he was not one of the fellows who followed Bolsover's lead—against Cholmondeley.

"You saw it?" said Bob.

"Yes."

"Then—then—then what about what Chum-jam said about the man—about his being a rogue and an impostor—?"

"That's what all the fellows are asking," said Tom. "It's a queer business; but I suppose we needn't meddle in it. Chum-jam can look after his affairs himself."

Bob Cherry did not reply. He went out of the study without another word, his rugged face quite pale. He had knocked Bunter about for saying what was the truth—he knew that

now! His temper had risen at once at an imputation against his friend—but the imputation was quite true. It remained now to have an explanation with Cholmondeley. Bob walked about the Close by himself, with a moody brow, till he saw Cholmondeley come in, and then he followed him into the house, and up to his study. Bob Cherry slammed the door shut. Then he turned to Cholmondeley.

"Will you tell me what this means, Chummy?" he asked huskily. "I've chummed with you, and I've pitched into a fellow for saying things about you—and it turns out that the things are true! You told me you wouldn't see the German fellow—that he was a liar and an impostor, and had no claim on you! Now you've received him in a friendly way, and had him in your study, and walked down to the gate with him, and so on! You seem to have changed your opinion of him all of a sudden!"

Cholmondeley's lips quivered.

"I suppose you think me a liar?" he said.

"Tell me what it means."

Cholmondeley sank into a chair.

"It means that I'm a liar and a rascal, and that I'm not fit to have you speak to me—that's what it means!" he said, with a choke in his voice. "It means that I'm a swindler, and—and I wish I'd gone down in the Adler! I wish you hadn't been there to save me—that's what it means! I can't lie to you somehow! Better let me alone—I'm not fit for you to talk to! Go and tell the whole school what I've said, if you like—I don't care!"

"I'm not likely to do that," said Bob, whose face had grown very pale. "I haven't known you long, Chummy; but I've been your friend, and I've stood up for you! If you've told lies, what have you told them for?"

"Oh, don't ask me! I should only have to tell you more lies, and I can't do it!" groaned Cholmondeley. "I thought I could, but I can't. I'm a liar and a thief and a rascal, if you want to know—go and tell the fellows."

"I won't do that. I don't believe you know what you're saying. Look here, has that man got any hold over you?" demanded Bob.

Cholmondeley nodded his head without speaking.



"I've broken the law and I could be sent to prison!" said Cholmondeley. Before the startled Bob Cherry could reply the new boy walked away into the dusk.

"Tell me what it is—I'll help you out. We'll all help you," said Bob eagerly. "I know you are a square fellow at heart, anyway."

"I can't tell you. You wouldn't touch me—you wouldn't speak to me if you knew," said Cholmondeley, with a groan. "Don't speak to me any more—I can't stand it. If I'd been lucky I might have had a chap like you for a friend—but it wasn't to be. I've lied to you—that ends it. Now leave me alone."

The wretched boy covered his face with his hands. Bob stood looking at him. What did it all mean? He could not understand; but he knew that the boy before him was stricken with remorse and shame—for what? He could not guess. What could he have done to place himself in the power of Lasker?

"Chummy, old fellow," said Bob at last,

"I—I don't understand you, but—but I'm your friend all the same. I don't care what you've done—perhaps something silly—but I know you never meant any harm. I'd swear to that. And I'm sticking to you."

"You wouldn't if you knew."

"I would!"

Cholmondeley shook his head.

"You wouldn't—you couldn't. You'd shrink away from me—so would all the rest—a liar, a thief, an impostor! Oh, I can't stand it!"

"Chummy! Do you know what you're saying?"

"Don't talk to me any more. I shan't speak to you again. Now get out—get out. Leave me alone!"

The boy was shaken by sobs. Bob Cherry stood looking at him for some moments, and

then quietly left the study and closed the door.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

### The Stolen Name !

**C**HOLMONDELEY kept very much to himself during the following days. He avoided Bob Cherry.

More than once Bob sought him out, but Cholmondeley did not respond to his cordiality, and gradually Bob realised that the friendship was at an end.

His regard for Cholmondeley remained unchanged, and he knew that it was the same with Chum-jam; but the new junior wished to break off. He had stated his reason—that he was not good enough to be Bob Cherry's pal, and that Bob would refuse to speak to him if he knew the truth.

What was the truth ? Bob could not imagine—but he knew that Lasker knew, and he guessed that Chum-jam was paying Lasker the price of silence. It came out, as things will come out, that Chum-jam had visited Lasker more than once at the Anchor, and that the man was spending money at a rate that made the villagers open their eyes. A letter would come for Chum-jam in a rough, foreign hand, with the Pegg postmark, and the same day Chum-jam would go out—and somehow or other, probably through Billy Bunter, who was famous for his discoveries at keyholes—it became known that Cholmondeley was having a good deal of money from the Head, a cabled authorisation having been received from Mr. Cholmondeley in India.

Bob could not help putting two and two together, and he often wondered miserably what was Lasker's hold over Chum-jam, and always he tried to think that it must have been some foolish escapade which Chum-jam was taking too seriously—and yet he knew that it must be more than that.

Chum-jam had very little to do with the Co. now. He avoided them, and even avoided football, the game he had taken up so keenly, to keep away from them. He devoted all his attention to his studies, but even into his work he did not put all the keenness of old. Mr. Quelch noticed the falling-off, though he did not remark upon it. He thought the boy

looked pale and unwell, and did not urge him to work. Cholmondeley had fallen into the habit of walking alone in the old Cloisters when he was not at work, and after one or two attempts Bob Cherry gave up joining him there.

The boy was so subdued and troubled that even Bolsover major felt his rancour against him die away. Even Snoop at length ceased his jeering allusions to Lasker. All the new junior's brightness and high spirits seemed to have faded away since the day Lasker had succeeded in penetrating to his study.

What was the matter with him ? What had he done ? Bob Cherry had not said a word of the half-confession Cholmondeley had made to him even to his chums, but he thought about it incessantly.

It was about a week after Lasker's visit that Bob made one more attempt to break through the icy barrier that had grown up between himself and his friend. It was a dim November evening—an evening that was destined to be long remembered in the Greyfriars Remove. Bob had been watching a footer match—he was not playing himself—and when it was over he strolled away in the gathering dusk, and caught sight of Cholmondeley crossing the Close towards the dim old Cloisters. He quickened his steps and joined him. Chum-jam also quickened his steps to avoid Bob, but the latter refused to be avoided.

"Look here, Chum-jam," he said, overtaking Cholmondeley. "I'm not going to be shoved off like this. If you'll say out plainly that you don't want to pal with me, I'll leave you alone, but—"

"You know it isn't that," said Cholmondeley in a low voice.

"Yes, I know. Then what is it ? "

"I've told you."

"Silly rot about not being good enough to pal with me !" said Bob impatiently. "Well, I don't believe it. I don't believe you've done anything wrong. I don't believe that scoundrel Lasker has any real hold over you. It's all rot. And I'm not going to have you moping about by yourself and getting all sorts of blue devils. Do you hear ? I'm not going to stand it ! "

"It may all come out !" said Cholmondeley

huskily. "Don't you understand? Lasker was saved from the wreck, after all. Suppose somebody else was saved? I shouldn't wonder. And then, if I'm disgraced, you don't want to be known as my pal. I don't want to disgrace you, too."

"Do you mean to say that everybody on the steamer knows this, whatever it is, as well as Lasker?"

"Yes."

"Then it can't be anything serious. Whether you tell me or not, I'm sticking to you, and I won't believe a word against you, even from yourself."

Cholmondeley shook his head.

"Goodness knows how I'd like to let you stick to me, Bob; but I can't. It may all come out; it's always possible. I thought I was safe for some years at least—till it was time to go back to India. But then Lasker turned up, and—and—Let me alone, Bob! If you keep on, I shall end by telling you, and then I shall have to leave Greyfriars."

"Leave Greyfriars?" said Bob blankly.

"Yes."

"Good heavens, Chummy! Is it so serious as that? Do you mean to say that—that—"

"I've broken the law, and I could be sent to prison if they knew," whispered Cholmondeley. "Now do you understand?"

He walked away before Bob could reply, and disappeared into the dusk. Bob Cherry, feeling as if he had received a stunning blow, went into the House. He hardly noticed where he went in his confusion of mind. Cholmondeley's whispered confession had thrown him quite off his balance.

There was a buzz of voices in the Common-room. Bolsover major had been down to Friarsdale, and he had come in brimming with news. He had a newspaper in his hand, and the fellows were crowding round him, reading it over his shoulders. There were exclamations of surprise and wonder on all sides. Bolsover major shouted to Bob Cherry as he caught sight of him:

"Hallo, Cherry! This way! Here's news for you—news of your friend, Chum-jam. Chum-rats! Ha, ha, ha!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Bunter.

Bob Cherry turned upon them fiercely. He

was in no humour to stand chaff of any sort, and especially upon the subject of Clive Cholmondeley.

"What do you mean, you rotten cads?" he demanded, with lowering brow.

"I mean that he's found out!" roared Bolsover. "Oh, the awful spoofe! Now we know why he didn't want Lasker to see him. Now we know what he's been handing that fellow money for. My hat! They'll both be arrested now."

"What!"

"Lasker is an accessory after the fact," said Ogilvy. "That's the law. He'll be arrested for helping Chum-jam with the swindle."

"What are you talking about?" Bob demanded furiously. "If you've got anything to say against my pal, Chum-jam—"

"Your pal Carrots!" roared Bolsover. "His name's no more Cholmondeley than mine's Smith. His name is something else—but it's not Cholmondeley. Look at this paper—it's here in black and white. He's an impostor—a swindler! Clive Cholmondeley has been found!"

"What!"

"There was a boat got off from the Adler before she went ashore, and it was picked up by a Russian ship. Captain and six seamen and a passenger saved—and the passenger was a boy named Clive Cholmondeley, who was being sent to school in England. Here it all is in the paper! Couldn't make it known that they were saved till the Russian ship got to port—that's how they haven't been heard of yet. Now they've wirelessed from Odessa. They don't even know that a swindler has been passing himself off here as Clive Cholmondeley!"

"Oh!" gasped Bob.

"And look here; here's another paragraph!" chortled Snoop. "Look at this!"

*"We understand that a boy saved from the wreck of the Adler, off Pegg, represented himself as being Clive Cholmondeley, and was received at Greyfriars School under that name. As there was only one English boy besides Master Cholmondeley on the ship, this person is undoubtedly a*

**ship's boy named Handley, previously supposed to have been drowned in the wreck. We understand that Scotland Yard is taking this matter up."**

"That means that the bobbies are coming to arrest him!" said Vernon-Smith. "My hat! Can't help feeling sorry for the poor beast! What a wonderful nerve to play a game like that on us."

Bob Cherry snatched the paper away from Bolsover. Even yet he had a faint hope that it was all some horrible joke—some fiendish rag planned by the enemies of Cholmondeley. But a glance at the paper banished that hope. There it was, as Bolsover had said, in black and white. Clive Cholmondeley was in Odessa, with the captain and other members of the crew of the Adler. And the boy who had called himself by that name at Greyfriars—he was in the Cloisters now, unconscious of his impending doom—while in an express, probably at that very moment, was the detective charged to arrest him.

Bob Cherry flung the paper in Bolsover's grinning face, and dashed out of the room. He knew all now. Cholmondeley was an impostor, a swindler, a thief, for had he not taken money under his stolen name? But whatever he was, he should be saved. There might be time yet for the wretched boy to escape before the police arrived. Whether he was doing right or wrong, Bob Cherry hardly knew; he did not stop to think. Through the mist of the November evening, he ran breathlessly for the Cloisters.

#### THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER

Pals to the Last!

THE boy who had been known at Greyfriars as Clive Cholmondeley was in the Cloisters. He was pacing there with moody brow when Bob dashed in. Bob caught him by the arm, and Cholmondeley glanced quickly into his face.

"You've got to go!" panted Bob.

"What! What do you mean?"

"It's all come out!"

Cholmondeley reeled against one of the stone pillars.

"It's in the papers!" Bob panted. "Some survivors of the Adler were picked up by a

Russian ship and taken to Odessa. Clive Cholmondeley was among them."

"Oh, heavens!"

"And you—you—"

The boy groaned.

"I'm Tom Handley! Heaven forgive me! But I'm glad he's saved. I'm glad it's all over—I don't care."

"What did you do it for?" said Bob miserably. "I could never have suspected it. What did you do it for, Chummy?"

"It was forced on me. You don't understand. I was a ship's boy—lucky to get a job on that German steamer," said the boy drearily. "I always had a longing for something better. I spent what little money I could get on books. And then, when young Cholmondeley came on the steamer, he took me up; and—and he was weak and a bit silly, but he was a good chap. He was sick and ill on the steamer, and I looked after him a lot, and we became friendly. He lent me books; he let me do lessons with him—and I was simply hungry for them. I couldn't help thinking, thinking, thinking—why shouldn't I have his chances? Why should he go to Greyfriars, with plenty of money in his pocket, and I remain a ship's drudge—I, who wanted to learn ten times more than he did? I envied him, but I liked him all the same. And when the wreck came—when the boat put off—and it seemed the only chance of life—I shoved him into it. He would never have got into it by himself. I saved his life, as it turns out, just as much as you saved mine."

"I'm glad of that!" said Bob.

"But—but when I woke up in the inn, they told me nobody else had been saved—and I knew it was a hundred chances to one against that boat having lived through the storm—they said I was the only survivor—and they called me Cholmondeley. You see, the real Cholmondeley had given me some of his clothes and things, so what I was wearing was marked with his name—and I had his coat on, with his letters in the pocket. I had got the coat to put round him in the boat, but it was dashed away from the ship, and I couldn't get it to him. He was a kind lad—he knew I had nothing, and he gave me

clothes and things—and when they called me Cholmondeley in the inn, and said I was the sole survivor, it came into my head—Cholmondeley was dead, and his people were thousands of miles away in India—why shouldn't I be Cholmondeley, and let it go at that? It was wrong—wicked—I know; but then I wasn't very clear in my mind just then—I did it."

"I understand," said Bob.

"I tried to be honest," groaned the boy. "I tried. Goodness knows how I tried. As if I could be honest when I was an impostor and a liar! I wouldn't take any money—you remember I wouldn't take any money in Cholmondeley's name at first?"

"I remember," said Bob.

"But I had to. But then I accepted only a little, and I swore to myself that I would earn it later and pay it back. And then came that villain, Lasker. So long as he didn't

see me he believed that I was Cholmondeley, and he couldn't hurt me; but as soon as he saw me, he knew me, of course—"

"And then—"

"Since then I've been paying him to keep quiet—stealing Cholmondeley's money to pay him," said the boy bitterly. "In for a penny, in for a pound, you know; that was how I had to look at it. I didn't foresee all that, of course. All I thought of when I took Cholmondeley's name was getting into school in his place and getting a good education. And even then I'd have stopped, I think, only I found Dr. Locke had cabled to Mr. Cholmondeley that his son was saved. Nobody had the slightest suspicion; nobody in England knew Cholmondeley by sight." He broke off.

"I think I understand," said Bob. "Anyway, I'm sorry for you, and—"

"Sorry for me—a swindler, liar, cheat?"



"Give us your fin  
and clear," said  
Bob Cherry.  
Handley grasped  
Bob's hand.  
"Heaven bless  
you! I'll go  
straight after  
this, honour  
bright!"

"Yes," said Bob steadily. "And I want to help you. You've done wrong—awful wrong, but I believe you're a decent chap at heart, all the same. I believe you'll go straight after this, if you have a chance."

"I will—I will, but I shan't have a chance. I shall be arrested for this and I shall be sent to prison—at least, to a reformatory."

"You've time to get clear," said Bob. "I don't think the Head knows yet. The detective will be here any minute, but he's not here yet. You've got to clear in time. Do you understand?"

The boy's eyes gleamed with new hope.

"You—you came here to warn me?" he muttered.

"Yes. You've got to get out while there's time," Bob said hurriedly. "Look here! Take all the cash I've got, take my watch, too—you'll need it all—and get over the wall and clear. Hark! That's the gate-bell now. It may be the detective. Don't lose a minute!"

"I—I can't take this—"

"Rats! Bosh!" Bob Cherry thrust the money and the watch into the boy's pockets. "You'll need every penny. Now, give us your fin, and clear."

"You—you'll give me your hand after—" The boy's voice broke.

"Here it is. Give me your fin. And—and when you're quite safe, old man, write to me and tell me how you're getting on, and that you're going straight, honour bright."

The boy who had been known as Cholmondeley grasped his hand.

"Heaven bless you, Bob Cherry—Heaven bless you! I'll keep my word, honour bright!"

One moment later he had dropped from the outside of the school wall, and was running swiftly up the road in the dark; and at the same time a stout gentleman with a hawkish eye was inquiring in the School

House for a young gentleman who had called himself Clive Cholmondeley, but whose real name was Tom Handley.

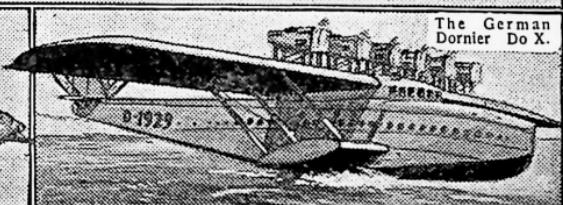
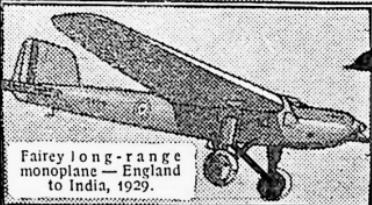
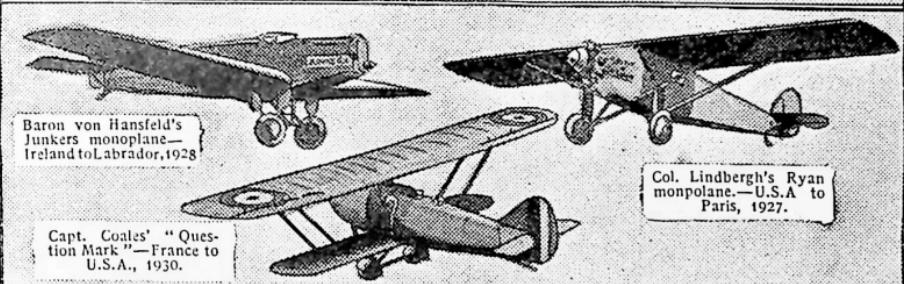
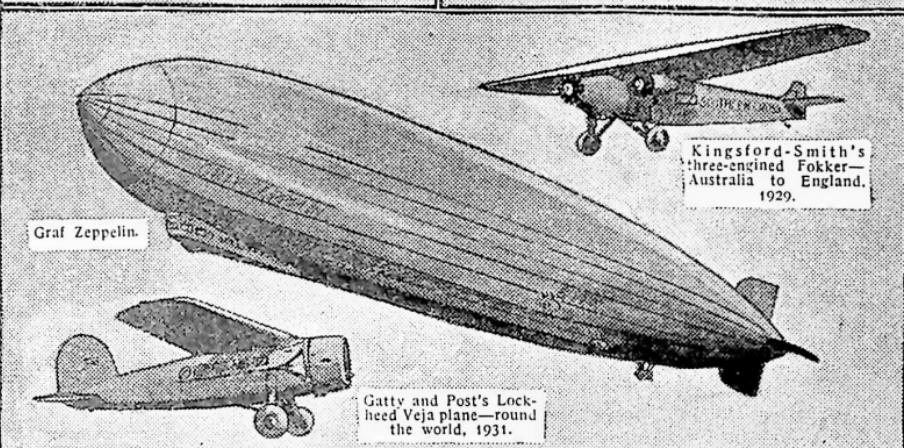
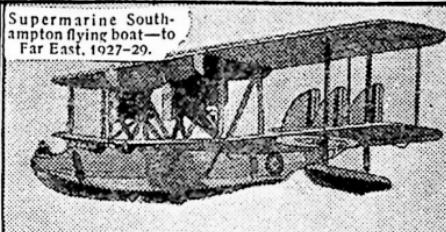
The gentleman from Scotland Yard inquired for Cholmondeley, but he inquired in vain. The Head, astonished and shocked, gave orders for the boy to be searched for, and Greyfriars was searched from end to end, Bob Cherry assisting in the search. But Chum-jam was not found. He had vanished, and it became evident at last that he had taken the alarm and fled. The gentleman from Scotland Yard retired disappointed, and consoled himself by arresting Fritz Lasker at the Anchor Inn, in Pegg village.

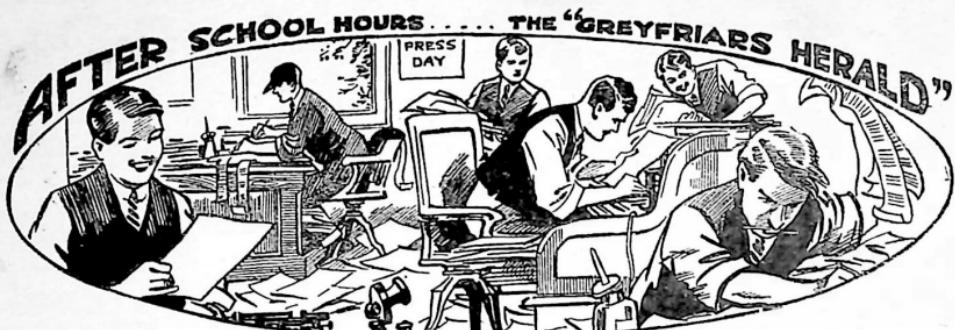
It was a nine days' wonder at Greyfriars. Tom Handley was not seen again, and so far as he was concerned the matter had to be dropped. But as it was evident that Lasker was a party to the imposture, and that he had taken a share of the plunder in cash, Lasker went to prison for three months, which would have been nearer his deserts if it had been three years.

The real Clive Cholmondeley never came to Greyfriars. His health had been so affected by the storm and its stress that he was sent to the South of France instead. In the Greyfriars Remove the fellows continued to talk of Chum-jam for a long time, and to speculate as to whether he would get clear; and when it became certain at last that he had got clear, even Bolsover major was not sorry. Bob Cherry did not forget his pal, "wrong 'un" as that pal had turned out to be, and he firmly believed that Chum-jam would keep his word and that from that time forward he would "go straight." And in that Bob Cherry was right, and long afterwards he knew that he had done right in putting his faith in the boy who had been saved from the sea and who had come to Greyfriars under a stolen name.



# FAMOUS LONG-DISTANCE AIRCRAFT





*Running a school paper provides plenty of pleasure  
—and trouble—when the day's Form work is done.*

By MARK LINLEY.

**T**HIS is one of our most important ways of spending our time after school is over. Producing the HERALD is always a labour of love, and the Remove boasts many fellows with a humorous and literary turn of mind who will see that the HERALD is kept going.

First among these is our Editor-in-Chief, who is a tireless worker in this good cause. Although he does not write a terrific lot of matter, Wharton probably works harder than anybody. There are lots of facts and figures to go over in running a school mag., and Wharton is master of them all.

Hats off to our worthy editor!

Vernon-Smith is Sports Editor, and always has his hands full. Greyfriars not only boasts football and cricket elevens, but has its rowing eights, tennis courts and tournament, Middle-school hockey team, boxing championships, cross-country and marathon running, field sports and swimming races. In addition to these, some of the fellows and one or two masters go in for fishing in the Sark, while Mr. Prout and Mr. Lascelles occasionally shoot over Popper Court preserves with their guns.

All of these activities are in the hands of Vernon-Smith. He is kept pretty busy. He has his own staff of reporters, including Tom Brown, Squiff and Bulstrode, and these three fellows have to attend and report on the various sports meetings and matches.

Sub-Editor Bob Cherry is in charge of the

General News, and he also has his reporters—Peter Todd (who does the Law Courts and Parliament notes), Johnny Bull (who does class-room and Rag reports), and Dick Penfold (who covers holiday activities and village sketches). Penfold also looks after the poetry columns of the HERALD.

Frank Nugent is Art Editor, and arranges for all the drawings. And right well he does it. Drawings can make so much difference in a paper that this is a very important department.

Next on the list comes Harold Skinner. In many ways Skinner is a bit of a rotter; but he has a fine sense of humour and is the greatest practical joker in Greyfriars. Skinner writes those screamingly funny Society Notes, Hints on Beauty, Children's Corner, News from Fagland, Diary of a Fifth Form Fathead, and many other laughable contributions. We do not always get on well with Skinner, but we admit that the HERALD wouldn't be the same without him.

Every Friday evening Study No. 1 is the scene of much bustle and activity, for Friday is press day, and the copy has to be sent off to the printer. Johnny Bull, who is Official Chucker-Out, has his hands full; and many dull thuds and anguished yells show that unwelcome contributions are being rejected, and unwelcome contributors ejected.

Long live the GREYFRIARS HERALD. Long may that bright and breezy schoolboy paper entertain chums all over the world.

# LOWTHER'S LAST LAUGH



By

JACK BLAKE

(of the Fourth Form)

*Ragging a practical joker is a highly risky proceeding—a fact which is brought home to Tom Merry & Co. when they "take it out of" Monty Lowther, the St. Jim's joker*

If ever a chap deserved being boiled in oil, then that chap's Monty Lowther of the Shell!

He calls himself a practical joker. Personally, I prefer to regard him as a practical idiot!

Only a couple of days ago he sent a dozen of us racing off to Wayland on our bikes in the expectation of seeing a spectacular fire. When we got back, after a fruitless journey, he calmly informed us that the fire he had been talking about was in the grate of the tea-room at the bun-shop!

What can you do with a fellow like that?

We gave the matter serious consideration—"we" being Tom Merry and Manners and Kangaroo and Gussy and other big shots in the Fourth and Shell.

Ultimately we decided that it was time Lowther was brought to his senses. We unanimously chose a dorm. ragging as the best means of achieving our object.

That night a crowd of us from the Fourth went along to the Shell dorm. Monty Lowther was yanked out of bed, biffed with pillows, bumped till the House almost rocked on its foundations, and finally made to run the gauntlet.

"Perhaps that'll keep him quiet for a time!" I remarked, as we trooped back to our quarters.

And the next morning Monty certainly looked more subdued. His expression was awfully meek as he joined a crowd of us on the steps.

"I say, I'm awfully sorry if I offended you about that fire bizney," he said. "Wouldn't have had that happen for worlds, naturally."

"Hum!"

"After that ragging you gave me last night, I realise that you looked on it more seriously than I'd thought," said Lowther meekly. "I feel I want to make amends now."

Gussy, as the representative of Vere de Vere manners, assured Lowther on our behalf that it was quite all right, and that undah the circs. we fweely forgave him.

"Yes, I know you're all awfully good and kind," Lowther said. "But I want to do something to make up for the way I've treated you, and I think I've found a way of doing it. You see, I've got an uncle who's managing-director of the new ice-rink at Wayland, and I can get you free passes to a private session this afternoon. How's that?"

"Fine!" we said promptly.

"There'll be nobody else there bar a couple of engineers, for the rink has closed down for the summer season," went on Lowther.

"You can all have the time of your lives."

We thanked Lowther and said we hoped we hadn't hurt him too much the previous night.

We all turned up at the ice-rink that afternoon. Ice-skating doesn't come our way every day, and we were as keen as mustard.

Lowther led the way in.

"You're not skating, then?" I asked, noticing that he was the only one without skates.

"Oh, it's nothing much to me!" Lowther said nonchalantly. "I can look in any time, you see, as my uncle's boss of the place."

"Ice looks a little off-colour!" Manners remarked, as we sat down and put on our skates. "Not quite so white as you'd expect it to be."

"That's because it hasn't been used for a day, I expect," Lowther said. "You fellows get going. I'll dodge down below and have a word with the engineers."

Lowther disappeared.

We fixed on our skates and duly got going.



We yanked Monty Lowther out of his bed and biffed him right and left with pillows as a warning to him that his practical joking must stop!

We hadn't been going many seconds before we discovered that there was something very peculiar about the ice. It seemed to be off-colour in more senses than one. Our skates seemed to stick, somehow, and we found quite a lot of difficulty in getting along at all.

All at once we tumbled to it.

"It's thawing!" yelled Tom Merry.

It was! And some parts had thawed more than others, for even as Tommy spoke we found ourselves gliding into a foot of icy water!

A dozen yells rang out, then. They were followed by a dozen splashes as, one by one, we collapsed into the swirling waters of the thawing rink.

And then there was a fresh yell—of laughter!

It came from Monty Lowther!

Lowther was standing on terra firma, fairly howling.

"I've seen the engineers!" he managed to call out. "They're awfully sorry to inconvenience you, but they won't be putting on the ice again till next autumn. At present they're draining it away for the season. Ha, ha, ha!"

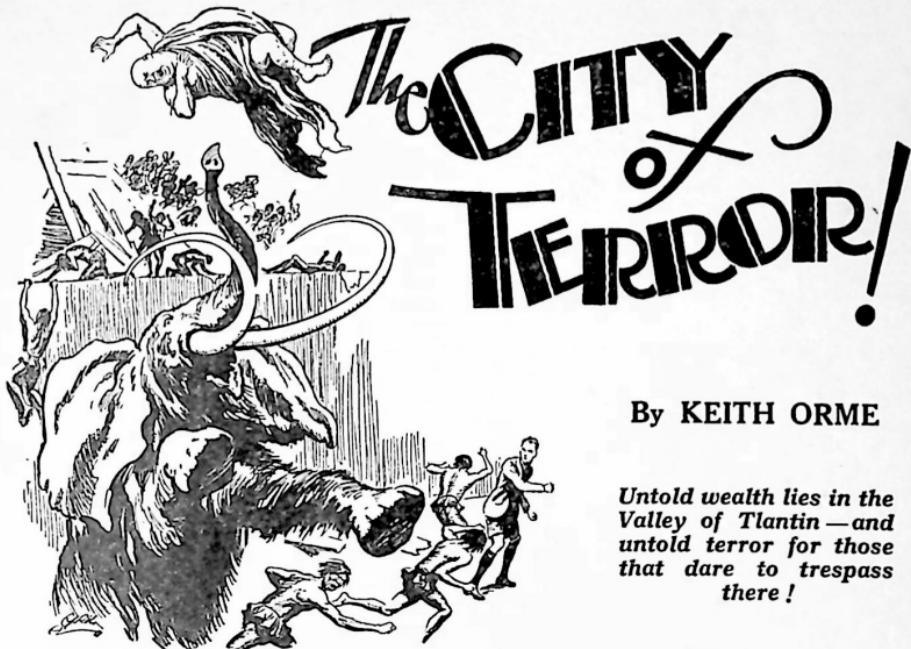
The truth came to us in a sort of blinding flash. It was all a jape! Lowther, aware that the ice was being thawed and drained off that afternoon, had deliberately invited us there to give us a ducking, and we'd swallowed his meekly phrased invitation like lambs!

We were simply furious with the fatheaded practical joker, and threatened him with dire punishment when when we get our hands on him.

We staggered through the water to the side to change into our ordinary footwear and make an ignominious exit.

By which time, needless to say, Monty Lowther was far, far away!

Wait till we get him!



By KEITH ORME

*Untold wealth lies in the Valley of Tlantin—and untold terror for those that dare to trespass there!*

#### THE FIRST CHAPTER Sinister Sounds!

ONE hundred miles south of Basoko. Fifty miles west of the turgid Congo at the point where it crosses the Equator. A week's trek from the last outpost of civilisation—and the temperature so high that it was not advisable to touch the rifle barrel with bare hands.

John Saunders caught the eye of his companion, Jerry Braimes, and twisted his glistening features into a wry grin.

"Sno good, Jerry," he gasped; "must rest a bit. This atmosphere's enough to poach a fellow!"

With that he eased the pack from his scantily-clad shoulder and sank limply to the moist ground, where he was presently joined by Jerry and the guide, a huge cheery negro whom they called Vulcan, who had been striding on a few yards in advance. This trio completed the party who were pushing their way into the steaming, low-lying centre of

uncharted Africa, the place of mysteries and sudden death, where Nature was still the undisputed monarch, and white man had not as yet attempted to foil the elements with his bridges and tunnels and irrigation systems.

John Saunders was carrying on the great quest in the pursuance of which his father and his father's father had lost their lives—the quest of the Ivory Ring. Sixty years before, Robert Saunders, investigating the ruins of the Temple of Tar-el-Kabir, on the Nile, discovered an inscription in hieroglyphics which told of a great treasure hoard, and which gave as the key to the treasure a ring carved in ivory, covered with ancient writing. But the ring was not to be found.

The old scientist made a copy of the inscription, and with the indomitable spirit that marked the true Briton, proceeded to search for the little circle of ivory which had been lost for thousands of years.

He traced it right up the Kagera into the

Victoria Nyanza Basin, whence it had been taken by the ancient priests; but there all trace of it seemed to be lost. When he died—mysteriously—his son, John Saunders' father, took up the search and was fortunate enough to discover that the descendants of the priests of the temple, having degenerated through the ages into savages of the weakest type, had been conquered by the Bantus and driven westward into the equatorial forests, taking with them the Ivory Ring along with the other few remaining relics of the ancient Egyptian civilisation.

John Saunders, accompanied by the one and only Jerry, had taken up the quest at the place where his father died—also mysteriously—near the Stanley Falls.

By good fortune they had fallen in with a tribe, who told a legend handed down by their forefathers.

Many years ago, said the legend, the tribe in its wanderings had come upon a race of strange light-skinned people in the jungle, and had promptly attempted to wipe them off the face of the earth.

They were more or less successful, so the legend had it, inasmuch as they managed to loot nearly everything, although quite half of the strange tribe escaped. John Saunders proved the story to be correct in the main, for in the witch-doctor's possession he actually found some ancient Egyptian relics—without a shadow of a doubt the same as were brought from the temple on the Nile by the priests thousands of years ago. He had inquired about the Ivory Ring, and his hopes had been raised and smashed again in five minutes.

Yes, they had had a yellow ring, made from the tusk of an elephant, about as wide across as half the span of a man's hand, and covered with strange charms; but it had been stolen one night from Mtedi, their previous witch-doctor, who had been trampled to death by a mighty elephant.

Saunders had excavated unsuccessfully for days at the place where Mtedi died, and decided that either the ring was lost for ever in the undergrowth, or had been picked up by a passing native before the body was discovered by the tribe. And so he found himself at a dead end.

Having nothing more tangible to work on, John Saunders decided to follow the very thin thread of a clue suggested in the ancient hieroglyphics handed down by his grandfather, and push still further westward.

And so the party eventually reached the place where they were resting in the furnace heat of the Congo, scarcely above sea-level. Vulcan, the negro, had now ceased to serve as a guide, since he knew no more of this part of the country than Saunders and Jerry; but he proved himself invaluable by his strength and stamina and his unfailing good humour, and was regarded by the white men as more a friend than a servant.

Saunders produced the much-fingered parchment from the leather pocket on his belt for the thousandth time, and read it half aloud:

“And thou, O searcher for the Sacred Ring, shalt be led by thy quest into a foul land where abound huge and awful creatures, where the heat is like that of a furnace, and the air is heavy with moisture. And there thou shalt find the Secret of the Tomb, in the heart of a traitor.”

He pondered over the parchment for a while, and then spoke.

“It's that last bit that puzzles me, Jerry,” he said. “This is the place they mean, from the description. It's hot and moist enough at any rate; but I can't for the life of me make out what's meant by that bit about finding the Ivory Ring in the heart of a traitor.”

“ Sounds like the melodramatic meanderings of some ancient Egyptian poet! ” commented Jerry. “ I fail to see the faintest glimmering of sanity in it, anyway.”

“ Well, only the future will show us, I suppose,” said Saunders philosophically. “ Ah, Vulcan, you're a pal! I'm dying for some tea.”

The three adventurers settled down to the meal which the big negro had been preparing while they talked. This over, they turned in, leaving Vulcan to take the first watch, and slept like logs on the hot ground.

Three hours later Jerry was awakened by the negro, and took up his stand by the camp fire, rifle on the ready. Vulcan whispered to him before he stretched his great limbs on the ground.



"Baas, dere am some ter'ble big animals movin' about in de bush, so keep yo' eyes peeled jest in case dey come too close!"

Jerry chuckled, and settled down for a three hours' vigil.

For an hour or more Jerry Braimes concentrated on the strange, sinister noises coming from the bush to the west, apparently a good distance away. There were deep reverberating grunts and high-pitched squeals, and occasionally the unmistakable sound of breaking timber as some enormous body forced its way through the trees.

He was pondering whether they were elephants or prehistoric animals, of which latter he had heard many vague rumours, but had always scorned the possibility of their existence, when something out of the velvety blackness of the night crashed with terrific force on his head. He toppled over sideways without a sound, and lay still.

All was silent for a few minutes; the fire, in an occasional burst of flame, lit up the three recumbent forms of Saunders, Vulcan and Jerry, and—something else!

From the blackness, into the circle of the firelight, snakelike, without sound, slunk a

Silently the sinister figures slunk towards the three adventurers. Suddenly a knobkerrie whizzed through the air, followed by a dull thud, and Jerry Braimes, the sentry, went to the ground and lay still.



lithe brown form, crouching, like an ape, with knuckles on the ground. It was followed by another, and yet another, until roughly twenty of them crouched silently round the three adventurers and watched. They were men, but very small in stature, and with long, greasy, black hair straggling over their eyes like skye-terriers.

Presently one of them glided forward, straightened up, and dealt the sleeping negro a fearful blow on his unprotected head with a long, slender knobkerrie.

Saunders, who always slept with one eye open, began to stir, although the only sound had been the crack of the club on Vulcan's skull. The weapon circled viciously, and the third of the trio joined his two friends in oblivion.

"By George! I say—has there been a blinkin' earthquake?"

Jerry muttered the words through a haze of semi-consciousness, and promptly faded away again. Half an hour later he recovered sufficiently to open his eyes and try—painfully—to focus them on objects round about him. After a while he was successful in making out the recumbent forms of Saunders and Vulcan, one on either side. They were still unconscious.

His eyes wandered past them, and fell on white stone walls. He closed them, and tried to tell himself that he was dreaming, but he could not convince himself, and when he opened his eyes again, the white walls still persisted.

His head was rapidly clearing, notwithstanding the awful throbbing pain in it, and gazing round, he found that they were in a small but lofty room, lit by means of several slits in the wall near the ceiling. It dawned on him that somehow or other they had been made captive by somebody, and his mind, groping blindly in the dulled recesses of his memory, at length recalled the camp fire and the crushing blow from the darkness.

For a long time he lay still with closed eyes, half-unconscious; then, feeling a little stronger, he tried to move and make an attempt to revive the other two, but found that he could not budge an inch. He was trussed up like a chicken from head to foot, as were also Saunders and the negro.

An hour later the others began to show signs of life, to Jerry's relief, and in a little while they were revived sufficiently to discuss the situation; although, naturally, they could do little but guess, for not one had known what hit him.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### Sentence of Death!

THE three adventurers lay there for what seemed an eternity before a small door was pushed cautiously open, and a lean, brown,

primitively-clad figure entered with bowls of some kind of slushy substance and a pitcher of water. He was followed by others, and the captives were raised into a sitting posture, and fed like children. No attempt was made to release their hands. Evidently their captors were taking no chances!

They suffered the ignominy of having the vile stuff fed to them in this manner only because they knew that their one chance of escape lay in keeping their strength up. Nevertheless, their blood boiled, and Vulcan strained at his bonds furiously in a vain effort to get at the little brown men, of whom he could have lifted one in each hand and crashed them together like eggs. But he had been well tied.

Saunders tried to converse with them, using nearly every language from the Nile to the Zambesi, but all to no avail; either they did not understand or they would not. The gabble they used among themselves was quite unintelligible.

Their captors left them, and for many more weary and painful hours they were alone. At length a party, armed with spears, came into the cell, and the captives' legs were released, and after much massaging to restore the circulation, they were led through passages and down long flights of stone steps, until they found themselves in a magnificent hall, at the farther end of which was a throne of sorts.

They were told to advance, and, on doing so, beheld on the throne a being as startling to look upon as he was different from the rest of the strange people who had captured them. He was of much bigger stature, and looked, to say the least of it, well nourished. His head, which was completely bald, was well developed and showed far greater intelligence than any they had seen so far in this strange place, and his wrinkled face contained altogether more strength of character. But it was his eyes which held the attention of the captives. They were set close together, and looked cunning and malicious beyond words, and strangest of all, they were of a distinct red colour.

Behind and on each side of the throne were files of warriors armed with spears and knobkerries.

The strange being was speaking. The words he used were quite without meaning to Jerry and Vulcan, but Saunders was listening intently. Presently the voice ceased, and Saunders replied haltingly in the same language, and then turned excitedly to Jerry.

"By George!" he exclaimed. "It is the language of the ancient Egyptians. He says we must give an explanation of our trespassing in the holy valley of Tlantin—whatever that might mean—what race we are of, and if there are any others of our party still outside the walls of the city."

"Tell the old oil merchant that we've as much right in Equatorial Africa as he!" exploded Jerry, whose temper was on a short fuse at the best of times. "Tell him we belong to a race of people who will blow his mouldy city off the face of the earth if he doesn't untie my wrists quickly!"

Saunders turned to the king—for such he seemed to be.

"We are of a race called the British," he said haltingly, "and we come in peace. We are searching for a certain thing which is of no value to any save ourselves, and we had no knowledge of your city until we found ourselves inside it, so that we cannot have come with hostile intentions. Moreover, I

Saunders, Jerry and Vulcan, their hands bound, were led before the ruler of the tribe, and never before had they seen such a startling person.



would demand an explanation of your assault upon us, and our capture."

"I do as I will with whomsoever trespasses in the holy valley of Tlantin," said the king impassively. "I have heard of your land, you white people, beyond the great barrier and the land of death, and I have heard of your mysteries and power. But see, you speak to the great Tu-Tlan, immortal and omnipotent, who has lived for ever, and to whom death cannot come. I, in my wisdom, know that I cannot release you, for should I do so you will hasten back to your people and tell of the wonderful city you have found, and of the gold and hard stones that you worship; and in a little while one will come who has a soft voice, and who will speak of strange gods, and when he is killed for blaspheming the gods my people worship, a

great army will come to avenge him. But that will only be an excuse, for their real motive will be to conquer the city and take the gold and hard stones which are their gods. Therefore, you must die."

Saunders translated the extraordinary speech.

"Well, I'm dashed!" exclaimed Jerry. "Tell the old pink-eyed Methuselah that if only he'll let me get hold of my four-fifty I'll blow a hole in him as big as the side of a house, an' then we'll see if he's immortal and omnipotent!"

The king's voice broke in.

"Tell your companion," he said to Saunders, "that no man may harbour thoughts of violence against the mighty Tu-Tlan and live. Though I know nought of your tongue, it is given to me to divine your thoughts, and whatever mercy I might have shown, now you shall surely die."

He went on to tell them how, when and where their end would come, and evidently enjoyed the telling, although if he anticipated a show of terror and pleadings for mercy, such as he was used to, he was disappointed.

"Thought reader, is he?" grunted Jerry, as Saunders translated. "Well, then, it's a wonder he doesn't blush. So we're to fight some kind of an animal in an arena outside the city walls, for the king's amusement, eh? Exciting, isn't it? I wonder where the Ivory Ring comes in. If it's to be found anywhere, I should imagine this would be the place."

Presently they were taken back to their cell, under heavy guard, and their arms released. Thereafter their food was passed through a narrow grid in the heavily bolted door, and they were free to walk about in the narrow confines of the cell.

Their rifles and ammunition, including Jerry's little automatic, had been left with Tu-Tlan. The probability was that the king had never seen firearms before, but no doubt he had associated death with the strange implements belonging to his captives. At the present moment he was probably examining them.

Days passed; long, wearisome days of broiling heat, and at length came the morning of the execution. They were escorted once

more to the throne, and saw that everything was in readiness for a journey. Tu-Tlan addressed Saunders from the throne.

"It grieves me that you have to die," he said, "but it must be, for reasons which you know. Nevertheless, you have one small chance. If you are able, through strength or strategy, to preserve your lives until nightfall, then, by the law of my city, you are entitled to live, albeit in strict captivity. Never yet has any man survived the arena, but I am impressed with your physique"—meaning Saunders—"and am favoured of the opinion that you will afford much amusement. I have discovered the secret of these weapons of yours, and when you have amused me enough, and I have seen the last of your capers, I will descend into the arena and hunt him yonder and the black man. See, I have had the weapons put into my sedan, and shall have them with me in the amphitheatre."

Having delivered himself of this callous speech, Tu-Tlan snapped out orders, and the journey to the arena was started.

The place where the three adventurers were to fight for their lives was an hour's march from the city, and was a natural amphitheatre at the end of a valley. High hills formed three sides of the arena, and the open side was barred by a tremendous wall of the same white stone as was used in the building of the city. There was one door set high up in the wall to one side, and approached by a broad flight of stone steps, and another, an enormous structure of logs, was set at ground level in the centre of the wall. Evidently this was through which the animals were driven when trapped in the valley.

The prisoners were taken into a dungeon-like place, which had a small barred door opening into the arena itself. Through this they looked, and seldom had they seen anything so awe-inspiring.

The arena was a huge circular flat-bottomed basin, hewn out of the rock, and from the floor, at intervals of about twenty yards, rose massive pillars of stone, some ten feet thick and fifteen feet high. The walls of the arena rose perpendicular to a height of ten to fifteen feet, and from the top upwards receded tier upon tier of coffee-coloured faces.

The whole of the city was assembled to watch the sport of the killing of the trespassers in the sacred valley ! At the farther end was Tu-Tlan and his bodyguard, seated nearest to the arena, that he might enjoy better the thrills of the fight.

Presently there was a signal from the king, and Saunders was seized by half a dozen warriors. his bonds were cut, and he was flung into the arena. Something clattered after him, and when he picked himself up he found it was a long bronze spear with a silvery-looking point, which, on closer examination, he found to be pure platinum. Truly there was great wealth in this valley of Tlantin !

Saunders had little time for conjecture. He stalked into the centre of the arena, feeling ridiculously puny, in spite of his splendid physique, under the concentrated gaze of the multitude above. He was there for these heathens' amusement, and the thought made him angry.

He turned to where Tu-Tlan sat in his gaily-decked stand, and bawled at him with all the strength of his lungs. regardless of the fact that the king could not hear a word of what he said, above the cumulative roar of the natives' voices, even had he been able to understand.

" You yellow-livered heathen ! " he roared. " Come down here and fight like a man, an' I'll give your subjects a bigger treat than they've had for years. I'll——"

Tu-Tlan raised his hand in a slow, significant gesture, and there was a sudden deathly silence, followed by a mighty roar as all eyes turned to a point behind the Englishman.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### At the Mercy of the Mammoth !

**S**AUNDERS swung round and faced the high wall from which he had entered the arena, and saw a great door being slowly raised. Through the growing space at the bottom he could see the shadowy form of some enormous animal moving about on the other side.

He gripped the spear until the knuckles of his hand shone white. Whatever it was, he was determined to give a good account of himself. He would give the people of Tlantin

something in the way of excitement that they would not forget in a hurry !

He saw Jerry's white face peering through the bars of the little door, and waved his hand. He watched the door, backing slowly away as the space widened. In a little while the great door was wide open, and from the black opening thundered the most gigantic beast Saunders had ever heard of. A mammoth !

It was a good three feet higher at the shoulder than the biggest bull elephant he had ever bagged, and its great curved tusks must each have weighed every ounce of a hundred pounds. Its ears, each measuring six feet across, were spread out in a great triangle on either side of its head, and its colossal trunk was curved high in the air, showing the pink of its open mouth. Unlike an elephant, it was thickly covered with long stringy hair, and altogether it was an unnerving spectacle as it charged with the speed of an express train straight down on the man standing in the centre of the arena.

Saunders was as cool as ice. He waited until the huge beast was almost on him ; then, when the breathless crowd above thought the fight was over before it had fairly begun, he sprang nimbly to one side, behind one of the stone pillars, and the huge bulk thundered past and slid to a standstill, the great toenails of its pile-driver-like feet striking sparks from the rock. The game had begun !

Saunders now saw the purpose of the stone pillars ; they were merely to make it more difficult for the animal to catch its victim, and so afford more amusement for the watcher. But for these no man could possibly last more than two minutes.

A deadly game of hide-and-seek. The brute spun round, screaming with anger, its trunk raised, trying to get the scent. Saunders knew it was hopeless. Dodge as he might, he knew that this fearful thing would wear him down and get him before long.

But something urged him to fight—to tantalise the beast, and keep it on the run. Accordingly, hardly knowing why he did it, the Britisher stood out in the open and faced the mammoth once more. Hardly able to believe its tiny, evil eyes, the monster paused for a moment, then, with a terrifying scream,

bore down again on the puny, tantalising thing before it.

Again Saunders leaped aside at the crucial moment, and again that fearful trunk flashed through the air a fraction of a second too late. In the few seconds that it took the mammoth to recover from the impetus of its rush, Saunders sprinted towards the other end of the arena, the king's end, and reached the shelter of another pillar just as the animal wheeled.

He balanced the platinum-tipped spear in his hand, and smiled whimsically. The king had a sense of humour, he thought. What earthly use would a thing like this be against such a monster, which must have a hide like armour-plating? Then it occurred to him that there was one soft spot, if he could hit it—the eye. He resolved to have a shot at it. He may as well die now as in an hour's time!

Once more he stepped out and saw, past the huge shape of the prehistoric beast, Jerry and Vulcan gazing through the little door. His hand waved a farewell, and then the mammoth charged.

But this time it changed its tactics. Instead of rushing blindly, as it had previously, it pulled up sharp when no more than fifteen feet from him, lowered its massive head, and advanced slowly, its great trunk stretched out in front, its wicked eyes gleaming cunningly.

The crowd above yelled. Saunders moved like lightning. Aiming for the right eye, he hurled the spear with every ounce of his great strength—and missed! As he threw, the monster raised its head in the act of crushing its puny antagonist with one sweep of its trunk, and the razor point of the spear sank deeply into the soft flesh under the base of the trunk, almost in the roof of its mouth.

Saunders sprang back as, with a deafening squeal, it ripped the spear from the wound with the tip of its trunk and whipped it to the floor with terrific force, crumpling it like a straw and trampling on it and squealing in a fearful rage.

The natives above were standing up and screaming their applause, and for the first time the maddened animal seemed to notice the audience and to forget the man in the arena. Lashing its injured trunk from side

to side in its fury, it wheeled two or three times, its inefficient eyes on the sea of seething humans above.

Suddenly something caught its eye—it was the brilliantly-decorated stand of Tu-Tlan and his bodyguard. The mammoth moved towards it, slowly at first, but with greater speed as the hazy brilliance of the king's decorated person took more definite shape in its eyes.

Tu-Tlan thought, reasonably enough, that the beast was still searching for Saunders, but not until it had passed the stone column behind which crouched the condemned man, and was thundering at full speed towards him, did the king suspect the truth, and then it was too late.

This was the largest beast the arena had ever contained, and they had not foreseen that it could reach a full twenty feet vertically with its trunk, when reared on its hind legs!

With a squeak of fright, the immortal and omnipotent one staggered to his feet, fumbling with one of Saunders' rifles, the mechanism of which he professed to have mastered, but he could do nothing. He was in the act of clumsily raising it when the monster crashed up to the wall directly beneath, and with one sweep of its mighty trunk, cleared the royal stand of its occupants, flinging them far into the arena.

Seizing the screaming Tu-Tlan round the middle, it hurled him high into the air, and caught him as he came down. Caught him fair and square on the point of one of the great tusks.

Then began the stampede proper. In the arena the frenzied animal heaved and threw its tremendous bulk here and there amongst the warriors it had knocked down, having thrown the king from its tusk with terrific force. Above, the natives panicked in their wild rush to get away from the demon that had killed their king, and altogether pandemonium reigned.

Meanwhile, Saunders watched his chance. His objective was the rifle which had fallen into the arena when Tu-Tlan was seized. Presently the mammoth, having satisfied itself that there was not an ounce of living matter near it, began trotting slowly round the walls, apparently searching for a way out. The

Englishman darted from behind the pillar, and reached the rifle—but not a second too soon!

The beast either heard or saw him, for it wheeled and charged back again. Dropping to his knee, Saunders took a lightning aim for the eye—this time with a weapon he knew. The report rang out, and the mammoth stopped dead. Another shot, and another, and slowly, majestically, the colossal brute sagged to its knees, rested its trunk on the floor, gave one great convulsive shudder, and rolled on to its side, dead.

Saunders felt pretty groggy, for the ordeal had been no light one; but with an effort he pulled himself together and hurried over to the little door in the wall.

In a few minutes he was shaking hands with Jerry Braimes, while Vulcan could scarcely contain himself in his jubilation. They made their way back to the dead mammoth, between the great pillars hewn out of the rock, which had stood there for centuries, and which bore dark, ominous stains—grim and silent evidence of countless fearful tussles with Death through the ages.

There was little chance of any of the Tlan-tinians returning to disturb the trio; they were probably in the city by now, with the gates bolted and double-bolted.

Saunders viewed the dead mammoth with an appreciative eye, and was suggesting that they set to work to take off the skin immediately, as he must at all costs preserve it for the British Museum, when Vulcan, who had been surveying the great tusks with an awed expression on his ebon face, suddenly bent down and peered closely at one of them.



Aiming for the right eye, Saunders hurled the spear with all his strength. The mammoth raised its head to crush him, and the spear sank deeply into the base of the trunk.

"Baas!" he called presently. "Dere am something funny about disyer tooth!"

Jerry, who was nearest, inspected the place pointed out by Vulcan, and saw a distinct mark encircling the blood-stained tusk.

"I say, Saunders, what do you make of this?" he called, looking up. "Dashed strange, I call it."

Saunders came round and looked closely at

the mark that Jerry excitedly pointed out. {

"Queer," he muttered. "Looks as though something had been tied tightly round there at some time. Anyway, I don't suppose it will have damaged the ivory at all—"

Suddenly he stopped, and his face lit up. Swooping down, he studied the tusk closely, measuring the width of the mark with his finger and thumb. Then he straightened up, and without so much as a word, dashed over to the place where lay the mangled remains of Tu-Tlan and his bodyguard. Bending over the almost unrecognisable corpse of the king, he inspected the awful wound made by the mammoth's tusk in the centre of the chest.

Suddenly Jerry and Vulcan, by the mammoth, were startled by a great whoop from Saunders and, turning, they saw him dancing like a madman, brandishing a blood-stained circular object above his head.

"It's the Ivory Ring!" he yelled. "At last—the Ivory Ring!"

"By gad, in the heart of a traitor!" exclaimed Jerry hysterically. "Then the prophecy was true!"

"And this is the beast which gored Mtedi, the witch-doctor, years ago," added Saunders. "It must have caught the ring on its tusk, and there it remained, tightly wedged, until it was forced off between the ribs of that fat rascal, Tu-Tlan!"

The finding of the Ivory Ring ended at last the quest that had been started by Saunders' grandfather many years ago. For the carvings on the ring laid open the way to the great treasure hoard, which eventually Saunders and his companions discovered after a long search.

They went back to England with the intention of returning to explore further the Valley of Tlantin, but in the excitement of hunting for the treasure, neither Saunders nor Jerry Braimes kept a record of the direction in which Tlantin lay. The two adventurers returned after six months in the hope of remembering the route and finding the city again, but they were unsuccessful. Tlantin remained a hidden city, but no longer one of terror.

THE END

## Sea-Bed Treasure-Hunters!

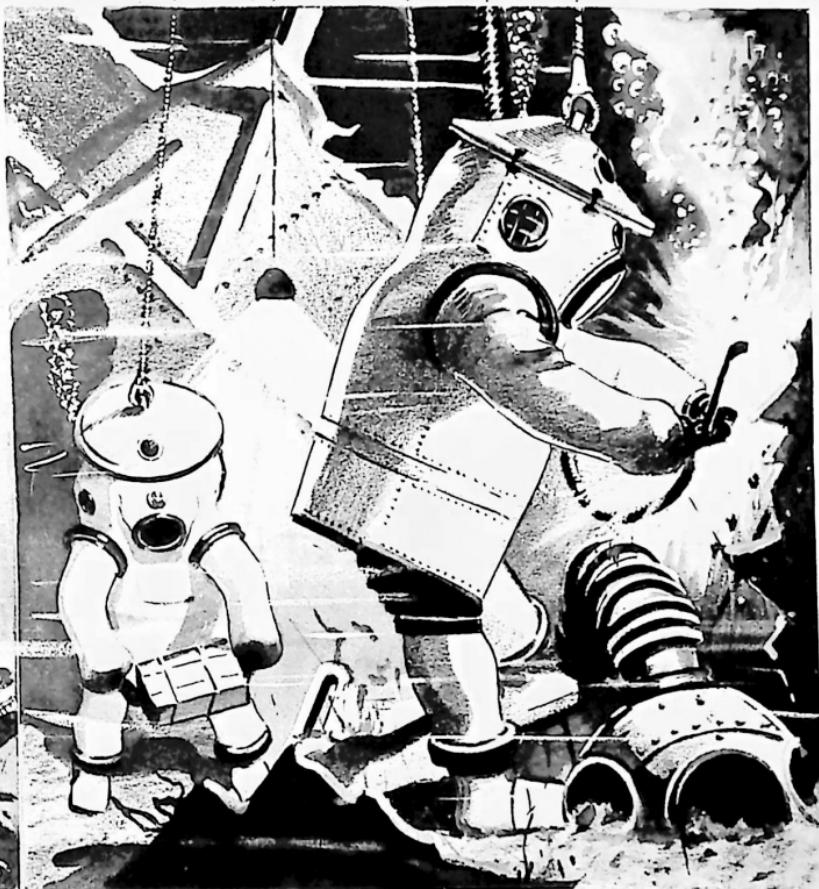
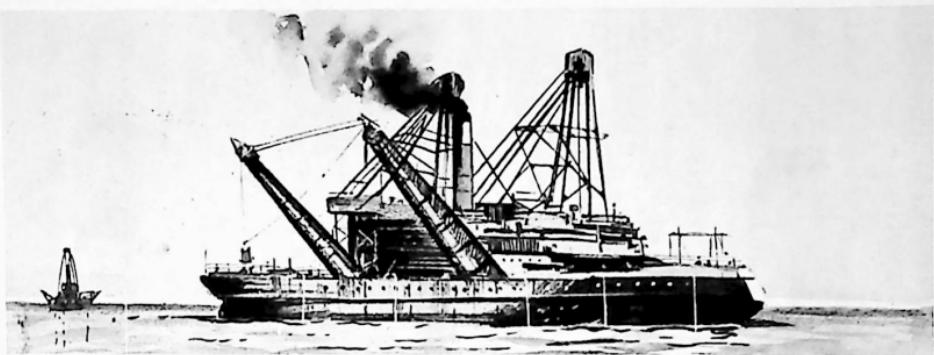
If a native diver suddenly came face to face on the sea-bed with a diver equipped in the manner shown in the plate opposite, he—the native diver—would no doubt bolt to the surface in terror. For the up-to-the-minute diver is like nothing on earth or in the sea. In that enormous armour-plated diving dress, there is nothing whatever to be seen of him. He is bolted and screwed-up inside it completely.

These "self-contained" diving suits enable the man inside to go treasure-hunting 300 feet below the surface, which is the deepest that divers have ever been. Inside the massive head-covering of the modern diver are flasks of oxygen, the supply from which he is able to regulate by means of valves. There are thick plate-glass "windows" at the front and sides, enabling him to get as clear a vision as the depth of dusky water allows. Inside the great helmet also is a telephone, so that he can talk easily with the ship up above from which he is conducting operations.

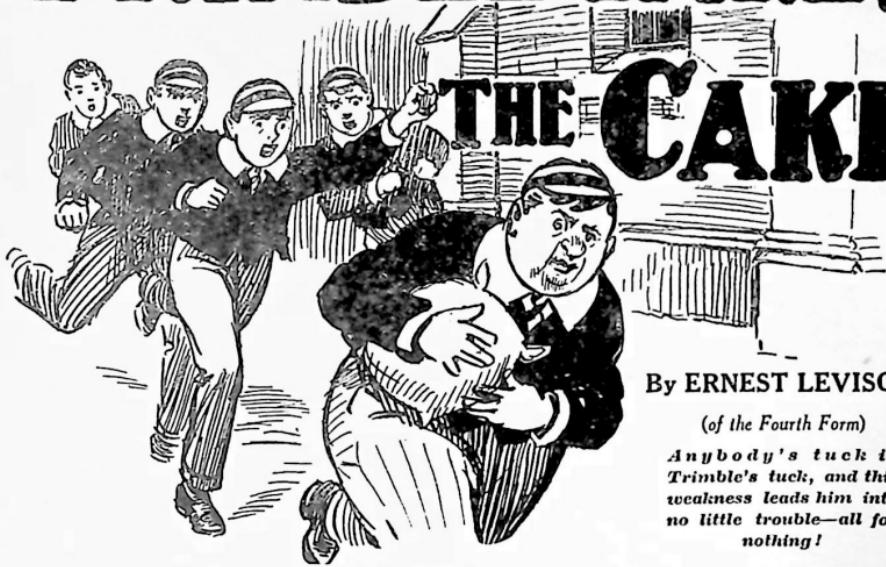
He is connected to the ship by a steel rope, and when he wants to go down or come up a powerful winch aboard ship sees to that operation. At the ends of the diving suit arms are very ingenious pincers which are operated from inside and so enable the diver to lift and handle objects with ease.

The use of such a marvellous diving suit was practically demonstrated during the salving of a sunken treasure-ship, the Egypt, which went down off Ushant in 1922 and for years remained completely beyond the reach of any human beings.

But equipped with these suits, divers located the wreck and started to get at the treasure. It was extremely dark down there, so powerful electric lamps were lowered. The wreck had gradually sunk deeper and deeper in the grey slime of the sea-bed, and immense sucking-tubes had to be let down to suck the covering mud away. Then, with the aid of oxy-acetylene apparatus, the divers cut great holes in the vessel—and at long last the immense treasure was revealed.



# TRIMBLE TAKES THE CAKE



By ERNEST LEVISON

*(of the Fourth Form)*

*Anybody's tuck is  
Trimble's tuck, and this  
weakness leads him into  
no little trouble—all for  
nothing!*

**B**AGGY TRIMBLE took the cake.

It was lying just inside old Taggles' lodge among a pile of miscellaneous parcels that had come in by the midday post. Baggy recognised it as a cake immediately, partly by the shape of it, and partly because instinct told him it was a cake.

For all he knew, it might have been addressed to the Head. The direst penalties might have been involved in taking that cake. But Baggy didn't hesitate. Trifles didn't worry him where a cake was concerned. He took it, and bolted.

Railton was coming down to the gates as Baggy bolted. That was a bit of bad luck for Baggy. He cannoned into Railton and sent him fairly flying.

Railton got up, almost foaming at the mouth with rage.

"Trimble! How dare you run about in such a manner? Report to me in my study in half an hour—for a caning!"

"Oh, crikey!" murmured Baggy.

He rolled on towards the School House, feeling decidedly less enthusiastic. A cake was very nice, of course; but a licking from Railton to follow it rather took the gilt off it.

Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther met him on the steps. They eyed him rather suspiciously. Trimble with a parcel in his hand was a sight to excite suspicion in the most unsuspicious minds.

"Where did you find it, fatty?" Tom Merry asked.

"Oh, really, Merry! I didn't take it from Taggles' lodge—and, anyway, there weren't any parcels there! The postman hasn't been yet!"

That was good enough for the Terrible Three. They made a move to relieve Baggy of his parcel with a view to investigating.

Trimble, desperate at the possibility of losing the prize for which he had already paid so dearly, turned tail and fled.

The Shellites streamed after him, several other curious spectators joining in the chase.

Again Baggy was unlucky. Rounding the corner of the gym, he bashed into Knox, doubling up the cheery old black sheep of the Sixth like a jack-knife. Knox went down with a bump. He had the presence of mind to drag his assailant with him, so Baggy also collapsed, with a thud and a yell.

"Yarooooop! Murder! Police!" howled Baggy.

A moment later Baggy's pursuers arrived, to be followed soon after by the Head.



He eyed the disorderly scene with looks of disapproval.

"Knox! Trimble! Get up at once! What are you doing?"

Knox staggered to his feet and heatedly explained that he had had no option about rolling on the ground.

The Head turned to the trembling Baggy.

"Trimble! What is the meaning of your unseemly haste? Were you running away from these juniors?"

"Oh, dear! That's it, sir!" gasped Baggy. "They thought I'd pinched—I mean, taken—a cake. But it wasn't me. I think it must have been Knox!"

"What!"

"Nothing to do with me, anyway, sir!" said Baggy. "I wouldn't dream of taking another chap's cake. Perish the thought!"

"Is this the cake?" asked the Head, pointing to a mangled parcel lying on the ground. "Yes, sir—not that I know anything about it!"

The Head picked up the squashed remains and looked at the label.

Then he jumped.

"Trimble!"

"Oh! Yes, sir!"

Trimble darted round the corner of the gym, and —bump!—he butted into Knox. The Sixth-Former doubled up under the impact.

"Do you know to whom this parcel was addressed?"

"No, sir; I didn't have time to look at the label when I took it from the porter's lodge—that is to say, sir—"

"There is no need to go into further details, Trimble. Had you looked, you would have apparently saved yourself a lot of trouble, for the *parcel is addressed to yourself!*"

With which Parthian shot, the Head walked away.

We helped Trimble back to the House. He needed it.

Baggy Trimble hasn't been the same man since. I don't think he ever will be again!

# A GRAVE INJUSTICE!

By  
*HORACE COKER.*

IVY I translate without a "dic." ;  
At figures I'm peculiarly correct ;  
I'm exceptionally quick at advanced arithmetic,  
And I own a very brilliant intellect.  
Compared with such intelligence as mine,  
The Reverend Head himself is but a fool.  
I invariably shine in the literary line—  
And yet I'm not made captain of the school.

At sportsmanship my prowess none refute ;  
For cricket, I am famous far and wide ;  
At footer I'm a "beaut" ; I can dribble, pass and  
shoot,  
And I frequently score goals (against my side).  
My merit as a swimmer's understood ;  
In water I am always calm and cool ;  
At the hurdles I am good, I can box like Jackie Hood—  
And yet I'm not made captain of the school.

Of course, there is a drawback in the way ;  
I'm modest, and I simply cannot boast ;  
Not a word I ever say about the fame of Horace J. ;  
I'm as bashful and retiring as a ghost.  
I never join an argument unruly,  
Never quarrel ; never fight a duel ;  
And I never boast unduly of the merits of yours  
truly—  
And yet I'm not made captain of the school.

The fathead Wingate's captain in my stead.  
I shall interview the doctor after tea ;  
I shall point out to the Head that I'm getting rather  
"fed"  
With the treatment that is meted out to me.  
I shall say it's time we had an alteration ;  
He'll see my point, if he is not a mule ;  
With icy indignation I shall claim my proper station—  
As the undisputed captain of the school.

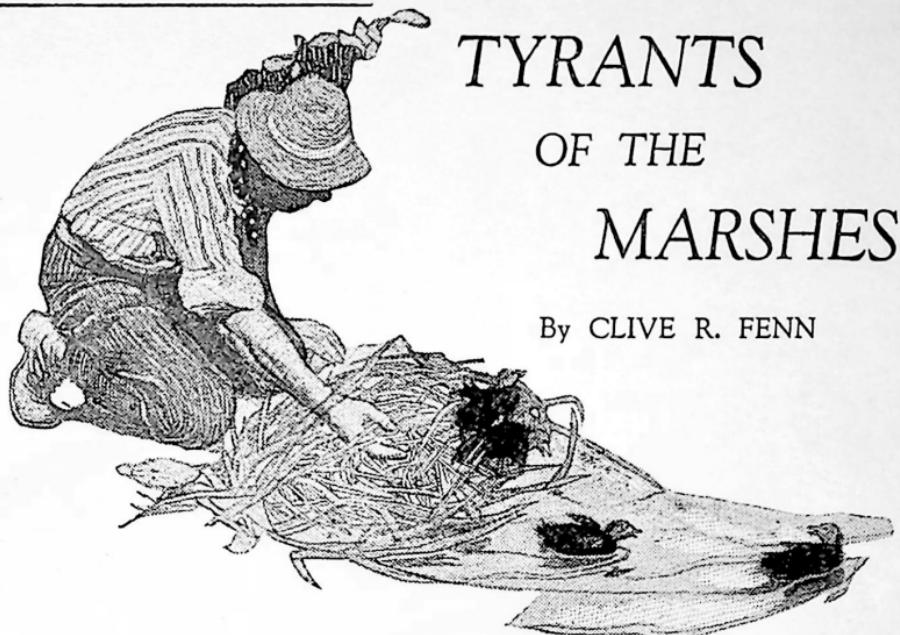
## *After Tea.*

I've been to see the Head about the fact—ow !  
And told him clearly what he ought to do ;  
I pointed out with tact—ow !—that Wingate  
should be sacked—ow !  
And I made captain in his place—yarooh !  
The Head was plainly jealous of my fame—ow !  
He seized a cane and gave it to me cruel !  
He gave me six the same—ow !—on a spot I cannot  
name—ow !  
And STILL I'm not made captain of the school !



# GREYFRIARS FREAKS AT THE FAIR!





# TYRANTS OF THE MARSHES

By CLIVE R. FENN

**T**RIPINA of the marshes was a moorhen of rather nervous disposition, and she really had some reason for being so. When she was quite young she had escaped only by the skin of her claws, as you might say, from the rats which lived in the dikes.

The rats favoured this part of the world, for they found harbourage in the rotting hulk of an old schooner that had been driven ashore many years before. Its timbers, what there was left of them, lay buried in the tangle and the ooze.

Since those distant times the sea had drawn back for many a mile, leaving a stretch of country which had a strange beauty of its own. It was a land of rough herbage and of deep ditches, of tiny rivers, and wastes of marsh where oddly-tinted flowers grew.

On a clear morning, if you stood about sunrise near the spot where Tripina had her

home in the sedges, you could see the funny-looking little pill-box called a Martello tower, at Revensea, five miles away, while in the other direction was a misty blue on the horizon which was the ancient port of Rye.

Tripina might perhaps have chosen a safer place to live, but she did nothing of the kind. Like the people who lived near a volcano, she trusted to luck. She and her race had always lived in the marshy wilderness, and always would; the place suited them.

Besides, there was Jake Goodyer, who killed rats. Maybe it was for this reason that Tripina liked him. Jake was the one human being who ever came across that part of the old marsh. He made friends with the water-fowl, and Tripina never felt even a tremor when the big fellow came near the rough nest where she lived with her small family.

Jake was a man who understood a lot about

**Splayfoot is the truant of the family, but he turns up at home when danger threatens — and so redeems himself.**

the marsh. He caught rats because he found their skins of value, and perhaps this was one of the reasons why the birds of that district liked him. They never resented it when he tramped through the sedgy wilderness and inspected their nests.

Tripina had five in family, all promising youngsters who took to the water in proper style.

One day when Tripina was out food-finding Jake came on the little brood in their rough nest and helped them through with their morning swim.

Timothy made the plunge first, squealing like mad ; after him splashed Greywing and the others, deeming this to be the adventure of their lives.

But Splayfoot, Tripina's mate, who had to be absent most of the day, did not conceal his anxiety about the matter. Tripina told him not to be so silly. Jake was their friend, and could be trusted. Splayfoot was not half convinced. He pointed out that it would have been far wiser had they made their home farther away in the lonely marsh where even Jake did not go. Tripina told him sharply to mind his own business and keep his fears to himself. She said he would only frighten the youngsters without cause, and also that it was not Jake of whom they need be afraid, but the rats.

"Oh, as to rats, I don't mind them," said Splayfoot confidently. "Just let one dare come this way and I will soon settle his account!"

Tripina merely rustled her feathers, but there was something of scorn in her eye, though she had a certain secret appreciation of her partner's brave words. As to rats, however, she knew the peril, and she looked gratefully at Jake when he passed the little retreat where the moorhen family lived and had its bathing lessons every day.

Then one day the dread thing happened—just what mother moorhen had seen in her dreams as she sat on guard over her little ones.

It was in some respects the fault of Timothy, the over-bold, for he had left the nest early, just out of independence and to show how he was getting on, his intention being to have a

swim before the others so as to brag about his pluck at breakfast.

Now Timothy, like his brothers and sisters, had lived a screened life ; he had never heard of rats, and at first he was not a bit frightened when he saw a curious-looking animal streak out from amidst the reeds. He was about to say "Good-morning" quite politely, but there was no time. Romus, the rat, had an edge to his appetite and the little bird was fat.

There was a flash of fur, and then it was over. Timothy did not fly—not much ! He gave one shriek, and then the rat, its teeth bared, was upon him, and poor little Timothy lay dead amidst the water plants, while his mother crouched quaking on the nest, feeling almost dead herself at what she saw, but rallying enough to urge the other little ones to keep close to her.

At that frightful moment of agony, thinking of proud and wayward Timothy, who made a point of never doing what he was told, she had completely forgotten her mate. As a matter of fact, he had of late caused her a lot of uneasiness. He had been too long absent on so-called food quests, far longer than business demanded. In her imagination she often pictured him at the Moorhen Club, wasting his time talking over his exploits and so on. She had to run the home and keep things going.

But a moment later she knew her mistake—knew she had been over-harsh on Splayfoot, even if he did like travelling up and down the marshes. That was natural.

Of a sudden there was a whirr of wings, and Splayfoot, flying erect, his legs hanging straight down, came from nowhere as it seemed, dropping right in front of the nest it was his duty to guard.

Tripina gazed fascinated at the sight and felt proud of Splayfoot—proud of the way in which he seized the whole situation, and of the manner in which he faced the old enemy, the rat.

Romus felt he was going to be cheated of his much-needed early breakfast, and he foamed with rage ; but before he could snatch up his prey and scamper for safety, Splayfoot was upon him. The rat snapped and bit, then



There was a whirl of wings, and Splayfoot, coming as if from nowhere, dropped down and attacked Romus with a ferocity that the rat found it hard to combat.

screamed with pain as the sharp bill of his antagonist drew blood. Splayfoot was unerring in his dart, and in the moments that ensued Romus had the worst time of his life. He rolled over snarling, fighting to find a way behind the attack. Then knowing that he had lost his prize, he made a bolt to escape.

Splayfoot afterwards said it was nothing, and that as a hunter he would be to blame if he did not know how to deal with a rat; but

Tripina made no reply to these remarks. She felt too sad at the loss of little Timothy and her thoughts went out to him.

When the opportunity came along she told Jake all about what had happened, for he knew moorhen talk, the same as he understood all the life of the marsh. Jake stroked her and assured her that she need not tremble for the fate of the rest of the brood, since the next day he was having a grand hunt right

the whole length of the dike, and he did not intend to miss a single rat. He meant to make short work of the egg stealers and slayers of small birds.

He asked Tripina to keep a still tongue about what was afoot, not even mentioning the matter to Splayfoot, since he might inadvertently reveal what he knew. Tripina promised faithfully and was as good as her word. Besides, with all her cares she was not one to gossip.

So that the rats, Romus included, were taken unawares when Jake descended on them with his terrier and a company of beady-eyed ferrets.

For far too long the rats had kinged it in that part. They had been reinforced by parties from the distant town who had come in after hearing of the fat life revelled in by the marsh rats. Now they wished they had stayed away, for Jake's methods were very sure, extremely thorough, and he was made more eager by a fresh big order for skins.

But his motive in exterminating the rats was not wholly a sordid one, for he loved the birds, and the rats had been tyrants for years, lording it over the rest of the population of the marsh, especially the feathered inhabitants, as if the whole vast area belonged to them alone.

Jake was satisfied with his rat round-up. The whole creek, where the ship had come to ground years ago, was fairly alive with rats who had made themselves snug in the timbers of the hulk. But they had never dreamed of a day of reckoning, and they were badly rattled. Of course, Jake did not rake them all in. Some of the big fellows escaped the ferrets and made a break for the open.

And Tripina was able to bring up her family in peace and comfort and to see them all comfortably settled in the world; so that now, being more at liberty, she can at times accompany Splayfoot on those cheery jaunts through the salt-laden air, above the old spreading marsh where the blue and yellow flowers lend colour to the scene.

THE END

## CLASSICS v MODERNS RIVAL EIGHTS



*By the Rookwood Rhymester*

NOT only do these lads confine  
Their various endeavours  
To terra firma; but they shine  
In races on the rivers.  
In springtime how the Classic eight  
Delights each young supporter  
As oars together penetrate  
The green and gentle water

But just as keen, the Moderns, too,  
Are eagerly at practice;  
They are a nicely-balanced crew  
And speedy. But the fact is  
The Classics are above their weight  
At oarsmanship and rowing,  
And always beat the Modern eight  
In any kind of showing.

Perhaps through lack of skill and pace,  
Or other sundry reasons,  
The Moderns haven't won a race  
For six or seven seasons.  
But this year Tommy Dodd will try  
The knock-out to deliver,  
And make his House, by victory,  
The Cock House of the River.

"They're off!" The Modern juniors yell,  
And urge their crew to action.  
The Modern boat is moving well,  
And proves a great attraction.  
They take the lead by half-a-length;  
The Classics calmly going  
On their way, reserve their strength  
For later strenuous rowing.

Two lengths ahead! The Moderns win!  
The Classics take their leisure,  
Till Jimmy Silver, with a grin,  
Begins to put on pressure.  
The Classics spurt! Gee, what a pace!  
Up, Moderns! No, they've done it!  
The Classic boat controlled the race,  
And once again they've won it.



## THE DUFFER PAYS BACK

By  
**MICHAEL POOLE**

*"I'll pay you back one day!" the Duffer had said when Herriott made him the laughing-stock at school. And in thrilling circumstances, somewhere in Flanders during the Great War, the Duffer repays!*

### THE FIRST CHAPTER

The Daylight Raid

**S**ERGEANT HERRIOTT!" Company Sergeant-major Shaw's voice rapped out. "Eight men for No. 3 Platoon. Take the list."

In the big and muddy yard at the back of Mullhais Farm, which stands somewhere in Flanders, odd groups of khaki-clad men were being sorted out and arranged. The 5th Milchesters were at rest, and a new draft of men had come up from the base. Some of them were old hands who had been down the line, sick or wounded, and were now returned for duty once again.

Most of them were newcomers, however, who had crossed from England ten days or so ago. Sergeant Herriott took his list and called his corporals.

"Atkins and Farmer, you go with Corporal

Loames. Benson and Coleman with Corporal Drummond. Lang and Doan with Corporal Moss. Johnson and Duff—Corporal Tanner. That's the lot!"

Sergeant Herriott had ticked off the names as he called them out. Now he looked round at the eight new men to whom in the future the word of Herriott would be law. Most of them were youngsters, and Herriott's quick eye decided that they were good. Then his eye fell on the last man.

Three buttons of his tunic were undone, and instead of wearing his equipment as the others did, the whole lot, including his gas-mask, rifle and tin hat, trailed from his hands to the ground. A raw recruit would have looked smarter and more soldierly than this youth did.

"Duff!" Herriott's mind suddenly connected the name and its owner with events of

long ago, and he stepped towards the fellow. "You're Duff, aren't you? Used to be at Cranston?"

"Hullo, Herriott! I spotted you straight away!" Duff was grinning in the same old asinine way he had always done when he had been in the Fifth at Cranston School. "Somebody told me you were in the Milchesters, so I made up my mind I'd join them, if they'd have me. Jolly meeting you, isn't it?"

"Yes," Herriott said quietly. "You'd better go along with Corporal Tanner now. He'll fix you up. I'll be seeing you again."

Herriott well recalled the last time he had seen Duff. It was just after war had broken out, and the Officers' Training Corps at Cranston School was being brightened up. But neither officers nor N.C.O.'s could ever brighten Duff, and most of them abandoned it. Herriott had tried kind words and then sarcasm. He had even made a laughing-stock of Duff before the fellows in training.

He could remember now how Duff had turned on him in the end and, apparently blind with temper, had gasped out: "I'll pay you back one day! Oh, I'll pay you back for this, Herriott!"

It was unlucky for Herriott that the Head himself saw the scene, and more unlucky still that the Head had a strong belief that the N.C.O.'s of the O.T.C. were guilty of bullying when the chance came. Nobody had ever accused Jim Herriott of being a bully, and he had honestly believed that if only Duff could be stung into taking an interest in the drill he could do it all right.

Instead, Herriott was sent for by the Head in due course. There was a row, and the sergeant was disrated to private in the O.T.C. Herriott made no excuse, but two days later he set an example which many others followed. He ran away from school and joined the Army!

The next day he ceased to be a schoolboy and became a man—Private Jim Herriott of the Milchesters. Since then there had been precious little time to ponder on the past, though just occasionally Herriott remembered the amiable, grinning ass who had suddenly shown the hidden depths of his nature and

had gasped out in sheer temper: "I'll pay you back one day, Herriott!"

"I wonder?" Herriott asked himself after Private Duff, now of the 5th Milchesters, had followed the corporal to his billet. "Somehow I can't imagine the old Duffer hating anybody. But it's queer he should join just because he knew I was in the Milchesters. Still, it's no use worrying. If he's waiting for a chance to pay back, he'll get it all right when we go up the line!"

Three days later the Milchesters' rest came to an end, and they went back to the trenches again.

"Keep your head down, you blithering ass!" Sergeant Herriott hissed.

"Sorry, sergeant! But I'm sure there's a mob of Jerrys creeping up!"

"In broad daylight? Don't talk rot! And anyway, you can look over the top without sticking your whole blinking head above the parapet!"

Sergeant Herriott was already giving Private Duff an example of how one could peer over the parapet without too much risk. With one corporal and seven men Herriott was in charge of No. 8 Post on the particular part of the line now held by the Milchesters, and the enemy across the way, familiarly known as "Jerry", had taken a dislike to No. 8 Post.

For the past hour red-hot metal had been dropping all around them—shells, which burst in the air and sent down a shower of death. In No. 8 Post they crouched against the sides, pressing themselves close to the sandbags for the mere comfort of feeling something fairly solid in a trembling, shaking world.

Now and again one or other of the men would peer cautiously over the parapet. Not that there was any real fear among the veterans that Jerry would make a raid in broad daylight, but they had to keep a good look-out. Yet it annoyed the sergeant in charge when the tall, lanky Duff raised himself to his full height and stared out across the swirling smoke as though he were immune from flying shrapnel.

The shells were now dropping nearer the



Sergeant Herriott's eye fell on the last man, whose slovenly appearance would have disgraced a raw recruit. It was the Duffer, who had been at Cranston School with him.

main front line and behind the outpost, and Sergeant Herriott put his tin hat an inch or two above the top of the parapet and looked out. A gentle breeze sent the heavy smoke swirling and twisting upwards and now and again a clear break showed.

It was through one of these breaks that Herriott had a sudden glimpse of figures in field-grey rising from the ground and breaking into a slow, crouching trot. Not twenty yards away they were, and Herriott heard, even as he grasped the truth, a sharp command in German. The enemy were about to make a daylight raid!

"Gerry! Here now!" Herriott rapped out commands. "Quick! Jump to it! A daylight raid! Collar the bombs! Come on! Up here! Five rounds! Let 'em have it!"

There was not much need for commands once the men had grasped the facts. Rifles blazed away and bombs were thrown. Behind No. 8 Post the shells were pounding and hammering away furiously all along the front line, screening those who were there and

preventing them from knowing what was happening.

In front of the post the smoke was clearing rapidly except for the thinner veil of bursting bombs. With a sudden rush the enemy charged down on the post. Twenty or more there must have been, though already some of their number were lying where they had fallen when bullet or bomb had caught them. Herriott rammed in another clip of five bullets and then made a swift decision.

"Into them!" he yelled, and jumped on to the parapet. No use staying in the post now. Jerry was on them and the advantage was his so long as he was above them.

For a time after that Herriott saw nothing but the looming figures in field-grey. A bayonet glanced along his arm, slashing into his tunic, and another made a savage jab at him, but he warded it off.

He saw red and fought madly, dimly aware that near him some of his own men were clinging grimly on and were shouting out mad cries of encouragement. Yet time and again when Herriott thought he had driven off his

attackers they came back and fought afresh.

Then suddenly Herriott was gripped from behind, and his arms were pulled back just at the moment when he was driving back a fresh attacker.

Crack ! Herriott's rifle was dashed from his grip. It would never have happened but for that vice-like grip which was forcing his arms back and pulling them behind him.

"Run ! Run !" German voices were shrieking at him in harsh and guttural accents. Herriott knew the game and fought tigerishly to break free. It was a dash-and-grab raid and the Germans wanted a prisoner. Herriott had played the same game himself and because of that was determined to die rather than be taken prisoner.

"Run ! Run, stupid ! Run ! "

The Germans prodded him in the back and struggled furiously to make him move. They, too, wanted to get back to their own lines now. A horrible fear came to Herriott that he would have to yield. Already his legs were giving and they were half-carrying him so that he could not fall.

Then a great figure, a khaki-clad giant it seemed, came towering in front of Herriott. It was Duff ! He was waving his rifle as though it were a club and he brought it round with a mighty swing against the head of the man on Herriott's right.

The man staggered into Herriott, but there was still another clinging to that same arm. Duff swung his clubbed rifle again furiously and shouted wildly :

"Crack ! for ever ! Played ! Played ! Take that ! And that ! "

Herriott's right arm was free and he swung round to try to plant a savage blow in the face of the man who was gasping out again : "Run, stupid ! Run ! "

Crack ! The German went down under Duff's clubbed rifle. Herriott jumped back and, like a man possessed, swept aside a bayonet. He seized the man's rifle, and as he pushed it farther aside, he got in a hard blow, and then wrenched the rifle from the German.

"Played, Herriott !" came Duff's voice. "Well hit ! "

Then something hit Herriott at the back of

the head, and he had a distorted vision of Duff as he went down. He was still waving and swinging that rifle of his, awkwardly and clumsily, and yet with deadly sureness.

A grey mist blotted out everything as Herriott fell, yet he tried to call out "Carry on, Loames !" For a time after that he seemed to be whirled round and round, until something tugged his arm and checked him and a voice sounded in his ears.

"Not hurt, sergeant ? Give us your arm. All over, bar shouting ! Jerry's breaking the record back to his own lines now ! We held the fort—what ? "

Herriott struggled to his knees, still dazed and weak, with a head which throbbed so violently that everything seemed to be shaking and shivering in the morning sunlight. Duff gave him a hand and they dropped back into No. 8 Post. For a time, at all events, Herriott was incapable of asking questions, and was content to sit there on the fire-step and hold his aching head.

He gazed round presently and saw two fellows propped up against the trench-side. One had a bandage round his head, while the other lay as though asleep, his tunic undone and his kit slipped free from his shoulders.

Somebody dropped down from the parapet by Herriott's side. A limp figure it was, and in field-grey ! The next moment Duff was standing just in front of Herriott, but speaking to the German soldier he had brought in.

"You stay where you're put, my lad," Duff was saying. "A prisoner you are, and you've not much to worry about. They'll patch you up by and by. I'll go and see if there are any more worth bringing in."

"Keep your blinking head down !" Corporal Loames snapped out, and Duff ducked violently behind the parapet as the whine of a bullet sounded overhead.

The Duffer took the corporal's advice after that !

"How do we stand ? "

Herriott was getting a grip on himself at last.

"We've been lucky," Loames said. "I thought they'd got you, sergeant, but I couldn't get near you. Just saw them trying

to rush you back. And then Duff jumped in. Crikey ! But I'd like to see that chap handling a cricket bat ! I'll bet he'd swipe 'em ! "

## THE SECOND CHAPTER Zero Hour !

*"A strong and determined enemy raid was carried out early on the morning of the 17th after a severe artillery bombardment, but was repulsed with heavy loss to the enemy, three of whom were taken prisoner. Our own casualties were slight."*

awarded the D.C.M. and Corporal Loames the M.M.

The story of the way Duff had knocked the Jerries about had also gone the rounds. Instead of his old nickname of the Duffer becoming permanent he was rechristened the Swiper, or simply Swiper Duff. The Swiper was one of several who told the adjutant how Herriott and Loames had led the section against the German raiders. Herriott spoke to Duff about it.

"It was the simple truth," Duff asserted.



Herriott looked cautiously over the parapet and saw field-grey figures advancing at the trot. The enemy were making a daylight raid !

THE Milchesters read the news when it was over a week old and they were out at rest again. Sergeant Herriott and two or three others had been wounded, but Herriott was soon patched up and was back with the Millies soon after they came out of the line.

Herriott had a surprise two or three days after he got back. Over the holding of No. 8 Post the colonel had put forward two recommendations, and Sergeant Herriott had been

"We all said the same thing, being a pretty truthful crowd in my section. We just said you were giddy heroes and that was all he wanted to know. Congratters, Herriott ! For the sake of old times."

"Don't rot !" Jim Herriott said. "I always had an idea you were saving something up for me, and you were going to pay me back one day with interest. Remember that affair at Cranston ?"

He spoke jestingly now, but Duff flushed

till his old grin came back in a shamefaced sort of way.

"I thought you'd forgotten that, sergeant. I was a miserable rotter over it all. So I owe you something for that, but a lot more for what you've done for me in No. 3 Platoon. You've been a brick and made things easier for me, and if ever I do get the chance I'll try to pay back."

"That's all right, Duffy," Herriott cut in. "Let's call it quits."

A few days later the time came for the Milchesters to go back to the trenches again, and it was generally accepted that they were due to take part in some big show.

They were in the front line for two days, and during that time the N.C.O.'s learned more about the task ahead of them. The word was passed to the rank and file. On the morrow the Millies were going over the top. Zero hour was at five-thirty in the morning, and every man put his watch exactly right by the sergeant's.

A long, long night followed, and, as so often happened before an attack, it was strangely quiet until dawn began to turn the blackness to grey. Then the guns broke forth with frightening suddenness, and far ahead of the front line the world was going up in flames, with the shrieking and crashing of the shells as accompaniment.

From somewhere near the waiting No. 3 Platoon a tiny whistle shrilled and the figure of an officer was silhouetted against the ghastly light of the flames and smoke ahead. Zero hour! The signal had been given!

No. 3 Platoon clambered out and formed into sections. Sergeant Herriott led the way, very slowly and steadily in the beginning, but presently like all of them, in a jerky, dodging way as the wailing lash of machine-gun bullets swept across.

Jerry was making his answer now. His guns sent back shell for shell, and the Millies went ahead through flying débris and clouds of swirling smoke.

"Steady! Steady, Three Platoon!" Jim Herriott's voice sounded thin and feeble, but he was shouting out with all his might. "Pass the word along. Steady! That's our objective!"

The rolling cloud of smoke and flames and flying earth had passed farther on. As the smoke cleared they saw a line of trenches. Herriott called again, and his platoon made the last little dash forward.

They were in the trench now. Frightened figures were cowering in odd corners. They were the survivors of the barrage, and they had passed the stage when they either knew or cared what happened. The trench itself was little more than an ill-kept ditch after the pounding of the guns. But No. 3 Platoon knew their job and got on with it.

Prisoners were sent back after a quick search, and then began the task of "consolidating the position." Not all No. 3 Platoon had reached this trench, but those who had, worked strenuously with entrenching tool to get deeper and better cover.

The enemy guns were hard at work, too. One by one they went down in No. 3 Platoon, till Sergeant Herriott collected the remnant late in the afternoon and got along to a deep crater on the left.

"We can hold on better here," he told them. "Try to get in touch with No. 2 Platoon presently. Anybody seen Mr. Laurence?"

Nobody had seen Mr. Laurence, the officer who had led the attack, but he might be with No. 2 Platoon, or lying somewhere away back. The Lewis gunners were fixing their guns and the riflemen were making sure their magazines were full.

Darkness came and they crouched on the fire-step they had dug out, leaning against the side of the crater and peering over the top. Almost as soon as it was dark Jerry began a fresh bombardment, and the British artillery hammered away in reply. Above the roar and the crashing, Swiper Duff heard a sudden cry and then another.

He crept along a little way towards the spot where the Lewis gunners had fixed their position. This crater was thick with acrid smoke which stung the eyes and burnt the throat.

"Three Platoon! Who's that?"

"All right, sergeant! Duff!"

"Anybody else? If so get them along here! I'm trying to fix this Lewis gun; it's jammed. They were hit."



Dazed and wounded, supporting the sagging figure of Sergeant Herriott, Duff staggered and crawled towards a crater.

In the darkness Herriott struggled with the gun while Duff crept round the crater hunting for other men. The gun was working again presently, and Duff collected three or four men, who gathered near the sergeant.

Their smarting eyes developed an uncanny sense as they peered through the smoke clouds. Herriott suddenly rapped out a command and he was handed a fresh magazine for the gun.

"Bombs! Bombs! Let 'em have it!" he shouted out fiercely, and they answered his call. "Go on! Oh—jammed again! Out! Out you get! Come on!"

In pent-up fury the few men jumped out and their rifles blazed. The shelling had passed farther on, but creeping phantoms—Jerrys—had been throwing bombs, lobbing them over to where flashes of flame told them

there was a rifle or gun. Duff was by Herriott's side as they jumped out, and together they charged for the phantoms.

In the darkness they fought till Duff realised that he was fighting thin air. The sharp-cracking bombs were dropping about him now, and there came a livid flash which seared his eyes and sent his head jerking backwards.

The Duffer knew that his eyesight had gone and was conscious of a furious and stinging sensation in his arm. His rifle had dropped, too. At all costs he must get that!

He bent down and touched something, but his eyes were filled with dancing blobs of fire now. Yet he was sure that he could see. Between the dancing balls of fire he glimpsed strange outlines and knew that men were

lying about him. He had the feeling, too, that he was alone in a world of dead.

"Herriott! Herriott!" He was gasping the name out as he tried to find his rifle, and one of the figures near him answered the call.

"Here!" It was Herriott who called weakly. "I'm hit in the leg. We're all right. Holding the line! You carry on, Duffy!"

"Got to get back to the crater," Duff said, and struggled to lift Herriott. He was never quite sure afterwards whether he just dragged him back or whether at times Herriott crawled a little way himself. But they reached the crater and lay for a time.

Then a whispering voice echoed hoarsely across the crater:

"Who's there? Milchesters?"

"Milchesters here!" Duff and two others gave the answer.

"Seventh London!" the voice called, and half a dozen figures were clambering round the crater. "Relief's up! Couldn't get through before. Jerry's been putting it over hot and strong."

The Milchesters had done their job and their weakened force was relieved by a fresh battalion.

"Come on, sergeant!" Duff meant to cling to Herriott at all costs and get him down to the aid post. "Give me your rifle! We're relieved! We're going down!"

Herriott did his best. In the darkness the pair staggered and crawled towards the line they had left early that morning.

Then Herriott slipped and fell, and Duff lay beside him in the shell-hole for a time, until he raised himself and let out a husky shout:

"Stretcher-bearers! Stretcher-bearers!" Duff made the effort in the hope that the S.B.'s were out and that they would get Herriott down. Through the darkness a voice answered his call. The stretcher-bearers were up!

"I'm all right," Duff assured them. "But Sergeant Herriott's got it in the leg. You get him! I'm all right!"

"That's good!" the S.B. told him, as Duff toppled in the darkness. "Anyway, you soon will be, laddie!"

Swiper Duff had a vague idea the next

moment that someone was lifting him, and then he was swinging very gently till he went sound asleep!

He did not even waken when they put him in the ambulance. He had a ticket on him now which gave his name, rank and number, and had several abbreviations which told the hospital people that he had two leg wounds, one arm wound, and several wounds about the right shoulder. As a collector of Jerry's scrap-iron Swiper Duff had done well!

He knew all about it later, of course, but by then he was in England. Yet it was quite a long time before he began to wonder again about all that had happened. What had happened to the Milchesters, and his pals in No. 3 Platoon? Did Herriott get down safely? It was no use asking in the hospital, because they weren't there.

They let him get up one bright day and presently he was toddling round. Someone told him there were other Milchesters in D2 Ward, and he went along. The first man he met was a Millie, and Duff chatted with him.

"Sergeant Herriott? Oh, yes! I know him! Over in that bed down there."

"Right-o!" Duff said, and hobbled off. In front of the bed he stopped and stared for a moment or two just to make sure.

"Hullo, sergeant!" Duff was quite sure now and his old grin was on his face.

"Hullo!" Herriott was staring, too, but looked as though he had seen a ghost. "Jumping snakes! It's Duffy! Old Swiper! I've been dreaming about you!"

"That would upset you!" Duff grinned.

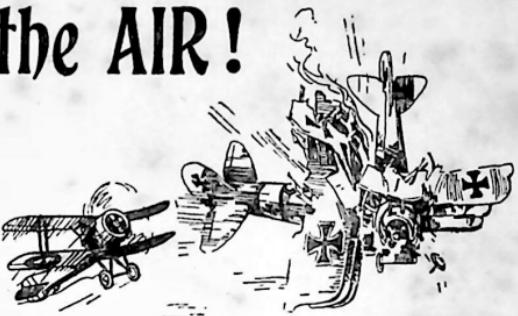
"Don't be an ass, Duffy!" Herriott was grinning himself now. "You got me down, didn't you? I sort of remember patches about it all, but had an idea you fell somewhere and that you were left behind when they carted me down. Made me feel rotten when I thought about it. But you're here!"

"I'm here!" Duff agreed. "And you're here, Herriott! So I've paid back what I owe you. We're quits! It's a lovely war this morning, sergeant!"

"Quite a good war to-day!" Herriott said cheerily. "Sit down for five minutes. I'm jolly glad to see you again, Duffy! Good old Swiper!"

# KNIGHTS of the AIR!

*During the Great War all sorts of cunning devices for trapping airmen were invented. And woe betide the pilot who didn't learn all the "tricks of the trade"! The "decoy" method, as shown in our colour plate alongside, was a favourite one employed by both sides.*



THE old chivalry of battle in the days when men dressed themselves in armour went out of fashion with the passing of that armour. Scrapping became more and more a matter of tricks and cunning. But the pendulum *did* swing back to some sort of chivalry during the Great War so far as the fighting flying men were concerned. Many air pilots of both sides made it a rule not to attack another too furiously until some sort of warning had been given—such as a burst of machine-gun fire past the enemy's propeller or wings. Then they swooped at one another like infuriated eagles.

## The Decoy

But many bits of strategy developed as the War went on, and the "decoy" became one of the perfectly legitimate, above-board tricks of the game. It worked in this way. A German plane would be flying rather low, near to the German territory. A British plane, well up, would spot it, and the pilot, licking his lips with glee, would dash to do battle. With eyes only for that lone enemy plane, the British pilot would be blissfully unaware that in the clouds above hovered a bunch of German machines whose pilots were licking *their* lips. The Britisher would swoop down on the lone plane, and then the heavens above would seem to rain planes—all after him. After which, the British pilot's thoughts would be concentrated, not on the decoy, but on his best means of getting swiftly to a less hectic region.

Of course, the decoy trick worked both ways. As often as not the decoy was British,

with British planes above waiting to swoop on the lone enemy who had been "taken in." But generally it worked only once where the taken-in pilot was concerned. Either he crashed under the startling and concentrated attack, or he escaped and vowed never again to be caught napping.

Naturally the newcomer to war in the air couldn't be left to learn *all* the tricks by actual experience, or the learning of his first one might have proved not only the beginning but the end of his tuition. To keep his head, no matter what astounding developments suddenly gathered around him in the sky, was always his first lesson.

## Led into Lead!

Wide awake to all the thrilling chances that had to be taken by all war-time flying men, he realised that the "decoy" trick was the simplest of all traps—nearly as simple as that other bright wheeze which centred around an enemy plane suddenly falling, apparently out of control. This dodge led the incautious attacker well into streams of bullets from other planes that a moment before were invisible behind low clouds or in the strong glare of the sun. A number of planes can be quite invisible against the background of the sun—sitting there, as it were, in instant readiness to pounce on the follower of the "falling" decoy.

The solitary attacker couldn't very well take on all that horde of enemy that dropped with paralysing swiftness out of the blinding rays of the sun, so—if he had time—he would turn tail and put into breathless practice the

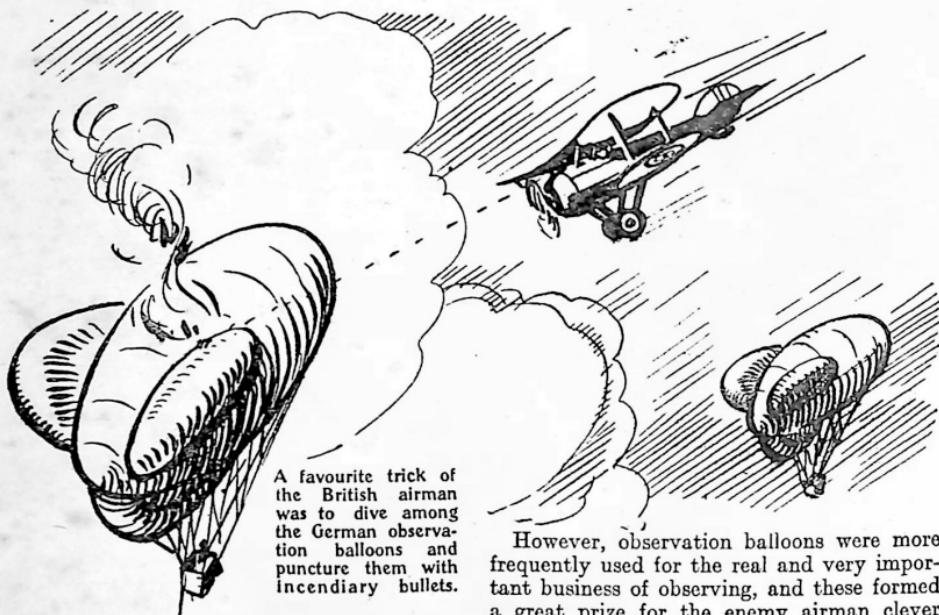


old adage that discretion is the better part of valour. There was always the chance that a pilot, as he gained increasing experience of actual aerial combat, would lose a little bit of his earlier caution. For such a pilot a specially clever trap was set—a big fat enemy balloon, apparently carrying observers.

#### A Ruse to Trap the Reckless

The scouting plane would spot it, and if it was the pilot's unlucky day he would make a bee-line for the balloon with the intention of filling the great envelope with bullets.

It meant sacrificing the balloon. But the enemy could well spare that so long as the attacking scout was blown to smithereens along with it. A variation of the same trick consisted in filling the basket of an old observation balloon with high explosive, an electric wire trailing therefrom, together with the anchoring rope, to the ground. When an attacking plane edged in close enough to rip the balloon's envelope to shreds with machine-gun fire, his enemy would press a button, and away would go balloon and plane into the emptiness of space.



A favourite trick of the British airman was to dive among the German observation balloons and puncture them with incendiary bullets.

There would be no one in the basket of that specially "planted" balloon, but there would be a number of anti-aircraft guns ("Archies") and concealed machine-guns trained most carefully on the air in its immediate vicinity. A few sighting shots would already have been taken by the concealed guns, and so the stage would be all set for a perfect storm of bullets and shrapnel and shells to be released at the scouting plane as it hurtled to the attack.

However, observation balloons were more frequently used for the real and very important business of observing, and these formed a great prize for the enemy airman clever enough to bring one or more of them down. As the enemy did not wish to lose them, these balloons, with actual crews, were hauled down very swiftly, by means of a winch, when it was that a fighting scout was after them. One of our most intrepid flying men, fired with ambition to "get" some German balloons and knowing all about their hauling-down device, one early morning swooped upwards out of the mist and punctured five before the bunch could be hauled down!



# COKER'S GREAT GAME!

By Bob Cherry

Horace James Coker's the world's worst footballer, but even Coker can be put to good use on the footer field, as Bob Cherry's humorous short story proves

## FIRST SPASM

Blundell's Brain-wave.

OLD BLUNDELL, the captain of the Fifth, trotted into Study No. 1 the other afternoon looking pretty fed up. The Remove were playing the Fifth at footer, and we reckoned he had come to see us about the match. He had.

"Trot in, old scout," said Harry cheekily. "Take a pew, old bean," invited Frank.

Blundell frowned. As a great man and a "blood" of the first water, it was rather cheek for Removeites to call him "old scout" or "old bean." He gave us a lofty look, which didn't make us very uneasy.

"I've got something to say to you kids," said Blundell.

"Us which?" asked Johnny, with some grimfulness."

"You kids. I believe the Fifth are supposed to be playing your lot at footer to-day, Wharton."

"I believe they are," assented Harry.

"Like your cheek to challenge us; but still, Form matches are good practice, and we

don't mind. But the fact is, I'm in a bit of a hole."

"True enough," I nodded. "I've often said the Fifth is an awful hole. These chaps have all heard me—haven't you, you men?"

"I wish I had a pound for every time I've heard you say it," grinned Johnny.

"The poundfulness would be terrific," said old Inky.

Blundell glared.

"I didn't come here for any fag cheek," he said. "You can keep your chin for fellows who like it. I don't. Look here, Wharton, I want you to do me a favour."

"Delighted," laughed Harry. "You've got such a fascinating way of asking favours, old scout."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Blundell breathed hard.

"I don't want to have to thrash you for cheeking a senior before the match, Wharton," he said. "I've told you before that you can keep your chin and talk sense. Look here, I want you to play Coker in your team this afternoon. Is it a go?"

" Wha-at ? "

We simply yelled. Coker of the Fifth is the biggest dummy who ever trod a footer ground—or anything else. He scores goals against his own side, mops up the referee when he likes, charges his men all over the place, and knows as much about footer as a warthog. And yet he thinks he is the best player at Greyfriars.

" Oh, my hat ! " gasped Harry. " Nunno ! I—I don't think it's a go, Blundell. In fact, I'm sure it isn't."

" The no-gofulness is preposterous, my esteemed Blundell."

" I'd take it as a favour if you kids could manage it," urged Blundell, a little more amiably. " It would be no end of help to me."

" But—but I don't understand. Why do you want us to play that crass dummy Coker?"

" Are you doubtful about winning, and want to make it a cert ? " I asked.

Blundell glared again.

" Nothing of the kind, you young ass."

" Then why—"

Blundell coloured up uncomfortably. He bit his lip.

" Well, look here," he said at length, " I can trust you fellows not to let it get about, because it's rather derogatory to a man's dignity. The fact is, Coker had a hamper from his Aunt Punch or Aunt Judy or somebody—"

We grinned. We knew all about Aunt Judy's hampers. They helped to make Coker popular in the Fifth.

" He stood a bit of a spread in the Fifth," explained Blundell uncomfortably. " Well, he's a born fool, of course—he doesn't realise what a chump he is—and—and the fact is, he wouldn't let me have a whack in his spread unless I promised to give him a show in this Form match."

" Ha, ha, ha ! "

We yelled.

" It was an awful cheek, of course," said Blundell, " but—but, as it was only a fag match, and this hamper was really a rattling good one—"

" You promised him a show. Ha, ha, ha ! " yelled Harry.

Blundell was pink.

" Well, yes ! " he admitted. " That's about the cut of it. And now—"

" And now you have the awful nerve to try to palm him off on us," snorted Johnny. " You can't get out of your word, so you think you can let him play in the Remove."

" Howling cheek ! " we cried indignantly.

" Wait a tick," exclaimed Blundell. " You don't quite get me. You know what Coker is. Anybody seeing Coker play would imagine he had been bribed by the other side."

" Ha, ha, ha ! "

" And so I've been wondering whether, after all, Coker might not be induced to play a fair game for us, instead of giving the game to your kids."

" Eh ? " we said, puzzled.

" Look at it sensibly," urged Blundell. " Suppose Coker plays for you and Vernon-Smith or Cherry plays for the Fifth."

" Wha-at ? "

" Catch me playing for the Fifth," I observed.

" Do wait a bit. I say, look at it sensibly. If Cherry plays for us, he will wear our colours, but he will really be playing against us. That is to say, he will be playing for the Remove, although he will line up with the Fifth like the rest of us."

We gasped helplessly.

" But what—what—"

" Half a minute. Coker will line up with the Remove as a Remove man. But he will really be playing for the Fifth—although he won't know that. You see, if Coker scores goals against his own side as usual, it won't do any harm, because he will really be playing for the Fifth."

" Oh, crikey ! "

" As we line up, the position will be that twelve of the Remove are playing ten of the Fifth, although Cherry will be in the Fifth Form line and wearing the Fifth Form colours. But that won't be the position really, because Coker, unknown to himself, will really be playing for us. He will think he is playing for the Remove, but really and truly he will be playing for the Fifth. See ? "

" Then we can charge Coker over and take the ball away from him, although he is wearing our colours ? "

"Exactly!" nodded Blundell.

"And—and we can pass the ball to Bob, although he is wearing the Fifth Form colours?"

"You've hit it."

"Oh, ye gods!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm blessed if I can see any other way of getting a fair game out of Coker, and it's too much of a handicap to us to play him in the ordinary way."

"That's your fault. You shouldn't scoff Aunt Judy's hampers."

"Coker has redeeming features," I grinned.

"I wish he had a few on the footer field," grunted Blundell. "Well, you kids, is it a go?"

"It's a go!" chortled Harry, and we nodded. "It's only a practice match, anyway, so there's no harm done. It will be the joke of the season."

"Good!" said Blundell, getting up. "I'll go and tell Coker—he'll need soothing before he agrees to play in your fag team. I'm glad you've agreed. In consideration of that, I won't lick you for your cheek——"

"What?"

"Although you deserve it. See you at two-thirty on Big Side. Don't be late."

And Blundell walked off, leaving us practically speechless.

Then we burst into laughter. Even if we did consider it cheek for Blundell to suggest his brain-wave, the Form match promised to provide us with no little fun.

## SECOND SPASM

Sauce for the Gander!

BLUNDELL's novel scheme for making Coker play a good game for his side soon got about, and fellows all over Greyfriars announced their intention of watching the match.

It really was not such a bad idea. It was a little confusing, of course, to have a Remove man in the Fifth colours and a Fifth Form man with the Remove; but, as Blundell said, Coker, in playing for the Remove, was likely



"Look here," said Blundell, "I want you to play Coker in the Remove team this afternoon. Is it a go?" We simply yelled with laughter, for Coker is the biggest dummy that ever trod a football ground.

enough to play quite a fair game for the Fifth. Coker always played well for the other side. And as the other side would in reality be his own side, Coker might, for once, put up a good show.

We were all grinning as we went down to Big Side. I was wearing the blue and white stripes of the Fifth, while the rest of the Remove were in white shirts and blue shorts. We found the Fifth already in the changing-room.

The great Horace Coker was clad in a white

shirt and blue knickers like the Remove. He gave us a lofty look.

"I'm doing you kids a favour by playing for you this afternoon, and I don't want you to forget it," he said haughtily.

"You mean that you are doing the Fifth a favour?" queried Frank.

Coker's lip curled.

"I might as well tell you, right away, that I don't want any cheek or familiarity either on the field or off it," he said. "Because I'm playing for you fags it does not entitle you to speak to me as one of your own gang. I want to make that clear. Your position is one of respect and obedience."

"Oh, crumbs!"

"And there's another thing," went on Coker. "Who's the captain of your mob? You, I believe, Wharton?"

"Right on the wicket, ugly!" chortled Harry.

"Well, I want you to stand down this afternoon," said Coker, disdaining to heed Wharton's pet name. "If I am going to play for you, I must be captain. I insist on that."

"If you are going to play for us, of course you must be captain," nodded Harry.

"Good!"

"But as you are not going to play for us——"

"Eh?"

"And couldn't possibly play for a team of bunny rabbits——"

"What?"

"Not knowing what the verb 'to play' means, I hardly think you'll be captain, Coker," said Harry shaking his head.

"Haven't I just said I don't want any lip?" bawled Coker. "Am I captain or am I not?"

"Is he captain or is he not, you men?" asked Harry.

Nine voices replied at once:

"Not!"

And another voice added:

"The notfulness is terrific!"

"While you're in my team, you are under my orders, Coker," grinned Harry. "And the first order I give you is not to speak another word until the end of the match."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The second order is: Look sharp and get ready. We're waiting to take the field, and we don't want to hang about all day waiting for a champion chump."

"Rather not!"

Coker looked quite dazed. He made a stride at Harry, but the junior held up his hand.

"One moment," snapped Wharton. "My third order is that thou shalt not touch thy captain in anger."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And we crowded out of the pavilion, leaving Coker trying to say eleven different things at once. If ever a man looked as if he wanted to touch his captain in anger, old Cockey was the man.

He had cooled down by the time he came out to join the Remove eleven. Gwynne was referee, and he blew a solo on his whistle and told us to line up.

"Come along, kid," said Blundell to me. "You are centre-half in our line, the same as Coker is centre-half in the Remove line."

"Right-ho!" I grinned.

I lined up with the Fifth, looking, as Johnny told me, like a pygmy amongst the pyramids. Horace Coker, in the Remove ranks, looked like a lighthouse standing up at sea.

A large crowd had gathered around the touchline, and they were all laughing.

"Play up, Coker!" bawled Hobson.

"Coker of the Remove!" chortled Skinner.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whistle shrike—I mean, shrieked—and Wharton touched the ball to Penfold. Pen hung on to it for a moment and then passed it behind Blundell to me.

I was immediately surrounded by my striped "comrades," and Hilton barged me over while Price took the ball away. I sat up counting stars.

When I got my next view of the game—having wiped the mud off my face—I found that all the players were standing still and that the spectators were doubled up with laughter. Gwynne was waving the players back from the goal.

"Coker's going strong already," wept Bland near by. "I shall bust in a minute. Good old Coker!"

"What's happened?" I asked.

"Coker's handled the ball in the penalty area," sobbed Bland. "It's a penalty for the Fifth—in the first minute."

"Oh, my only aunt!"

The Removites, grinning, went behind the line. Blundell took the penalty, and drove the ball past Hazel in goal.

"Goal!" roared the crowd.

"One up to the Fifth—thanks to Coker!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Goal!" chirruped Hilton. "Good old Coker! I hope he handles the ball every five minutes."

The Remove fellows looked rather grim as they lined up. Of course, this was really only a rag, but it would not be nice to be beaten by about twelve goals to nil because of Coker.

They looked grimmer before the whistle went for half-time. Coker had done many wonderful and astonishing things.

He had scored twice—thanks to Johnny having given him the ball by mistaking him for a Removite. He had given away free kicks innumerable. He had charged over Smithy in the act of scoring a cert goal, and he had passed the ball to Tomlinson of the Fifth right on the Remove goal-line. Tomlinson merely had to touch it to send it in.

The Fifth, at half-time, were winning 5—0, thanks to Coker.

Harry looked a little rueful as we came off the field.

"Blundell knew what he was about when he swung Coker on me," said he. "Dash it all, I wish I hadn't agreed to it, as it happens. Of course, it's only a farce, but we don't want to be licked by goodness knows how many goals—even in a match like this."

"The fact is, old top," said Smithy.



No sooner did I receive the ball than I was immediately barged over by Hilton, while Price took the ball away. I sat up counting stars.

sucking a lemon, "you've let your leg be pulled, as usual. We simply can't tackle the Fifth with Coker on our backs, and we shall be laughed at up and down the school."

"What rot!" I exclaimed. "Everybody knows that this is only a silly rag."

"Rag or not, I don't like being whacked hollow in this way, and I say so plainly."

Harry looked uncomfortable.

"Well, there's nothing we can do now," he said.

"Isn't there?" I yelled. I had thought of a really brilliant idea. "Isn't there? Don't you believe it! If this match is a rag, we can rag the Fifth like they are ragging us. What's sauce for the goose is sauce for the gander, you know."

"What do you mean, ass?"



## MY WILL

By *Dick Penfold*

I HAVE a desire before I expire  
To write out a bit of a will;  
I live in the fear that I shan't last a year;  
I am feeling exceedingly ill.  
For Bolsover blacked both my eyes, and he whacked  
Me too hard. He deserves to be bunked!  
I go to my grave with a heart bold and brave,  
In a year you will find me defunct.

I give and bequeath a new set of teeth  
To Mr. Paul Pontifex Prout;  
The rhythmical saw of his muscular jaw  
Is wearing his other set out.  
To Quelchy I leave a new cane; I believe  
He won't take the thing as a joke;  
While Bolsover, he will receive a split pea  
And I hope that he'll eat it and choke.

Those fatheaded skates, my late study-mates,  
Inherit my private effects;  
It isn't a lot, but it's all I have got,  
And so I pass on to the next.  
I leave a large box of American chocs  
To old Bunter. (He'll roar with delight!)  
I'm sorry to state that the chocolates are ate,  
But the box—as a box—is all right.

My footer boots I will wear till I die  
And then raffle 'em twopence a round;  
The uppers and soles are mostly in holes,  
But the laces are perfectly sound.  
My cricketing pads I shall leave to the lads  
Of the team. And I bet I should chuckle  
To see them decide how on earth they'll divide  
The two pads without splitting a buckle.

To Toddy, the freak, I will leave all my Greek  
Lexicons, paradigms, phrases;  
And when I am gone he gets my Xenophon—  
That soul-stirring bunk *Anabasis*.  
My poems, of course, I shall leave with resource  
In a place where, dear reader, you see 'em;  
Eight hundred and ten brilliant works from my pen  
I bequeath to the British Museum.

“Listen to me my pippins,” I chortled, and I explained my idea.

When I had finished, Wharton and Smithy were wiping their eyes.

“Good egg!” laughed Smithy. “That'll turn the match into a proper farce. I wonder if the Fifth will think it quite so funny in this half?”

“Ha, ha! I think not! Something seems to tell me,” chuckled Harry, “that we may win after all. Come on, my infants.”

Gwynne's whistle was calling us back into the field. We trooped out and the grinning spectators gave us a cheer.

“Play up, Coker!”

“On the ball, the Fifth!”

Blundell kicked off, and the ball travelled to Tomlinson. Coker obtained possession and booted it towards the Remove goal. Play kept at that end of the field for a few moments, while I dropped back towards the Fifth Form goal.

Presently Smithy got the ball and raced away down the touchline, with the players after him. He dropped the ball into a crowd in front of the Fifth Form goal, and then Gwynne suddenly blew his whistle.

The fact was, I had accidentally handled the ball in the penalty area.

Blundell came puffing up.

“What's the matter?” he panted.

“Penalty!” snapped Gwynne. “Your man handled the ball in the area.”

“But—but Cherry's a Remove man.”

“Rot! He's in your team, isn't he?”

“Ye-es, I suppose so, but—”

“Stand back,” snapped Gwynne.

Wharton took the penalty, and drove the ball into the net.

Five minutes later once again I happened to handle the ball—quite accidentally, of course—in the penalty area.

Wharton took the kick, and the score became 5—2.

Blundell's face was a study.

“Look here, Cherry,” he snapped. “What's this game?”

“Jiggered if I know,” I replied. “It looks something like footer, but it can't be that.”

“I thought perhaps you were under the impression that it was rugger,” remarked



As the ball passed by me Gwynne suddenly blew his whistle. The fact was I had handled, and it was a penalty for the Remove.

Blundell sarcastically. "Keep out of our penalty area in future, if you don't mind."

I shook my head.

"I must stop the opponents scoring," I said seriously.

He looked as if he would eat me.

The play went back to the Remove goal. I stood in the Fifth Form penalty area and waited. Presently Peter Todd got the ball and booted it hard up the field past the Fifth Form backs. The ball fell at my feet. I drove it into the goal.

"Off-side!" howled Blundell violently.

"How can he be off-side when he's your own man?" snapped Gwynne. "Talk sense. It's a goal—scored by your own man."

By this time the spectators were in hysterics, and when, in the next three minutes, I again managed to handle the ball in the area, they broke down.

We won that game. Even Coker could not play like I was playing. I managed to handle the ball nine times altogether, and nine penalties yielded nine goals. I stood

on the goal-line and booted the ball in from an "off-side" position eight times. I managed to get in the way of my own men and stop them defending their goal, as a result of which the Remove scored another four.

The result was: Fifth Form, 9; Remove, 21.

Not a bad game.

Blundell's face was a picture. He had never considered the fact that I could score for the Remove exactly how I liked, and never be off-side. He regretted his little scheme when he thought of that.

As for Coker, he got quite an ovation for his sterling game. The sobbing spectators gave him three rousing cheers. He put in three of the Fifth's goals and was the cause of the other six being scored.

Wingate was standing by, and Coker looked at him.

"After this," said Coker calmly, "I should think that even you would give me my chance in the first eleven."

But Wingate had no words to reply. He simply couldn't think of them.



Here is the truth (?), in original orthography, about Greyfriars' most celebrated character, William George Bunter—by one who knows him as well as he knows himself!

We take no responsibility for the truth or otherwise of the statements contained in this article. It reached us through Bunter, who said it was written by his uncle, Lord Bunter de Bunter. If that really is so, we can only say that the illustrious author must be the most original speller in the peerage!

My nephew, Billy, is, of course, the famous Billy Bunter, of Greyfriars Skool. Some people have been known to call him "infamous," but that merely proves they're jellus beasts!

Jellusy, to tell you the truth, is at the root of all the misunderstandings that eggsist about my nephew Billy. What else but jellusy could injuce fellows to call him fat? Admittedly, he's not skinny, like the rest of the beasts, but to describe his fine, manly figger as "fat" is the giddy limmit!

The same mite be said about the silly legend that he eats too much. It's all bosh! No healthy fellow can eggspect to live on less than ten good meals a day, and my nephew Billy makes a point of never eating more than a dozen. Why, then, sujjest that he gorges himself?

Some of the beasts will tell you my nephew Billy is untruthful. Perish the thort! Why, only last week, Quelchy (that's his Form-master) remarked to him: "Bunter, you're the worst liar I ever knew!" That shows he lacks any akkomplishments in that direction!

Then there's the question of his honnesty. Some rotters go as far as to say that no

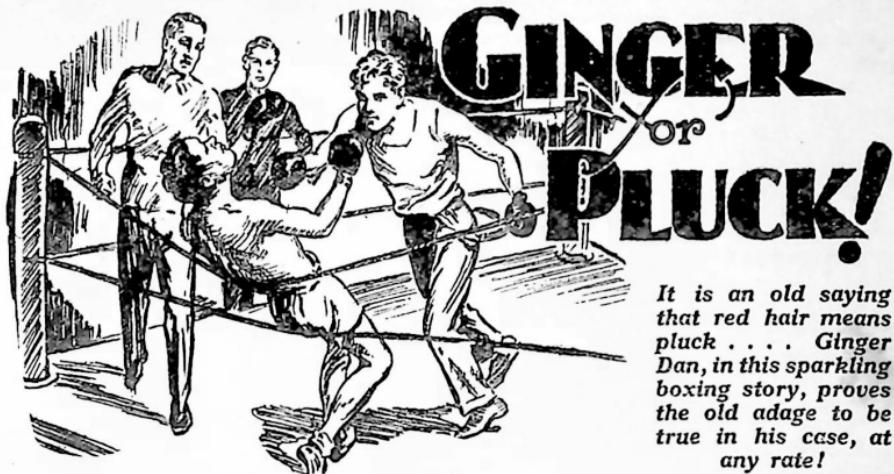
tuck's safe while he's about. Beleeve me, deer reader, my nephew Billy scorns to touch tuck that duzzent belong to him; and even when he does, he whacks it out among his friends, if they happen to be about!

As to his much-advertised nervusness, all I can say is Billy's as brave as a lion! On the sellybrated occasion when the dormitory caught fire, he was the first to jump out of the winder to show the rest how safely they were holding the blanket down below!

By this time, deer reader, you'll have guessed that the idea of his being a dud at games is just another of the fairy-tales circulated by jellus beasts who are afraid of being outklassed by him. The fact is, he's the best all-round sportsman in the skool. Footbawl, kricket, swimming and boxing are all the same to him—he's a champion, all the time! If you don't believe me, ask him yourself!

Finally, to dispose of all misconceptions, let me tell you that he is a gentleman and aristokrat. The blue blud of the Bunter de Bunters, who came over just before the Conkeror, flows through his veins. At Bunter Court, his ancestral home, he lords it as his fourbears have lorded it before him for jennerations!

And now, deer reader, you know the truth, the hole truth, and nothing but the truth about my nephew Billy. Let those jellus beasts who have detracted from this noble fellow in the past, read, mark, and inwardly dijest. Perhaps they will now be silent and forever hold their piece!



# GINGER or PLUCK!

*It is an old saying that red hair means pluck . . . . Ginger Dan, in this sparkling boxing story, proves the old adage to be true in his case, at any rate!*

## THE FIRST CHAPTER A Friend in Need.

THE big motor-lorry bumped sharply as it swerved over the railway-bridge, and a round object rolled from its precarious perch in the rear of the van on to the long grass.

There was a yelp and a snuffle, and another object launched itself from the same narrow resting-place. It, too, sprawled forward, but being more prepared for the shock, recovered itself, and an amazingly grimy rough-haired sheepdog revealed itself.

He trotted back to where the first object had fallen, and, thrusting his muzzle forward, licked at a hand which had just been raised to its owner's forehead.

"Gee winks, Bill, that was some bump!"

Billy evidently thought so, too, for he squatted in the thick grass and snuffed his sympathy.

"Still, no bones broken!"

Very leisurely the speaker arose to his feet, and stretched his arms above his head. He was a ragged, tattered youngster, with a cheeky, freckled face, and a shock of red hair.

He had boarded that particular lorry just outside Banbury with the fond hope of being carried to London. It had been very comfortable under that loose tarpaulin sheet, and

he had forgotten the precariousness of his perch, with the result that he had dropped off into a half doze, which the swift swerve and bump had rapidly broken.

If Ginger Dan had any other name, he did not know what it was. A waif of the highways, he was half gipsy, half vagrant, and the only friend in the world he had was seated at his feet in the presence of Bill, the lurcher sheepdog.

A keen, clever forager was old Bill, the sort of animal who could nip over a fence and remove a chicken without so much as permitting a squawk to arise from that feathered throat. As for rabbits, Bill's pace was distinctly deceiving, for he could trundle himself over the ground with greyhound-like speed when it came to the point, as many furry victims testified.

But it was getting winter-time now, and Ginger Dan, knowing the need of secure shelter, had decided to head Londonwards in common with others of his type.

"Where the dickens are we, Bill?"

Bill did not know, and obviously did not care. He arose, stretched himself, and awaited the decision of his young master. Finally Dan decided to follow the spume of dust that was all that was left of the lumbering furniture-van.

It was getting dusk now, and he footed it along the grass beside the road at a fair pace.

He was hungry, but that was nothing unusual. He was also thirsty, but a brook which he met with removed that want, and also helped him to make a slight toilet.

Finally, somewhere about seven o'clock, Dan found himself walking along beside a high wall, and, as he neared the gateway, the murmur of voices came to his ears; youthful voices, and obviously angry ones.

Dan halted and listened. The voices were coming from the other side of the wall, and Dan, being blessed with an amazing bump of curiosity, decided that it was necessary for him to inquire into these occurrences.

"You wait here, Bill!" he said to the dog.

A quick leap and a heave up saw him looking over the top of the wall. Below him, facing each other, were a couple of youths about his own age. One of them, a broad-shouldered, heavy-jowled fellow, was leaning forward in a threatening attitude, and his voice, very harsh and strident, came to Ginger Dan's ears.

"You've got to do what I tell you, or I'll make you pay for it."

"But I can't do it—I can't, Howard! Uncle Dick has forbidden us to go anywhere near the Crown Inn again, and I'll get into trouble if I'm seen there."

"Who's going to see you? All you've got to do is to take this letter and hand it over to Sam Drake, and wait for an answer!"

The burly-shouldered speaker reached out and grabbed the other youngster by the arm, twisting it forcibly.

"You hear me? You've got to deliver this letter!"

"I say, don't—don't! You're hurting—you're hurting me!"

The slimmer figure seemed helpless in the grip of the broad-shouldered, towering bully, and in the quick struggle which followed, he was soon brought to his knees.

"Are you going to take the letter or are you not?"

"All right, Howard, I—I'll take it! Give it to me!"

With a half sob, the slimmer youngster

arose to his feet, nursing his wrenched arm. The other, with a short laugh, slipped his hand into his pocket and produced an envelope.

"You sheer off right now! I expect Sam Drake will be up at the inn waiting for you. Don't forget you've got to bring an answer."

They turned and headed towards the trees on the right. Ginger Dan watched them until they had vanished, then, with a puzzled look on his face, he slid from the wall and dropped into the road again.

"Just as well you weren't with me, Bill," he said to the dog. "I don't think you'd have sat still and watched that rotten bit of bullying! But I find it isn't always advisable to interfere in other folk's business. Not in private grounds, anyway, where you can be locked up for trespassing!"

He moved on up the road, and presently he came to a high gateway with a lodge on the left. Just as he passed the gates a figure appeared on the drive, and came out into the roadway.

Ginger Dan glanced at it, and recognised the ruffled countenance of the slimmer youth, who had been bullied by his companion. The youngster walked up the road at a quick pace, and Ginger Dan and Bill followed him.

After a quarter of a mile they reached the outskirts of a little country town, and finally Ginger Dan saw the youngster halt outside the lighted windows of an inn.

When Dan reached the inn, the youngster was seated on a wooden bench beside the lighted porch.

Dan had a chance to see the face now, and he rather liked it, although it was thin and delicate-looking. There was a troubled expression on the countenance, and it was evident that the youngster was ill at ease.

Dan shuffled up to the form, and seated himself at the other end of it. Bill, after a preliminary look at the second seated figure, had settled himself, dropping his nose between his paws.

"Nice night, ain't it?" Dan remarked.

"Not so bad!" came the reply.

"What town is this?" Dan asked.

"Staplevale."

Dan sidled a little nearer to his slim companion.

"Any place here where they gives a night's lodging and grub away free?" he asked.

A chuckle came from the listener.

"I don't think there are many places like that in the world, are there?" he said.

Dan laughed, and his companion, eyeing the grimy, freckled face, decided that there was something very taking about that smile.

Dan explained how he had left his pack under the sleep-inducing tarpaulin of the van.

"Hard luck!" said the listener. "What are you going to do?"

"Oh, I'll be all right! Something always turns up for me!" said Dan, the optimist.

The stranger slipped his hand into his pocket and produced half-a-crown.

"If—er—this—this could be any good to you," he began.

Dan hesitated before replying.

"Can I do anything for it?" he asked at last.

He thought that this might give the youth a lead, but it failed in its object.

"No; that's all right!"

Dan took the half-crown, spat on it, and slipped it into one of the many pockets of the strange assortment of garments which he wore.

"Mebbe they'd give me a bit of bread and cheese here?" he remarked, rising to his feet.

"Oh, yes, they could do that!"

Dan slipped into the low-roofed passage and found himself in a sanded bar-parlour



Ginger Dan hauled himself up the wall to look over the top. His face clouded with anger at the sight of a burly youth bullying a youngster

of the inn. He crossed boldly to the bar, rapped on the counter, and, when the rosy-cheeked maid came forward, voiced his wants.

"Chunk of bread and cheese, miss, and a glass of milk," said Dan.

There were three other men in the bar, two of them hulking-looking fellows, and the third a lean, wiry lad, some two or three years older than Dan. The latter was wearing a sweater, and Dan noted that he was also wearing a pair of running-pumps.

There was something about the look of the trio which made Dan place them at once. He knew all professions, and the marks of these men's trade were unmistakable.

"Bruisers!" Dan thought, eyeing the gnarled ear of the man nearest him.

The girl brought his food. He paid for it, pocketing the change, then slipped out of the inn again and seated himself beside his companion.

Bill shared in that repast, receiving the crust and a portion of the milk. Dan had just completed the meal when a wheezy Ford

car swung round to halt in front of the inn, and a stout figure in a check suit stepped out of the vehicle.

Dan's companion rose to his feet, and, as the stout man came into the light from the porch, he stepped forward.

"Hallo, Mister Ralph Westerbrook! How are you this evening?"

The stout man spoke in a gruff, would-be-hearty manner, but there was something wrong in his tone.

The youngster produced the letter which Howard had given him, and handed it to the man.

"Howard asked me to give you this, and he—he wants an answer."

The burly man took the note, glanced at it rather suspiciously; then, stepping into the porch, he opened the envelope, and Dan saw the heavy face change as Mr. Sam Drake read the contents. A look of complete satisfaction crossed the fat countenance, and crushing the note into a ball, Sam Drake thrust it into his pocket.

"Very good, Mister Ralph, very good! You can tell your cousin that everything's O.K.!"

He turned and stalked into the inn, and Dan noted that Ralph looked after him with an air of deep dismay.

"Going now?" said Dan.

Ralph had already moved away from the seat as Dan called to him.

"Yes, I'm going back home."

"Well, mebbe I'm going your way."

Dan fell into step beside the slim youngster, and Bill, with a doggy moan, followed. For the first hundred yards or so, Ralph did not speak, but finally he turned to Dan.

"You don't happen to know that man, do you?" Ralph asked.

Dan shook his head.

"Well, he's—he's a skunk!" Ralph broke out almost involuntarily.

"I don't like skunks!"

Again there was a silence, and the two youngsters plodded on quietly together; then Ralph, obviously at his wits' end, came to a halt.

"Look here!" he said. "I don't know who you are, but I like the look of you. I'm in

no end of a mess, and I want someone to help me."

It was only then that Dan broke his silence.

"I guessed that," he said; "for, you see, I happened to look over the wall when that cousin of yours put the ju-jitsu grip on you."

"You—you saw?"

"Yes; that's why I followed you."

Ralph stared for a moment through the dusk at the freckled face, then he caught Dan's arm. His fingers tightened on the ragged sleeve, and a murmur of amazement came from his lips.

"I say, by James, you've got some muscles!"

And, indeed, under that tattered sleeve there were muscles of steel, and Dan, bending his arm, allowed the great biceps to rise like a ball.

"Phew! You must be as strong as a bull!"

"Oh, I'm strong enough!" Dan returned. "Look!"

Before Ralph was aware of his intention, Dan gripped the youngster's middle with one hand. Next minute Ralph was high in the air over the ragged vagrant's head; then, as gently as he was lifted, Ralph was placed on the roadway again.

"My hat!"

Ralph's gasp was half-admiration, half-awe. Dan chuckled.

"You've got to be pretty strong when you're on the roads," he said. "All sorts of fellows try to put it across you, and you've got to be able to hold your own."

Ralph leaned forward.

"Can you—can you box?"

"I can scrap a bit," said Dan.

Ralph came nearer to him.

"Did you ever hear of a chap called Battling Sid Blake?"

"No; can't say I have!"

"Well, he was in the inn while you were there, along with his two seconds."

"Oh, you mean that chap with the running-pumps on? I remember him all right."

"Well, it's like this, Dan. Mr. Sam Drake is Battling Sid's manager, and there's going to be a fight at the town-hall at Staple-vale on Saturday. My uncle, Captain Wester-

brook, has arranged the programme, and we have a local chap called Tom Berry, who's been matched against Battling Sid."

Ralph Westerbrook was all eagerness now. He had gripped Dan by the arm. They moved on, pacing down the dark roadway together, with Bill trotting contentedly at their heels.

"Tom Berry is a good boxer, and my uncle thinks he'll win, and so do a lot of other people about here. I know there's been a heap of betting going on over the event, and I'm afraid that my cousin Howard is playing a double part."

"Can't say I liked the look of him," said Dan.

Ralph drew a breath through his set teeth.

"He's a bully, but he's too strong for me," he returned. "Uncle has caught him at one or two fishy tricks already, and has warned him that if he is seen associating with Sam Drake again he would be thrown out. That's why he made me take the letter to-night."

"What's at the bottom of it all?" Dan asked.

"I'm not quite sure," Ralph returned; "but I think that Howard is going to get at Tom Berry. I believe the fight will be squared, and all the folk in these parts will lose their money."

"More fools they for betting on fighting," said Dan. "I've got no time for people who chuck their money away on that sort of game."

"Neither have I," Ralph said. "But it seems a shame that Howard and that skunk Sam Drake should play a rotten trick on everybody."

He turned towards the freckled-faced vagrant by his side.

"Tom Berry's coming round to our place to-night. Uncle's got a gym rigged up, and he's been training there. I wonder if I could manage to slip you in and let you meet uncle?"

"Don't mind slipping in anywhere, so long as I get a supper and a roof," said Dan.

"All right, leave it to me. I can fix you up a bed over the garage, and the gym is next door to it. By James, I don't know if we'll be able to work anything, but I've got an

idea at the back of my mind that something will come out of this."

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### Foul Play!

**G**INGER DAN was seated on the edge of a cot in a little room above the garage when a low whistle, sounding from the foot of the stairs, brought him to his feet.

Bill had been accommodated on a strip of ragged blanket near to the bed, and Dan turned, nodding his head to the dog.

"You just stay right there, Bill," he said. "You've got comfortable lodgings, and don't go and lose 'em."

The dog looked after his master, but made no effort to follow him, and Dan, hurrying down the flight of stairs, found Ralph Westerbrook waiting for him in the doorway.

"Come along, Dan!" Ralph said. "Uncle has just gone into the gym along with Berry. I've told him about you, and it's all right."

Dan followed his friend across the dark space and into a galvanised-roofed shed, which was lighted by a couple of powerful electric lamps, and was laid out as a small gym.

There was a roped-off space in the centre, and on a seat near to the ring was a broad-shouldered, military-looking man in a dinner-jacket suit. He was smoking a cigar, and, as Dan and Ralph entered, he rose to his feet.

"This is Dan, uncle," Ralph said, introducing the waif.

Captain Westerbrook, after a long, hard glance at the grimy, freckled face, nodded.

"Pleased to meet you, Dan!" he said, in a kindly voice.

Dan touched his forehead.

"Same to you, sir," he replied, and the captain laughed.

"Ralph has been telling me that you are something of a pocket Hercules, eh," said Captain Westerbrook, "and that you can box a little?"

They chatted together for a few moments, and Captain Westerbrook put one or two shrewd questions to Dan, which he answered readily enough.

Presently the door of the dressing-room opened, and Dan saw a sturdy, well-knit youngster come out in a sweater and shorts.

He was followed by an older man, and behind them came Howard. He was also in a sweater and gym shoes, and was carrying a pair of boxing-gloves.

Captain Westerbrook introduced Dan to the newcomers, and it seemed to Dan that Howard's eyes fixed on him in a rather hard stare. Dan returned the look with one of his usual open smiles.

"You can look after my nephew, Howard, Dan," said the captain. "He's going to have two or three rounds with Tom Berry. This is the last night of Berry's training, for he meets a very tough nut in the person of Battling Sid on Saturday, and I just want to see how he shapes."

Howard withdrew a pace, shaking his head.

"I don't want anyone to look after me, uncle," he said. "I can do all that for myself."

Captain Westerbrook's brows drew together in a half-frown, but he did not make any comment, and Howard, sliding under the ropes, seated himself in one corner and began to draw on his gloves.

Tom Berry went across to the opposite corner, where his older companion proceeded to help him to adjust the gloves on his hands.

Dan was leaning against the ropes, and suddenly Ralph saw him slide under them and go across to Howard.

"Might as well let me do that much for you, mister," Dan said, reaching out for the tapes.

It seemed to Ralph that Dan took a very long time over it, for finally Howard snatched his hands away from Dan's fingers.

"That's all right! Don't bother about me," he said.

Dan glided out of the ring, and came up to where Ralph Westerbrook was standing.

"I told you he was a beast," Ralph said. "I should not bother about him, if I were you."

Dan's eyes were curious as he looked at the youngster.

"Oh, I ain't offended, Ralph!" he said. "In fact, I'm very interested in cousin Howard—and his gloves!"

There was a significance about the latter part of the sentence which Ralph missed.

Captain Westerbrook, who had gone into the dressing-room for a moment, reappeared now and came towards the ring.

"Are you ready, Berry?"

"Yes, sir."

"Oh, then come along, Howard! Just let's see what you can do."

The two youngsters went out and shook hands, then dropped into a guard.

Dan saw at once that Howard was by no means inexpert at the game; he had a good guard, and seemed a powerful, hefty sort of fellow.

The two boxers began to spar, and presently Howard made a quick attack. Berry contented himself with countering and smothering the blows for some time, and gave ground round the ring.

Then his manner changed, and he began to fight back. He was a fairly good boxer, with a long reach and a good left, but to Dan, who had been in many training camps, he lacked that quick footwork which marks the real professional pug.

The heavy padded gloves did very little harm, and the two boxers pommelled each other with right good will till the first round came to an end.

So far, Howard had used his left glove only for punching, keeping his right for guards and counters.

But as soon as the second round started Howard took the battle into Berry's quarters immediately.

Three or four wild swings of the right just missed their target by inches; then, in a corner of the ring, Howard brought off another terrific swing. His bunched fist caught Tom Berry just above the eye, and the local boxer fell back against the post for a moment.

Howard tried to smash his right into the face again, but Berry ducked, and they clinched, swaying back into the centre of the ring.

"Here, stop a moment—stop a moment!"

Captain Westerbrook's voice sounded, and darting under the ropes, he ran into the ring, separating the combatants.

A stream of blood was pouring from Tom Berry's brow, and a gasp of dismay came from Ralph.



Ralph gasped in awe at  
Ginger Dan's strength as  
he felt himself gently lifted  
high in the air. "My  
hat!" he exclaimed,  
"you must be as strong  
as an ox!"

"I say! That's jolly serious!"

Tom Berry was hustled into his corner, and Captain Westerbrook and the other man examined the injury carefully.

Howard had crossed to his own corner, and was waiting there with folded arms.

"I'm afraid that's settled you, Berry," the captain said at last. "You've a very nasty cut there."

"No, sir, I'm all right—I'm all right!"

"Oh, no, you're not! What do you say, Smith?"

Smith, Tom Berry's trainer, shook his head.

"I reckons the captain's right, Tom. It's blinking hard luck on you, lad. That's a nasty cut, and will require a stitch or two to get it right."

It was, indeed, an ugly wound, for the skin had been cut for an inch or two, and the blood was pouring down Tom Berry's face.

Howard, slipping the gloves between his knees, drew them off, and, tucking them under his arm, he came across the ring.

"I—I'm very sorry," he began. "I—I hope I haven't hurt you?"

"That's all right, Mr. Howard," Tom Berry said; "accidents will happen."

He looked very pale and distressed, and Harry Smith's face indicated that this feeling was shared.

Ralph had darted into the dressing-room, and he returned presently with some sticking-plaster and bandages, and Captain Westerbrook carried out a rough first-aid to the luckless local boxer.

"Better take him along to see Dr. Parkin at once," he said to Smith. "It's most unfortunate, for, of course, the slightest blow on the wound will open it again, and that means a big handicap on Saturday."

Dan seemed to be very interested in Howard. He had watched the heavy-jowled fellow, and now, when Howard slipped away from the ring towards the dressing-room, Dan sidled after him. He saw Howard stoop over a box and fumble in it for a moment. One of his gloves was dropped into the box, and another glove was lifted out of it deftly.

Then Howard came back to the little group round Tom Berry.

"Can't understand how it happened, uncle," Howard Westerbrook said. "I didn't think I was punching very hard, and the gloves are quite all right."

He held them up for inspection, and the captain examined them.

"Yes; they seem all right," he agreed.

Tom Berry and the trainer disappeared into the dressing-room for a moment, then reappeared in their every-day clothes, and left the gym.

"It's very bad luck," Westerbrook said to Dan. "For with that injury to his eye, I'm afraid Berry has no chance against this fellow, Battling Sid Blake, on Saturday."

Ralph looked at Dan, and the freckled-faced youth shrugged his shoulders.

"He'll have a nasty black eye by tomorrow morning, sir," Dan said. "And it'll show up proper in the ring on Saturday. Battling Sid will make a mark of that eye of his."

He shuffled his feet for a moment.

"I suppose you ain't got the chance of putting anyone else in Berry's place?" he asked.

Captain Westerbrook laughed.

"Oh, yes; I could put in anyone else I liked," he said. "But there's not anyone in Staplevale who has a snowball's chance against this fellow Battling Sid."

Dan stretched his supple arms.

"I'm in Staplevale, ain't I, mister?" he said. "What about trying me out?"

Howard, who had been seated on a chair

beside the ring, arose now and came forward.

His uncle turned to him.

"Do you mind giving this chap a round or two, Howard?" he asked.

Howard looked at Dan, looked at the ragged clothes and the distinctly cheerful countenance, and—fell into the trap. For some reason or other, Howard seemed to resent Dan's presence there in the gym; perhaps it was because he seemed so friendly with Ralph.

"Just as you like, uncle!"

"All right! Go along, Ralph; take your friend into the dressing-room and get him ready."

Dan shook his head.

"I don't want no sweater, mister. I'm all right as I am."

He began to remove his nondescript clothing. There was a coat, a couple of waistcoats and two shirts; all of them of a very ragged description. Howard's nose was tilted into the air as Dan completed his undressing and stood at last in a warm, woollen under-vest.

"Carry all your wardrobe with you, I suppose?" he sneered.

Dan nodded.

"You bet! I find it easier," he returned.

Ralph brought a pair of gloves to Dan, and the waif slipped them into position. Captain Westerbrook had taken Howard's gloves, and he helped his nephew to adjust them over his wrists.

Ralph provided Dan with a pair of light gym shoes, removing the heavy Army boots which the waif wore. Then, at a signal from Captain Westerbrook, Dan and Howard faced each other in the ring.

Howard was champion of his school, and was by no means a bad boxer, but he seemed to be incapable of doing anything against that red-haired, quick-moving waif.

For three long minutes Ginger Dan led Howard a grim dance. Again and again the long, supple arm would shoot out, tapping Howard on chest and shoulder and head. The quick, slipping footwork and amazing dexterity of the counters and headwork kept Howard guessing all the time.

Finally the black-haired fellow lost his

temper and, throwing all science to the winds, went for Dan hammer and tongs, trying to smash through that amazing guard.

Dan gave ground for a moment or so, then, realising Howard's intention, he blocked one vicious swing, and, measuring the distance, sent in a left hard on Howard's throat.

It did not seem a very powerful punch but its effect was amazing, for Howard, staggering against the ropes, tilted clean over them and landed on his back with a thud which knocked all the wind out of his body.

"Hope I ain't hurt him, sir?" Dan said.

Ralph had run to his cousin's assistance, but Howard was already drawing himself to his feet.

His face was bloodless, and, with an angry snarl, he snatched the gloves from his fists, throwing them on to the floor.

"I've had enough of this!" he rapped out, and stalked off out of the gym, banging the door behind him.

Captain Westerbrook went across to Dan, and put his hand on the waif's shoulder.

"I'm quite satisfied," he said. "We'll keep this secret between us. If you're ready to meet Battling Sid Blake on Saturday, you'll have a chance."

He nodded to his nephew.

"Bring Dan across to the study after he's had a clean up," he said. "We'll have a chat over things."

As soon as the captain had left the dressing-room, Dan crossed to the locker where Howard had dropped the glove. He found it, and brought it over to Ralph.

"Feel that!" Dan said.

He was indicating the padded part, where the knuckles of the hand rested. Ralph ran his fingers along the leather, and a quick gasp of surprise broke from his lips; for inside was a hard lump.

"An old trick," Dan commented, "and a darned rotten one! It's plaster of Paris. You can cut a fellow's face open with a glove like this."

"Then you—you think that Howard did it on—on purpose?"

"Not much doubt about that," Dan returned soberly. "He meant to mark Tom Berry so that Battling Sid would have an

easy job on Saturday. A punch on Tom Berry's eye in the first round would have blinded him, and he would have been an easy victim then."

Ralph took the glove and slipped it under his coat.

"You leave this to me, Dan," he said. "Uncle will hear the truth about Howard at last!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Ginger's Great Fight!

THE town-hall at Staplevale was filled to overflowing, and prominent among the spectators was Mr. Sam Drake and his group of followers.

Mr. Drake had been very busy that day laying the odds against the local man. Something had happened to Berry, although what it was no one could quite say. He had vanished from his cottage, and rumour had it that he had been staying with Captain Westerbrook over the Friday night; but nobody was absolutely certain.

The preliminary events in the programme were fixed to start at eight o'clock, and the main contest of the evening was billed to take place at nine-fifteen. At nine o'clock the ring in the centre was cleared, and the M.C. appeared with a slip of paper in his hand, and began to make his announcement:

"A ten-round contest between Battling Sid Blake, of London, and Captain Westerbrook's nominee—" Here the M.C. halted, and glanced round the assembled audience. "I have to announce that, owing to a slight accident, our lad, Tom Berry, is unable to take the ring; but Captain Westerbrook has found another to take his place—Ginger Dan, of Nowhere."

There was a stir from the dressing-room on the left, and a group of figures appeared, to walk down the passage between the seats. A ginger-haired youngster was in their midst, and he climbed on to the platform, slipping under the ropes.

The M.C. pointed to him.

"This is Captain Westerbrook's nominee, Ginger Dan," he announced.

The cheery smile which crossed Dan's freckled face and the grin which accom-

panied the awkward bow brought a roar of approval from the crowd.

After a little delay, Battling Sid and his seconds appeared, and the foxy-looking, tough boxer glanced hard across the ring at the ginger-haired, cheery youngster opposite him.

The preliminaries were carried out; then "Time!" went, and the two lads stepped out to face each other.

The fight that followed was one of the finest that Staplevale ever saw.

Battling Sid Blake, a tried boxer, knew just what was expected of him, and he waded in to register a quick victory. But he found himself faced by a lad who could swallow punishment by the cartload, and come up for more.

If Battling Sid had been wiser he would have played with his man, instead of trying to overwhelm him by sheer strength of arm.

In the first round Battling Sid went for his young, unknown opponent hammer and tongs, and under the fierce fusillade Dan gave ground. He took a terrific drubbing, and it seemed as though Battling Sid could do just what he liked with the red-headed, square-shouldered youngster.

Now and again the professional pug would drop back a pace and grin savagely; then he would close, and a terrific hurricane of blows would rain on Dan's head, body, and shoulders.

The audience had been taken somewhat aback by the sudden announcement made by the M.C., and now, when the fight was in progress, and they were watching Ginger Dan receive what looked to them like a severe dressing-down, murmurs began to pass from lip to lip.

The gong which brought the first round to an end saw Ginger Dan turn, and, hurrying to his chair, sprawl there, while Smith and Ralph, and another second attended to him.

Captain Westerbrook was in a seat close to Sam Drake, the bookie, and that individual leaned forward and grinned across at the man in evening-dress.

"Like to make a little bet, Captain Westerbrook?" Sam's raucous voice broke out. "I'll give you three to one that your man doesn't last another three rounds!"

Westerbrook turned quietly.

"You would lose your money," he said.

"Your man hasn't got plaster of Paris in his gloves to-night, Drake!"

The bookie fell back in his seat, his jaw dropping, and the look which came into his furtive eyes made Captain Westerbrook turn away and smile grimly to himself.

His shot had told, and there was a hard look in the captain's eyes as he raised them towards the ring again.

He saw Ginger Dan's mop of crisp curls emerge from under the huge sponge which Smith was using. The freckled face was still smiling, although there were one or two ugly bruises on it, and Dan's cheery eye caught Captain Westerbrook's gaze. The waif of the road smiled, and Captain Westerbrook caught his breath sharply.

"By James, you're a game lad, and you're not nearly done yet!"

"Seconds out! Time!"

Into the ring again went Dan, and the same grim, slogging tactics were carried on by Battling Sid.

The bruiser's blows hurt, but did not harm, for Dan was always just able to check them or time them so that, although they landed easily enough, the sting was taken out of them.

And yet it was a case of always beating a retreat with those terrible fists of the pro battering at him on rib, chest, and head.

Round and round the ring they went, Sid's fox-like face intent and furious as he tried all the tricks that he was master of. Yet, although he pommelled Dan unmercifully, never once did he send that sturdy figure off its feet.

And so for five terrible rounds the battle waged, and at the end of that time Ginger Dan's youth and stamina came to the front.

In the sixth round Dan, bruised but indomitable, found his second wind, and began to fight back at his opponent.

Two fierce rallies, which brought the audience to their feet, marked the opening of the round, and from a clinch Dan broke away to distance; then, as Battling Sid launched at him again, Dan swung a shattering left full into his rival's battered face.

It was a pile-driving punch, and Battling Sid rocked under the impact. Dan leaped in,



As Battling Sid rocked on his feet, Ginger Dan leaped in, and a right hook, beautifully timed, went home on the point of the bruiser's chin.

and a right hook, beautifully timed, went home on the point of Battling Sid's jaw.

Battling Sid went down with a thud on to the canvas-covered boards to roll over on his back; and Ginger Dan, falling back a pace, heard the steady count of the timekeeper.

"Eight, nine, ten!"

The vast town-hall seemed to ring to the roar of delight which went up as Dan walked back to his corner.

Sam Drake had risen to his feet, and was leaning under the ropes, glaring at Dan. Dan bent his head, and whispered.

" Didn't have to use a glove containing plaster of Paris, either, Mr. Drake!" The bookee slunk away.

In a third-class compartment a very tired but very contented youngster was leaning back in the corner as the train drew

out of Staplevale on the following Monday.

He was still wearing his tattered garments, but there was a little wad of Treasury notes tucked away in one of the inside pockets, and Ginger Dan, bruised and battered though he was, smiled a smile of perfect contentment.

There had been a painful scene in Captain Westerbrook's study on the previous evening, where Howard, confronted by that faked glove, had been forced to confess the evil plot he had concocted with the rascally Drake.

The train struck on, and Dan, settling himself in his seat, closed his eyes.

"I don't mind if I'm bumped off another old furniture van," he murmured to himself. "Strikes me them bumps are lucky!"

And Bill, in the guard's-van, with a huge mutton bone with which to console himself, no doubt endorsed that sentiment.

THE END



# OWEN CONQUEST BY SOME OF HIS CHARACTERS

*Candid Criticisms of popular Owen Conquest by  
some of his well-known Rookwood Characters*

**JIMMY SILVER.** What do I think of Mr. Conquest? Well, the best way I can think to put it is that in writing up our adventures and misadventures in his inimitable style he has certainly lived up to his name! The only criticism I can offer is that he devotes too much space to Tommy Dodd and the inhabitants of that quite unimportant home for half-wits known as the Modern House.

**TOMMY DODD.** Owen Conquest? He's tip-top, Al and O.K., and several other things I haven't time to mention! I've just one complaint to make: He devotes far too much space to that mouldering, decrepit old asylum for the feeble known as the Classical House!

**CYRIL PEELE.** My feeling is that it's high time Mr. Conquest revised his ideas. Anyone with half an eye can see that he dwells too much on those soft idiots Silver and Dodd instead of concentrating on the live wire that all the readers are constantly yearning to read about. I refer, of course, to myself!

**RICHARD DALTON, ESQ.** I have nothing to say against Mr. Conquest using me so frequently in his stories, but I feel I have a legitimate grievance in protesting against the irreverent way in which he calls me "Dicky." This habit of his makes it quite hard for me to preserve discipline at times. Only yesterday, when I called out Mornington's name in class the young rascal had the temerity to reply "Yes, Dicky?" The roar of laughter which

greeted Mornington's act of exuberance was only equalled by the other kind of roar which Mornington emitted shortly afterwards!

**JOHN MACK.** Wot I says is, Mr. Howen Conquest's orlight. But I strongly objects to 'im makin' me drop my haitches, which is a thing I never 'ave been in the 'abit of doin' an' 'ope I never shall!

**TUBBY MUFFIN.** To tell you the truth, I consider Mr. Conquest has got many faults. Why, his yarns bristle with inaccuracies! Take me, f'rinstance. Any reader who didn't know me would imagine I was fat, flabby, fatuous and fond of food; whereas, as a matter of fact, I am manly, muscular, mean of measurement and, in food requirements, satisfied with a very small minimum! Put that in your pipe and smoke it, Mr. Owen Conquest!

**MARK CARTHEW.** Owen Conquest? He's the so-called gentleman who regularly describes me, I believe, as the "cad of the Sixth." Well, you can tell Mr. Conquest from me that if ever he comes to Rookwood, there'll be one at least who won't stand up and cheer; you'll find him in my study!

**GEORGE BULKELEY.** It's easy to tell from the way he writes that Mr. Conquest is one of the best. Give him my respectful compliments and tell him that if ever he comes to Rookwood he's assured of a right royal welcome!

**ROGER MANDERS, ESQ.** Mr. Owen Conquest? Bah!

# MY ALL-ELECTRIC STUDY



By  
**BERNARD GLYN**  
(*The St. Jim's inventor*)

*Bernard Glyn's all-electric study is the last word in inventive skill, according to Bernard Glyn. But such a study has its drawbacks!*

I HAVE an all-electric study.

To look at it's more or less like any other study in the Shell passage at St. Jim's. But when you examine it in detail you'll notice one or two small differences.

As you step on the mat outside the study, for instance, an illuminated sign prints out the word "WELCOME."

I'm taking it for granted, of course, that you don't belong to the New House. If you're a New House waster, "WELCOME" is replaced by the words "BUZZ OFF!"

As soon as the greeting has flashed on, the door automatically opens and the mat carries you in.

An electric "footman" removes your cap and smooths down your hair as you roll slowly through the doorway. This puts you at your ease and makes you feel quite at home, especially if you're already accustomed to electric footmen.

As you roll past the "footman," an electric record of my voice sings out the words, "Hallo, old chap! Wherefore the honour of this visit?" and an artificial hand swoops down from the ceiling and claps you on the back. I don't have time to do this myself,

so it's the easiest way I know of making my guests feel that I'm glad to see them.

After an interval of two seconds the gramophone sings out: "Take a pew, old bean! No charge, you know!" Simultaneously an electrically-controlled chair glides across from the wall, scoops you up and carries you to a table.

Now you may be calling on me for any one of a variety of reasons; but whatever the reason is, I can usually meet it satisfactorily by mechanical means.

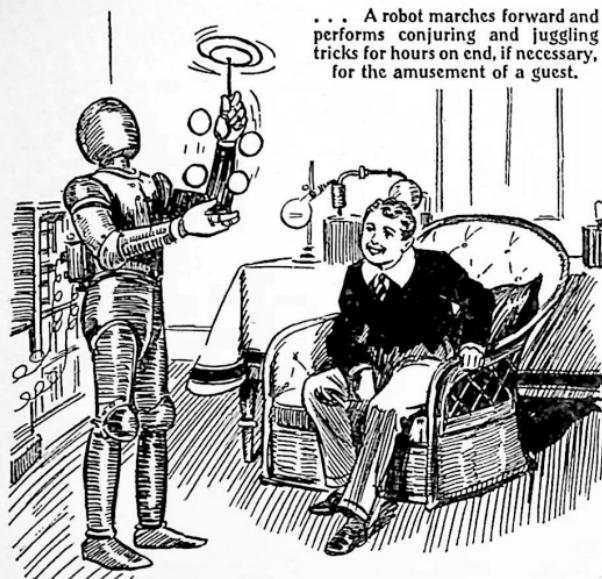
Perhaps, for example, you've trotted in to tell me some funny stories. It's ten to one I shan't have time to listen to them; but that needn't worry you. Every time you finish an anecdote a roar of appreciative laughter rings out from the electric gramophone, and a screen in the corner shows a close-up of your humble grinning like a hyena!

Possibly you've merely looked in to kill time and amuse yourself? You couldn't have come to a better place. In response to my pressure on a small switch in the wall, my electric Robot marches forward and performs juggling and conjuring tricks for hours on end, if necessary.

I think I can claim to cater for all comers in my all-electric study. Fellows who're dodging prefects or Railton or anyone else, for that matter, need only switch on the invisible ray machine and any part of the school they choose to look at flashes up on the screen just as it is at the very moment. The Glyn Electric Amplifier records any talk that may be floating about at the same time. My study is a regular dodgers' paradise, with all these convenient gadgets about!

—woe betide the New House bounder who tries to raid me! As he enters, a bell will clang out a warning, a loud speaker in every study in the School House Shell and Fourth will bellow: "New House waster in Glyn's study!" and the door will securely lock him in till someone chooses to release him from outside.

I haven't forgotten Baggy Trimble, either! Next time the jolly old Falstaff comes in on a tuck-raiding expedition he'll find that all cakes in my cupboard are supplied with electric batteries that will make his teeth chatter for hours!



... A robot marches forward and performs conjuring and juggling tricks for hours on end, if necessary, for the amusement of a guest.

Fellows come in sometimes to ask my advice about raiding the New House.

I have a simple method of dealing with them: As they sit down at the table I pull a lever and an illuminated plan of the New House appears on the wall, with little black dots moving about representing New House fellows at precisely the positions they occupy in reality.

At the same moment a series of scintillating signs beside the plan flash out suggestions for japes on our hereditary rivals.

What more can a man want?

Talking about the New House reminds me

By this time you'll have gained the impression that my all-electric study is rather a weird place. But I feel quite at home in it myself, and I'd rather have tea, do prep., play games and read books in it than in anyone else's den.

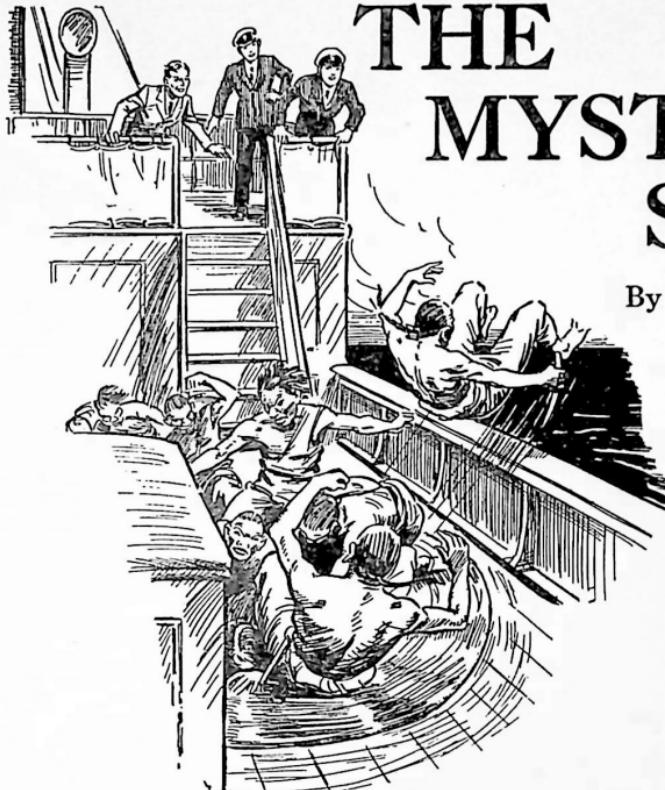
All these things are done on different lines, of course.

When I want tea, I press a button marked "TEA." This action is followed by a roar of machinery and violent activity in all corners of the study, concluding with a final terrific crash as a cup of steaming tea is delivered into my hand!

At prep. time I don the Glyn Three-speed Thinking Helmet and plug into the mains, and find myself immediately able to think at three speeds—normal, double, and times twenty, according to which switch I operate. A useful little article if time's short!

When I say I have all these things, perhaps I'm going a little too far. I should say that I *hope* to have them. I've got all the plans and designs ready, and one of these days I'm going to roll up my sleeves and start work on them.

The only question is whether they'll pan out as they should. Here's hoping, anyway.



# THE MYSTERY SHIP!

By G. L. DALTON

*Wung Li, the menace of the China Seas, gets more than he bargains for when his cut-throat pirates attempt to seize the mystery ship, Emperor!*

## THE FIRST CHAPTER

### Blackmail !

TRouble was brewing in the captain's cabin of the coastal steamer, Emperor, which was lying alongside a wharf at Hong Kong.

Two men faced each other across the cabin table. The first was a clean-cut youngster in the brand new uniform of a skipper in the mercantile marine. The other was a small Chinaman whose frock coat flopped down below his knees.

The Chinaman was speaking.

"My master, Wung Li, says you must pay him five thousand dollars. Your ship will

then be safe. If you refuse to pay, it will be at your peril."

Bill Wilson's fist came down on to the table with a thump that made the electric lamp dance.

"You yellow-skinned blackmailers!" he exclaimed. "D'you think I'm going to pay tribute to a gang of cut-throat pirates?"

The Chinaman shrugged his shoulders.

"This is your last chance," he said. "Wung Li's patience is short."

Bill glared at his visitor.

"Wung Li can go to blazes!" he replied. "If he wants five thousand dollars off me he'll be blinking unlucky."

The Chinaman smiled sneeringly.

"You will soon regret your decision," he said. "You will have many reasons to wish that you had paid."

"Sez you!" exclaimed Bill.

The Chinaman put on his bowler hat.

"I will bear your message to my illustrious master," he said. "Wung Li will be very amused. Other captains have also refused to pay. They are dead!"

With a significant motion he drew the back of his hand across his throat.

Bill raised his eyebrows.

"Wung Li will smile on the other side of his ugly face if he pokes his nose on board my ship," he growled. "Hop it!"

The Chinaman saw that argument was useless. He sneaked out of the cabin and made for the gangway. Bill watched him until he was lost in the deep shadows of the warehouses on the other side of the wharf.

"That blackmailin' pirate hasn't wasted much time," he muttered. "But, by gosh, he'll get it in the neck if he tackles me."

Bill did not speak boastfully. He had every reason to be self-reliant. He had just been given command of the Emperor, and was the youngest skipper on the steamers engaged on the Chinese coastal trade.

Wung Li was the scourge of the South China Sea. He was the most notorious of all the pirate chiefs and had numberless crimes on his blood-stained hands. Even the British naval patrols had failed to discover his hidden lair on one of the numerous islands which dotted the coast.

Striding along to the officers' quarters, Bill pushed open the door.

Andy Fergus, the chief engineer, and Sparks Duncan, the wireless operator, were playing draughts, but they shoved the board aside as Bill came in.

Sparks grinned broadly.

"Got rid of your mandarin?" he asked.

"Yes," replied Bill. He described how he had refused to pay Wung Li's demand.

By the time he had finished Andy's face was grave.

"I'm not sayin' you dinna' do right," he said. "But, skipper, you're takin' an awfu' risk. Wung Li's as cunnin' as a snake, and more dangerous."

Bill shook his head.

"I've considered the risk," he declared. "I won't pay a cent. I'll defy the murdering scoundrel while there's breath left in me. Are you fellows going to back me up?"

Sparks did not hesitate.

"I'm on!" he exclaimed. "We'll turn his pigtail into a horse-hair sofa."

Andy was more deliberate. It was his nature to make up his mind slowly.

"Yes! Count me in," he said after a pause. "It's more than time that somebody had the pluck to stand up to Wung Li."

The three shipmates shook hands over their bargain.

Sparks looked at Bill.

"What's the big idea, skipper?" he demanded. "What are you hiding up your sleeve?"

Bill grinned.

"It's this," he replied. "I've made up my mind—I'm going to turn the Emperor into a mystery ship."

"What?" exclaimed Sparks and Andy in chorus.

"A mystery ship," repeated Bill. "As you chaps know, I love working out new dodges. Several bright ideas have come into my head for giving Wung Li a mighty hot time if he tries to plant any of his pirates on board my ship."

Sparks whistled.

"That's a topping notion," he said. "We can help you. I'm pretty useful with electricity and Andy's the snake's hips on steam."

Bill gave a satisfied nod.

"We've got a week before we are due to sail," he said. "I'll get permission to shift the Emperor over to the naval yard where we can work without being overlooked by Wung Li's spies."

Andy rubbed his oily hands.

"That's fine," was his comment. "Wait a minute, I'll fetch the plans of the ship an' then we'll work out the details."

The police of Hong Kong did not know that the ferocious pirate, Wung Li, made frequent visits to the port. Neither were they aware that he possessed a luxuriously furnished house in the town.

It was to this house that the Chinaman hurried after his visit to Bill.

He was at once admitted into the presence of Wung Li himself.

Attired in a long and costly silk robe and wearing earrings of priceless jade, Wung Li motioned to him to come forward with his fan.

"You have been a long time, To Ping," was his greeting.

To Ping bowed double from his waist.

"The English captain was obstinate, Excellency," he replied.

Wung Li scowled and closed his fan with a snap.

"He refuses to pay?" he demanded.

To Ping again bowed.

"That is so, Excellency."

"For that foolishness he shall pay double," exclaimed the pirate chief.

To Ping plucked up courage.

"Excellency, the captain said that if you poked your nose on board his ship you would smile on the other side of your ugly face."

Wung Li's lips curled back and exposed his teeth.



Jerking an automatic from his pocket, Bill took aim and fired. The leading pirate flopped to the deck with a thud.

"For that insult he shall die," he snarled. "He shall be tortured to death."

He clapped his hands twice and a huge Chinaman entered noiselessly. It was Chang Fen, the pirate chief's lieutenant and as big a villain as his master.

"I await your Excellency's commands," he said.

Wung Li spoke swiftly.

"You are to capture the steamship Emperor on her next voyage," he began. "Here are my instructions. You and thirty of my men will book tickets and sail as passengers. You will hide your pistols and daggers under your robes. I shall await the Emperor in my junk. I shall order a gun to be fired. That will be the signal for you to take possession of the ship."

Chang Fen bowed.

"I understand, Excellency."

Wung Li tapped his nails with his fan.

"The captain is to be brought to me alive on board the junk," he said.

Chang Fen understood the threat in Wung Li's words and a cruel glint appeared in his eyes.

"It shall be as you command, Excellency," he answered.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### The Pirates Attack !

BILL took a glimpse through his binoculars at the headland they were fast approaching. A week had quickly passed, and on the previous day the Emperor had taken aboard cargo and passengers and set out from Hong Kong.

Throwing a plume of smoke across the sky, the steamer ploughed through the calm sea at a steady ten knots. From the bridge Bill looked down on a peaceful scene.

Several of the Chinese passengers, who had embarked at Hong Kong, were lying on the deck enjoying the sunshine. Others walked up and down chatting to one another. Loud exclamations came from a group who were gambling round a fan-tan mat.

Sparks was making his way along the deck, threading his way among the passengers.

Several of the Chinamen spoke to him politely, but Sparks appeared to be in a hurry, for he kept glancing at his wrist-watch.

Finally he reached the ladder leading up to the bridge, and bounded to the top.

Bill took a pace forward.

"Find out anything?" he asked.

Sparks jerked back his cuff.

"Look at that!" he exclaimed.

It was not a wrist-watch after all that he was wearing, but a delicate instrument, something like a compass, invented by Bill. Across the dial the needle was still flickering in an agitated manner.

Bill nodded. Metal objects acted like a magnet on the needle and caused it to vibrate.

"All the Chinks must be hiding guns," said Sparks. "The needle jumped as I passed each one of them."

"Then we can expect the fun to start soon," remarked Bill. "I suppose they hope to catch us napping."

Sparks pointed out the tallest Chinaman. It was Chang Fen disguised as a respectable silk merchant.

"That's the fellow to watch," he observed.

"He's a walking arsenal. The needle almost jumped off its spindle when I stood behind him."

"Righto," said Bill, and went into the wheelhouse, where the quartermaster, Sam Huggins, a former naval man, was steering.

Bill spoke down the engine-room voice-pipe.

"Hello!" boomed Andy's voice from the depths below.

"Keep your eyes skinned," said Bill. "Trouble's brewing!"

Andy replied with a bloodthirsty chuckle.

Bill suddenly felt the ship veer slightly from her course. Huggins was twirling the spokes.

"Junk rounding the 'eadland, sir," he exclaimed.

Bill stepped out on to the bridge and examined the approaching craft through his glasses. The junk was crowded with men. Her three large sails were up and her course was set to pass close by the Emperor.

Lowering his glasses, Bill turned to Huggins.

"What d'you make of her, quartermaster?"

Huggins shifted the quid of tobacco he was chewing into his other cheek.

"Bit doubtful, in my opinion," he replied.

"Looks to me mighty like a fighting junk."

Bill nodded in agreement.

"Anyhow, I'm taking no risks of being surprised," he said. "Give the warning, quartermaster."

Huggins gave two sharp blasts on the siren. This sounded like an ordinary warning whistle to the helmsman on the junk to keep out of the steamer's path. As a matter of fact, it was the signal to the Emperor's small crew to take up their stations.

Only one or two sailors were actually on deck, and as soon as they heard the siren they left their work and quietly disappeared.

Sparks' job was in the wheelhouse, where he took up his position before an instrument board on which a number of switches were fixed.

"Keep her on her course," said Bill to Huggins. "I don't want 'em to know we suspect there's trouble brewing."

"Aye! Aye!" replied the quartermaster.

Hands in his pockets and whistling a jazz tune, Bill strolled up and down the bridge in full view of the passengers. He scarcely seemed to be taking any notice of the junk as it crept steadily nearer.

The Chinamen had stopped their chattering. Those who had been squatting down scrambled to their feet and were watching the approach



"Look out!" There was a sudden exclamation from Huggins. Bill and Sparks turned to see Chang Fen, a dagger between his teeth, take a flying leap from the mast to the bridge.

of the junk. As the two vessels closed up, Bill noticed a group of men busily engaged on the poop of the junk.

The distance rapidly narrowed. Suddenly the men on the poop sprang back. There was a lurid flash of light followed by a loud explosion.

"Blank cartridge!" exclaimed Bill.

It was Wung Li's signal.

In an instant the scene on the deck of the Emperor was transformed as Chang Fen uttered a hoarse cry of command. The peaceful passengers betrayed their true characters. Snatching off their long robes, they stood revealed as muscular, half-naked pirates.

Chang Fen pulled a pistol from his belt and fired a shot into the air.

Bill flung himself flat on to the bridge. All the pirates were armed to the teeth with pistols, sawed-off shot-guns and daggers.

"Look out, Andy!" shouted Sparks down the voice-pipe.

Brandishing their weapons and uttering ferocious yells, half the pirates, led by a man with only one ear, rushed down the steps that led to the engine-room.

The remainder, headed by Chang Fen, made a frenzied rush for the ladder leading up to the bridge.

"Here goes!" muttered Bill.

Jerking an automatic pistol from his hip pocket, he took aim and fired. The leading pirate jumped a yard in the air and flopped to the deck with a bullet through the calf of his leg.

The pirates stopped their rush tactics. There was a ragged volley of shots and a splinter of wood curled up from the planks too close to Bill's head to be comfortable.

A tremendous commotion had broken out on the junk. Firearms were being discharged and tins banged to encourage Chang Fen and his comrades.

Crawling on his hands and knees, Bill entered the wheelhouse. Sparks and the quartermaster were bending down, watching the proceedings through eye-slits in the steel plating.

Bill wondered how Andy was getting on and rang up the engine-room.

"All right?" he asked.

"O.K.!" replied Andy. "The deevils are hammerin' on the door like mad, but they won't get it open till I'm ready for 'em."

Sparks gave a shout.

"Get down," he yelled.

Bill ducked just in time. Another volley

of shots rang out and the wheelhouse windows fell into jagged splinters.

The pirates were climbing up to every point from which they could shoot down on to the bridge.

One of the rascals swarmed up into one of the small boats and dragged up a companion after him. This brought them up level with the bridge. Levelling their pistols, they took aim.

Bill grinned.

"Give 'em a ducking, Sparks!" he exclaimed.

Sparks touched a switch on the instrument board.

The result was surprising. The small boat swung completely over and tipped the two pirates out head-first. With amazing agility the first grabbed hold of a rail as he was falling and pulled himself back on to the deck. The second disappeared with a splash in the sea.

While this was happening a one-eyed pirate was pulling himself on his stomach along the deck until he reached the bottom of the ladder leading up to the bridge.

In this position he was invisible from the wheelhouse.

With great stealth the pirate put his naked foot on the bottom rung and began to climb up, but no sooner had he touched the ladder than a bell tinkled in the wheelhouse.

"Somebody's on the ladder," exclaimed Bill. "Fetch him off, Sparks!"

Sparks pressed down another switch. Pivoted from the top, the ladder swung upwards at a terrific speed and hurled the one-eyed pirate clean across the width of the bridge. He fell with a crash on the foredeck and lay there motionless.

Huggins made a sudden exclamation.

"Look out!" he cried.

A dagger between his teeth, Chang Fen had swarmed a short distance up the mast. As the quartermaster spoke he took a flying leap on to the bridge.

With a bloodthirsty howl his companions rushed forward.

But Bill jumped out to meet Chang Fen. Before the Chinaman could regain his balance, Bill rammed in a right to the jaw.

It was a tremendous blow and timed to the second. Chang Fen's teeth rattled together. Blood appeared at the corner of his mouth for he had also bitten his dagger. Arms flying wildly he staggered backwards and fell off the bridge.

He would have broken his neck if his fall had not been broken by two of the pirates who were running forward. The three collapsed in a heap and rolled into the scuppers together.

But as quick as Bill had been in knocking Chang Fen from the bridge, other pirates had taken advantage of the time. Already two of them were clambering up to the bridge, and many others were rushing across the deck, knives flashing in the sunlight.

The situation looked ugly for the three on the bridge, to say the least. Bill and Sparks rushed forward to repel the attack, while the quartermaster held the ladder with a revolver.

As two pirates came up over the bridge rail, Bill and Sparks let drive. Simultaneously there were two thuds, followed by two anguished yells. The pirates lost their balance and crashed down on the heads of their comrades following behind. In a jumble of arms, legs and bodies,

the whole lot fell to the deck, landing on other pirates who were not quick enough to get out of the way. Yells and oaths rent the air as the pirates sprawled over the deck.

Bill, Sparks and the quartermaster took shelter again in the wheelhouse, ready this time for the next onslaught.

The Emperor's funnel bent completely over and from it billowed dense clouds of black smoke, smothering the pirates. Uttering shrill yells, they turned and fled.



### THE THIRD CHAPTER

"Shocking!"

THE pirates withdrew a short distance and held a council of war. Things were not going the way they planned.

Meanwhile, the other members of the gang were trying to batter their way down into the engine-room.

A stout door barred their progress.

On the other side of the door stood Andy, one eye glued to a tiny peephole.

The leader of the pirates thrust his pistol against the bolt and pulled the trigger. There was a deafening report in the narrow passage but all the damage done by the bullet was to fetch a flake of paint off the steel barricade which faced them.

"Wow!" exclaimed Andy. "I'm thinkin' it's time I shifted 'em back on deck."

He picked up a long flexible tube and screwed it carefully into the peephole. At the end of the tube was a huge pair of bellows worked by compressed air.

Andy turned a tap and there was a hiss as the bellows began to work.

In a second the passage was full of a fine powder which shot out from the jet with terrific force.

The pirates yelled in agony. Red-hot needles seemed to be sticking in their eyeballs. Their nostrils were scorched and every time they panted for breath they carried the burning powder into their lungs.

Clawing the air, they fought among themselves to get out of the passage. Terrified and half-blind they scrambled back on to the deck.

Bill saw them rush out of the companion-way and chuckled.

"I shouldn't have thought that two or three pounds of black pepper would have routed a gang of pirates!" he exclaimed, for that was what the powder consisted of—simply black pepper. Bill's brain-wave had worked with a vengeance.

Chang Fen rallied his men. He was trying to urge them on to another attack.

The crew on the junk had redoubled their yelling. Another gun was fired. Wung Li was becoming impatient.

Sam Huggins cut himself another quid of tobacco.

"Gosh!" he said. "This is better than the pictures!"

"Yes," agreed Sparks. "But I shouldn't like Wung Li to get hold of me. The danger's not over yet."

Suddenly Chang Fen withdrew his men towards the stern.

They broke up into groups and began to assemble a pile of boxes, coops, rafts—anything made of wood on which they could lay their hands.

Bill saw through their little game.

"Great Scott!" he shouted. "The blighters are going to fire the ship!"

The pirates were working at top speed.

"I'll soon stop their game!" muttered Bill.

He turned to Sparks.

"Smoke 'em out!"

Sparks turned a handle. The whirr of machinery was heard and an amazing thing happened.

The ship's funnel bent backwards. The plates of it glided together as Sparks turned another wheel and the top of the funnel turned completely over until it pointed downwards over the bewildered mob of pirates.

Bill was at the engine-room voice-pipe.

"All the smoke you've got, Andy," he said.

Clouds of dense black smoke and billowing sparks shot out of the funnel and completely smothered the pirates. They began to cough and sneeze. Dropping the boxes they fled out of the smoke and came bolting along the deck, smothered all over with soot.

Chang Fen led them. Mad with terror and rage they charged at the bridge.

The pirates were desperate. They meant to overpower the cool Englishmen or die in the attempt. Uttering shrill yells and brandishing their weapons they dashed forward.

Bill judged the distance.

"Now, Sparks!" he exclaimed.

There was the click of a switch, and, without any warning, the entire section of the deck on which the pirates were running began to spin round at a tremendous speed.

A great circle had been cut through the planks. In the centre, underneath, was a spindle driven from the engine-room, and this



C. P. SHIPTON

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HOLDING THE BRIDGE!

carried the deck round and round like the turntable on a huge gramophone.

Chang Fen and his gang were thrown from their feet. They didn't stand a chance. Faster and faster the deck went whirling round.

The pirates collapsed into a great heap of tangled limbs, clawing at the planks to try to retain a hold. But the tremendous force rendered them helpless.

Bill chuckled at the success of his device.

"They're off!" he exclaimed. "Watch 'em walk the plank, new style!"

The "new style" came into operation as Sparks touched the switch again. The speed of the turntable was increased still more, and the dizzy pirates became dizzier, until one after another they were spun from the turntable.

Chang Fen was the first to go. Legs and arms waving helplessly, he was shot off the revolving deck and sailed clean over the rails and into the sea.

In quick succession the other pirates followed him. Chink after Chink was thrown into mid-air. Splash succeeded splash until the water was dotted by the heads of the swimming men.

The last one went over the side with a yell, and Sparks shut off the power. The deck stopped spinning.

The crew on the junk couldn't understand what was happening as they saw their comrades propelled over the side of the steamer.

Wung Li stood on the poop. He shook with anger.

Scared out of their wits, Chang Fen and his gang swam to the junk and were hauled on board.

Chang Fen shrank back from Wung Li.

"The steamer has a magic spell cast over it," he said. "An evil spirit caught hold of our legs and threw us into the sea."

"You bungling fool!" snarled Wung Li, shaking his fists at the Emperor, which was steaming rapidly away.

Across the water, from the Emperor, floated the sound of the whistle:

"Cock-a-doodle-do!"

THE END

## A Flying Visit to St. Jim's

*Conducted by Monty Lowther*

For those with half-a-guinea and half-an-hour to spare, a joy-ride over St. Jim's in an aeroplane may be confidently recommended. Get it second-hand from me, here and now, and see how you like it.

We step into the plane on Wayland Moor and in less than two minutes a superb range of buildings is glittering below us in the bright spring sunshine.

It is the Wayland Gas Works. For a moment we thought it was St. Jim's.

Now we come to St. Jim's. We recognise it by the tiny white speck near the gates, which we know to be Taggles' head with a handkerchief thrown over it to keep off the flies during his afternoon nap.

Let's descend a couple of hundred feet and get a closer look at things. Ah! That's better. Now we can see the imposing mass of the School House building in detail. But what is that funny little cattle-shed near it? A pair of field-glasses reveals that it is not a cattle-shed but the New House.

These field-glasses are good. With their aid we can even see a worm crawling down the steps. Is it a worm, though? No, it's not; it's Mr. Ratcliff.

Fire! Fire! Surely that's a fire over there? We can even hear the agonised choking of the half-suffocated victims. All serene, though. It's only Crooke and Mellish, "enjoying" themselves with a packet of cigarettes behind the chapel.

Who's that, flashing a reflector in our eyes? But perhaps it's not meant to be a reflector? Come to look at it, it's D'Arcy's world-famed monocle. Good old Gus!

Just look down there. Must be an optical illusion; we've never seen a walking dictionary before, have we? Yes, we have; it's Herbert Skimpole himself.

What about that automatic barrel, then? Quite unusual to see a barrel steering itself across the quad. Must be Baggy Trimble; it is.

Well, time's up now. 'Fraid that's all we get for half-a-guinea. Good-bye, St. Jim's.

# A YANKEE



## THE FIRST CHAPTER

Blake & Co. Scent a Jape.

**H**AVE you ordahed any fish for this studay, Blake, deah boy ? "

Jack Blake looked up, and his

fret-saw ceased its operations for a moment. Blake, of the Fourth, was an amateur carpenter, and fret-work was his latest development. He had flooded Study No. 6 in the

School House with photo-frames, paper-racks, and weird-looking inkstands. He was engaged now upon his masterpiece, a fret-work design

When Fisher T. Fish, the American junior of Greyfriars, pays St. Jim's a visit, he promptly proceeds to show the fellows how things should be done—with disastrous results to himself !

expression showed that he had no time to be bothered with idle questions.

" Fish ? " he repeated.

" Yaas," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

" Fish. Have you ordahed any ? "

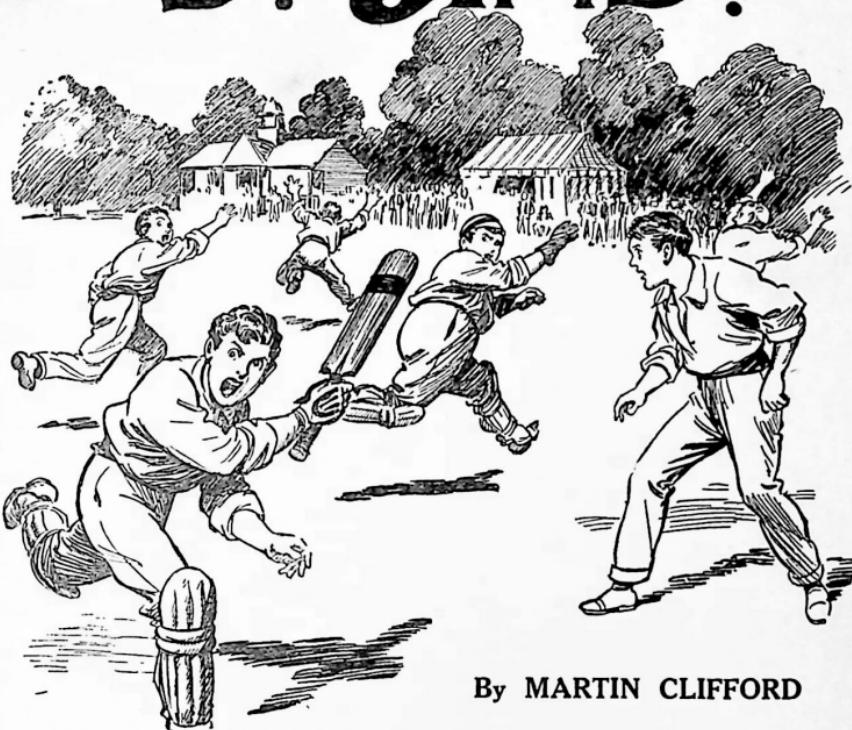
Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, Blake's chum and study-mate, had suddenly entered Study No. 6 with a telegram in his hand, and a puzzled expression on his face.

" No, ass ! " said Blake.

" Weally, Blake—"

" Shurrup ! " said Blake. " I'm busy. I'm being interrupted by two silly asses now."

# AT ST. JIM'S !



By MARTIN CLIFFORD

Herries and Digby, also denizens of Study No. 6, were sitting on the table, watching Blake's operations with the fretwork, occasionally offering advice that was ungratefully received, and jolting him from time to time.

"Have you ordahed any fish, Hewwies ?"  
"No, fathead ! " said Herries.

"Have you ordahed any fish, Dig ? "

"Of course I haven't," grunted Digby.

"Then," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "it is vewy wemarkable."

Herries and Digby stared at him. Blake went on with his work.

"What is there remarkable about it, chump ? " asked Herries politely.

"Because, you see, I haven't ordahed any fish, eithah," explained D'Arcy, as if that made it quite clear.

That mysterious remark caused Blake to look up again, though he was engaged upon a very delicate bit of the clock-tower at St. Jim's.

"Dotty ? " asked Blake.

"I wefuse to answah that widiculous question, Blake. I wepeat that it is vewy wemarkable. You say that you have not ordahed any fish——"

"Of course I haven't, fathead ! " roared Blake. "What the dickens should I be ordering fish for ? "

"Hewwies and Dig say they haven't ordahed any fish. I, myself, have certainly not ordahed any fish. I should wemembah it if I had. And if nobody in this studay has ordahed any fish, I quite fail to understand why they should telegwaph to me that the fish is goin' to be delivahed to-mowwow."

Arthur Augustus held up the telegram.

The curiosity of the chums of Study No. 6 was aroused by that time. They jerked the telegram away from the swell of St. Jim's and read it. Considering that nobody in the study had ordered the fish, it was certainly, as D'Arcy declared, a little remarkable. For the telegram ran :

"D'Arcy, School House, St. James' College, Sussex. Arriving Wednesday, three F. T. Fish."

Blake and Herries and Digby read the telegram in astonishment, and read it again, and Herries even turned it upside down, as if he hoped to make some meaning out of it by doing so. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy polished his eyeglass and gazed at his chums.

"What do you make of that, deah boys?" asked Arthur Augustus. "Thwee F. T. Fish. Of course, F. T. stands for Fwesh Tinned—that's cleah enough. Mr. Sands, the gwocer in Wylcombe, is advertisin' what he calls Fwesh Tinned Fish, and I wemembah his boy Gwimes bwingin' some heah the othah day for the house-dame. But why should anybody be sendin' us thwee fwesh tinned fish, when we haven't ordahed any? I wegard it as vewy wemarkable."

"Must be a jape," said Blake at last.

"Somebody's pulling Gussy's leg, as usual," said Herries.

"Weally, Hewwies——"

"Sure you haven't ordered any fish?" asked Blake.

"Quite sure, deah boy. I should wemembah it if I had. Besides, I do not like tinned things—you nevah know what they're made of."

"Might be a present from somebody," Dig suggested.

Blake shook his head.

"Anybody sending a present would sign his name," he said.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Besides, three tins of fish wouldn't make much of a present. It isn't a present. It must be a jape. Some silly ass has been ordering fish for this study for a joke, and the grocer has wired to say they're coming."

"Bai Jove!"

Blake wrinkled his brows in thought. His fretsaw was sticking in the fretwork tower of St. Jim's, but he had forgotten it. Even fretwork took a back seat at the idea of Study No. 6 being japed by a practical joker. If it was a jape, it was "up" to the chums of No. 6 to discover the japer and foil the japer. That was the pressing business of the moment. So Jack Blake thought it out.

"Somebody's pulling our leg, and we've got on to it through the grocer sending this wire," he exclaimed. "The question is, who's the silly ass? It might be the New House chaps——"

"Yaas, that is vewy pwob."

"Or it might be Tom Merry & Co——"

Dig gave a shout.

"Got it! It's Lowther! You remember his little game some time back—with Ratty—ordering things for him by telephone."

The Fourth-Formers grinned at the remembrance. The school had not yet ceased to chuckle over that jape on Mr. Ratcliff. That gentleman had fallen foul of Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther; and Monty Lowther had "got his own back" in his own peculiar way—by ordering huge quantities of goods from various tradesmen by telephone, to be delivered to Mr. Ratcliff at St. Jim's. Mr. Ratcliff had been driven almost frantic as goods and goods and goods piled in from various quarters, which he had never ordered or dreamed of ordering.

"Lowther, of course," said Blake with conviction. "He's been at the telephone again, and he's ordered some of that precious tinned fish for this study. And they'll stand round and yell when it's delivered."

"The awful wottahs!"

Blake chuckled.

"But this telegram knocks it on the head," he said. "Now we know—and forewarned is forearmed. We can give Monty Lowther a Roland for his Oliver. Jolly lucky that old Sands thought of wiring to us. Come on.

We'll 'phone to Sands, and turn the tables on the Shell bounthers."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

And the chums of Study No. 6 hurried out of the study. Three juniors of the Shell were coming down the passage, and they paused at the sight of Blake & Co's excited looks. They were Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther, the Terrible Three of the Shell.

"Hallo! Whither bound?" asked Monty Lowther. "Wherefore those excited looks, my infants?"

"Weally, Lowthah, you wottah——"

"Is it a New House raid?" asked Manners.

"Or has the order gone forth that all Fourth-Form kids are to wash their necks?" Tom Merry wanted to know.

Blake did not reply to the chipping of the Shell fellows. He waved his hands to his followers and shouted:

"Charge!"

The Fourth-Formers charged. The charge was sudden and terrific. The Terrible Three were bowled over, and they rolled on the linoleum roaring, and the four juniors hurried on, chuckling. Tom Merry and Manners and Lowther sat up, dusty and breathless, and blinked at one another.

"The—the silly chumps!" gasped Manners. "What did they do that for?"

"The rotters——"

"The outsiders——"

"After them!" roared Tom Merry.

And the Terrible Three, incensed and indignant, jumped up and rushed after the Fourth-Formers. They wanted vengeance, and they wanted it at once. They rushed along the passage and down the stairs after the chums of the Fourth. But they had to halt then. Blake & Co. had walked into the prefects' room, and into that sacred apartment, where the great men of the Sixth did congregate, it was impossible to pursue them. The Terrible Three halted outside the door, baffled and furious.

"You rotters!" howled Lowther. "Come out!"

To which the dulcet tones of Arthur Augustus replied:

"Wats!"

Kildare of the Sixth looked out of the prefects' room, frowning.

"Now, then, none of your rags here!" he exclaimed. "Clear off!"

And the Terrible Three, bottling up their vengeance for a future occasion, cleared off.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### Tit for Tat I

KILDARE turned back into the prefects' room, and frowned at the chums of the Fourth. Blake & Co. were looking very meek and mild.

"What do you kids want in here?" demanded Kildare.

"Please, we've come to ask a little favour!" said Blake meekly.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"What do you want?"

"We want to order something from the grocer's," Blake explained. "Of course, we could go down to the village, but we shouldn't be back in time for calling over, and being such good boys——"

Kildare laughed.

"Do you mean that you want to use the telephone?"

"Yes."

"Well, you can use it, and then clear out."

"Thanks awfully, Kildare."

Kildare went back to the window, where he had been discussing with Darrel of the Sixth the prospects of the First Eleven in the coming football season. Blake and Herries and Digby and D'Arcy gathered round the telephone. There was a telephone in the prefects' room for the use of those august personages. Juniors were allowed to use it after asking permission from a prefect. When the room happened to be empty, they used it without going through that ceremony. Which helped to account for the discrepancy between the list of calls kept at the exchange and the list kept at St. Jim's.

"Bettah let me telephone, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, as Blake took up the receiver.

Blake snorted and rang up.

"Rylcombe, 101," he said.

"Blake, deah boy, you had bettah leave it to me," said Arthur Augustus firmly. "You see, it will be necessary to be very cautious——"

"Sands would recognise your silly voice," growled Blake.

"There is nothin' whatevah out of the common wun about my voice, deah boy, and I fail to see why Mistah Sands should weccognise it any more than he would weccognise yours."

"Go hon!"

The bell rang. Blake spoke into the mouth-piece.

"Is that Mr. Sands?"

"Yes, sir," came back a voice that Blake recognised as the voice of Grimes, the youth who carried baskets for the Rylcombe grocer.

"Mr. Sands speaking?" asked Blake innocently, disguising his own voice.

"No, sir. Mr. Sands is hout. I'm speakin' for 'im."

"Very good. You have received an order for some of your fresh tinned fish from this school—this is St. Jim's."

"Yes, sir."

The Fourth-Formers exchanged glances. This was confirmation—strong a proof as holy writ.

"That settles it," murmured Dig, who had the second receiver between his ear and Herries'.

"What is he saying, deah boy?"

"Tell you presently, Gussy. Was the fish ordered by telephone?" Blake went on into the receiver.

"I think so, sir."

"Very good. It was a mistake—it is not to be delivered."

"Very well, sir."

"But we shall require some to-night—you hear me?"

"Yes, sir. How many tins?"

"Twenty—largest size."

"Very good, sir."

"To be delivered to Tom Merry. Got the name?"

"Tom Merry, sir. Yes, sir, I know the young gentleman. Anything else, sir?"

"Nothing else now, but I hope we can rely upon those tins being delivered this evening before eight o'clock."

"Suttinly, sir. I'll bring 'em down myself as soon as Mr. Sands comes in."

"Thank you."

"And the other lot that was ordered for tomorrow mornin', sir?"

"They will not be wanted."

"I'll make a note of it, sir. Can I send you anything else?"

"Not at present. Remember—twenty tins, largest size, of your fresh tinned fish, to be delivered to Tom Merry's study, with the bill. Wait for payment."

"Yes, sir."

"Good-bye."

And Blake rang off.

"Bai Jove," murmured Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, "that's wippin'! Twentay tins at a shillin' each—that will stick the boundahs for a pound—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"They can fork out the quid, or argue it out with Grimey, just as they like," grinned Blake. "Grimey will wait for the quid."

"The pound, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus firmly.

"Quid—"

"Pound—"

"Quid!" roared Blake. "Now let's get out."

And the chums of the Fourth got out.

They returned to Study No. 6, chuckling. That telegram having put them on their guard, the consignment of fish ordered for them would not be delivered—the Terrible Three would have the pleasure of receiving a larger one instead.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Prompt Delivery.

TOM MERRY looked into the cupboard in his study in the Shell passage, and gave a sad shake of the head.

Like the celebrated Mother Hubbard, when he got there the cupboard was bare. It was long past tea-time, and the chums of the Shell were hungry. After their unfortunate encounter with the Fourth-Formers, they had gone out for a spin on their bicycles, and they had come in ravenous.

"Nothing doing?" asked Lowther.

"Half a loaf," said Tom Merry.

"Half a loaf is better than no bread," said Manners. "But I don't think it will go round among three. How's the exchequer?"



"Charge!" shouted Blake. The Fourth-Formers charged. The Terrible Three were bowled over, and they rolled on the linoleum roaring.

Tom Merry turned his pockets inside-out in eloquent response. Monty Lowther extracted a bad threepenny-piece from his pocket, gazed at it sadly, and put it back again.

"You had half-a-crown this morning, Manners," said Lowther.

"Yes, and I was going to bring in one of old Sands' Fresh Tinned Fish, as he calls them," said Manners.

"Good idea! But we can do without it, if you've still got the half-crown. I'll cut down to the tuck-shop——"

"No go!"

"I don't mind——"

"The half-crown is gone, vanished, disappeared. I had run out of films——"

"Films!" roared Lowther. "Do you mean to say you've wasted the last half-crown in the family for rotten films for a rotten camera?"

"It isn't a rotten camera!" said Manners indignantly.

"Can we eat films?" shouted Lowther.

"I don't know whether you can, but I know you're jolly well not going to try—with my films, at any rate!" said Manners warmly.

"Peace, my infants," said Tom Merry chidingly. "We can't eat the films, and we can't eat each other. We shall have to ask ourselves out to tea."

"Tea's over," said Lowther, with a grunt. "Everybody's finished hours ago. Might have dropped in on old Lathom, and pretended he'd asked us—Levison does that sometimes when he's stony, and old Lathom never remembers whether he's asked a chap or not. But old Lathom has fed dogs' ages ago."

"What about Study No. 6?"

"They've finished, of course. They'll be doing their silly prep now——"

"I was thinking of a raid. They charged us in the passage to-day for nothing. We haven't settled with them yet. We can't allow it to pass—quite against the prestige of

the Shell. Let's go and raid No. 6, and collar whatever they've got."

"Hear, hear!"

Tap!

"Oh, come in!" said Tom Merry.

The study door opened, and Grimes, the grocer's boy from Rylcombe, presented himself with a basket on his arm. Grimes grinned and nodded to the chums of the Shell, who stared at him in astonishment. There was a large and heavy package in the basket on Grimes' arm, and it was evident that he had come to deliver goods.

"Good-evenin', gentlemen!" said Grimes.

"Top of the evening to you!" said Lowther affably. "You've mistaken your way, Grimey. The house-dame doesn't live in this study."

"I've brought the goods," explained Grimes.

"Well, is it a new dodge to deliver groceries in junior studies?" asked Tom Merry, in perplexity.

"I was hordered to bring 'em specially to this study, Master Merry, and 'ere I am," said Grimes.

"Great Scott! Is that little lot for us?"

"Yes, sir."

"What on earth is it?"

"The Fresh Tinned Fish, sir."

The Terrible Three exchanged glances of astonishment. As they had not ordered any of Mr. Sands' special line in Fresh Tinned Fish, they were naturally amazed.

"All of it fish?" asked Manners.

"Yes, sir."

"How many?"

"Twenty tins, sir, same as was hordered."

"My hat! Somebody has been making us a thundering big present," said Tom Merry. "I wish whoever it was had put in a little variety. A few jars of jam would have been better than twenty tins of fish. Still, they will make the half-a-loaf go down."

"Hand 'em out, Grimey," said Lowther. "Sorry I can't give a quid tip—I've left my cheque-book at the bank."

Grimes grinned, and handed out the package. He unfastened it, and disclosed a stack of twenty good-sized tins.

"Thanks awfully," said Tom Merry. "Some

Good Samaritan knows we're stony, and has sent us that little lot as a present, I suppose. I—hallo—what's that?"

Grimes presented the bill.

"One pound to pay, please."

"Eh!"

"Twenty tins at a shillin' each, sir, that's one pound," said Grimes, in surprise.

The Terrible Three stared at him.

"Yes, twenty tins at a shilling each would be a pound," agreed Monty Lowther. "I can do that in my head, without the aid of a net. But if you're under the impression that we are going to pay a pound for twenty tins at a shilling each, my estimable Grimes, that is where you are offside. See?"

"I was told to wait for the money, sir."

"Well, no objection to that," said Lowther, with an air of consideration. "Would you like to sit down, Grimey? You can wait as long as you like. You can wait until you turn into a waiter, if you choose."

"I got to get back," suggested Grimes.

"Then we won't detain you," said Lowther pleasantly.

"I s'pose this 'ere's a little joke," said Grimes. "But I really got to get back, Master Lowther. Would you mind paying the bill?"

"Look here!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "I don't know whether you are starting as a humorist, Grimes. We have not ordered any tins of fish, and we haven't any tin to pay for them. See? There's a mistake somewhere."

Grimes shook his head.

"They was hordered two hours ago," he said, "and 'ere they are. They was asked for specially for to-night. I thought that p'raps you young gents was givin' a feed or somethin', and I 'urried down with them as soon as Mr. Sands come in."

"Ordered!" exclaimed Tom Merry. "Who ordered them?"

"One of your young gents, by telephone," said Grimes.

"Telephone!" shouted Manners and Tom Merry together.

"Yes, sir. I took the horder myself."

"Lowther, you ass! Is this one of your little jokes?"

"Lowther, you chump, have you been playing the giddy ox ?"

"Of course I haven't !" roared Lowther. "Do you think I should order the stuff for my own study, you fatheads. I don't know anything about it."

"I've got to get back," said Grimes.

"It must be a jape," said Tom Merry. "Grimey, old man, I'm sorry you've had the trouble; but that stuff wasn't ordered by us. You'd better take it back."

"I can't take back stuff hordered, Master Merry, without special instructions," said Grimes, looking obstinate. "Them tins was hordered 'ere, and 'ere they are. I come in a 'urry with them, too."

"Well, I'm sorry. It was a joke of somebody or other."

"Pr'aps you can settle it with 'im, if you pay the bill," Grimes suggested.

"Can't pay the bill. My dear Grimes, the whole exchequer in this study is reduced to one threepenny-bit, and that's bad !"

"Well, wot's to be done ?" said Grimes.

"Take 'em back."

"Can't, sir," said Grimes. "Shop's closed, for one thing, and I'm goin' 'ome. Besides, I ain't no instructions to take 'em back."

"Then leave 'em here."

"Can't leave 'em without the money, sir. You know that Mr. Sands never gives credit to the young gents, sir. 'Tain't our custom."

"Well, if you won't take 'em or leave 'em," said Lowther, "you'd better put 'em in the basket and stand there with them. We can have our tea just the same; you needn't bother about us."

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"I'm waiting for that pound, sir," said Grimes.

"Keep it up !"

"Look 'ere, young gents——"

"Oh, rats !"

"I got to be paid."

"Go and eat coke !"

"Hallo, what's the row ?" asked Kangaroo of the Shell, looking into the study, where the voices were growing a little excited. "My hat ! You fellows laying in supplies for a siege ?"

"It's a rotten jape," exclaimed Tom Merry.

"Some silly ass has ordered this rubbish for us by telephone, and we're not going to take it."

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"What are you cackling at ?" demanded Tom warmly.

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"Another of Lowther's little jokes, I suppose. He's so funny that he plays jokes on himself ! Ha, ha, ha !"

"I didn't order them, you chump !" shouted Lowther.

"I'm waiting for the money, please," said Grimes respectfully, but with an air of dogged determination.

"Look here, Grimes, if you don't clear out, we'll sling you out," said Monty Lowther, who was losing his temper fast. Like a true humorist, he could never see the humour in a joke that was turned against himself. "And we'll jolly well chuck your tins of Fresh Tinned Poison after you !"

"I got to wait for the money," said Grimes grimly.

"Look here, you ass——"

"Look here, you fathead——"

"We're stony broke, if you want to know," roared Tom Merry. "Understand that !"

Grimes scratched his nose thoughtfully.

"You shouldn't horder the things, then, sir," he said.

"We didn't order them !" said Tom Merry wildly.

"I s'pose I shall 'ave to leave 'em without the money," said Grimes. "But I shall get into a row with Mr. Sands if they ain't paid for to-morrор."

"Take 'em away !"

"Can't, sir."

And Grimes settled the matter by walking out of the study. The Terrible Three roared after him with one voice.

"Come back, you silly jay ! Come and fetch this rubbish ! We're not going to pay for it !"

But Grimes was deaf. He marched on and disappeared.

The Terrible Three glared at the piles of tins on the table. Kangaroo rolled in the armchair and roared with laughter. It seemed funnier to the Cornstalk than it did to the chums of the Shell.

"Ha, ha, ha ! Twenty tins at a bob a time ! Ha, ha, ha !"

"Shut up !" roared the exasperated juniors.

"Ha, ha, ha !"

The Terrible Three fell upon the almost hysterical Cornstalk, and yanked him out of the chair and hurled him bodily into the passage, and slammed the door after him. And they were left alone—with twenty tins of fish piled on the table.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER

##### A Slight Misunderstanding.

ARTHUR AUGUSTUS D'ARCY looked into Study No. 6 with a twinkle in his eyes. Blake and Herries and Digby were doing their preparation.

"Come along, deah boys," said D'Arcy.

"What is it now, image ?" demanded Blake.

"I wefuse to be called an image. I have just seen Gwimes, and it appeahs that he has delivahed some goods to Tom Mewwy. I thought we might dwop in and see how they are gettin' on."

"Ha, ha, ha !"

The Fourth-Formers jumped up from their preparation at once. They were very keen to see how pleased the Terrible Three were with the sudden and unexpected arrival of twenty tins of Mr. Sands' special line in Fresh Tinned Fish.

They hurried along the passage, and found Noble of the Shell leaning against the wall, gasping for breath, and with tears of laughter on his cheeks. The Cornstalk looked at them, and gurgled :

"Have you heard ? Twenty tins at a bob a time—ha, ha, ha ! Lowther is so funny that he has been japing himself ! Ha, ha, ha !"

"I twust they are pleased, deah boy !"

"Yes, they looked pleased !" roared Kangaroo. "Ha, ha, ha !"

Blake knocked at the study door and opened it. Three furious faces were turned towards him. The Terrible Three expected to see the hilarious Cornstalk again, and they were ready to charge.

"Hallo !" said Blake affably. "I hear

you've been ordering supplies on a large scale. Standing a specially big feed ?"

"No !" yelled Tom Merry.

"You seem to have laid in a big supply of fish," said Blake, scanning the tins piled on the table. "What's it for, then ?"

"It's not for us."

"Present from somebody ?" asked Blake.

"It's a rotten jape of some rotter ; some silly ass has been ordering this rubbish for us by telephone, and old Sands will want to make us pay for them. Grimes wouldn't take them back."

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"If you've come here to cackle, you can get out !" roared Monty Lowther.

"Ha, ha, ha ! You'll have to pay now, as you've received the goods."

"Yaas, wathah !"

"I wish I knew who it was that has been so jolly funny !" howled Tom Merry.

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"Yes, it's funny, isn't it ?" grinned Blake. "Funnier than ordering three tins for our study—eh ?" And the Fourth-Formers roared again.

"What ! Has somebody been ordering them for you, too ?" demanded Lowther.

Blake winked.

"Oh, come off !" he said. "You know jolly well that you ordered three tins for No. 6 by telephone."

"I ?" yelled Lowther.

"Yes, you, you funny ass ! So we countermanded the order," explained Blake, chuckling. "And as it was a pity to disappoint the grocer man, we gave him an order for you instead."

"Ha, ha, ha !"

"You—you—you gave him this order ?" stuttered Lowther.

"Exactly. One good turn deserves another."

"Yaas, wathah ! Ha, ha, ha ! I wegard it as vewy funny."

"You chumps !" shouted Lowther. "We didn't order anything for you. You've got the wrong pig by the ear, you fatheads !"

"Oh, draw it mild !"

"But we haven't—we didn't—we never thought of it !" howled Lowther.

Blake whistled.

"Honour bright?" he demanded.

"Yes, you chump!" said the Terrible Three together.

"Oh, bai Jove! You have put your silly foot in it this time, Blake, deah boy!" said Arthur Augustus. "It must have been Figgins & Co., aftah all."

"The New House bounders!" said Blake. "Oh, my hat! Well, it wasn't our fault. Lowther is so jolly funny on the telephone, we naturally thought it was Lowther. If you keep a wild, funny man in the study, you've only got yourselves to blame."

"Yaas, wathah; that's quite cowwect."

"You can pay for them!" exclaimed Manners warmly.

Jack Blake shook his head.

"No fear, they're yours. But I'll tell you what we will do—we'll take half a dozen of them off your hands at a tanner a time!"

"You—you—you—"

Grimes presented the bill for the tins of salmon. "One pound to pay, please." "Eh?" The Terrible Three stared at him in surprise.

"Yaas, that's a good offah."

"You frabjous asses!" growled Tom Merry. "What put it into your silly heads that we had ordered stuff for you? Has it been delivered?"

"No; we got a wire saying the three tins were going to be delivered to-morrow, and we telephoned and changed it over for you."

"A wire!" exclaimed Tom Merry in astonishment. "Do you mean to say that old Sands spent a bob on a wire over a three-shilling order?"

"Yes. Queer, wasn't it?"

"He must make a whacking profit on this stuff if he can afford to acknowledge three-bob orders by telegram," said Tom Merry. "More likely there's some mistake, and you've put your idiotic foot into it."

"Wats! Here's the wiah."

Arthur Augustus drew the telegram from his pocket, and laid it on the pile of salmon-tins.



The chums of the Shell looked at it.

"Arriving Wednesday three F. T. Fish."

"What on earth does he call it F.T. Fish for?" said Manners.

"That is an abbreviation, deah boy, for Fwesh Tinned Fish," Arthur Augustus explained.

"Looks to me more like a name," said Tom Merry.

"A name? How could it be a name?"

"Well, Fish is a name, and F.T. might be the initials. Are you sure this telegram was sent from Rylcombe?"

"I suppose so, as it comes from the grocer's there."

"How do you know it comes from the grocer's, ass? Look here!" Tom Merry read from the form. "Handed in at Courtfield."

"Courtfield!" said Blake. "Where's that? I've heard the name before."

"It's the junction near Greyfriars, where you change if you're going there," said Tom Merry. "Don't you remember?"

"That's a jolly long way from here," said Blake in surprise. "What on earth could old Sands want to send his telegram from Courtfield for?"

"It can't be from Sands at all."

"Oh, rot!" said Blake. "Then who is it from? Who else sells Fresh Tinned Fish?"

"Yaas, wathah! Answah that, deah boy!"

Tom Merry did not answer it. He looked at the telegram again, and then he suddenly went off into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What's the joke?" demanded Blake, with an uneasy feeling that perhaps some mistake had been made, after all.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, you chump——"

"Explain, you ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Tom Merry, the tears running down his cheeks. "Oh, you asses! Oh, you burbling jabberwocks! Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you cackling at, you image?" shrieked Blake.

"If you don't explain——" yelled Lowther and Manners.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors rushed upon Tom Merry. They seized him, and jammed him against the wall of the study.

"Now, explain, before we jam your silly napper on the wall!" shouted the exasperated Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha! I—I——" gurgled Tom Merry. "It doesn't mean three tins of fish. It means that Fish is coming at three o'clock."

"Well, it might mean that," said Blake. "But it doesn't make any difference what time the fish comes. This telegram means that it's coming."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Bang!

Tom Merry's head came into violent contact with the study wall.

"Oh! Ow! Yah!"

"Now explain, before we bust the wall with your silly skull——"

"Ow! You chumps! Can't you see? There's a chap at Greyfriars named Fish. A Yankee chap, bristling with initials——"

"Oh!"

"His full name's Fisher Tarleton Fish, I think. Anyway, he calls himself F. T. Fish. And that's what's coming to-morrow."

"Bai Jove! Then it's not Fresh Tinned Fish at all!"

"Ha, ha! No, it's a Yank—a live Yank!"

"Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

### A Fall in Fish.

HERE was no doubt about it.

Tom Merry had read the riddle.

Now that the juniors came to think of it, they remembered the American boy at Greyfriars School, whom they had seen on the occasion of a visit to play cricket. F. T. Fish was not in the Greyfriars junior eleven, certainly; but he was not the kind of fellow to allow himself to pass unnoticed anywhere, and he had made himself known to every member of the St. Jim's party.

The mystery of the telegram was explained now. F. T. Fish, of the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars, had sent that telegram from Courtfield, near his school, to announce that

he was arriving at St. Jim's at three the following day.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" said Blake at last. "I suppose that's it. If that silly ass Gussy had remembered asking Fish to come here—"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Rotten bad form to forget issuing an invitation," said Monty Lowther.

"But I haven't invited him!" shouted Arthur Augustus.

"What? He's wired to you to say he's coming?"

"Yaas, it appeahs that he has, but I haven't invited him. I weally don't know what he is comin' for. I wemembah the chap now you speak of him, but I had uttahly forgotten his existence. I don't know him."

"We've been writing to Greyfriars about fixing up the footer match," said Tom Merry. "I heard from Wharton, their junior skipper, that one of them might be coming over to see us about it, and I said that we should be glad to see him."

"If it's about the footer, he should have wired to me, as secretary," said Manners.

"He may have wired to me as the most important person," said Arthur Augustus, in a thoughtful sort of way. "Yaas, that is pwobably how it is."

"But he isn't their sec," said Lowther. "Their sec. is a chap named Nugent."

"May have some important business to see us about," said Tom Merry, "or it may be just a friendly visit. Americans are free and easy, you know—and after all, we would make any Greyfriars chap welcome—they'd do the same for us."

"Yaas, wathah!"

"One of their chaps came to see Gussy some time back—what was his name?"

"Gwuntah," said D'Arcy, "Gwantah, or Shuntah, I think."

"Bunter," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Perhaps Bunter's given a glowing account of St. Jim's hospitality, and Fish is coming to see what it's like."

"Bai Jove! I should wegard that as a gweat compliment."

"Well, we'll make him welcome, and entertain him," said Tom Merry. "It's rotten luck to be stony just now—we shall have to

stand something decent in the way of a feed—"

"Yaas, wathah."

"Well, you've got enough fish, anyway—"

"Blake remarked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"F. T. Fish—Fwesh Tinned Fish!"

chuckled Arthur Augustus. "After all, it was a vewy natural mistake to make—"

"For you—yes!" growled Lowther.

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"And now you fatheads can see that you put your foot in it, you can take that fish off our hands," said Tom Merry.

The chums of the Fourth looked serious. Undoubtedly it was "up" to them, under the circumstances, to take the consequences of their extraordinary mistake. Arthur Augustus rose to the occasion in his usual graceful manner.

"Yaas, it's up to us," he said. "We'll take the wubbish. I'll send Sands the money to-mowwow, deah boys."

"It's a quid," said Lowther.

"A pound, deah boy," said D'Arcy, gently but firmly.

"Quid—"

"Pound—"

"Well, as Gussy is going to pay, he can send a quid or a pound, just as he pleases," grinned Tom Merry. "Now take your blessed potted goods away, Gussy. We want the table. We'll take one off your hands, if you like, for threepence."

"Weally, Tom Mewwy—"

"Lowther's got a bad threepenny-bit, so if you want to make a bargain—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll have one on tick," said Manners. "You shall have the bob on Saturday, Gussy."

"Yaas, deah boy."

"Now carry off the other nineteen," grinned Lowther. "They're your property now."

Arthur Augustus regarded the pile of tins in dismay. But there was no help for it. They were his property, and had to be removed from the Shell fellows' study.

"Pway lend a hand, deah boys," said D'Arcy resignedly.

But Blake and Herries and Digby were already gone. Arthur Augustus looked round from his contemplation of the stack of tins, and found himself alone with the Terrible Three. Lowther was already busy on the borrowed tin with a tin-opener, and Tom Merry started lighting the fire, and Manners got out the tea-things.

"Bai Jove! Those boundahs have gone," said D'Arcy. "Howevah, I suppose I can cawwy them. I've seen a man at a circus cawwy fifty tins piled up, and put them on his nappah. You might lend me a hand to get hold of the beastly things, deah boys."

The Shell fellows grinned, and lent a hand. Tins were placed on D'Arcy's hands as he held them out, and piled up against his chest. The pile rose higher and higher. The tins were placed in a double stack against his fancy waistcoat, and they rose to his chin, and then beyond his chin. The odd one of the nineteen, laid on the top of the rest, just met the aristocratic nose of the swell of St. Jim's.

"Mind how you go," grinned Lowther.

"Oh, I can manage all wight, deah boy. I'm not so clumsy."

And Arthur Augustus trod cautiously out of the study with his load. The Terrible Three chuckled as they watched him go. The stack of tins toppled perilously, but Arthur Augustus was very, very careful. He trod his way down the Shell passage as carefully as if he were walking on ice.

Unfortunately, just as he turned into the Fourth-Form passage, Knox of the Sixth came along in a hurry. The prefect met the Fourth-Former in full career. The collision would not have mattered much at any other time, but it mattered very much now.

"Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arcy, "look out——"

But Knox of the Sixth had no time to look out. Biff!

"Yawooh!"

Arthur Augustus staggered backwards, with tins of fish showering upon him, thick as leaves in Vallombrosa.

Biff! biff! biff! crash! crash!

"Ow! Ow! Wescue—yawooh! Oh!"

Knox staggered back, and gasped, and then burst into a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha! You young ass. Ha, ha, ha!"

Crash! crash! crash!

"Oh, bai Jove! Gweat Scott! Wescue! Yah!"

Blake and Co. rushed out of their study. The sight of Arthur Augustus D'Arcy sprawling amid strewn salmon tins made them yell. Arthur Augustus sat up dizzily amid the flood of tins, and blinked at them. He groped for his eyeglass, but a Fresh Tinned Fish had plumped on it, and the famous monocle was in fragments.

"Bai Jove! Ow! Bai Jove!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What are you fellows cacklin' at? I fail entirely to see anythin' to cackle at. Ow!"

"You'll pick up all those tins, D'Arcy," said Knox. "I've a good mind to give you lines for being so clumsy. Don't do any more of these conjuring tricks in the passage." And Knox walked on chuckling.

"Are you wottahs goin' to lend me a hand with these tins?" said Arthur Augustus sulphurously, as his chums roared.

"I'll help you, D'Arcy, old chap," said Levison of the Fourth, who had come out of his study with Mellish. "You've been laying in a big stock of fish, haven't you? Lend a hand, Mellish."

Mellish grinned and lent a hand. So did the chums of No. 6, and Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's new possessions were carried into Study No. 6, and stacked there. Arthur Augustus sat down and gasped. It was not till some time later that it occurred to him to count the tins, to make sure that all had been gathered up. When he counted them he found that there were seventeen. He looked along the passage, but failed to discover any more. He would have asked Levison if he had seen them, but Levison's door was locked, and he did not reply to a tap on it. Inside Levison's study, Levison and Mellish were enjoying an unlooked-for supper—the chief item on the bill of fare being Fresh Tinned Fish!

#### THE SIXTH CHAPTER

#### A Feast of the Barmecides!

JACK BLAKE finished his preparation, and looked at the study clock.

"What price a little supper?" he said.

D'Arey looked up.

"That's accordin'," he said. "It depends on the amount of money you spend on it, deah boy."

"Did you work that out in your head?" said Blake admiringly. "Look here, we're laden up with things to eat. What price standing a little supper? There's plenty of time before bed, and we don't want that salmon to eat its head off in the cupboard, do we?"

"Good egg!" said Dig. "I'm getting peckish."

"We've got nineteen tins of fish—"

"Seventeen, deah boy. Two are missin'."

"Well, seventeen is enough to feed a giddy army. The Fourth are playing the Shell to-morrow, and we shall have the New House bounders in our team. It's pax with Figgins and Co. Suppose we ask them over to supper."

Arthur Augustus nodded at the clock.

"Quartah past nine, deah boy. Bedtime at half-past."

"That's an American clock, fathead. It's a quarter to nine. Heaps of time. I'll buzz over to the New House and ask the chaps. You fellows get the table laid."

"Wighto, I'll ask some of our fellows, too."

Jack Blake walked out of the study whistling. For once the warfare between School House and New House was suspended. When the Fourth played the Shell, the respective teams were drawn from both Houses. Figgins and Co. of the New House were to play in

Blake's team on the morrow. The football season was beginning, but cricket was dying hard. The weather was fine and sunny, and the juniors had arranged a last match to fill up the half-holiday.

Blake returned with his friendly foes from the New House—quite a little crowd of them. Figgins and Kerr and Wynn, the famous Co., Redfern and Owen and Lawrence. And Reilly and Kerruish of the New House came



"Bai Jove!" gasped D'Arey. "Look out—" But Knox had no time to stop. He cannoned into Arthur Augustus, and the nineteen tins of salmon showered over them.

in with D'Arey. Study No. 6 was crowded almost to its limit.

"Jolly glad to see you fellows," said Figgins affably. "We're going to lick the Shell to-morrow, to wind up the season properly. Fatty Wynn's in great form."

"Yes, I'm pretty sharp set," said Fatty Wynn, whose thoughts were on the little supper. "We didn't have much for tea—only a pie and a cold chicken and some saveloys, as well as the toast and shrimps.

Jolly decent of you chaps to ask us over."

"We've come into a fortune in the shape of tins of fish," Blake explained. "Seventeen shilling tins."

Blake dragged the stack of tins out of the cupboard. Fatty Wynn's eyes glistened at the sight. There were a dozen fellows in the study, but seventeen large-size tins of fish were ample to go round.

"Sorry there's nothing else," said Blake, politely. "Plenty of bread-and-butter—but only fish besides. We could have got something to follow if the tuck-shop wasn't closed."

"My dear chap, this is ripping," said Fatty Wynn. "If you've got a tin-opener, I'll lend you a hand opening them. I've tried old Sands' Fresh Tinned Fish, and it's all right."

"Anybody got a tin-opener?" asked Blake.

"One in my pocket-knife," said Herries, producing that article.

"But how on earth did you get seventeen tins of fish?" asked Figgins in amazement.

Blake explained.

The New House fellows roared over the story. But a sudden thought occurred to Kerr. Kerr was a Scotsman, so naturally he thought of things that escaped the attention of less canny youths.

"You say that they told you on the telephone that some tins had been ordered from the school?" he asked.

"Yes," grinned Blake, "and, of course, that made us dead certain that Lowther had been pulling our leg."

"And you cancelled the order over the phone?"

"Of course. We cancelled that order, and ordered twenty tins for Tom Merry's study instead."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But it turned out that Lowther hadn't ordered any?"

"Yes, I've said so."

"Well," said Kerr, with a chuckle, "it seems to me that you've put your little hoof into it again."

"What do you mean?" demanded Blake warmly.

"Why, if the tins were ordered, and Lowther hadn't ordered them, they must have

been ordered by the house-dame. And you've cancelled an order by Mrs. Mimms."

"Oh, my hat! I never thought of that."

"She'll be expecting her giddy tins, and she won't get them," grinned Kerr.

"Phew!"

"Bai Jove! I nevah thought of that, eithah. Blake, deah boy, you have weally put your foot in it. There will be a wow. Mrs. Mimms will think that we have cancelled her ordah for a joke, and she will speak to Waitlon about it."

"Better telephone again," suggested Dig.

"Too late. Sands is closed long ago."

Blake grunted.

"Well, a chap can't think of everything," he said. "Sufficient for the day is the salmon thereof. Let's have supper."

"How do you work this blessed thing?" asked Fatty Wynn, who was busy with Herries' pocket-knife. "Where's the tin-opener?"

"Simple enough," growled Herries. "I'll open it." He took the pocket-knife from the fat Fourth-Former. "Oh, I forgot! It broke the other day, when I was prising open a box with it. Sorry!"

"Haven't you got a tin-opener in the study?" asked Fatty Wynn.

"We always depend on Herries," said Blake severally. "Now he's left us in the lurch."

"There's a corkscrew in the knife," said Herries. "You can try with that if you like."

"I'll try it with the blade," said Fatty, taking the knife again.

"No you won't!" said Herries warmly. "It'll break."

"That's all right. There's two blades. If one breaks I'll try the other."

"You—you ass! Let that knife alone!"

"Look here, Herries—" began Blake.

"Twy with the pokah," suggested Arthur Augustus. "Bash the tin with the pokah, you know, and vewy likely it will burst open."

"Ass!"

"Weally, Blake—"

"Well, I'll try the corkscrew," said Fatty Wynn. "I'll—"

Fatty Wynn was interrupted. The study door was opened, and Knox of the Sixth came in. The juniors looked at Knox in a hostile

way. Knox was a bully, and they did not like him; but as he was a prefect, he had to be treated with outward respect. Knox grinned as he saw the stack of tins on the table.

"Just going to feed, eh?" he asked.

"Yes," said Blake belligerently. "No harm in having supper in the study, I suppose?"

"Not so long as it's your own grub," said Knox. "Come in, Mrs. Mimms. Here's your tins of salmon. I knew these young rascals had them."

"What?" shouted the juniors.

Mrs. Mimms, the stout house-dame, followed Knox into the study. Mrs. Mimms was a kindly soul, but she was looking angry now.

"Dear me!" she exclaimed. "Yes, here they are, indeed. You are very bad boys to take the goods delivered for me—very bad indeed!"

"I say, they're our tins!" exclaimed Blake in dismay, as Mrs. Mimms began to gather up the fresh tinned fish into a large bag she carried.

"You young rascals!" said Knox. "Mrs. Mimms ordered them from the grocer's, to be delivered this evening, and they didn't come. But I remembered seeing D'Arcy loaded up with them, and heard that Sands' boy had been here, so I guessed you young sweeps had raided them. Blessed if I ever heard of such cheek!"

"Look here, they're our tins!" shouted Blake. "Gussy is going to pay for them to-morrow. These ain't the tins you ordered, Mrs. Mimms."

"I ordered sixteen tins by telephone," said Mrs. Mimms. "They were to be delivered to-night. How can you say that these are not the tins, Master Blake?"

"But—but—"

"Take them away, Mrs. Mimms," said Knox. "These young rascals must have got Grimes to deliver them here instead of in the kitchen. Have you got the cheek to say that you ordered this stack of tins for this study, Blake?"

"Well, not exactly. It was a sort of mistake. But—"

"It was a sort of mistake that will get you fifty lines," grinned Knox. "Take them away, Mrs. Mimms. Sixteen I think."

"There are seventeen tins there!" shouted Blake.

"Yes, seventeen," said the house-dame, who was counting them. "I shall leave the odd one. I do not know why Mr. Sands delivered seventeen tins when I ordered sixteen. I shall not pay for the extra one."

And the house-dame left the study with her heavily laden bag. The juniors gazed after her, open-mouthed, as she disappeared with their feed. Knox chuckled and picked up the solitary remaining tin. Fatty Wynn's eyes were fastened on that tin, and he had the corkscrew ready. But the corkscrew was not wanted.

"You'll take fifty lines each, Blake and Berries and Digby and D'Arcy," said Knox. "I shall confiscate this tin."

And Knox walked out of the study with the tin under his arm. That night Knox had salmon for supper in his study.

The juniors were too overcome for words for some moments. They had asked numerous guests to supper on the strength of that huge and unexpected supply of fresh tinned fish. And the fresh tinned fish was gone from their gaze like a beautiful dream. The feast had turned out a Feast of the Barmecides—that peculiar banquet in the Arabian Nights where the viands vanished as fast as they were put upon the table.

"Oh!" groaned Fatty Wynn at last.

"Bai Jove!"

"Oh, rotten!"

Jack Blake looked at his guests with a sickly smile.

"Sorry, you chaps," he murmured. "I—I didn't expect this, you know. There—there's still the bread-and-butter."

"Thanks!" said Redfern, with elaborate politeness. "I fancy we've got large supplies of bread and butter at home. Good-night."

"Faith, and I'm not hungry for bread and butter, thankin' ye all the same, Blake darling," said Reilly.

And the guests melted away.

The chums of Study No. 6 were left alone in their study with grim faces. Blake broke a painful silence.

"It's all Gussy's fault, of course," he said at last.

D'Arcy extracted an eyeglass from his waistcoat pocket. The swell of St. Jim's had an unlimited supply of those indispensable articles. He adjusted the monocle in his eye and gave Blake a withering look.

"I fail to see how you make that out, you duffah," he said.

"It's all through you inviting blessed Yankees to come here, with idiotic names like Fish——"

"But I have alweady wemarked that I did not invite him——"

"And making silly mistakes over silly telegrams!" roared Blake. "Any silly idiot ought to have known what the telegram really meant."

"Wats! You did not know!"

"Why, you—you——"

"I wepeat——"

"Fathead!"

"Duffah!"

"Chump!"

"Wottah!"

"Frabjous ass!"

"I wefuse to weply to such oppwobwious wemarks!" said Arthur Augustus, with great dignity. And he walked out of the study, and Blake transferred his opprobrious remarks to Herries and Digby, who replied in kind. And the chums of Study No. 6 wreaked their wrath and relieved their feelings in a terrific slanging match.

## THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

### An Arrival in Style!

**FISHER T. FISH**, of the Lower Fourth Form at Greyfriars, stepped out of the train in the little station of Rylcombe.

Fisher T. Fish was a slim, keen-faced youth. He had sharp features and sharp eyes of an uncertain colour. His complexion was sallow—a little freckled. He walked with the air of a fellow who owned the earth, or, at least, was conscious that, owing to his extraordinary merits, he ought to own it. Keenness, coolness, and an illimitable confidence in himself seemed the chief traits in the character of Fisher Tarleton Fish.

He cast a patronising look up and down the platform, bordered on one side with flower-beds. It was a very quiet little

country station and seldom woke up, excepting on the occasions when St. Jim's or the Grammar School broke up for holidays.

"Regular Sleepy Hollow, I guess!" said Fisher T. Fish aloud, as he scanned the platform. "I wonder if any of the jays have come to meet the train. Hallo!"

An elegant youth, natty and spotless from the tips of his gleaming boots to the crown of his shining silk topper, was crossing the platform to meet the American junior. A monocle gleamed in his eye, and Fisher T. Fish knew him. It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's—a young gentleman whom Fish had marked down in his mind as a "jay" of the first water.

Arthur Augustus had felt it incumbent upon him to come down to the station to meet his guest. He had requested his chums to join him in doing his Transatlantic visitor that honour. Blake had politely told him that he would see him further first. The Fourth were playing the Shell that afternoon, and Blake explained that he would see both D'Arcy and his guest at the bottom of the Ryll quite cheerfully before he would risk missing the Form match. The utmost he would do was to put D'Arcy on the list as last man in, if the Fourth batted first, so that the swell of St. Jim's would have a chance of getting back to the school in time for his innings.

If D'Arcy did not return in time, Kerruish would be played in his place. But even the risk of being left out of the Form match did not deter Arthur Augustus from doing the polite thing. With Arthur Augustus D'Arcy, courtesy came first and last and all the time.

D'Arcy raised his silk hat very politely to Fisher T. Fish. He hardly remembered the Yankee junior of Greyfriars, but he concluded that this must be Fish, as he was the only fellow in Etons who had alighted from the train.

"Glad to see you, deah boy," said D'Arcy.

"Same here," said Fish affably, as he shook hands with the swell of St. Jim's. "I guess you had my wire, what?"

"Yaas."

"I kinder reckoned I'd give you a look up," Fish explained. "Wharton's given



Fisher T. Fish swiped at the ball wildly and completely missed it. *Crash!* The middle stump was knocked out of the ground. "How's that?" came a joyful yell.

me some messages for your sec. But I guess I've really come over to see you."

"You are vewy kind. I wegard it as an honour," said Arthur Augustus, in a stately way.

Fisher T. Fish nodded, as if he regarded it as an honour, too.

"Pretty sleepy here, what?" he said, as they walked out of the station.

"Sleepiah than Gweyfwiahs?" asked D'Arcy mildly.

Fish yawned.

"Nope! Got me there! First time I came to this old island I fell asleep. Like getting into bed, you know, after New York. Ever been to New York?"

"Yaas."

"Guess it struck you as some city, eh?" Arthur Augustus D'Arcy had to reflect a

little before he understood. At St. Jim's he studied English, German, and French, as well as Latin; but American was not in the curriculum. It was a new language to him. "Yaas," he said, at last. "You mean as a gweat city?"

"Just a few," said Fish.

"Yaas."

"You spotted the skyscrapers, what?"

"Yaas: you mean those howwid gweat buildin's evah so high—"

"Horrid!" said Fish, with a sniff. "I guess that's your English ideas. My word! They're the last word in construction—some. Why, in some of our burgs, I can tell you, we've got skyscrapers that simply shut the sun out, right out of sight. Down on the side-walk you feel as if you were underground. What do you think of that?"

"It must be wotten," said D'Arcy gently, under the mistaken impression that Fisher T. Fish wanted sympathy.

"Rotten!" ejaculated Fish. "Oh, my hat! I swow!"

"You—you what?" gasped D'Arcy. The verb to swow was entirely new to him.

"Oh, that puts the lid on," said Fish. "Did you ever go on the trolleys?"

"Twolleys!" exclaimed D'Arcy, in amazement. "Certainly not. I believe my luggage——"

"Your baggage, you mean?"

"My luggage was wheeled on twolleys, pwobably, but I should certainly not think of being wheeled on a twolley myself. I should regard it as undignified."

Fisher T. Fish chuckled.

"I believe you call 'em trams over here," he replied.

"Oh! Yaas. I certainly went on the twams."

"Trolleys!"

"Twolleys, if you like, deah boy," said Arthur Augustus, gracefully yielding the point. "I've got a twap here to take us to St. Jim's. The station cab is vewy slow, and it takes some time to walk. We're playing cricket this afternoon. Pewwaps you would like to see the match?"

"Yep. Cricket is my strong holt," said Fisher T. Fish. "I'll play for you if you like, if you've got a tough team to beat. I guess that's just where I live."

"I'm playin' in the eleven, if I get back in time," said D'Arcy. "Here is the twap. Pway jump in."

Fisher T. Fish jumped in, in the driver's seat, somewhat to Arthur Augustus's dismay. He had intended to drive himself. The horse was a good one, and somewhat mettlesome.

There were a good many things Arthur Augustus D'Arcy could not do, perhaps; but among the things that he could do was picking out a good horse. His knowledge of horseflesh was unlimited, and at the livery stables they never tried to palm off a crock on him when he wanted a drive.

"You are goin' to dwive, deah boy?" he asked.

"I guess I'm some driver," said Fish.

"The horse is wathah fwesh."

"That's all right. I guess I could drive the freshest mustang you could scare up in Texas or out of it."

"All wight, then."

D'Arcy's code made it imperative to him to yield to a guest on all points. He did not mind making the little sacrifice, if Fish could drive. And the Yankee schoolboy seemed very confident about it.

Fish gathered up the reins in a business-like manner, and the trap started down the old High Street of Rylcombe.

The horse was fresh, and the horse was intelligent. He had felt the hand of a master on the reins when D'Arcy drove him from St. Jim's. He did not feel the hand of a master now. It took the horse about two minutes to discover that he could do as he liked with his driver, and he proceeded to do as he liked.

The first thing to do was to break into a gallop, and he took the trap down the village street at a speed that was alarming. The High Street of Rylcombe was not arranged for that kind of thing. Children played there fearlessly, geese wandered where they would, countrymen stood in the middle of the old street to chatter the latest news about the crops, the weather, and Farmer Giles' black bull. The career of the trap, with Fisher T. Fish driving, was fearsome.

"Pway pull in the horse, deah boy," murmured D'Arcy.

Fisher T. Fish shook his head. As a matter of fact, he could not have pulled in the horse to save his life, and he knew it. But it was not Fisher T. Fish's way to admit that he couldn't do anything. Hamlet's advice, to assume a virtue if you have it not, was taken by F. T. Fish. If he couldn't do a thing, he guessed it was up to him to pretend that he could if he liked, but wouldn't take the trouble.

"All O.K.," said Fish airily, as the horse ran away with him. "I always give the beast his head, you know. Yep!"

"But if you wun ovah somebody——"

"I guess they should keep clear."

"But weally——"

"You watch me!" said Fish confidently. D'Arcy did not watch him, however; he

watched the street and the inhabitants thereof. He watched geese run cackling to escape, he watched frightened hens sailing into shops or houses; he watched Gaffer Jones make a wild spring for his life, leaving behind him the stick with which he had plodded about Rylcombe for unnumbered years. He heard the shrill squeal of a pig as the wheel of the trap grazed it.

Then, fortunately, they were out of Rylcombe, with nobody killed.

On the wide country road Fisher T. Fish said he would let the horse have his head—the horse having already taken it.

The squeaks and yells and squalls and cackles had excited the horse, and what had begun in mischief ended in real fright. The horse was running away, and it required an iron hand on the reins to pull him in. As Fish could not pull him in, he let him dash on, and the pace of the trap increased alarmingly. The light vehicle swayed and bumped from side to side, and the occupants clung to it. It looked as if they might be shot out any moment, if the trap did not overturn them into the ditch and roll over on them.

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "I weally wish you would pull him in, deah boy."

"I guess he's going all right."

"But it is dangerous. Suppose we meet a cyclist?"

"All the worse for the jay on the jigger, I guess."

"Weally, Fish——"

"It's all O.K. He's tiring himself out, and I guess he'll slacken."

Fortunately they did not meet a "jay" on a "jigger." But the horse showed no signs whatever of tiring himself out. He was good for many miles, at any rate, and it was doubtful if D'Arcy himself could have pulled him in now. And Fisher T. Fish could as easily have carried him in his arms as pull him in. But the cool grin of confidence did not leave Fish's keen, thin face. He held on to the reins as if he were still driving, though he was inwardly wondering what was going to happen.

A grey tower rose over the trees.

"There's the school!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "Pewwaps you had bettah give me the weins,

Fish, deah boy. We can't dwive in at this wate."

"That's the gate?" asked Fish, as the great stone gateway of St. Jim's came into sight down the long road.

"Yaas."

"I'll turn him in, and then he'll slacken down."

"Bai Jove!"

Fisher T. Fish probably would not have succeeded in turning the horse in at the gateway, but for the fact that the animal knew the way well, having often been driven by D'Arcy of the Fourth. He was willing to turn in at the gates, and he turned in. But he did not slacken down; he dashed on furiously, and gravel flew in clouds from under the lashing heels. There was a shout from fellows in the quadrangle—a shout that rose to a roar.

"Look out!"

"Stop him!"

"Pull him in, you ass!"

The horse dashed on, fellows scattering before his charge. Fish dragged him aside as he seemed bent on charging up the steps of the School House. The horse careered away off the drive, with the trap bounding behind. On the cricket field the juniors were busy, but play ceased at the sight of the trap and the runaway horse. For the runaway, seeing the playing-fields stretching wide before him, dashed right at them, and with a clatter of hoofs and a rattle of wheels he came thundering upon the cricket-pitch.

The fieldsmen scattered like magic.

The trap drove on over a wicket, and the wicket keeper leaped for his life. Someone ran at the horse's head and he swerved suddenly. There was a crash as the trap overturned, and the horse went over with it, sprawling and lashing. D'Arcy and Fisher T. Fish rolled over on the turf out of reach of the horse. The swell of St. Jim's sprawled on his crunching topper. Fisher T. Fish sat up dazedly.

The cricketers surged round in fury.

"You fathead——"

"You crass idiot——"

"You lunatic——"

"You dangerous duffer——"

"Who is it?"

"Pway don't wag him, deah boys," said Arthur Augustus faintly. "It's Fish, from Gweyfwiahhs."

"Fish! Oh!"

Fisher T. Fish grinned feebly.

"Yep! I'm Fisher T. Fish—and I guess I've arrove."

## THE EIGHTH CHAPTER

### Fish Helps!

FISHER T. FISH had arrived—or arrove, as he preferred to call it.

He had "arrove" in a decidedly sensational manner.

There was no possibility for anybody at St. Jim's to fail to learn the fact that Fisher T. Fish of New York had arrove.

The cricketers, who had been about to commit assault and battery on the escaped lunatic who had interrupted the game and ploughed up the pitch, paused in time.

The kicking horse was soothed and secured, and led away. Tom Merry, who was fielding, picked up the American junior. Blake dropped his bat and helped Arthur Augustus to his feet.

The swell of St. Jim's was a little dazed.

"Bai Jove!" he murmured. "Is the horse hurt?"

"No, he's all right," said Blake.

"Good. Is that cwass ass hurt—I—I mean is Fish hurt?"

"Ha, ha! I think not."

"I guess I'm all right," said Fisher T. Fish. "It would take more than that to hurt me, I reckon. We don't grow soft over there."

"Over where?" asked Blake.

"In the Yew-nited States," explained Fish.

"I should think a fellow who drives like that must be in a be-nighted state," murmured Monty Lowther.

"I'm glad there's no damage done," said Fish, looking round.

"No damage," howled Figgins. "Look at the pitch."

"Yaas, wathah, and look at my clothes," said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I have wotted ovah on the pitch—my clothes are howwibly dirtay—"

"You can't touch pitch without being defiled," said Monty Lowther solemnly. But Arthur Augustus was not in the humour to appreciate Lowther's puns.

"Pway don't make idiotic jokes, Lowthah," he said. "I wegard this as wotted. Fish told me that he could dwive."

"I guess that's just where I live," said Fisher T. Fish. "You can't scare up many galoots on this side that can drive like me."

"None at all," grinned Tom Merry. "There are some fellows who would drive like you, if they could—but we keep 'em shut up in Colney Hatch, out of harm's way."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"If you wouldn't mind getting off the pitch, we'll go on playing," said Figgins gruffly.

Fisher T. Fish walked off the pitch. He was a good deal shaken, but his airy confidence had not deserted him. And he was not really displeased at having arrived in such a sensational manner. Fisher T. Fish loved the limelight. He strolled to the pavilion, and stood dusting himself down and looking on as the cricketers resumed the game. Blake and Herries were batting, and the score showed four down for the Fourth Form for twenty-six runs.

Arthur Augustus disappeared into the School House. He had to change into his flannels for the match, and he felt badly in need of a wash and a brush-up, anyway. He was in good time for the game. Fisher T. Fish's brilliant driving had at least landed the juniors at St. Jim's in good time—though it had landed them on their necks.

Fisher T. Fish joined the group of waiting batsmen, and joined cheerily in the remarks passed upon the play. From Fish's observations, it appeared that he was a first-rate cricketer. At all events, he certainly had no hesitation in passing criticism on the play.

"I guess your field wants to get a move on, some," he remarked to Figgins.

"What's the matter with 'em?" asked Figgins, not very cordially. He was not very favourably impressed with the Transatlantic junior.

"Slow," said Fish. "All-fired slow."

"Top-notch fieldsmen at Greyfriars, I suppose?" said Kerr sarcastically.

"Nope; much the same. I find everything very slow over here. You should see how we play cricket over there, in the Yew-nited States."

"You play cricket over there?" asked Redfern, with heavy sarcasm.

"Not so much as you do over here," said Fish.

"But we play it. Quality instead of quantity, I guess."

The juniors looked at him as if they would eat him. St. Jim's prided itself upon its cricket. If Fish had not been a guest at St. Jim's he would have been answered in words plainer than his own. But he had a double claim on the forbearance of the St. Jim's fellows—as a guest, and as a stranger in a strange land. So they gave him his head, as Kerr expressed it in a whisper. But, like the horse to which Fish had given its head when he drove it, he would have taken it in any case.

"I'd like to show you some cricket," Fish remarked. "I guess I could open your eyes, some. Yes, sir."

"Bravo, Blake!" shouted Dig, as Blake drove the ball away. Kangaroo of the Shell was bowling, and bowling well, but Blake was scoring fast.

Fisher T. Fish grinned patronisingly.

"Wasn't that a jolly good hit?" demanded Dig, a little excitedly.

"Yep, I dare say. But the bowling's



Fisher T. Fish clambered desperately up the wall of the shed, putting a foot through a window. The angry Towser's jaws snapped only inches away from him as he scrambled up. "Gee-whiz!" gasped Fish.

"weak," said Fish. "That guy won't take that wicket in a month of Sundays. You watch out."

The next ball down knocked Blake's middle stump out of the ground, and Jack Blake carried his bat out. The juniors looked at the oracle from New York. They were sorry to see Blake's wicket go down, but there was some satisfaction in seeing Fish's prediction falsified as soon as it was out of his mouth. But if they expected to see Fisher T. Fish looking sheepish, they were disappointed.

"I guess I could show that pilgrim how to bat," was all Fish said.

Figgins grunted and went in. Jack Blake caught Fish's remark, and his eyes glinted. He had batted well, and it was only the first-class bowling of the Australian junior that had beaten him. Blake prided himself upon being a cricketer from a cricketing county, and Fish's criticism touched him on the raw.

"Do you bat for Greyfriars?" he asked.

Fish shook his head.

"No. I guess I haven't time to play for the junior eleven. Besides, it wouldn't really do. No good having a top-hole cricketer among a lot of average jays. Like a whale among the tadpoles, you know."

"I'd like to see you bat," growled Blake.

"I'll bat for your team, if you like," said Fish readily. "If you've got a tough proposition in this match, and want help, I'm your antelope."

Blake hesitated. He was very keen to see the Greyfriars Yankee bat, to see whether there was anything in his "gas." If he was half so good a cricketer as he evidently believed he was, he would be a valuable addition to any team. But he shook his head. It would not do to take the risk. The match was a pretty close one, and Blake could not afford to risk throwing away a wicket.

Herries went down to Vavasour's bowling, and Redfern went in. Redfern and Figgins between them made the fur fly. The runs began to pile up. The juniors were cheering the two New House fellows loudly when Arthur Augustus arrived upon the field in spotless white, with a Panama hat on.

"How's it going, deah boys?" he asked.

"Six down for fifty," said Blake.

"Not bad," said Arthur Augustus. "If I make a centuwy, the Shell won't have the slightest chance of beating us."

"Go hon!" snorted Blake. "I've made eighteen, so you're dead certain to make a century, I don't think."

"Weally, Blake——"

"Hullo! There goes Reddy!"

Redfern had been caught out by the Cornstalk. Reilly went in. But the Belfast junior had bad luck. He had only made four when a deadly ball from Kangaroo

whipped out his leg stump, and he came off looking rather blue.

"Eight down for fifty-four," said Blake.

"I guess this side wants bucking up," remarked Fisher T. Fish, apparently quite unconscious of the fact that he was taking liberties in passing such open criticism on the cricket. Trifles like that did not trouble Fisher T. Fish. "Now, that galoot ought to have played back to that ball."

Reilly, who had just come off the pitch, gave the American junior a basilisk glare as he heard that remark.

"Ye howling gossoon!" he exclaimed.

"I played a bit too far back, and that's why I was out. Phwat do you know about cricket, intirely?" When Reilly was excited, the accent of the Emerald Isle came out more strongly, and he had reason to be excited now. He was greatly inclined to "dot" the Yankee junior's sharp nose.

"I guess I know the game from A to Z," said Fisher T. Fish confidently. "That ball would have been a boundary for me."

"Sure, and it's a pratin' ass ye are——"

"Steady!" murmured Blake. "Honour the guest that is within thy walls."

"Shurrup, Reilly."

Reilly grunted and walked away. He did not wish to be rude to a guest, but as he confided to his chum Kerruish, he was "fed up intirely" with Fisher T. Fish already. But Fisher T. Fish was not at all disconcerted by Reilly's plain speaking. He was a plain speaker himself—very.

Figgins was out at last. The score was at seventy when his wicket fell. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy put on his gloves. Fisher T. Fish touched him on the arm.

"I guess you've got a low score," he remarked.

"Yaas; I'm goin' to twy to buck it up."

"Other side good at batting?"

"Yaas, wathah!"

"Then you haven't much of a look in, I guess. That fat chap at the other end seems some of a stonewaller, and what you want is a really top-notch bat at this end to pile up the runs."

"Yaas; I'm goin' to pile up all I can, while Fatty Wynn stonewalls," explained D'Arcy.

"Better put me in."

"Eh?"

"I guess I'd pull the game out of the fire for you," said Fish confidently. "I don't say I should make a century. The other fellow couldn't keep up his end long enough, I guess. But so long as the fat chap can keep the innings open, you can count on me for the runs. I guess you'd better play me."

"Weally, Fish——"

Arthur Augustus looked distressed. He did not like to refuse a request made by a guest. But he felt that Fish's request was unreasonable. Fish's batting was an unknown quantity, and if it was anything like his driving, it was not likely to do the side much good. And Arthur Augustus wanted to bat. He had high hopes of pulling the game out of the fire with brilliant batting, while Fatty Wynn stonewalled at the other end.

"Better do it," said Fish urgently. "I don't like to see you beaten."

"But you're not in flannels, deah boy."

"I guess I can bat as I am."

"You see, I'm not the skippah," said D'Arcy feebly. "You must speak to Blake."

Fisher T. Fish turned to Blake.

"Put me in and save the match," he said tersely.

Blake grunted.

"I suppose it is up to us to play him, if he wants to," murmured Arthur Augustus, aside. "I wish you had put him in instead of Hewwies or Weilly."

"Catch me!" said Blake. "I'll put him in instead of you, if you like. It can't make much difference—you can't play Kangy's bowling."

"Weally, Blake, I fully intend to make a centuwy——"

"But Kangaroo doesn't intend to let you, and it's Kangy's intentions I'm thinking of," grunted Blake. "I suppose you would be good for a dozen, with luck."

"Last man in," called out Figgins.

"If you like to stand aside for Fish, I'll put him in," said Blake.

Arthur Augustus suppressed a groan.

"All wight," he said. "Ask the Shell chaps to wait a few minutes while he changes. I'll lend him some clobbah."

Fisher T. Fish did not take long to change. He came out of the pavilion in three minutes. He accepted D'Arcy's beautiful bat, and swung it lightly as he walked on to the field. The Fourth-Formers watched him with keen interest. After all, in spite of the super-abundant "gas" of Fisher T. Fish, it was possible that he was a good bat, and nobody but D'Arcy had faith in D'Arcy's power of piling up a century. D'Arcy would have made a dozen runs—with luck, twenty or so. The fellows who had played Greyfriars knew that the juniors there were good cricketers, and it was likely enough that Fish was as good as the rest. So they were contented to see him go on, and they were ready to cheer him to the wide if he made a good score.

Fisher T. Fish took up his position at the wicket with airy confidence. It was the last ball of an over, and Kangaroo of the Shell was bowling. The Australian looked along the pitch, marked Fisher T. Fish with his eye, and smiled. The fieldsmen knew his smile, and they smiled in anticipation.

Down came the ball, like a four-point-seven shell. Fisher T. Fish swiped at it gaily, and his bat described a circle in the air.

Crash!

Fisher T. Fish looked at his wicket. The middle stump was clean out of the ground, and reposing along with the bails. From the whole field came a joyful yell:

"How's that?"

And the umpire sniggered as he yelled in response:

"Out!"

"I guess that gets me," said Fisher T. Fish. "I say, wasn't that a trial ball?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess this is where you get off the earth," remarked Manners, the wicketkeeper.

Fisher T. Fish walked off. The crowd before the pavilion greeted him with grim looks. He had batted for them and had scored a duck. Fatty Wynn came off wrathfully. He was not out, and he was angry.

"What did you send that idiot in for, Blake?" he demanded excitedly.

"Shush!"

"Gussy would have been bad enough!"

howled Fatty. "He would have run me out, I expect——"

"Weally, Wynn——"

"But to plant that straddling cuckoo on me, and chuck my wicket away——"

Figgins and Kerr led the wrathful Fatty away to console him. Fatty Wynn was in a humour to lay his bat about Fisher T. Fish. The innings was over, and the Fourth were all down for seventy runs. The Shell fellows were smiling. They were good for a hundred, anyway, if a hundred should be wanted.

Blake could have said many things to Fisher T. Fish; but he restrained them. He felt that the Greyfriars chap must be feeling pretty bad at having let his side down in that disastrous manner. But he did not know F. T. Fish.

There was no sign of abatement in the jauntiness of that cheerful youth.

"I guess that lets me out," said Fish calmly. "You see, the bowling was wild, very wild. I'm accustomed to playing first-class bowling over there. Things happen like that sometimes. First-class bat knocked out by a bad bowler. You see the point?"

Blake & Co. did not reply. Their feelings were too deep for words.

#### THE NINTH CHAPTER

##### F. T. Fish Shows How It is Done.

THE Shell innings opened with Tom Merry and Kangaroo at the wickets. Blake led his merry men out to field, Fisher T. Fish among them. Arthur Augustus had gently hinted to Fish that he needn't trouble to field; but Fish was stone deaf to gentle hints. He had shown the St. Jim's fellows what batting was like "over there," and now he was going to show them what fielding was like, and bowling. He calmly requested Blake to let him bowl the first over.

Blake gave him a look that ought to have withered him on the spot—but Fisher T. Fish took a great deal of withering.

"Bowl the first over," said Blake.

"Yep!"

"We're playing cricket, you know," said Blake sarcastically. "This isn't a screaming farce."

"I guess it would encourage the side if

you get the hat-trick in the first over," said Fish. "You've made a pretty low score, and as it's a single-innings match, you've got to pick up on the bowling. That's where I come in. I'm a dab at batting, but bowling is my strong holt."

And Blake gave him the ball, out of sheer curiosity to see what he would do. Fisher T. Fish made his preparations very carefully. He felt that the eyes of all the field were upon him. All the spectators were watching him. It was a great opportunity for F. T. Fish to open the eyes of the Britishers on the subject of bowling, and he was prepared to do it.

He bowed to Tom Merry. He took a little run, and turned himself into a catherine-wheel, and the ball went down. The wicketkeeper gathered it in with a grunt. It was the widest of wides.

But Fish was not abashed. He sent down the second ball and waited for the crash of the wicket. It was the crash of the bat that he heard. The ball flew—but the batsmen did not run. Tom Merry knew it was a boundary.

"Ahem!" murmured Fish.

The third was knocked away for three. Then Kangaroo was facing the bowling. The rest of the over added ten runs to the score, and the Shell fellows smiled. Blake, in a deep voice, told Fisher T. Fish to go into the field, and tossed the ball to Fatty Wynn.

Fatty Wynn was the champion junior bowler. In the House matches, his bowling was the terror of the School House fellows. In the Form matches, he was the terror of the Shell. Fortunately for the Fourth, Fatty was in top form. Fatty was inspired, also, by a desire to show Fisher T. Fish how to bowl. Tom Merry's wicket fell in Fatty's first over, and Vavasour, who followed him in, was dismissed for a duck's egg. Then came Bernard Glyn, and he scored two, and fell. And the Fourth-Formers yelled in appreciation of Fatty Wynn's first over.

As the field crossed over, Fisher T. Fish spoke to the Fourth Form captain.

"Where's the ball?"

"Why, what do you want with the ball?" asked Blake, in sarcastic astonishment.

"Ain't I bowling again?"

"I guess not!" grinned Blake.

"I say, you'd better take advantage of a good bowler when you've got one," urged Fisher T. Fish. "That fat chap's had good luck, but it was all flukes. I guess I can show you some really scientific bowling."

"Yes—with seventeen more on the Shell score," growled Blake. "Thanks; I've had some! You can field if you like, or you can sit down and look on. I don't care which."

"I guess I'm not here to spectate," said Fish. "I'd like to save the match for you. But I guess I can show you some fielding."

"Like your batting and bowling?" queried Figgins.

"I guess fielding is my strong holt. You watch out for my catches. Where am I to field?"

"Anywhere you like," said Blake politely. "The farther off the better."

Fisher T. Fish sniffed.

He was wearing out Blake's politeness. But he was resolved to show the Britishers what catches were like. As it happened, he had a good opportunity in the very next over. Kangaroo drove the ball away, and the batsmen ran. The ball came whizzing right

at Fisher T. Fish. Kangy had been a little careless, perhaps, because his keen eye had spotted Fish was no good. Fish saw the ball coming; even he could not fail to see that it was an easy catch. His hand went up for it, and touched it, and he fumbled it and let it drop into the grass. There was a roar.

"Butter-fingers!"

"Oh, you chump!"

"Send it in, you fathead!"

For Fisher T. Fish was staring at the ball, in great surprise, and the batsmen were still running. Blake dashed up and recovered the ball at Fish's very feet, and returned it; but the batsmen had scored three.

After that, Fisher T. Fish was specially favoured by the batsmen. If he had muffed



The Juniors scattered in all directions as Towser went for them. But Tom Merry was not quite quick enough. The bulldog's teeth fastened on a trouser-leg and there was a rending of cloth.

the easiest of easy catches, it was safe to send him the ball; he made a flaw in the Fourth Form armour, so to speak, and the batsmen knew that he would never catch them out. And he didn't. He had opportunities enough but not one of them materialised. The utmost Fisher T. Fish could do was to get in the way of the other fieldsmen.

The Shell score was at sixty, with four wickets yet to fall. Kangaroo was not out yet, and he looked as if he would never be out. Clifton Dane was at the other end, and the Canadian was backing up the Corn-stalk manfully. Fatty Wynn exerted himself upon the wickets in vain, and Blake tried his hardest, and Figgins tried his hardest, but still the batsmen were there.

Fisher T. Fish urged his skipper to put him on to bowl again, but Blake's reply was so gruff that he dropped the subject.

But fortune smiled upon Fatty Wynn again. The score was at sixty-five when he bowled Kangaroo clean out. In the next over Clifton Dane was caught out by Kerr. Eight down for sixty-five! The Fourth-Formers breathed again. There was a chance yet—a slim and slender chance.

All their reliance was upon Fatty Wynn. And the fat Fourth-Former rose nobly to the occasion.

Lowther was dismissed for a duck's egg, and the score stood at nine down for the same figure, as the over finished.

Last man in!

Manners and Thompson were at the wickets for the finish. Two for Manners—sixty-seven. One more—sixty-eight! Then one for Thompson—sixty-nine. One wanted to tie—two to win! But if a wicket would only fall—

"Go in and win, Fatty, old man!" said Blake, who had bowled the last over, giving the ball to the Falstaff of the New House.

Fatty Wynn grinned.

"They're jolly well set," he said. "But I'll do my best. If you hadn't played that howling duffer—"

"I know that!" groaned Blake. "Go in and win, and shut up."

Fatty Wynn went on again to bowl. Thompson was receiving the bowling now; and he took one off the first ball. The scores tied. There was a jubilant murmur from the Shell fellows. The game was safe now, from their point of view—at the worst it could only be a draw. From the Fourth Form point of view, at the best it could only be a draw. But that was better than a defeat—and they watched Fatty Wynn hungrily as he prepared

to bowl Manners. Manners swiped away the ball, and away it went into the long field. Smack!

Fisher T. Fish was there—had he caught the batsman out? His hand had touched the ball—the whole field heard the smack. The batsmen were running. There was a roar of wrath from the field as Fisher T. Fish was seen to stoop for the ball. He had fairly had it in his hand when he had let it fall. Even then there was time to save the game, if the return had been smart. The wicket keeper looked imploringly—Fish had caught up the ball—there was time to hurl it fairly into the wicket keeper's hands, and for the wicket to be knocked to pieces before the batsman could get home.

But Fisher T. Fish knew a trick worth two of that!

He generally did.

He sent the ball for the wicket.

A good throw-in would have knocked the wicket over before the panting batsman could have reached it. But it was unfortunately a bad throw-in. The ball dropped short, and the bat clumped on the crease. The wicket was saved—and the Shell had taken the odd run they wanted.

"Shell wins!" chuckled Tom Merry. "A run and a wicket. Hurray!"

Blake rushed towards Fisher T. Fish. What he was going to do will never be known, for Arthur Augustus dashed on the field in time.

"Blake, deah boy—"

"Lemme gerrat him!" said Blake, wildly. "Let me get his silly head in chancery—only for a minute—"

"Weally, Blake, a visitah—"

The fieldsmen closed round Blake and dragged him away. Fisher T. Fish walked off the field looking quite jaunty.

"Sorry you chaps are licked," he said to the glowering Fourth-Formers. "I did my best for you. But I guess it was too tough a proposition. One first-class player isn't enough in a team. The odds were against me."

Arthur Augustus D'Arcy slipped his arm through his guest's, and walked him hurriedly off the field. Fisher T. Fish was in danger of massacre.

## THE TENTH CHAPTER

Kerr Has an Idea.

FISHER T. FISH sauntered into the tuck-shop with Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. Many of the cricketers gathered there after the match. Partly owing to the aid of Fisher T. Fish, the game had ended much sooner than was anticipated. Fisher T. Fish confessed that he was peckish, and allowed D'Arcy to order him a supply of the best that Dame Taggles could furnish. Fish sat on a high stool at the counter, and disposed of a cold chicken, which he washed down with coffee, at the same time laying down the law to the St. Jim's juniors on the subject of cricket.

The fellows stared at first—it was amazing to hear a fellow who had proved himself a crass duffer at every branch of the game laying down the law and criticising players who could have played his head off.

But that was Fisher T. Fish's little way.

Some of the fellows were inclined to be angry, but they soon "got on" to Fish's character, and began to take him humorously, and even led him on to "gas" by way of pulling his Transatlantic leg.

"Yes. I guess you should see us play over there," said Fisher T. Fish. "I guess it would be a sight for sore eyes, what?"

"It must be," grunted Blake, "if they all play as you do. I admit I never saw a cricketer quite like you before."

"And you never will in this old island," said Fisher T. Fish airily. "They don't grow here. What you want is hustle, sir—hustle. Hustle all the time. Now, in New York we make things hustle—just a few. My popper made and lost three fortunes before he became a millionaire. Now he's got a million dollars."

"Whose?" asked Blake innocently.

D'Arcy gave his chum a warning look; but Fisher T. Fish only chuckled.

"Very smart for a Johnny Bull," he commented. "But I guess the race is to the swift over there. It's get on or get out."

"Same as in a pack of giddy wolves," murmured Figgins. "I don't think I should brag about that myself."

"We learn to do things over there," said Fisher T. Fish, who seemed never tired of expatiating upon the great qualities of his

beloved country. "Not talk—but do! That's us! Business from the word go. Savvy?"

"Not talk—but do," murmured Blake. "Oh, my hat! And to see him muff that catch—"

The Terrible Three came into the tuck-shop. Tom Merry called to Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

"Grimes is waiting to see you, Gussy."

"Bai Jove!"

"Mrs. Mimmis has settled for sixteen tins, and you've got to settle for four," said Tom Merry, laughing. "Pay up and smile."

"Yaas, but it's wotten." And Arthur Augustus slipped out of the tuck-shop to settle with Grimes for the four tins of Fresh Tinned Fish, one of which had been lent to Tom Merry, two of them which had been raided by Levison and Mellish, and the fourth which had been confiscated by Knox the prefect.

The chuckles of the juniors as D'Arcy departed caused Fisher T. Fish to look inquiringly.

Tom Merry explained to him the mistake over the telegram, and the ordering of the twenty tins of Fresh Tinned Fish by the chums of No. 6.

Fisher T. Fish roared.

"Ha, ha, ha! I guess I made my wire plain enough."

"If you'd put in the word 'o'clock' after 'three,' there wouldn't have been any mistake," said Blake.

Fish shook his head.

"I guess that was impossible."

"Eh? How was it impossible?"

"It would have run over the twelve words," explained Fish.

"Oh!"

"As it was, I had a argument at the post-office about 'School House' being one word," said Fish indignantly. "Wanted to make out it was two words. Fact! I stood there for a quarter of an hour jawing at them before they'd admit that it was only one word; and then it was only to get rid of me. But I guess they couldn't come any of their old buck over me—nope. They would have to get up very early in the morning to take a rise out of F. T. Fish!"

The juniors grinned. It would certainly have been difficult to overcharge a fellow who was ready to spend a quarter of an hour arguing over a penny. Fisher T. Fish might own a millionaire for a "popper"—perhaps—but he evidently had learned the value of money, and how to take care of it.

"No; I guess Fisher T. Fish is wide awake all the time," said the Yankee schoolboy, with satisfaction, as he started on jam-tarts. "I guess he knows his way about—just a few. I guess I shall have to be spry to-night when I get back."

"How's that?" asked Tom Merry.

"I shall be late. It's a half-holiday at Greyfriars, the same as here. But my train won't get in till ten o'clock—half an hour after bedtime for the Lower Fourth. I guess I shall have to use all my wits to get out of a licking."

"Bai Jove!" said D'Arcy, who had returned to the tuck-shop, having settled with Grimes for those famous tins of Fresh Tinned Fish. "Have you come away without askin' permish?"

"I didn't want to ask permission, I reckon."

"Why not, deah boy?"

"Because it would have been refused," chuckled Fisher T. Fish. "It was easier to absquatulate—"

"To what?"

"Absquatulate," explained Fish. "That means vamoose."

"And what may vamoose mean?" asked Blake.

"I swwow! You don't know what vamoose means?" exclaimed Fish, in surprise. "Well, my hat! It means to slide. Know what that means?"

"Yaas, of course," said D'Arcy. "Slide is an English word. But I uttahly fail to see how you can slide in warm weathah. Have you a skatin'-wink at Gweyfwiahhs?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Fish.

Arthur Augustus looked surprised and nettled.

"Weally, Fish, I do not see the joke. How can you possibly slide without ice to slide on? I fail to see."

"Slide means to levant!" roared Fish.

"Levant! Gweat Scott! And what does that mean?"

"You don't know that word? Gee-whiz! When I say levant I mean to pull up stakes."

"Pull up stakes?" said D'Arcy dazedly.

"What stakes?"

"Oh, great snakes!" said Fisher T. Fish. "Don't you study English? Pull up stakes means to muzzle—get out—absquatulate—travel—clear. Got that?"

"Oh, now I compwehend."

"As I was saying, it was easier to absquatulate without asking first," explained Fish. "I shall get out of a row somehow when I get back, you bet. Fisher Tarleton Fish never gets left. That's his strong holt."

"But suppose the Head discovers that you've absquatulated without permission?" said Kerr. "He might send somebody after you."

"Not an expensive railway journey, I guess."

"He might telegraph to somebody here to send you back. Suppose he wired to the police-station to look for a runaway junior?"

Fish laughed.

"I guess that's not likely," he said. "He'd wait till I got back, to lick me. But if he did, I guess I should wriggle out somehow. I guess I'm not leaving this hyer show till the eight train."

"I should like to see you arguing it out with a bobby."

"My dear kid, I should pull that bobby's leg, and raise his blind, you bet," said Fisher T. Fish confidently.

"Raise his blind!" said the juniors blankly. They could dimly guess at the meaning of the American verbs to absquatulate, to vamoose, to slide, to pull up stakes—but to raise a blind was quite beyond them.

"Never heard of that?" asked Fish passionately. "I guess the English language is making bigger strides over there than it is on this side. When I say I should raise his blind, I mean that I should straddle his ante."

"Oh, cwumbs!"

"That means, go one better, of course," said Fish. "And if I had to argue it out with a Johnny-Bull bobby, I kinder calculate that I should annex the jackpot."

"Would you weally?" gasped D'Arcy, who had never even heard of a jackpot, and

hadn't the faintest idea how it was annexed.

"I guess so—some!" said Fisher T. Fish.

Having finished his refreshments, Fisher T. Fish slid off the high stool. Jack Blake mentioned that he had to go in to get on with his fretwork, and Fish caught at it at once.

"You go in for fretwork—eh?" he asked.

"Yes, rather!" said Blake. "I'm making a fretwork model of St. Jim's. I made the design myself. Brooke helped me draw it, and I'm cutting it out. It's to make an ornament for the study, you know. Like to see it?"

Blake felt a little more cordial towards the muffer of catches and thrower-away of wickets when he found that he was interested in fretwork.

"I guess so," said Fish.

"I'm nuts on fretwork myself. If you've got a difficult bit on hand, I guess I could help you out."

"Come up to the study," said Blake.



"What do you think of that merchant?" asked Kerr at last.

"Walking gasworks," said Fatty Wynn.

"I wish I could see somebody pull his leg, and take a rise out of him," said Figgins. "I'm blessed and dashed if I ever heard a chap gas as he does!"

"Good egg!" said Kerr. "I'm on!"

"What are you thinking of?"



"Will you kindly step down?" said the policeman. "I've got to execute my dooty and take you in charge." "Bust your dooty!" snorted Fisher T. Fish. "You walk your chalks out of hyer or you'll get a sockdolager!"

Fisher T. Fish strolled away with the chums of Study No. 6. Figgins, Kerr, and Wynn walked away towards the New House—Kerr with a peculiar twinkle in his eyes. The Scottish junior was evidently thinking something out. Figgins and Fatty Wynn were grinning. Fish amused them.

"Suppose the Head of Greyfriars missed the bounder, and was waxy about his taking French leave, and wired to the police-station in Rylcombe for him to be collared and sent back?" said Kerr.

Figgins stared.

"He wouldn't."

"He might," said Kerr.

"Well, he might, if he was very ratty ; and Fish is enough to make anybody ratty," said Figgins. "But——"

"Well, he's going to," said Kerr deliberately.

"Eh ?"

"At least, a bobby is coming here for Fish."

"What ! How do you know ?" exclaimed Figgins, in astonishment.

"Because I'm the bobby," said Kerr coolly.

"Oh, my hat !"

"We've got a bobby's uniform in the props of the Junior Dramatic Club. You know I played Police-constable Fatsides in our comedy," said Kerr. "The fellows here know it, but that cheery merchant doesn't. What do you think ?"

Figgins and Fatty Wynn roared.

"It would take him down' a peg or two, and stop the escape of gas," Kerr suggested.

"But he's a guest," said Figgins, hesitating.

"Not our guest. He belongs to the School House chaps. Nothing to do with us. Besides, it's up to us as Britishers to show that that blessed Yankee isn't quite so smart as he fancies he is."

"It would be a ripping joke ; but——"

"Jolly good wheeze !" said Fatty Wynn. "If he hadn't been a visitor, I'd have hammered him for chucking my wicket away as he did. The Shell beat us, and all through that frabjous ass !"

"That's true," said Figgins. "He ought to be boiled in oil !"

"And look at that catch he muffed—and the way he threw in the ball and saved their last wicket for them !" said Fatty Wynn indignantly. "And after that to gas about cricket as if he knew the game better than we do ! Why——"

"We'll do it," said Figgins. "Come on, Kerr !"

And the three juniors, chuckling, disappeared into the New House.

#### THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER

Fish Makes Himself Useful.

JACK BLAKE and his comrades led the guest from Greyfriars into Study No. 6.

The fretwork model lay upon the table in that famous apartment.

When it was finished it would make a silhouette of St. Jim's, seen from the quadrangle, and Blake was very proud of the idea.

He had left off the work at a very difficult bit of the clock tower, which required great care.

Fisher T. Fish looked at it and nodded.

"Is this it ?" he asked, not very enthusiastically.

"That's it," said Blake.

"I guess you've got a few things to learn in fretwork," Fisher T. Fish remarked. "You don't mind my saying so, of course ?"

Blake glared.

"Oh, not at all !" he gasped.

"What's this ?" asked Fish, tapping the clock-tower.

"That's the school tower."

"Yes ? I guess that will want careful handling," said Fish, regarding it attentively. "I'll do that bit for you, if you like."

He took up the fretsaw.

"Hold on !" said Blake uneasily. "Can you handle that ?"

Fish looked surprised.

"I guess that's just where I live," he said. "You watch me."

He started operations without waiting for any permission. That was one of his little ways. Blake did watch him—very uneasily. There were some hours of work in that fretwork model already, and he didn't want to see it spoiled. Fisher T. Fish started with a heavy hand, and Blake gave a gasp.

"Hold on ! You're not following the line !"

"That's all O.K. You watch !"

"But I say——"

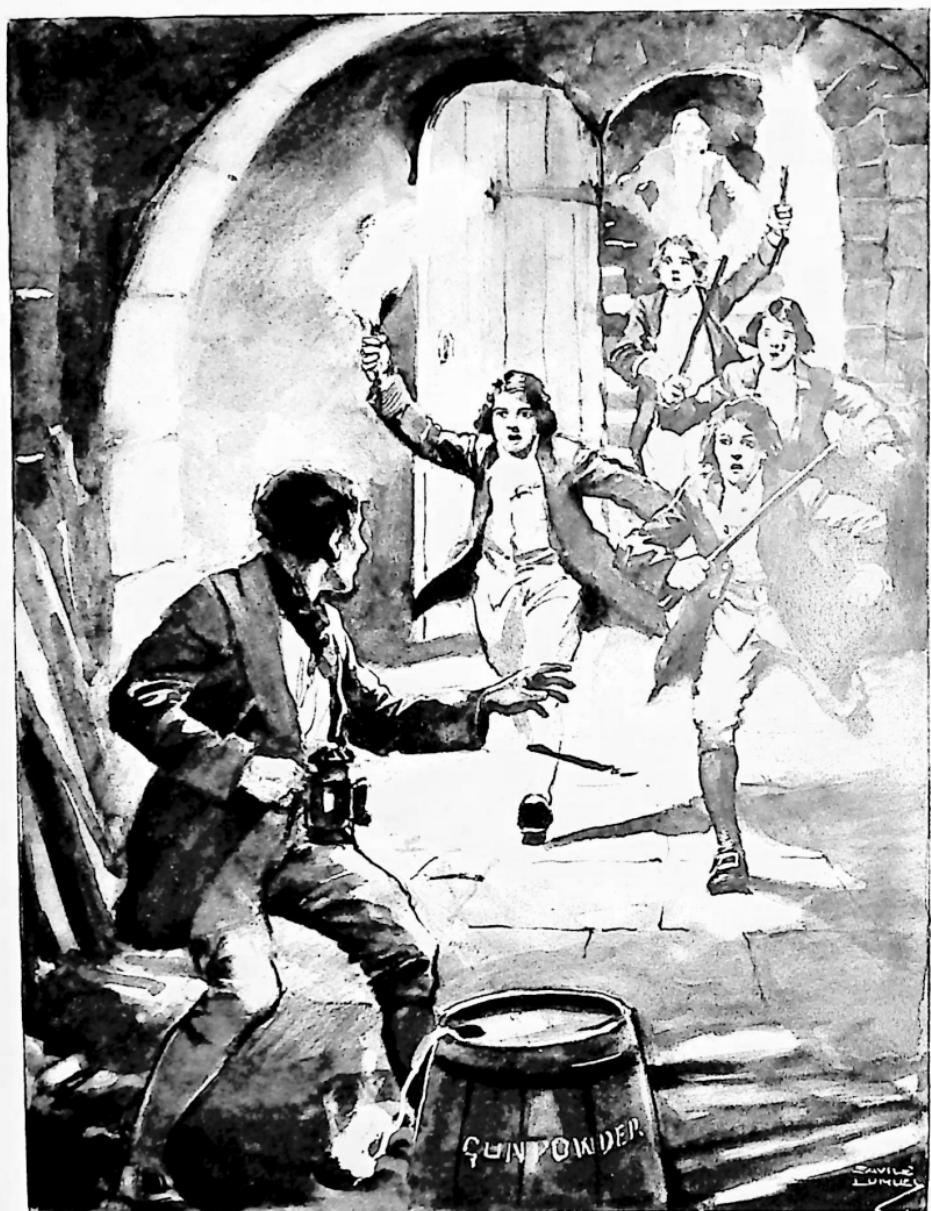
"Bai Jove !"

"Stop it !" roared Blake, as the fretsaw zigzagged. "You—you chump, you've cut off the top of the clock-tower !"

"Gee-whizz, so I have !" said Fish, with a nod. "I guess this isn't a good saw. You should see the fretsaws we use over there. I——"

"You ass ! You're sawing down through the library now !" howled Blake. "Leave it alone !"

Politeness failed Blake as he saw the work of his hands being cut to pieces. He grabbed



# The Gunpowder Plot at St. Jim's

STRANGELY enough the name of the gardener at St. Jim's in the year 1756 was Ephraim Taggles, but the Taggles of to-day would be horrified if anyone suggested there was a link of ancestry between them. His namesake of 1756—a vagrant whom Dr. Bristow, the headmaster, had saved from the Poor House, and installed at the school as gardener, out of kindness of heart—was all that was bad. He repaid his benefactor by robbing him right and left over a period of months, abusing him in the taproom of the local hostelry, and because he had been justly called to account for some misdemeanour, swore vengeance. The form his vengeance was to take was startling, if not original—nothing less than blowing St. Jim's sky high! But fortunately Taggles' dastardly plot was frustrated. This was due to an accidental discovery by Hinloch Babadies—a romantically minded youth in the Fourth Form, who fancied himself as a detective. After dusk one evening Babadies, seeing Taggles carrying a suspicious-looking barrel into the vaults, decided to "sleuth" him. With growing excitement he saw the treacherous gardener set down the barrel carefully and then fix a fuse to the bung. Full of what he had seen, Babadies rushed up to his Form fellows and told the extraordinary news. At first his story was derided, but his obvious earnestness and sincerity at last prompted four juniors to investigate. Armed with torches and staves they followed Babadies into the vaults—and only just in time! There stood Taggles, lantern in hand, having just lit the fuse running to the barrel. The horrified juniors fell upon him and overpowered him, what time Babadies stamped out the fuse, averting an appalling disaster, for the barrel was filled with gunpowder! The "Gunpowder Plot," as it came to be known, was the sensation of the term, and Babadies was the hero of the hour. And while the Fourth-Former enjoyed a full measure of limelight the wretched Taggles lingered in the dingy confines of Wayland Prison with a long sentence in which to reflect on his ingratitude and treachery.

the fretwork model, and jerked it away from Fisher T. Fish, breathing hard.

"Let it alone, you ass! You've ruined it already!"

"Sorry. I knew there was something wrong with the saw," said Fish.

Blake, with feelings that could not be expressed in words suitable for a visitor's ears, put away his fretwork. Fisher T. Fish glanced at the clock on the study mantelpiece, and started.

"Gee-whiz, it's not so late as that!" he exclaimed.

Blake snorted.

"No; that's an American clock."

The American junior grinned.

"Half an hour fast," he commented.

"Why don't you put it in order?"

"I've put it in order once or twice, but it only makes it go faster."

"Oh, you don't know how to handle clocks!" said Fisher T. Fish, taking the clock from the mantelpiece. "I guess I'll regulate it for you. I guess I'm a dab hand at regulating clocks. Some!"

"Weally, Fish, deah boy, you needn't twouble——"

"No trouble at all," said Fish. "It won't take me a minute." He took out the back of the clock.

"There's somethin' or othah there you pweess one way to make it go slowah, and an-othah way to make it go fastah," said D'Arcy.

"Better be thorough," said Fish, with a shake of the head. "I'll take a squint into the works and see what's wrong."

"Don't bust it!" said Herries, in alarm. "It's an American clock, but it's the only one we've got, and we can guess at the time by it."

"I'll make it go like a chronometer," said Fish.

"I say, what are you unscrewing there?" asked Blake warmly.

"That's all right. I guess——"

Buz-z-z-z-z-z-z! Whiz!

Something jumped out of the clock and caught Blake on the ear, and Blake roared.

"Ow! What's that?"

The clock had ceased to tick. It was not likely to gain any more.

"I guess the mainspring's broken," said Fisher T. Fish calmly. "Sorry; I'm afraid I shan't be able to do anything for that clock. It was a bit too far gone, I calculate."

He put it back on the mantelpiece.

The chums of Study 6 exchanged glances. A great and almost overpowering desire was upon all of them to seize Fisher T. Fish by the scruff of the neck, and bump him upon the study carpet, but they nobly restrained that desire. Fisher T. Fish never knew what a narrow escape he had had.

He was looking round the study, as if in search of fresh worlds to conquer. His eye fell upon Herries' cornet, and he made a stride towards it.

"You play the cornet—eh?" he asked. "I guess I'm a dab at playing the cornet. I'll—"

"No, you won't!" said Herries excitedly, jumping between Fish and the cornet. "You'll jolly well let my cornet alone."

"Weally, Hewwies, deah boy—" murmured D'Arcy.

"Let's get out of doors," said Blake hastily.

"I'll take him along to see Towser, then," said Herries.

"Good!"

## THE TWELFTH CHAPTER

### Sitting Up!

**C**OME and see my bulldog!"

It was up to the chums of Study No. 6 to entertain their guest. Herries felt that he was deserving well of the study in taking Fish to see his bulldog. To talk to Towser, the bulldog, and to tickle him under the chin, afforded Herries any amount of entertainment, and to Herries' mind, any properly constituted fellow ought to have been sufficiently entertained by going and doing likewise.

"Got a bulldog, hey?" said Fish, with interest.

"Yes, rather!" said Herries proudly. "You'd better not touch him, perhaps—he doesn't like strangers to touch him. But come and look at him. He's a beauty!"

"You should see our bulldogs over there—" Fish was beginning.

"Come and see the bulldog over here," broke in Herries. "I don't think you've got anything over there quite like Towser."

"Pway be careful, deah boy," said D'Arcy. "Don't go too near the beast. Towshah has no wespect whatevah for a fellow's twoousahs."

"Oh, that's all right!" said Fish confidently. "I've got a way with dogs. I guess I never saw the dog I couldn't master."

"Might be dangerous," said Monty Lowther solemnly. "Towser eats fish, you know."

"Weally, Lowthah—"

"Come on!" said Herries. "You can talk to him, you know. I keep him on the chain. It's one of the rules here—people don't like his playful ways. He doesn't really bite, you know, unless you hurt him. He might give you a playful nip, but it wouldn't really hurt. It's just his way."

"Pretty Fanny's way!" giggled Blake.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Oh, I guess he won't bite me!" said Fish. "I can manage bulldogs. That's my strong holt."

"Weally, Fish, I do not venchah to touch him myself, and you had bettah—"

Fish smiled.

"It's different with me," he said. "I've got a way with dogs. I'll take Towser off his chain, and make him sit up and beg—you watch me."

"Towser won't do that for anybody," said Herries shortly. "He's not one of your blessed dachshunds. He's a dog."

"I guess I could make him do it—all by kindness, too—force of will, you know," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Well, if you like to take the risk of handling him, it's your own look-out," said Herries. "He might take a bit out of your bags, but he won't really bite you unless he's hurt. Of course, his teeth might go in deeper than he intended—that has happened."

Towser looked out of his kennel, and greeted the arrival of the juniors with a growl. Herries patted him on his huge head, and Towser growled affectionately. He was very fond of Herries. But he did not like being touched by anybody else, and his growl was of quite a different tone when a strange hand caressed him.

Fisher T. Fish regarded the big bulldog critically, and shook his head in a disparaging sort of way.

"Not what we should call a really dandy dog over there," he remarked. "Not much go in him, I reckon."

"If he got after you, you'd find enough go in him," grunted Herries.

"Oh, I guess he wouldn't go after me! He hasn't got it in him. I can handle dogs, too. Now, you see me teach him to sit up."

"You can't do it," said Herries gruffly.

"I guess it's as easy as rolling off a log to me."

"Or muffing a catch?" suggested Blake.

Fisher T. Fish did not seem to hear that remark. He devoted his attention to the bulldog and patted his head encouragingly. Towser blinked at him and growled—quite a different growl from the affectionate rumble he had bestowed on Herries. But Fisher T. Fish did not notice it; perhaps he was not quite so well up in the manners and customs of the canine breed as he fancied.

"Good dog—good boy!" said Fish soothingly. "Now, you trot out hyer! I guess you're going to do as I tell you, just a few!"

And Fish cast off the chain from the collar, and the big bulldog stood free.

The juniors drew back a little. Towser was not a ferocious dog at all; but if he was worried he was liable to get excited—and his teeth were formidable. When Towser had been tormented once by a rascally junior, Levison of the Fourth, he had been known to make a deadly attack; and if he had succeeded in getting hold of Levison on that occasion, amputation would have been required for Levison's leg, as Herries proudly declared.

Fish was not intending to be cruel, of course; but dogs do not like to be worried, and Towser especially had an aversion to it. So the juniors gave him plenty of room. Fish grinned as he saw it.

"Don't be afraid," he said. "If he should break out, I'd grip him by the collar, and hold him so that he couldn't do any harm."

"You—you—" Herries snorted. "Do you think you could hold Towser in? Two of you couldn't hold him in!"

"I guess I could handle him some!"

"We are not awfaid," said Arthur Augustus indignantly. "But I do not want to have my twousahs ruined, if you excite that beastly cweature!"

"Now, Towsy, good dog!" said Fish, rubbing Towser's neck caressingly—a caress that Towser hated.

He was a dignified dog, Towser was, and he did not like being mauled by every chance-comer. His eyes opened wider, his jaws parted a little, and a deeper growl rumbled from his throat.

"Better let him alone," said Herries. "He's growling."

"I guess he growled at you, too."

"That was a different kind of growl." "I don't notice any difference myself. It's only his way," said Fish airily. "He likes me already."

"Does he?" murmured Lowther. "Well, there's no accounting for tastes!"

But that remark was unheard by Fisher T. Fish.

The Yankee junior continued to fondle Towser, Towser's growl growing deeper every moment. His stump of a tail was moving angrily; but Fish thought that he was wagging it in appreciation. Fisher T. Fish's ignorance of dogs and their ways was abysmal in its depths.

"I'll put the chain on again," said Herries.

Herries knew that it was only his presence that was keeping Towser from snapping at the Yankee schoolboy; but Fisher T. Fish was in blissful unconsciousness of the fact.

"Nope!" said Fish. "That's all right. You watch me."

"Weally, Fishay—"

"Now, sit up!" commanded Fish. "Sit up, Towser! You hear me? I guess you're going to sit up! Got that? Give me your paw!"

Towser stared at him disdainfully. Fisher T. Fish took the paw, and raised it by force, as an instruction to Towser what was expected of him. That reached the limit of Towser's patience. He snapped at Fish's hand, and closed his jaws on it, making the terrible teeth meet tightly without penetrating the skin.

Towser did not mean to bite—he meant it

as a warning that he wanted to be let alone ; but Fish did not understand that. He turned quite pale as he felt the jaws on his hand. He snatched the hand away, and, too excited and alarmed to know that he was not even bitten, he grasped the dog's collar to hold him tight, so that he could not attack. .

Towser struggled. He was struggling to get loose ; but Fish imagined that he was struggling to attack him. He held on the collar tenaciously, and Towser turned his teeth on the grasping hand. Fish, in terror, jabbed his boot at the bulldog's head, giving Towser a very nasty jar, and the bulldog, twisting himself loose, made a jump at him.

Fish turned and ran in terror of his life.

Towser was already hurt, and excited and angry. It only needed the sight of his assailant running to decide him. He dashed furiously after Fisher T. Fish, with a growl that made the Yankee junior's blood curdle.

" Towser ! Towser ! " shouted Herries.

But Towser did not heed his master's voice ; he rushed on. Fisher T. Fish clambered madly up the nearest wall, putting a foot through a window, with the bulldog's jaws snapping only two inches below his feet.

" Gee-whiz ! " gasped Fish.

Towser leaped after him, and fell short, and growled furiously. He snuffled along the shed as if in search of some means of getting at his supposed enemy, and, finding that there was no means, he sat down. He sat quite still, patient, quiet, but with gleaming eyes fixed upon Fisher T. Fish, promising only too clearly what he would do when the junior was within reach of his jaws again.

Fisher T. Fish gasped for breath. He was sitting on the roof of the shed, which, fortunately sloped only a little. The bulldog was watching him, with the grim and deadly patience of a bulldog. Unless help came to remove Towser, Fisher T. Fish was destined to spend a long time on the roof of that shed.

The juniors stood round, and looked at him and at the bulldog. Nobody was likely to touch Towser in his present mood, with the exception of Towser's master. And Towser's master was very much annoyed.

" Well, you haven't made him sit up yet ! "

said Herries gruffly. " How long are you going to be about it ? "

" I guess I give that bulldog up. He's a rotten breed," said Fish. " I guess I could handle a pure-bred bulldog O.K. ! "

That was the last straw.

If there was anything Herries prided himself upon, besides his wonderful powers with the cornet, it was his ability to tell a dog's breed. Towser, according to Herries, was of the purest possible bulldog breed, a very king among dogs—or, rather, an emperor.

To traduce Towser's breed was to incur the deadliest enmity that Herries was capable of feeling. Fisher T. Fish might be a visitor. He might be a stranger in the land. But when he said that Towser was not a pure-bred bulldog, he placed himself outside all the laws of courtesy—so Herries considered. And Herries replied to Fisher T. Fish's remarks with a plainness of speech that was worthy of F. T. F. himself.

" Rotten breed ! " said Herries. " You idiot ! "

" Weally, Hewwies, old man—" murmured D'Arcy.

" You fathead ! " yelled Herries. " What do you know about dogs ? As much as you know about cricket ? Or as much as you know about fretwork and mending clocks and driving traps ? You silly chump ! "

" I guess—" "

" You blithering, burbling jabberwock ! " roared the incensed Herries. " You babbling duffer ! Rotten breed ! My hat ! "

" Herries, old chap—" "

" Of all the silly, cheeky, gassing idiots that ever gassed—" went on Herries, with undiminished eloquence.

" Remember, he's a visitor," murmured Tom Merry, nearly choking with laughter. " It's all true, but don't pile it on. Manners, you know ! "

" Manners be blowed ! " yelled Herries.

" Eh ? What's that ? " exclaimed Manners of the Shell, supposing that he was alluded to. " Look here, Herries, what—" "

" Ha, ha, ha ! "

" Manners be hanged—" "

" Why, you silly chump—" said Manners wrathfully.

"I don't care twopence for manners——"

"I guess you don't," said Fisher T. Fish from the top of the shed.

"Manners will give you a dot on the nose if you don't cheese it!" roared Manners.

"Eh?" said Herries. "Who's talking to you? I'm talking to that skinny, fatheaded, wall-eyed, chopper-chivied monkey on the shed!"

"Hewwies, you wude beast——"

"He says my dog isn't pure-bred. Well, a pure-bred bulldog never lets up on a chap he means to watch. We'll see whether Towser lets him off. Don't you fellows interfere—you'll get hurt if you do. I warn you. Towser is riled, and no wonder—pawed about by the blithering, burbling, chortling chump! Watch him, Towser! Watch him!"

Towser growled, as an assurance that he would not fail to watch Fisher T. Fish. Herries stalked away. The other fellows gazed at this proceeding in dismay. They knew that no one but Herries could remove Towser from his watch; and unless Towser was removed, Fisher T. Fish was a prisoner on top of the shed for the term of his natural life!

"Bai Jove!" said Arthur Augustus. "Call that dog off, Hewwies!"

Herries snorted, but made no other reply. Tom Merry ran after him and caught him by the arm.

"Herries, old chap, call Towser off. Fish can't stay up there!"

"Can't he?" sniffed Herries. "Let him get down, then!"

"But Towser will bite him——"

"Towser won't touch him unless he's a well-bred bulldog. Fish says he ain't. Well, if he ain't, Fish can handle him all right!"

"Herries, old chap——"

"Oh, rats!"

"Herries, old chap," stalked round the School House, and disappeared. Tom Merry rejoined his chums in dismay. Herries had evidently made up his mind. The aspersion upon the breed of his bulldog had finished the matter for Herries.

He wasn't going to call Towser off. Nobody else could do it. The juniors were in what F. T. Fish would have called a quandary.

They stood and consulted together, and watched Towser—and Towser watched Fisher T. Fish.

## THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER

### Startling News!

FISHER T. FISH was beginning to look anxious. The shed upon which he had clambered was the building used to shelter the pets belonging to the St. Jim's fellows—the "menagerie," as the juniors called it. It was detached from all other buildings, and there was no escape for the besieged junior, unless a kindly aeroplane should swoop down and rescue him. Fish's position on the sloping roof of the shed was far from secure, and far from comfortable. He sat there, and clung on, looking down at the patient bulldog.

The thought of falling into the jaws of Towser made cold thrills run along his spine. He had said that he had a way with Towser, and it had failed. But if he dropped off the shed, it was certain that Towser would have a way with him that would not fail.

"I say, you chaps, call that bally dog off!" shouted Fish.

"He won't come, deah boy."

"Look here! I can't stay here all night!" howled Fish.

"Can't you make him sit up?" asked Lowther. "You were going to make him sit up. It seems to me he's made you sit up instead!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess I'm not touching that mongrel again. You call him off, so that I can skip."

The juniors tried to call Towser off. They called him "Towser," and "Towsy," and "Good dog," and "Good old doggie." Towser did not take the slightest notice. Blandishments were lost on him. He was deaf to the voice of the charmer.

His master had bidden him "watch" the Yankee schoolboy. And Towser had his own reasons for watching him, too. And he watched him.

"Towsah, old boy, pway come away," said Arthur Augustus, venturing to touch the bulldog caressingly on the head.

Towser turned his head and opened his jaws, and D'Arcy stepped hurriedly back.

"Bai Jove, the awful beast was goin' to bite!"

"It's too bad of Herries," said Tom Merry, gasping with merriment, but very much puzzled what to do. "Shall we drive him off with brooms and things?"

"Not an easy job," said Blake.

"Fish said he would handle him," said Monty Lowther. "Let him handle him, and it's all simple enough. Get down and handle him, Fishy."

"I guess I'm stopping hyer till that dog's gone."

"But you've got a way with dogs——"

"I guess I freeze to this roof."

"Suppose we twy to tempt him away with somethin' to eat."

"Good!" said Tom Merry. "Cut off and get some meat from the kitchen. Cookey will give you some if you tell her what's the matter."

"Right-ho!"

Arthur Augustus ran off at top speed. He returned in about ten minutes with a large piece of meat in his hand, holding it carefully in a fragment of newspaper. He held it out to Towser. Towser did not even sniff at it. Towser had business on hand, and he was not to be tempted from his duty.

"Towsy, old man, take a bite," urged D'Arcy. "You wotten beast! Eat it, you wottah! Dear old doggie! This way, you know, you wotten, wotten wottah!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's no good, deah boys; he won't move."

"He'll have to be driven off," said Tom Merry. "Get sticks and stable brooms and anything, and we'll march on him. He'll have to shift."

"It's the only way," grinned Digby.

The juniors armed themselves for the fray. They took brooms from the stableyard, and rakes and sticks and other things from the woodshed. They marched on Towser in a body, with threatening gestures. Towser did not move until D'Arcy poked him in the ribs with a rough broom-head. Then Towser snarled. Towser's snarl was terrifying, and

it was a warning that he meant business. The juniors involuntarily jumped back.

"Oh, pile in!" said Fisher T. Fish. "You ain't afraid of a dog, are you?"

Considering that Fish was clinging to the roof of the shed in mortal fear of Towser, this remark was what might have been called in his own language "pretty considerable cool."

"You jump down and handle him!" shouted Blake wrathfully.

"Nope."

"Then shut up!" said Blake, forgetting for the moment that Fisher T. Fish was a visitor.

"Weally, Blake——"

"Oh, ring off!" growled Blake. "What the dooce are we going to do with that confounded dog? Look here, we've got to charge him! Come on!"

"Steady, the Buffs!" grinned Lowther. They charged.

Towser jumped up then, and there was a wild yell from Tom Merry as the bulldog fastened on him. The juniors scattered. Tom Merry jumped away, leaving half a trousers-leg in Towser's jaws.

"Bai Jove! Has he bitten you, deah boy?" Tom Merry gasped.

"Just grazed the skin. Oh, look at my bags!"

"Wuined, bai Jove! It's howwid!"

"Look here! Are you going to get that blessed dog away?" bawled Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I can't stay up here till the cows come home!"

Towser had resumed his place and his watching. The juniors held a hurried consultation. What was to be done? If they had been willing to smite Towser hip and thigh at the risk of seriously injuring him, he could have been driven off or disabled. But, naturally, they did not want to do anything of the sort. Fisher T. Fish was the cause of the trouble, and it was not fair that Towser should suffer.

"Herries will have to come and call him off," said Tom Merry at last. "I'll go and change my bags. You chaps find Herries and bump him till he agrees to call Towser off."

"Yaas, that's a good idea!"



The policeman paused and wagged a warning finger at Taggles. "Don't you let me catch you drunk and disorderly agin, my man."

"Hold on!" yelled Fish. "Don't you absquatulate and leave me here alone with that dog!"

"We're going to fetch Herries."

"Look here! I guess——"

Toby, the School House page, came round the corner of the School House. There was a grave and alarmed look on Toby's face.

"Is a gentleman named Master Fish here?" he asked.

"I guess I'm that antelope."

"Master Herries told me I should find you here, sir," said Toby. "You're wanted."

"What's the trouble?" asked Tom Merry.

"There's a policeman asking for Master Fish, sir. I've showed 'im into Study No. 6," said Toby.

The juniors jumped.

"A policeman!"

"Yes, sir. He says Master Fish has run

away from Greyfriars, and he's come to take 'im back."

"Oh, crikey!"

#### THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER

##### The Arm of the Law!

TOM MERRY & Co. simply gasped.

It had been suggested, more in jest than in earnest, that the Head of Greyfriars might think Fish had run away from school, and apply to the police to send him back. Nobody, of course, had supposed for a moment that such a thing would happen.

And now it had happened.

A policeman in Study No. 6, waiting for Fisher T. Fish to take him back to Greyfriars.

"Well, I swow!" gasped Fish.

"My only hat!"

"Well, this is a pretty kettle of fish!" gasped Manners.

"A pretty kettle of Fisher T. Fish!" grinned Lowther.

But no one laughed. The matter was too serious.

Herries came into sight with Figgins and Fatty Wynn of the New House. The three juniors were grinning.

"Seems that somebody is looking for Fish," said Figgins.

"Fat bobby in Study No. 6," said Fatty Wynn.

"Call that bulldog off!" yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Herries, you chump, call that blithering dog off! I'll slip out of the school and get down to the station while the bobby's in the study."

"Yaas, that's a good ideah!"

"I guess you can tell him I'm gone as soon as I've vamoosed," said Fish. "Call that dog off, do you hear?"

Herries heard, but he did not call the dog off.

"Herries, old man——"

"Look heah, Hewwies——"

"Can't interfere with the law," said Herries stolidly. "If there's a policeman wanting to see Fish, he's going to see Fish. We can't break the law."

"Bai Jove!"

"If Fish bunks, the bobby might go to the Head inquiring," said Manners thoughtfully.

"I guess I'm going to light out all the same," yelled Fisher T. Fish. "Will you call that dog off, you jay?"

"No, I won't!" said Herries. "Toby, go and fetch the policeman here!"

"Yessir," said Toby. And he hurried away.

"Look here!" howled Fisher T. Fish. "I guess I'm not going back to Greyfriars in charge of a bobby! Call that dog off!"

"You can argue it out with the bobby," said Herries calmly. "You said that if anything of the kind happened you'd pull the bobby's leg and manage it all right. Well, now's your chance!"

"Yaas, wathah! There's somethin' in that!" agreed Arthur Augustus D'Arcy.

Fisher T. Fish did not appear to think that there was anything in it. He simply raved.

The idea of being taken back to school in charge of a policeman was unthinkable. He would leave all St. Jim's laughing behind him, and he would find all Greyfriars laughing when he arrived there. Fish was not very keenly sensitive to ridicule, perhaps, but this was the limit.

He was still raving when the constable arrived on the scene, piloted by Toby. The juniors all looked at the policeman with painful interest. He was a short, fat constable, with a red, ruddy face and thick whiskers. His feet were very large, and he walked with a sounding stride.

He stared stolidly at the juniors, and at the bulldog, and at the frantic youth on the roof of the shed. Figgins and Wynn and Herries were grinning, as if they saw some comical side of the matter that was lost on the other fellows. Tom Merry & Co. were serious enough. D'Arcy whispered to Tom Merry that if a pound was any good, he was ready to tip the limb of the law to that extent. But Tom Merry shook his head. He had heard tell of a policeman who could not be bribed, and for all he knew, this might be that very policeman!

"Which of you young gents is Master Fish, of Greyfriars?" asked the fat constable, in a deep and rumbling voice.

"I guess there's no such person here," said Fisher T. Fish, denying his own identity with perfect coolness.

The policeman shook his head.

"I've got certain information that he is here," he replied. "Is it you?" he added, dropping a heavy gloved hand on Arthur Augustus D'Arcy's shoulder.

The swell of St. Jim's jumped back.

"Bai Jove! Certainly not?"

"Master Fish is an American, I understand," said the officer. "The young gentleman on the shed is the person, I think."

"I kinder guess you can't figure it out that I'm an American, any more than the other galoots hyer," said Fisher T. Fish.

"As if a dead donkey wouldn't know him by that accent!" gasped Blake.

The constable signed to the junior to descend.

"Please come down, Master Fish!" he said.

"I guess it can't be done till that dog's gone."

Herries called off Towser. Towser had done his duty. The bulldog reluctantly obeyed his master's voice, and abandoned his prey. The chain clinked as Herries fastened it on the bulldog's collar, and never had any sound appeared more musical to the ears of Fisher Tarleton Fish.

"Now, please step down, sir, so that I can take you in charge," said the constable.

"I guess I'm not going to be taken into charge," said Fisher T. Fish. "Where's your warrant? I suppose there's some law in this hyer old country, ain't there?"

"No warrant is necessary for taking a runaway schoolboy back to school, sir."

"But I ain't a runaway schoolboy!" yelled Fish. "I'm here on a visit, I guess."

"You must settle that with your headmaster, sir."

"I guess I'm not going with you."

"Then I shall have to take you by force."

"Look here, don't you lay hands on a free American citizen!" roared Fish. "Why, it's up against the American constitution, and the Star-Spangled Banner, and the Monroe Doctrine, and everything. You just walk your chalks. You hear me?"

"Will you kindly step down, sir?" said the policeman stolidly.

"I guess not."

"Will one of you young gentlemen lend me a ladder?" said the policeman calmly. "I must proceed in the hexecution of my dooty."

Herries obligingly fetched a short ladder, which the policeman placed against the side of the shed. The juniors looked on in dismay. Fisher T. Fish brandished his fist at the red face of the policeman as he stepped on the ladder.

"I guess that I shall dot you on the nose if you come up!" he shouted.

"Bai Jove! You mustn't wesist the law, Fishay, deah boy."

"Better go quietly, Fish."

"It can't be helped, you know."

"Grin and bear it."

Fisher T. Fish snorted. Good advice was showered upon him from all sides, but he did not seem inclined to avail himself of it.

"I guess I'm not going with that jay," he said. "You watch out, bobby. If you put your cabeza in reach of my fist, you get a sockdolager on the nose. You watch out!"

"I've got to hexecute my dooty."

"Bust your dooty! You walk your chalks out of hyer."

The fat policeman did not "walk his chalks." He steadily ascended the ladder, and his red face came within easy hitting distance of Fisher T. Fish's fist. The St. Jim's juniors almost held their breath. If the Yankee junior was reckless enough to strike a policeman, there was no telling what the consequences might be.

But there was no need for alarm. Fisher T. Fish brandished his fist until the red face was close upon him, and then he left off brandishing it. In the American language, he had "wilted." His dire threats to the policeman were only a little more of his abundant flow of "gas."

The heavy gloved hand descended upon his shoulder, and he was jerked down the ladder to the ground. There he would have run; but the hand had closed upon his shoulder with a firm grip.

Fisher T. Fish was a prisoner—in the hands of the law!

"I guess this lets me out!" groaned the Yankee schoolboy. "The Head must have been off his chump when he wired for this jay to fetch me. Oh, gee-whizz!"

"Why don't you pull his leg?" asked Herries.

"Or raise his blind?" said Figgins.

"Or straddle his ante?" suggested Fatty Wynn.

The juniors grinned, in spite of the seriousness of the situation. Fisher T. Fish looked very far from attempting any of those operations. The hand of the law had crushed him. He looked quite crumpled.

"I guess I'm in for it!" he groaned. "What a played-out old country, where a pilgrim can't give himself a holiday without being collared by a hobby. Oh, Jee-rusalem!"

"Yaas, it's vewy wuff!" said Arthur Augustus sympathetically. "I should recommend you to wemonstwate with your head-mastah, you know. It's wotten!"

"You come with me," said the policeman. "We're catching the eight o'clock train, and there ain't too much time."

"Look here," said Fish. "I was going to catch that train, anyway. I guess there isn't any need for you to come with me."

"I've got my dooty to do."

Arthur Augustus sidled up to the policeman, with a pound note in his hand. He had resolved to try it, in spite of the well-known fact that members of the Force are utterly impervious to the influence of bribery and corruption.

"I say, officah—" murmured D'Arcy. "If you'd let my fwieud off—"

"Dooty, sir."

"And if a pound would be any good—" whispered D'Arcy.

"What!" thundered the policeman. "Tryin' to bribe me in the hexecution of my dooty! I'm ashamed of you, sir. I'm a pore man—pore but honest."

"My hat!" ejaculated Lowther. "Are you the chap? I've heard of you before."

But the juniors did not grin at Lowther's little joke. Arthur Augustus hastily slipped the offending note back into his waistcoat pocket.

"Sowwy!" he murmured.

"Bribe me!" gasped the policeman. "Good heavens! Bribe me! I'm a pore man, sir, but never 'ave I took a bribe."

"I beg your pardon, officah," said Arthur Augustus. "It was vewy w'ong of me. I owe you an apology. I apologise most sincerely."

"Very well, sir, the matter's hended. Come along, Master Fish!"

Master Fish came along—he couldn't help it, with that firm grasp upon his collar. And the juniors followed.

## THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER

### Fish Has the Last Word!

THE news that Fisher T. Fish, the visitor from Greyfriars, had left his school for the long journey without permission and was being taken back by a policeman had spread. Crowds of juniors of both Houses came to see him marched off.

Tom Merry & Co. were very uneasy that

the masters might see the policeman from the School House windows; but the officer was very considerate. The juniors tried to get him to take the path by the elms, where he would be out of sight from the windows, and they found it quite easy to manage. The policeman was very good-natured—or perhaps he had his own reasons for not wanting to be seen.

Quite an army of juniors marched round them to the school gates. Taggles had come out of his lodge to lock the gates, and he stared at the procession in amazement.

"Well, my heye!" he gasped. "Wot's that?"

"I guess it's my unlucky day," said Fisher T. Fish.

"Wot's he arrested for, officer?" asked the school porter.

"Run away from school," said the policeman.

"I ain't run away!" roared Fish. "I guess I was paying a visit."

Taggles grunted. Taggles did not approve of boys at all, and he was not sorry to see one of the obnoxious race getting it "in the neck."

"That's right," he said. "Take him away, officer. I 'ope he will get a good licking from 'is 'eadmaster—that's wot I 'ope."

"Oh, you go and eat coke, Taggy!" said Tom Merry.

The policeman paused, and fixed his eyes upon Taggles with an intent gaze.

"Oh, it's you, is it?" he said.

Taggles stared.

"Yes, it's me," he said. "Wot about it?"

"A hold hoffender," said the policeman. "Don't you let me catch you drunk and disorderly agin, my man, that's all."

Taggles turned crimson, and the juniors chuckled gleefully.

"Wotcher mean?" spluttered Taggles, nearly speechless with wrath. "I ain't never seed you afore, and well you know it."

"Drunk and disorderly—forty bob or a month," said the policeman. "Who paid your fine last time, my man?"

"I ain't never been fined," yelled Taggles. "You slandering villain! I ain't never been drunk and disorderly."

The policeman wagged a gloved finger at him.

"You be careful," he admonished. "I've got my heye on you."

T a g g l e s struggled for words; but before he could find any, the policeman had marched his captive out into the road. Tom Merry & Co. followed. The Co. had already obtained permission from the Housemaster to see their guest to the station when he departed for the eight o'clock

train at Rylcombe. The other fellows had to remain within gates, excitedly discussing the happening. Down the road towards Rylcombe marched the fat policeman, with his hand on the collar of Fisher T. Fish. Tom Merry & Co. walked round them with serious faces. Only Herries, and Figgins, and Fatty Wynn did not look serious. They were grinning all the time.

They reached the station, with twenty minutes to wait for the train. The policeman took the Greyfriars junior upon the platform, and the St. Jim's fellows accompanied them there. They were very sympathetic towards the down-hearted Fish, but they could do nothing to help him. The arm of the law was too strong for Tom Merry & Co.

"Bai Jove, this is a wotten endin' to the aftahnou!" said Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I'm vewy sowwy this has happened, Fishay."

Fisher T. Fish groaned.



The Juniors stared blankly at the policeman as he dragged off his whiskers. Then they yelled: "Kerr!" It was Kerr of the New House. "Waal, I swwow!" gasped Fisher T. Fish.

"Not so sorry as I am," he said. "I guess I could have handled the Head all right if I had walked in on my lonesome. But if I'm marched in by a bobby, it's a mule of another colour. I reckon it's a licking."

"Wotten!"

"It's jolly awkward not bein' able to bwibe a policeman," Arthur Augustus confided to Blake. "Of course, it's vewy noble of them, and all that, but it makes things doocid awkward sometimes."

"It does—it do," agreed Blake.

"It's all right for Fish," said Herries. "He's only got to pull the bobby's leg, or raise his blind, or whatever it is. Besides, nobody ever takes a rise out of him, so he's bound to come out all right, isn't he?"

"Pway don't pile on a chap when he is down, Hewwies!" said Arthur Augustus severely.

"Oh, rub it in!" said Fisher T. Fish

resignedly. "I guess I've come out at the little end of the horn this journey."

"You don't admit it?" said Herries, in astonishment.

"I guess it's up against me."

"Sure you didn't plan this all along, so as to make a striking exit?" suggested Herries.

Fisher T. Fish considered. He would willingly have said so, but he felt that such a yarn would not hold water, and he shook his head.

"Nope!" he said.

"Heah comes the twain!" said Arthur Augustus disconsolately.

The train was coming in. It stopped in the station, and the policeman marched his prisoner towards it. He opened a carriage door, and told Fisher T. Fish to "op it." Fish hopped it, and sat down in the carriage with a lugubrious visage.

The St. Jim's fellows crowded round to shake hands with him and wish him luck. The policeman stood by the carriage door, not getting in himself. He was unfastening his helmet, and he took it off as the juniors were saying good-bye.

"Ain't you getting in?" demanded Fish, with a gleam of hope.

The policeman shook his head.

"Can't," he said, in quite a different voice. "I should be late for calling-over if I did, you see."

"Wha-a-a-at!"

"You see, I belong to St. Jim's," said the policeman calmly. "and I've got to get back along with the other fellows. Sorry!"

There was a roar of surprise from the juniors. They knew the voice now. As they stared blankly at the policeman he dragged off the thick whiskers with one pull of the hand.

The juniors yelled:

"Kerr!"

Fisher T. Fish sank back in the carriage seat, gasping. His breath was taken away. He was greatly relieved, but—

"Kerr!" howled Tom Merry.

"Kerr, you rotter!"

"Kerr, you frightful spoofah!"

"It's Kerr! Oh, crumbs!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Figgins. "Are you still going to say that nobody could take a rise out of you, Fishy?"

"Nobody could pull his leg—what?" chuckled Fatty Wynn.

"He knows how to handle policemen!" grinned Herries. "You fathead, Fish, do you think I should have let him nab you if Figgy hadn't told me who it was?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, I swow!" gasped Fisher T. Fish. "This lets me out! Gee-whiz! You—you—you're not a policeman! Well, carry me home to die!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Stand back, there!" called out the porter. The juniors, shrieking with laughter—as much at the expression upon Fisher T. Fish's face as at the joke of the New House juniors—crowded back. The carriage door was slammed, and the train started.

"This is where the Fish-bird sings small!" chuckled Herries.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Who said the age of miracles was past!" grinned Kerr. "He actually hasn't a word to say for himself—not a word! Ha, ha, ha!"

But Kerr was mistaken.

The window of the carriage jammed down, and Fisher T. Fish leaned out excitedly as the train moved on, gathering speed.

"I say, you jays!" shouted Fish.

"Yaas, deah boy?"

"Don't you think you took me in! I guess not—some!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"I guess I knew it all the time. I was just playing up, you know, to see how far that jay would carry the joke! Ha, ha, ha!"

"Gweat Scott!"

"I guess it's not so easy to take a rise out of Fisher T.—"

The roar of the train drowned the rest, and the last words of Fisher T. Fish were lost to the juniors of St. Jim's.

"Gas to the last!" grinned Blake. "Of all the nerve—"

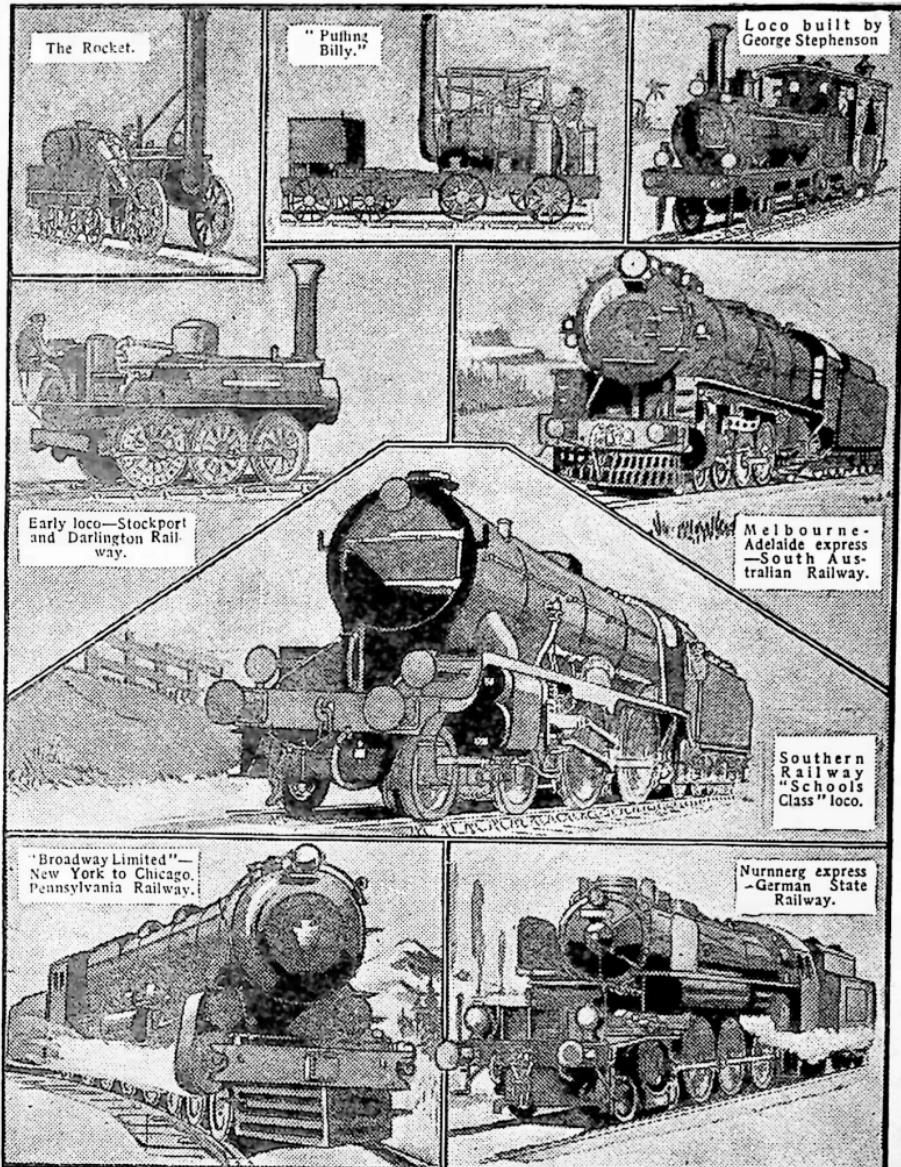
"Of all the cheek—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

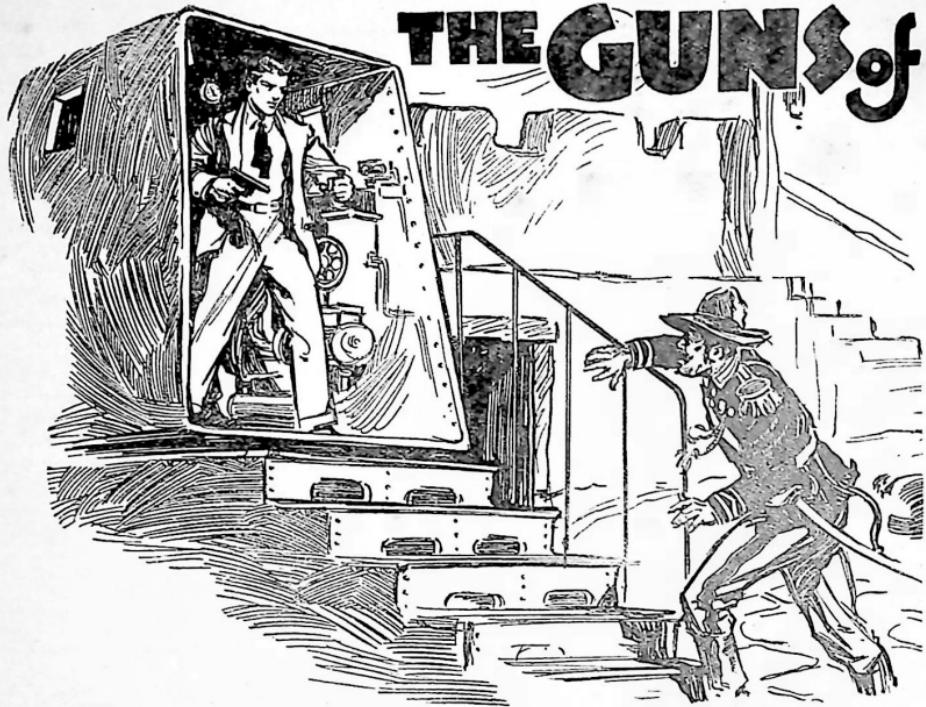
And Tom Merry & Co. walked back to the school, chuckling heartily over their peculiar experiences with the Yankee at St. Jim's.

THE END

# THE PROGRESS OF THE RAILWAY ENGINE



# THE GUNS of



## THE FIRST CHAPTER

### The Eve of a Revolution!

THE lad who had been lying still as death against the skylight heard a dull murmur of cheering from the lighted room below, and then began to wriggle his way snake-like across the flat roof towards the white parapet. Gaining this he cautiously raised his head and shoulders and peered over.

A gleam of light, filtering through a green-shuttered window, fell upon a bayonet and the shadowy figure of a sentry standing motionless in the darkness below.

The lad bobbed down and drew in his breath a little quickly.

The meeting in the room below was breaking

up. In the courtyard on the opposite side of the building he heard a car started up, and a blaze of light fell upon dark green trees in the distance as headlights were switched on.

There was no escape that way, and it was dangerous to linger. He peered over the parapet again.

The sentry still stood there—a big man in shabby blue uniform and equipment, a sombrero on his head, and his rifle with the glinting bayonet held at the ready. From the garden round the white

and green bungalow rose the somewhat sickly perfume of the night-scented tropical flowers of Central America.

The lad raised a leg over the parapet, then the other, and his cool blue eyes judged the

*Only control of the guns of Gumpoco Fort can save San Dorontes from the hands of rebels! Daring death, young Tim Rafferty sets out to save the city, and thereby experiences the biggest thrill of his life!*

# GUMPECO

*C. Malcolm Hincks*



distance between himself and the sentry. There was little margin for error with that bayonet so unpleasantly close! He put his hands on the parapet, gave himself a push off, and leapt.

He landed heavily on the sentry's shoulders, and with a cry of alarm the man pitched forward on his face, his rifle clanking on to a path. The lad had leapt up from the sentry's shoulders and was bursting through some shrubs before the man could recover sufficiently to let out a yell.

"Halt!"

The lad plunged on, taking a zigzag course. He tripped over a root and pitched forward.

Crack!

A bullet whistled over his head, stripping leaves in its passage.

"Faith, it was a lucky fall!" murmured the lad, and went plunging on.

Another rifle rang out on the still night,

but the shot went yards away. Then the boy heard a harsh commanding voice speaking in Spanish, shouting out an order to stop firing.

He knew why the order was given; they didn't want to advertise that meeting.

Vaulting a low fence, the lad came out on a hillside road. Down below, beyond the sleeping town, could be seen the twinkling lights of ships in San Dorontes harbour—silvery lights against a black background. The clock of the stately cathedral on the Plaza Grande was striking twelve. He had been two hours on that roof!

The lad raced on, but as he approached the outskirts of the town he slowed down to a quick walk. A car was coming up behind him, so he slipped into the garden in front of a small bungalow and, crouching by a bush, waited for it to pass. Powerful headlights lit up the garden for a moment, then it was in darkness again, and the lad was following the car down the hill.

Some distance farther on he turned off into a road, lit by street lights, of gaily-coloured bungalows. He kept to the shadows and glanced over his shoulder before he turned in at a white gateway. He went round to the back and whistled softly.

Almost instantly a door was opened.

"I thought they'd got you, Tim!" said a deep, agitated voice. "I'd never have forgiven myself for having let you go!"

"Faith, I'd never have forgiven you if you hadn't, uncle," was the cool reply. "Is there anything to eat?"

A burly figure moved along the passage, and Tim Rafferty followed his uncle into a room plainly furnished and carpeted with coconut matting. Some cold meat, a salad, and some fruit stood on a cane table. Ignoring the eager curiosity in his uncle's eyes, Tim flopped into a chair and began to eat ravenously, pouring himself out a glass of the light native wine of Bonduras, the small Central American republic of which San Dorontes was the capital and sea port.

"Your information was right this time, uncle," said Tim, his mouth half full. "It's odds on Manoel being president at sunrise in the morning."

" If that's right, Tim, it will break us ! Manoel hates the British. He'll not renew our concession, and without the concession it will mean winding up the company. Tell me quickly—what did you hear ? "

" Everything. I shinned up on to the roof just before ten, and before they'd put sentries round. The skylight was partly open for ventilation, and I knew enough Spanish to catch the drift of all that was said. It's to be a peaceful revolution—there's no treachery, of course. The post office and central telephone exchange were being handed over to Manoel's men at midnight, and no message will now be allowed through. San Dorontes is cut off from the world. In the early morning troops will march on the president's palace ; the blue flag of Manoel will be run up at sunrise, and that will be a signal for the gunboat in the harbour, and Gumpoco Fort to run up the blue flag, too. They reckon that even President Jose's most loyal troops will jib with the guns of Gumpoco trained upon the city ! "

The face of Tim's uncle, Donald Stewart, was now a little haggard. He had been manager for the British company in San Dorontes for ten years, and could soon look forward to comfortable retirement ; but the news his young nephew brought him spelled ruin. There had been rumours of revolution before. Manoel Mexatas had been scheming for years, but twice his plans had been nipped in the bud. This time, however, things had been managed differently. It was only that afternoon Mr. Stewart had heard a whisper of the coming revolution, with the result that the wild young son of the Irishman who had married his sister had volunteered to find out something more definite from Manoel's big bungalow on the hill above San Dorontes. The news he had learned seemed rather serious for his uncle.

" You took a ghastly risk, my boy, and three hours ago your information would have been worth a fortune, but it's too late now ; we can do nothing ! "

The lad—he was little more, despite the fact that he stood nearly six feet, with broad shoulders, deep chest, and the tapering form of the athlete—took an apple from the

plate and began to quite coolly peel it with a silver knife. His lean face was tanned, his fair hair tumbled and damp with perspiration, and there was a thoughtful expression in the cool, audacious blue eyes. The white drill suit he wore was soiled from his crawl on the roof and plunge through the shrubs.

" I thought we could do something," he said slowly, " if I could get into Fort Gumpoco."

His uncle, who had sunk dejectedly into a chair, looked up with a start.

" Tim, you're mad ! You took a ghastly risk in going to the bungalow on the hill to-night, but that would be child's play compared with even walking along the road towards Gumpoco."

" Faith, I like taking risks ; but I'd not be after walking along the road to Gumpoco. I'd be taking the mule track. Captain Cassilis is a friend of yours—he showed us over the fort only a few weeks ago. He's loyal to the president, and was sick at not being given the command. If I could get a word with him we might beat that blue-faced monkey Manoel yet ! "

His uncle gazed at him blankly.

" How ? "

" The guns of Gumpoco are the key to the situation ; they could smash San Dorontes to pieces. They've modern artillery there, and the gunboat is a mere pop-gun compared with it. A blue flag won't float for long above the palace or the gunboat if a red and orange flag floats over Fort Gumpoco ! "

The blue eyes were lit with excitement now. Tim Rafferty dropped the core of the apple into his plate and finished his glass of wine.

" But Cassilis is not in command of the fort."

" The man in command of the fort, and the man who rules Bonduras, is the man who can fire the guns of Gumpoco at sunrise ! " said Tim Rafferty, jumping to his feet. " Let me have your revolver, uncle. I've a feeling that I've got a sporting chance, and faith, I'm going to take it ! "

Mr. Stewart walked over to a desk, unlocked a drawer, and produced a small automatic.

" I think you're mad, Tim, and for heaven's



Judging the distance between him self and the rebels' sentry, Tim leapt down from the parapet, to land heavily on the unsuspecting man's shoulders !

sake don't use this unless it's to save your life. If your parents were alive I wouldn't dare to let you go; but you know the risk you're taking, and if you can get to Pedro Cassilis—another young daredevil like yourself—the situation might yet be saved. Hang it, boy, you've no brains in the office, but I admire your pluck!"

Tim Rafferty grinned cheerfully.

"If I bring this off will you let me go from the office?"

"If you bring this off, if you save the president, there'll be no need for you to worry about any office," was the hoarse, excited reply of his uncle.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER Daring Death !

THE city slept, but there were shadowy prowlers in and around San Dorontes that night—men on strange business, and men who waited for a signal at sunrise. High up on the rugged hill behind the city, invisible but ever-menacing in the darkness, was Fort Gumpoco.

Tim Rafferty, as he stole along in the shadows, was wearing a dark cloak over his white drill suit, and a sombrero on his fair head. He had started on the risky climb to the fort. Soon the road he was traversing gave place to a cart track. Later Tim knew this would in turn bring him to the long-disused mule track leading to the fort.

He was well on the alert as he moved quietly along, for he had narrowly escaped three furtive, armed figures patrolling the road he had just left. San Dorontes was cut off from the world, and there were men whose job it was to see that no one left the city that night.

Then suddenly, from a bush two yards ahead of Tim, appeared a cloaked figure, who spoke sharply in Spanish, and the lad was looking down the muzzle of a revolver.

A second's delay and the man would summon help, and his chance be gone; a movement towards the pocket where the automatic lay heavy against his side, and he would get a bullet, but—

Desperately he acted in a way the cloaked man did not expect. He doubled his right

fist and drove it with all his force right between the man's eyes, and, swift as lightning, brought his left up in a swinging hook under an unshaven jaw.

Clop !

The man, reeling from the first blow, went headlong backwards as he received the second, before he went to the ground heavily, out to the wide.

Tim stooped and picked up the man's revolver, slipped it into his own pocket, and went hurrying on, but proceeding with more caution. The man he had knocked out was probably a guard, but he might not be able to do the same to the next one he met.

Villas and bungalows had been left behind now. The track became rougher and narrower, until it ultimately tapered down into a stony path through long, coarse grass, rapidly steepening as it approached the fort a mile away at the top of the hill, with the last five hundred yards a precipitous climb up the face of the rock on which the fort had been built.

Tim went down on his hands and knees as he left the shelter of the stunted bushes, and crawled along between the tall grass. His eyes were used to the darkness now, but he knew that the eyes of the guards would be as sharp as his, and that round San Dorontes that night a man was likely to shoot first and apologise afterwards, if circumstances should demand an apology ! He knew full well that he was daring death to reach Fort Gumpoco.

His hands and knees ached and his progress was slow, but it was a long time before he felt it wise to get to his feet and hurry on. In the old days the track had been used by mules, being so much shorter than the journey by road, but nowadays it was forsaken.

It was growing a little lighter when Tim gained the last bad stretch. He had to go down on all fours again, partly because of the stiffness of the climb, but principally because the nearness of the fort, with alert sentries, made it highly advisable. As he crawled round a jagged rock he found himself facing a bayonet !

Tim's heart seemed to cease to beat. The bayonet was within a foot of his throat, and instinctively he threw up his hands, and

knelt motionless on that rough track, almost under the shadow of Fort Gumpoco.

The bayonet never moved; no challenge came from the still man behind it.

The icy grip left his heart. He peered closer, and as he did so, he dropped his right hand and grabbed from his pocket the automatic his uncle had lent him. No movement came from the sentry, and a somewhat sheepish grin spread over Tim's bronzed, audacious face. He had received a false shock, for the attitude of the man behind the bayonet ought to have told him that he had little or nothing to fear.

The sentry must have been posted on the mule track, and fallen asleep at his post. He lay huddled over his rifle, flat on his stomach, one arm doubled under him, the other flung out stiffly. As Tim crawled forward, levelling the automatic at the man's head, it struck him that there was something strange in the stiffness of that left arm which lay across his path; and then he caught in his breath with a faint exclamation of horror.

He was pointing his revolver at the head of a dead man!

He had been shot in the back some time ago, for Tim had heard no shot, and the body was cold and stiffening. With a little shudder Tim climbed on.

The discovery was disturbing. The man

Suddenly from a bush a few yards ahead appeared a cloaked figure which spoke sharply in Spanish, and Tim found himself looking at the muzzle of a gun!



had been shot from behind. If anyone else had been trying to gain admittance to Fort Gumpoco that night he would certainly not have shot a sentry in the back. Had he dared to shoot at all it would have been facing the man who had challenged.

The dead man must have been leaving the fort, and shot from that direction. Why?

Tim had enough problems of his own, but the problem puzzled him. It hardly tended to give him heart in the big risk before him. If he could gain the main entrance to the fort and get into the presence of Captain Pedro Cassilis, he would at least have a sporting chance of success, for the young officer was a friend of his uncle's, and had become quite friendly with Tim since the lad's arrival at his uncle's office six months ago.

The night was slowly turning to a smoky-grey now, as Tim wriggled on snake-like along the ground. He saw the silhouetted form of a sentry, and remained motionless, barely daring to breathe; then on again, crawling

over rough ground, among stunted, brambly bushes, until his sombrero got caught in a branch.

Bang !

No challenge—just the crack of a rifle ! The bullet whistled over his legs and pierced the sombrero on the bush.

A sharp command rang out within the fort. He heard heavy boots running along the wall as he made a wild dash for the shelter of it, just as two more rifles rang out.

Tim pressed against the wall as he moved slowly along.

" Halt ! Who goes there ? "

He had come upon the main gate before he had expected it, and a man in a blue uniform was holding a bayoneted rifle in close proximity to his stomach.

" A friend ! " replied Tim quickly. " A friend to see Captain Cassilis."

He spoke in good Spanish, and the mention of the name of the second in command at Fort Gumpeco had its effect upon the sentry.

" From whom do you come ? "

" From his friend, Mr. Stewart. I am British ! "

" You must come with me, señor, " said the sentry. " Put up your hands and walk in front of me. If you put down your hands, I shoot."

He pointed to the main gate a few yards away, where a little group of soldiers stood, and a non-commissioned officer strode forward and demanded to know who he was and what he was doing there.

Tim told the same story he had told the sentry, and he was marched in through the main gate, under an archway, and into a courtyard. A young officer came hurrying up, and looked a little bewildered.

" How did you get here ? " he demanded.

" I came by the old mule track. I did not want to be held up by sentries on the road route. There's a dead soldier lying two or three hundred yards down the track."

" A shot deserter, " said the officer shortly, and turned to a man beside him. " Inform Captain Cassilis of this man's visit. I will tell Colonel Almonde."

Tim was left standing in the courtyard with an armed man on either side of him, and he

was tingling with excitement. Everything depended upon his getting a word with Cassilis before the commander of the fort appeared on the scene.

Dawn was breaking now, and he looked quickly round him. The fort was an old-fashioned one. On three sides of the square were the officers' and men's quarters, store-rooms and kitchen, and on the fourth side, the only one approachable, and which dominated the city and harbour of San Dorontes, were the gun emplacements.

It seemed only the other day that Captain Pedro Cassilis had been showing him with pride those two modern nine-inch guns, electrically controlled and fired from a conning-tower on a steel platform above. Then everything had seemed peaceful ; but now there was an air of activity, of tension. He saw that the two big guns had their muzzles through the thick wall, and he thought of that fascinating instrument board in the conning-tower—the two little brass wheels which raised or deflected those wicked-looking muzzles, and the switch lever which could fire one or other gun, or the two together.

The guns had been unloaded then, and Cassilis had showed him how the mechanism worked. The Bondurian army was not famous for its gunners, but from that tower one trained officer could, unaided, control those two big guns, and Cassilis had learnt his gunnery with the Royal Artillery in England.

The guards beside Tim suddenly stiffened to attention, for the young officer was returning, and by his side walked a swarthy man in blue silk pyjamas and slippers feet, his black hair tumbled, and rubbing sleepy eyes. On his upper lip was a small black moustache, and his fascinating smile revealed perfect white teeth.

" Hullo, Rafferty ! " he said in excellent English, with only the slightest accent. " You've a nerve to come here ! I'm practically under arrest. I felt certain that there was something up, and I sent a man to tell the president that the big guns were loaded, and that it meant mischief. They shot the man before he could get clear, and I'm under open arrest for a breach of discipline. This means revolution, I know that. Almonde must

be backing that blue-faced monkey Manoel. What news have you brought ? "

" Can these men speak English ? "

" No."

" Then you can stop the revolution ! " cried Tim. " Your commander is a traitor, so is the captain of the gunboat in the harbour. Manoel's no stomach for a fight. He's got a few disgruntled officers and the rag-tag and bobtail civil guard, who would sell their souls for sixpence. Manoel's relying on those guns. Faith, man, get to that tower and you'll be ruler of Bonduras ! "

Cassilis stared at him blankly ; but before Tim could explain, there was a clatter in the courtyard, and in the grey morning light a short, thick-set man in a blue uniform with much gold lace upon it, came striding across the courtyard. He was buckling on his sword as he walked—a sallow-faced man with a heavy black moustache and small, pointed black beard.

" Arrest those men ! " he snapped in Spanish.

Cassilis, still a little dazed, was unprepared for the move, and two soldiers stepped up to him and seized his arms. The third soldier, who had been standing beside Tim, his bayoneted rifle held at the ready, evidently considered that the young man was, to all intents and purposes, already under arrest, and made no move.

But Tim made a move. Success or failure, probably life or death, depended upon what he did in the next few moments. It was only swift action and the element of surprise that could save him now. He could not rely upon Pedro Cassilis.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Control of the Guns!

**I**N a flash the long black cloak he wore was off Tim's shoulders and thrown upon the soldier beside him, and he was sprinting for the steps leading to the control-tower above the two big guns.

" Stop him ! "

He had gained the foot of the steps before the astounded commander rapped out the order to his dazed men.

Bang ! A bullet whistled past Tim's ear.

He leapt up the steel steps, and as he gained the tower, a rifle cracked out again.

Phut ! A bullet flattened itself against the thick wall of the fort.

Tim hastily gripped the lever which controlled the firing of the two big guns of Gumpoco, thankful that he knew the right one.

" Put down your rifles or I'll blow your town to blazes ! " he shouted in Spanish. Colonel Almonde, his face ashen, shouted a hoarse command as he moved nearer to the steps.

Tim Rafferty knew that at any moment his bluff might be called by a rush up those steps, or a bullet put through his head ; but, despite his peril, he was perfectly cool.

He stood in a compartment of steel something like a locomotive cab, shielded at the front and sides and roofed over, but open at the back to the steps and courtyard. At the foot of the steps stood the officer commanding the fort, his face livid. Beyond him was the young Spanish officer in blue silk pyjamas, with a sentry on either side of him, and behind them the members of the small garrison who were standing open-mouthed gazing up at Tim, waiting to see what happened.

Putting his left hand on the switch lever, Tim whipped out his uncle's automatic as Colonel Almonde put a foot on the first step.

" Stand back and keep your men back or I fire these guns ! "

The colonel took his foot off the step. He was not a quick thinker, and he wanted to gain time, to try to reason with this lunatic who had taken them by surprise.

" I want to talk to you, boy—I will show mercy. Come down here and I will——"

" I've told you what I shall do if a rifle is raised against me, and if I was shot I should fire the guns in falling."

That was a probability that had not been overlooked by the worried commander.

" You would not kill hundreds of innocent people ! "

" I don't want to. I shan't unless you kill or attempt to kill me ; but I'm not worrying much about it. I shouldn't be alive to have any worry. You would have the worrying to do until the population of San Dorontes either shot or hanged you. I expect it would

be lynching, colonel ; they're rather an excitable crowd ! ”

A yellowish hand stroked the bull neck above the gold-braided collar of the blue tunic.

The rising sun suffused the clear sky over the hills. The day of the revolution was dawning, but unless Colonel Almonde acted quickly there was a possibility of the revolution being quashed before it had started.

Then suddenly there was a stir in the courtyard ; the smashing of flesh against flesh and bone against bone. Tim saw a soldier holding both hands to his face, another lying on his back, and Captain Cassilis was dashing across the courtyard to the steps of the control-tower.

“ It's all right, Rafferty,” cried the captain calmly, as he pushed by Colonel Almonde. “ Good work on your part. Keep Almonde covered.” He sprang up the steps and began turning one of the brass wheels ; a wicked-looking gun took a higher elevation, and swung round a little. “ Almonde had it trained on the cavalry barracks of the palace —the loyal soldiers of President Jose.”

Pedro Cassilis studied the sights, and then still keeping his hand on the lever, he turned to the young officer and pointed to the colonel.

“ Arrest that traitor ! ”

Almonde's hand moved towards the sword at his side.

“ Drop that ! ”

Tim Rafferty's voice was sharp and commanding. The Bondurian colonel looked up into narrowed, cold blue eyes, and his hand fell to his side. The nervous young officer stepped up to him.

“ In the name of the president I take command here ! ” cried Captain Cassilis. “ You will obey my orders ! Tie the traitor to that gun until I've time to deal with him.”

The young officer had the order carried out. Whatever feelings the troops might have had in the matter they were quite willing to bind their colonel to one of the old guns that were still in the courtyard.

As the sun rose, and the waters of San Dorontes harbour gleamed blue beyond the white and green of the city, a young man in

blue pyjamas and a boy in stained white drill commanded the guns of Gumpoco.

“ Where's the flag ? ” demanded Cassilis.

A soldier stepped forward with a blue flag.

“ The colonel told me this flag, captain,” he said, a little uncomfortably.

“ I tell you the president's flag ; go and get it.”

The man saluted and moved quickly away. The staff above the big white palace far below remained bare, but out in the harbour a blue flag rose slowly to the mast of the gunboat, and broke out in the slight breeze.

Not knowing who was in command at the fort, the captain of the gunboat had had the rebels' flag hoisted as arranged. Captain Cassilis smiled to himself as he put his hand on the lever that fired the first gun. He would give the captain a broad hint to have it hauled down. Then——

Boooooom !

The roar was so terrific, so unexpected, that Tim put his hands to his ears. He saw number one gun shoot back, quivering like a thing of life ; heard a screaming whistle and an explosion, and just beyond the gunboat a great mass of water rose in the air. The tubby warship rocked, and small craft danced wildly on the disturbed water. Then the blue flag fluttered to the deck as an agitated artilleryman ran up the red and yellow flag above Fort Gumpoco.

Tim grinned.

“ That's the sort of language they understand ! ” he said.

Pedro Cassilis was training the other gun on the palace.

“ Young Rafferty,” he said, smiling, his white teeth gleaming under his little black moustache, “ we proclaim ourselves Presidents of Bonduras until a flag goes up over the palace. You were right ; it's the man who can fire the guns of Gumpoco who dominates the situation. It will never happen again ; the politicians will see to that. But for the moment, boy, we're more powerful than kings, and we've beaten that traitor Manoel.”

With the red and yellow flag flying over Fort Gumpoco, and that extremely strong hint from the fort to the gunboat to haul



Stop him!" Tim had reached the foot of the steps before the command rang out. Bang! A bullet whistled past the boy's ear.

down Manoel's flag, the conspirators' scheme was ruined. The shot had roused the city.

Cassilis handed Tim a pair of binoculars, and looking through them, Tim could see people scurrying about the Plaza Grande, and a body of horsemen riding out from the quadrangle of the president's palace; but the flag-staff of the palace and the mast of the gunboat remained bare.

"Why not give them another hint to run up the right flag?" said Tim calmly.

"Good idea!" agreed the captain, and raised the elevation of the other gun.

Boooooom!

This time the shell exploded dangerously near to the gunboat. Through the drifting smoke which floated in front of the fort, Tim, still looking through the powerful glasses, saw a commotion on the deck of the antique battleship, and the red and yellow flag was run up to the masthead. At the same moment the flag of President Jose broke from the mast on the flat roof of the white palace.

The guns of Gumpeco had won!

Half-an-hour later Captain Cassilis, in blue and gold uniform, a cigarette between his lips, joined Tim in the control-tower.

"I had some delay in getting through to the president. Apparently Manoel had a big pull in that department, and more or less backed on it. The telephone operator said he had orders to put no messages through. I told him that if my connection was not put through at once I would blow the exchange to blazes, and I've never had a quicker connection to the palace.

"Don Jose was only half awake, and had no idea how close he had been to being deposed; but I told him that it was through you that he was still President of Bonduras, and he was duly grateful. There's been a little rioting in the streets, but no real damage done, and all is quiet now. They're sending some loyal troops up to arrest Almonde, and I hope they get him."

Tim grinned.

"I suppose in a revolution they can't think of everything, captain, but, faith, Manoel was a mug to back on bossing the telephones instead of the electricity department."

The cigarette fell from the captain's suddenly-opened mouth.

"By Jove, yes! If they'd cut off the current from the cable which runs up here the big guns would have been out of action. But they weren't to know who was in command up here."

Tim was watching a body of horsemen in white uniforms and red-plumed silvery helmets riding up the winding road to the fort.

"I suppose not; but when I grabbed that lever it suddenly flashed on me that the current might have been cut off, and for a second I expected Almonde to shoot. When I saw he was windy I felt all right, for whether the current was on or off didn't matter two hoots so long as he thought it was on; but I'm glad he didn't call my bluff."

They went down into the courtyard, where the guard was turned out, and the gates opened. Bayonets flashed in the sunshine as the guard presented arms, and a grizzled, scarred officer of the President's Horse-guards came up to Tim and Captain Cassilis and shook hands with them.

"The president is greatly impressed by your pluck and daring, Senor Rafferty. Manoel has been arrested and is to be deported. We shall want an account of what you heard and saw from the roof of his bungalow, and a suitable reward for your services is to be paid you."

"And he deserves it!" said Captain Pedro Cassilis.

The officer of the guard looked at Tim.

"I can't think, now, why you should have risked your life in a purely political matter which was no concern of yours."

Tim Rafferty grinned cheerfully.

"But it concerned my uncle very much, and, faith, the adventure was worth the risk and the chance of getting free of office work!"

THE END

## CLASSICS v MODERNS CRICKET



### By the Rookwood Rhymester

WE'VE done with footer boots and balls ;  
The football season's finished ;  
But "Moderns versus Classicals"  
Continues undiminished.

For now upon the cricket pitch  
In flannels they are present ;  
Still friends but deadly rivals ; which,  
Upon the whole, is pleasant.

Silver at the wicket now  
A forceful bat is wielded,  
While Modern fellows show us how  
Extremely well they're fielding.  
As Lovell makes a splendid hit  
Off Lacey's tricky bowling,  
We see old Doddy jump at it—  
Upon the ground he's rolling.

He's clutched the ball and held it tight,  
And to his feet has jumped,  
While Lovell scrambles back in fright ;  
But just too late, he's stumped !  
A pretty piece of fielding that ;  
The crowd with glee is roaring  
As Mornington comes out to bat  
And carries on the scoring.

The Classics are all out at tea ;  
They've totalled ninety-seven.  
The Moderns rub their hands with glee  
And cheer their bold eleven.  
It's quite a decent total ; still,  
The Moderns look like winning ;  
But Tommy Cook gets out for nil—  
A rather bad beginning.

It's five to six ! Ten runs to win !  
One wicket yet to fall !  
Dodd and Wadsley still are in  
As Conroy takes the ball.  
A boundary ! Another four !  
By Jove, exciting cricket !  
Another hit ! The Moderns roar !  
They've won it by a wicket.

# GETTING THEIR OWN BACK !



When Herr Kinkel, the German master of Rookwood, vents his vengeance on Jimmy Silver & Co. it recoils on himself in an unexpected and humorous manner.

## THE FIRST CHAPTER Under Detention.

JIMMY SILVER & Co. were down on their luck.

It was really Jimmy Silver's fault.

Nature had endowed Jimmy Silver with a plentiful gift of humour. Nature had been extremely niggardly in that respect with Herr Kinkel, the German master at Rookwood. Hence the trouble.

As Jimmy Silver was on the Classical side at Rookwood, and the German master's activities were confined to the Modern side—for the Classicals did not take German—Jimmy had nothing to do with Herr Kinkel.

He might have steered quite clear of Herr Kinkel. And it would have been only prudent to steer clear of Herr Kinkel, for the Herr was not a nice-tempered man.

But that was where Jimmy Silver's humorous proclivities came in. Jimmy Silver

By OWEN CONQUEST

maintained that it was all old Kinkel's fault, and his chums—Raby and Lovell and Newcombe—agreed with him. Unfortunately, his Form-master, Mr. Bootles, did not. Mr. Bootles did not see eye to eye with the Fourth-Formers.

It came about in this wise. Herr Kinkel had lately received a copy of a celebrated German song.

Naturally, Herr Kinkel tried over the music, and his deep voice boomed out the expressive words; and the Fistical Four came along in the quad, and heard that boomerang proceeding from the window of the German master's study—like unto the roar of a megaphone.

So Jimmy Silver chimed in, without pausing to reflect, putting in a loud and prolonged squeak at every pause in the metre,

so that Herr Kinkel's vocal efforts, with Jimmy Silver's assistance, sounded like nothing on earth !

Lovell and Raby and Newcome howled with laughter. A crowd of fellows gathered round in great merriment. Even Tommy Dodd & Co., of the Modern side, who were generally up against Jimmy Silver & Co., joined heartily in the squeaking, and in the roars of laughter which accompanied it.

Herr Kinkel's song ceased suddenly. He "went off song" as he realised that there was a merry demonstration under his study window.

He leaned out of the window, his fat face crimson with rage, and shook a fat fist at the juniors.

"Ach ! You sheek me !" he howled. " You sheek me, mit you ! I reports tat to your Form-master, Silber ! "

Which he promptly did ; and Mr. Bootles, with a lack of humour which lowered him considerably in the estimation of his pupils, sentenced Jimmy Silver & Co. to detention for the afternoon.

It was a half-holiday that afternoon, and a glorious day.

All Rookwood was out of doors.

From the windows of the Form-room the Fistical Four could see their old rivals, Tommy Dodd & Co., enjoying themselves on the cricket-ground. They could see a cheery crowd refreshing themselves with ginger-beer at the school shop. They could see fellows reading the "Ranger" under the old beeches.

And they were detained.

They were down on their luck. Half-holidays came only twice a week, and there were so many things to do on a half-holiday—cricket, rowing, cycling, ragging the Moderns, or looking for a row with the juniors of Bagshot School.

They groaned over the lines Mr. Bootles had given them to do. And they looked from the windows. They felt inclined to sing a Hymn of Hate with Herr Kinkel as its object.

Jimmy Silver snorted.

"All because those Modern worms must mug up German instead of Latin," he said bitterly. "If there wasn't a Modern side at

Rookwood there wouldn't be a German master. It's all the fault of those caddish Moderns ! "

"Oh, it's rotten !" groaned Raby. " Think of a walk over the downs now, and tea at the old farm ! "

"Or a run down to the sea, and a bathe !" grunted Newcome.

"Oh, don't !" growled Jimmy Silver. " You make me want to go for Kinkel with a ruler !

"Let's hook it !" he concluded desperately.

"Oh ! "

"Bootles has gone out ; he'll never know. Let's chance it ! "

Lovell and Raby and Newcome looked serious. Breaking detention was a serious matter. But the blue sky, dotted with drifting clouds ; the soft whisper of the wind from the sea, seemed to call to them. They thought of the open, breezy downs, and looked round the dusty old class-room, and made up their minds.

"I'm game !" said Lovell.

"If there's a row, there's a row !" said Jimmy Silver recklessly. "I don't care ! I mean, I do care, but not enough to stick in here. It's wicked to stay indoors on a day like this ! "

"Hear, hear ! Come on ! "

Lovell hurled his Virgil across the room. Raby pitched his pen on the floor, and jumped on it. The Fistical Four made a rush for the Form-room door, resolved to make a bid for liberty and chance the results.

They came out into the deserted passage with a rush. They could have whooped with glee at the prospect of freedom.

But just as they reached the end of the passage a bulky form loomed up before them, and two little spiteful light eyes blinked at them over an enormous pair of spectacles.

"Was denn ! Where you go ? "

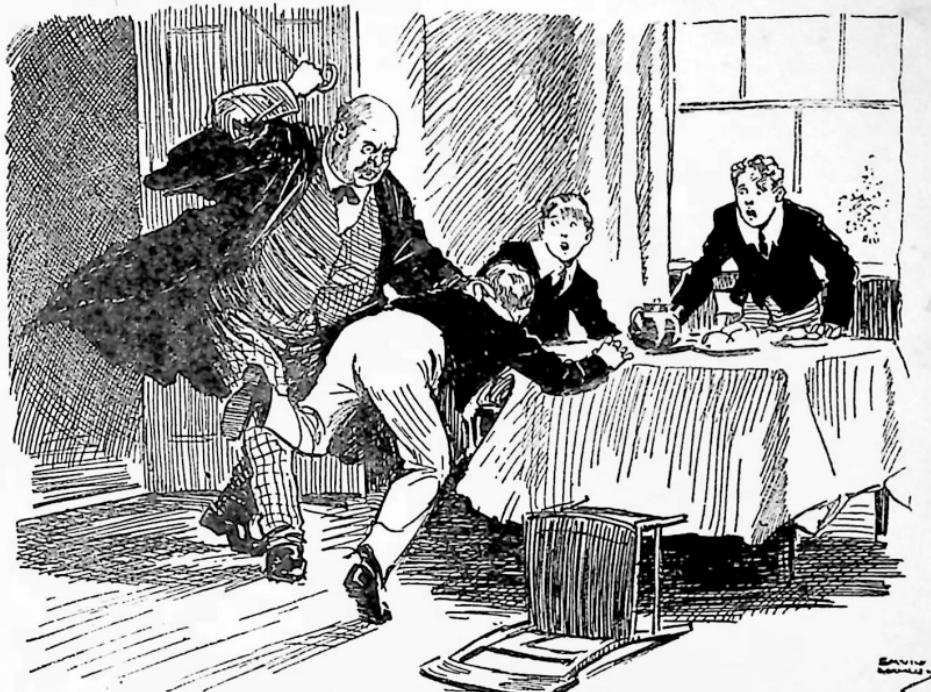
The Fistical Four halted in blank dismay. Herr Kinkel stood before them.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

Keeping Watch.

HERR KINKEL blinked at the juniors.

The juniors blinked at Herr Kinkel. For a moment there was a desperate thought



The short-sighted Herr Kinkel dragged Pankley off his chair, and the unhappy junior let out a wild yell as the master's cane came down on his trousers : Whack ! Whack ! Whack !

in their minds of rushing the German master, bumping him down in the passage, and escaping over his breathless body. But they checked that wild impulse. The consequences would have been too dreadfully serious.

" You preak pounds, isn't it ? " said Herr Kinkel, with a disagreeable smile. " I tinks tat Mr. Pootles, he order you to stay in till six o'clock."

" Ye-e-es ! " growled Jimmy Silver.

" And now it is tree o'clock."

" Ahem ! " said Lovell.

" I tink you know tat Mr. Pootles is gone out mit himself, and you tink tat you preak pounds. But I tink of tat meinself, and I keeps open mein eye. You goes pack to your detention."

Jimmy Silver clenched his fists. He would have given a whole term's pocket-money to

" land " Herr Kinkel one on his nose. Instead of which, he had to go back to the Form-room.

In the lowest possible spirits the Fistical Four returned to their detention. They sat down at their desks with glum faces.

Herr Kinkel followed them as far as the doorway and blinked in at them.

" You keeps here," he said. " I tinks I keeps an eye open, hein. I smokes mein pipe at te end of te passage, and if you gum out vunce more, I see you. Den I dakes you to der Head mit you."

And Herr Kinkel waddled away.

Jimmy Silver and his comrades looked at one another with feelings almost too deep for words.

" Did you ever ? " gasped Jimmy.

" Hardly ever ! " groaned Lovell.

" The fat Hun has been spying on us in case we cleared."

"And now he's sitting by the passage window, smoking his beastly pipe, and keeping his beastly eye open, and reading his beastly German newspapers!" said Newcome.

"Oh, dear!"

With their spirits at zero, the Fistical Four settled down to do lines. But after a quarter of an hour Jimmy Silver jumped up. He could hear the cheery shouts from the cricket-field. It was simply impossible to do lines that afternoon!

"Chuck that rot!" said Jimmy Silver. "I've got a wheeze."

Lovell and Raby and Newcome looked up hopefully.

"What's the little game?"

"Even Germans have some human feelings," said Jimmy Silver. "Old Kinkel must have a heart tucked away somewhere under the layers of fat. Let's go and speak nicely to him. We'll tell him we're sorry we squeaked—we are sorry, ain't we? I've never been sorrier for anything in my natural."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It's against the law to kill him, so let's try soft sawder. He must have some human feelings somewhere," argued Jimmy Silver.

"Well, he may have—appearances are deceptive," agreed Lovell. "Let's try."

Four hopeful youths quitted the Form-room and walked down the passage. Just round the corner was a big window with a deep window-seat, and there Herr Kinkel sat smoking his German pipe and reading his German paper. He blinked up severely at the sight of the Fistical Four.

"I tinks tat it is not six o'clock," he said sarcastically.

"No, sir," said Jimmy Silver, with deep respect. "We only want to speak to you, sir. We—we should like to hear you sing that nice song, sir, if you would."

"Vat!"

"And if you would kindly forgive us, sir, we will never squeak any more when you are singing so beautifully, sir," said Raby.

"And—and we've got something special on this afternoon, sir," said Jimmy Silver. "We've ordered tea in advance at the Downside Farm, and we shall have to pay for it even if we don't go."

"So if you'd let us off, sir—"

"I vill do noozing of te kind, you bad, sheeky poys. In Chermany te poys do not sheek deir masters—dey tremble at deir frown."

"Must be a spoony lot!" murmured Newcome.

"Vat!"

"I—I mean, sir, we—we don't mind trembling at your frown, sir, if—if you like."

"Go pack mit you!" thundered Herr Kinkel.

"But, sir—"

"Go pack, or I boxes you mit te ears!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

Soft sawder was evidently wasted upon Herr Kinkel.

The Fistical Four went back into the Form-room dolorously.

"It's all up!" groaned Jimmy Silver. "We've got to stick it. If there's a dead, fat pig found about Rookwood some day, you'll know that Kinkel brought it on himself."

The juniors looked dolorously out of the windows. Tommy Dodd was scoring runs on Little Side, and the Moderns were cheering him. Smythe of the Shell was lounging elegantly in the quad, his eyeglass gleaming in his eye, talking "gee-gees" to Tracy and Howard.

"Hallo! Is that how you kids do your detention tasks?"

The Fistical Four spun round from the window. Bulkeley of the Sixth, the captain of Rookwood, had come in. He gave them a good-humoured smile.

"Oh, I say, Bulkeley, be a good chap and get us off!" said Jimmy Silver. "We didn't do anything—only pulled a German leg."

"Think of being shut up till six on a day like this," said Lovell beseechingly.

Bulkeley grinned.

"I saw you outside Kinkel's window," he said. "You young rascals!"

"Well, ought a blessed Hun to sing his blessed German songs here?" demanded Raby.

"Never mind that. Mr. Bootles spoke to me before he went out—"

"Eh?"

"And told me to come in at half-past three and tell you you could go."

"Oh, my hat!"

"If you've done a hundred lines each."

"Hurray!"

"He thinks that will be sufficient," said Bulkeley. "How much have you done?"

"Well, we—we've done some," said Jimmy Silver, wishing that he had been more industrious.

"Well, make it up to a hundred each, and clear," said Bulkeley.

And with a nod, the kind-hearted captain of Rookwood left the Form-room. Jimmy Silver & Co. exchanged ecstatic glances.

"Isn't he a brick?" murmured Jimmy Silver. "I know he put in a word for us to Bootles, though he doesn't say so. Bulkeley's got us off, my sons. I'll always back up Bulkeley through thick and thin—and down with the Modern cads! Buck up with those rotten lines!"

Four pens worked at a feverish rate over the impot paper. Never was Latin written at so terrific a speed before.

At the end of the hundredth line Jimmy Silver leaped up with a whoop, threw his pen in one direction, and his Virgil in another, and chirruped:

"Free! Free as giddy birdlets in the sky! Buck up, you slackers. Now we'll walk past Kinkel and smile at him! He will turn pink; he will turn green; he will turn purple and blue! Hurray!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Herr Kinkel on the Track.

JIMMY SILVER paused in the doorway of the Form-room, and dragged his chums to a halt.

"Hold on!"

"Rats! Come on!" said Lovell impatiently. "I want to get out!"

"Hold on, I tell you! Kinkel's still watching there—you can see his smoke curling round the corner."

"Well, what about it?"

"That shows that he doesn't know we're let off!"

"Well, Bulkeley wouldn't mention it to

him—he doesn't like Kinkel," said Lovell. "He doesn't know the old oyster is spying on us, either. Why should he tell him?"

"No reason why he should—and he hasn't," said Jimmy Silver. "Kinkel still thinks we're detained up to six o'clock."

"He'll stop us as we go by, and we can tell him."

"That's what I'm coming to. We're not going to tell him."

"Then he won't let us pass."

"We'll sneak down to the corner on tiptoe, and make a sudden rush, and get past before the beast can stop us," whispered Jimmy Silver. "He'll think we're breaking bounds—see? He'll report us to Bootles later—to get us a licking—and then he can find out that we were entitled to scoot—see? Let the old josser put his foot in it."

"Good egg!"

"And it will be ripping to hear him rave when we scoot. He'll call us back, but as he's only a rotten Modern master, we needn't take any notice. He can't give orders on this side. Now Bootles has let us off, we can snap our fingers at him. This is where we get a bit of our own back! Come on, and not a word, mind!"

The chums of the Fourth, grinning gleefully, crept on tiptoe down to the corner of the passage. Jimmy Silver peered round the corner. Herr Kinkel was reading his German newspaper, but he was keeping an eye open. He spotted Jimmy at once.

"Silber! You——"

"Run for it!" shouted Jimmy.

The Fistical Four came round the corner like hares.

Herr Kinkel jumped up, dropping his pipe and his newspaper. But he was not quick enough for the young rascals of the Fourth.

They were past before he could make a grab at them, and they disappeared down the passage as if on the cinder-path.

"Stop mit you!" shouted Herr Kinkel. "Young rasgals tat you are! You gum pack!"

But the juniors did not "gum pack."

They kept on at top speed and vanished, and came out into the quadrangle, gasping and grinning. They had only paused in the hall to snatch up their caps, but not even to put

them on. They put them on in the quad and trotted towards the gates.

There was a shout from the cricket-field. Bulkeley was there now, and he was batting against Knowles's bowling. The Fistical Four turned towards the cricket-ground, but only for a moment. Herr Kinkel came raging out of the School House, and the Fistical Four ran on to the gates.

"Stop!"

The Fistical Four turned a deaf ear.

They were quickly out of the gates of Rookwood, and in the lane they slackened down and burst into a merry chortle.

"Hold on," said Jimmy Silver. "The old ruffian may come after us! That would be the giddy lid on! Cover!"

The Fistical Four promptly took cover among the trees beside the road. They peeped out in the direction of the school gates.

Out from the old stone gateway came a fat and ponderous form. Herr Kinkel stopped in the road, hatless, and breathing like a pair of very old bellows. He blinked up the road and he blinked down the road, and he snorted with rage as he failed to spot the juniors.

"Aber ich weiss—ich weiss!" the Fourth-Formers heard him mutter; and he went back to the gates and disappeared.

"Was he gargling, or saying something?" said Lovell. "You never can tell when it's a German."

"He was saying 'I know—I know!'" said Jimmy Silver. "Of course, we told him we were going to tea at Dowsdale Farm. I rather fancy he's gone back for something, and is coming after us!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It will take him some time!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "We'll have had tea by the time he gets there. It doesn't seem to occur to the old duffer that we've got leave."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four started merrily across the fields. The thought of the fat German tramping a couple of miles over hill and dale to recapture them at the farm made them yell with laughter. For, as they had leave from their Form-master, he had no authority to interfere with them there, and he would have his long tramp for nothing. Not that the

young rascals intended to give him any information on that point. They were already looking forward to leading Herr Kinkel a dance all the afternoon.

How could a half-holiday be better spent?

Jimmy Silver & Co. breathed joyously in the fresh sunny air as they walked across the green fields. They were happy to be out of doors again.

About a mile on their way was a stile they had to cross, and on that stile three youths in Bagshot caps were seated in a row. They were Pankley, Putter, and Poole of the Fourth Form at Bagshot School, who were in the habit of letting off their superabundance of youthful exuberance in rows and rags with the Rookwood fellows. They made no movement to get off the stile as the Fistical Four came up.

"Hallo!" said Pankley affably. "Been falling down, Silver?"

"Falling down?" said Jimmy. "No!"

"What's that on your face, then?"

"My face? There's nothing on it, is there?"

"Yes, rather—right in the middle of it!" said Pankley, squinting at him. "Looks like a small saveloy, or a large gooseberry!"

"Why, what?" Jimmy Silver passed his hand over his face, but felt nothing out of the usual there.

"By Jove!" said Pankley, in astonishment. "It's all right, Silver! My mistake. Only your nose."

"Why, you silly ass—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Bagshot trio. "Only your nose, Silver! Didn't recognise it at first as a nose!"

"Shift those silly asses!" said Jimmy Silver. "Why, what are you cackling at?" he added, glaring at his comrades.

"Oh, nothing!" grinned Lovell. "We'll soon shift 'em!"

"Here, mind what you're at!" roared Pankley, as Jimmy Silver seized his ankles. "Leggo! Why, I'll—Oh, my hat! Yow-ow-ow!"

Pankley slid over the stile and alighted gently on his head in a patch of mud. Poole and Putter joined him there.

The Fistical Four vaulted over the stile



Splash ! "Ach, Gott !" The plank slipped from the stone and Herr Kinkel lost his balance and flopped down into the water.

and walked on, leaving the Bagshot juniors to sort themselves out.

"Why, the cheeky bounders are after us !" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, looking back from the other side of the field and seeing the three Bagshot juniors in hot pursuit.

"Let 'em come up !" said Lovell. "We'll soon make 'em tired of chasing us ! "

"Give 'em a run for it," said Jimmy Silver. "Old Kinkel has started already. No time to waste on them."

"Look here, I'm not going to run away from Bagshot bounders ! "

"Bog-wow ! Follow your leader ; we can lick them any time."

Jimmy Silver started, and his comrades followed him, though reluctantly. They didn't like turning their backs on the enemy. But Jimmy Silver was the acknowledged leader of the Fistical Four.

"Yah ! Stop ! Funks !" shouted Pankley. Even that did not move Jimmy Silver. He kept on at a steady run, and his comrades kept on with him.

The Bagshot juniors, much surprised to see four fellows running from three, chased them at top speed across the fields. But the Rookwooders kept well ahead, and reached Dowsdale Farm fifty yards in front of their pursuers.

Jimmy Silver paused in the doorway of the farmhouse to kiss his hand at the pursuers, and then the Fistical Four went in.

#### THE FOURTH CHAPTER Mistaken Identity.

"THIS is something like !" remarked Jimmy Silver.

A quiet dusky room, with little diamond-paned windows looking out on a wide stretch

of orchard and cornfield. A table covered with a spotless cloth, and the whitest of bread, the freshest of eggs, the purest of butter, and the best of home-made jam. It was really something like!

The stout, good-tempered farmer's wife brought in the tea. Jimmy Silver's face wore an expression of great satisfaction. Lovell and Raby and Newcome were not looking so satisfied. They did not like having run away from the Bagshot bounders.

Outside the farmhouse, Pankley & Co. had come to a halt. They could not very well carry the war into the farmhouse.

"Everything you want, young gentlemen?" asked Mrs. Tootle.

"Yes, thanks!" said Jimmy Silver. "This is something like. What are you fellows looking grumpy about?"

"What have we run away from those bounders for?" demanded Lovell.

"Three more cups, now I come to think of it, Mrs. Tootle," said Jimmy Silver, unheeding; and his comrades stared.

"Yes, Master Silver."

"What's the little game?" yelled Lovell.

"We're going to ask our friends outside to tea."

"Ask 'em to tea!" said Lovell sulphurously.

"Certainly!"

"What for?" howled Raby.

"Because Herr Kinkel is such a short-sighted old chap."

"Eh?"

"What?"

"Which?"

"Leave it to your Uncle Jimmy," said Silver reassuringly. "You know I've got the brains of the firm."

"You've got the face!" growled Lovell.

"And the cheek! And the neck!"

Jimmy Silver stepped to the open window. He waved his hand to the three Bagshot juniors outside.

"You fellows looking for anybody?" he called out.

"Yah! Funk!" bawled Putter.

"How would you like some tea?"

"What?"

"Our treat!" said Jimmy Silver.

## Helping a Fugitive

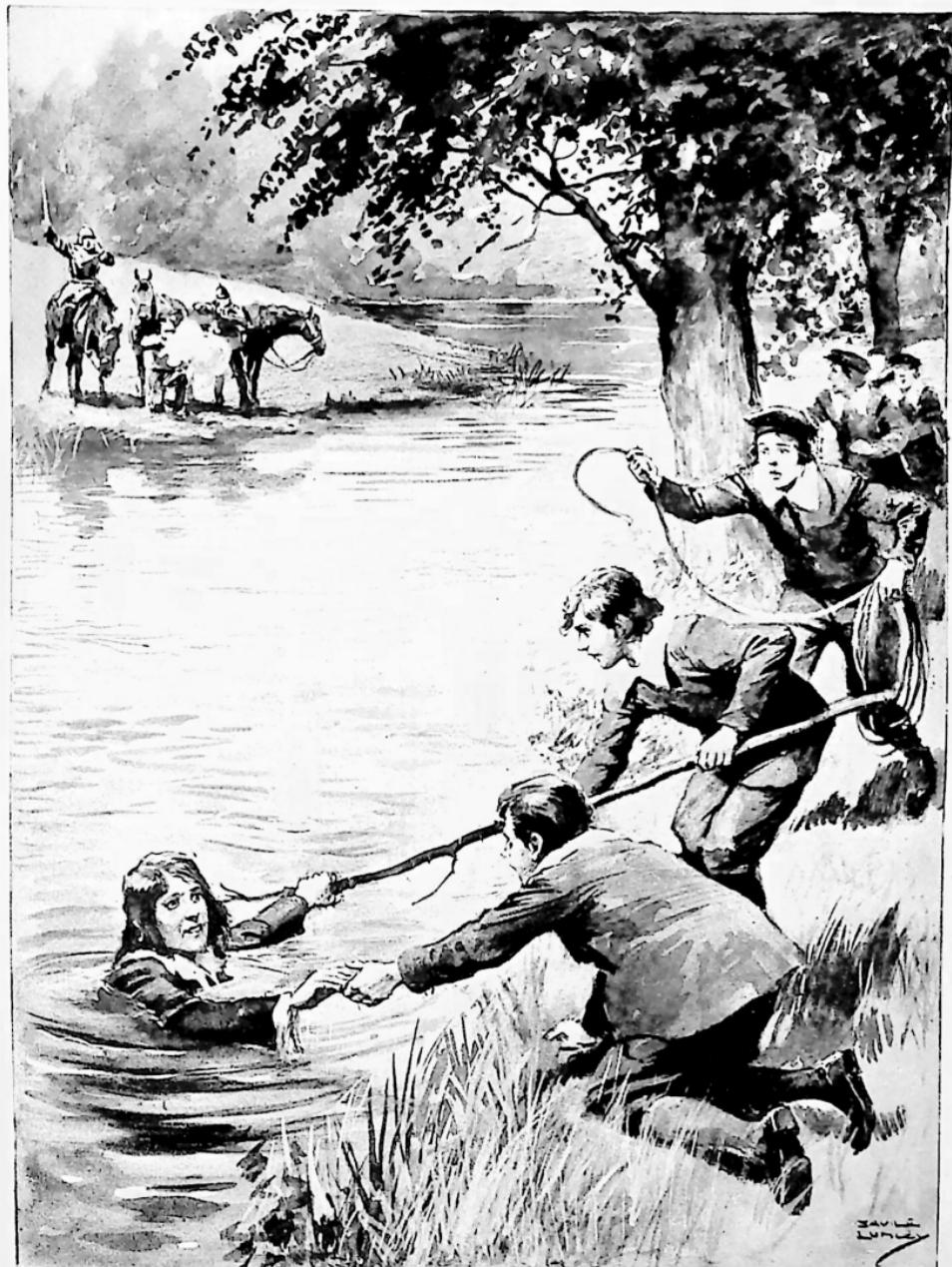
WHEN the army of Charles I was defeated at the Battle of Naseby in 1645 by Oliver Cromwell's Ironsides most of the Royalists still standing were taken prisoners. A few escaped, however, and among them was James Fairley—a staunch adherent to the Stuart cause and an old Rookwood boy.

With Cromwell's victorious soldiers following relentlessly on his heels, Fairley made in the direction of Hampshire. At the back of his mind was the hope that if he could reach the confines of Rookwood, the authorities there, whose sympathies were with the Royalists, would shelter him until it was safe to leave the country. Hunted and barried for days without a break, the fugitive, in a state of utter exhaustion, finally reached the bank of the river not far from the school. Behind him in full cry were three mounted troopers, and capture seemed certain. With the courage of despair, Fairley plunged into the water and struck out for the other side.

The shouts of the mounted soldiers brought five Rookwood juniors, who had been lounging under the trees, to their feet; and curiously enough one of the schoolboys was Fairley's own son! The first shock of that surprise meeting over, Fairley junior showed himself to be a cool hand. While he snatched up a branch and held it out to his exhausted father, one of his chums procured a rope.

Meanwhile, the infuriated troopers had dismounted and were recklessly firing their muskets at the bobbing head of their quarry. Their aim was wild, however, and after anxious minutes, Fairley senior was dragged ashore by willing hands and rushed off to the woods.

When the baffled Roundheads, who obviously could not swim, had reached the spot, after traversing four miles to the nearest bridge, there was no sign either of the fugitive or his schoolboy rescuers. Furious at their failure they thereupon gave up the chase; but a close search of Rookwood School, a mile distant, would have revealed both James Fairley and his rescuers, for it was to the old school that the former was taken and sheltered until the hue and cry had died down.



"Well, my hat!" said Pankley, in astonishment. "What's the little game?"

"Let us be peaceful on this pleasant afternoon, my young friends," said Jimmy Silver. "Little birds in their nests should agree, for if they do not they would fall out."

"Oh, come off!" said Pankley. "Still, we'll come and have tea, if you like. I'd rather have tea than a scrap!"

"Trot in!"

Pankley & Co. came in, looking very dubious. They half-suspected that Jimmy Silver had some little trap ready for them.

But Jimmy was blandness itself. Lovell and Raby and Newcome, understanding that their leader was scheming a scheme, though they could not guess what it was, played up to him loyally, and grinned as cordially as they could at the Bagshot bounders.

The festive board was graced by an additional cake and three more cups and saucers, and the Bagshot fellows sat down.

"Pile in!" said Jimmy Silver hospitably.

"Oh, go it!" said Lovell. "Jolly glad—ahem!—to see you at the festive board."

Pankley & Co. went in cheerfully. The handsome and substantial tea in the farmhouse was better than a scrap any day.

But they could not help feeling surprised at this hospitality from the Rookwood juniors, whom they had pursued with slaughterous intentions.

However, they travelled at a great rate through new-laid eggs and muffins and cake and jam and tea. Jimmy Silver was politeness itself. He listened sympathetically when Pankley related that a crowd of Bagshot fellows were laid up with influenza.

He expressed a polite hope that Pankley wouldn't catch it, and all the time he had one keen eye on the window, and he did not fail to spot a fat and ponderous form that, when tea was nearly over, came lumbering across the fields towards the farmhouse.

Herr Kinkel was arriving.

His fat face was streaming with perspiration after his long walk in the sun, and his brow was thunderous with rage. He had a stick in his hand, and every now and then he swished it through the air. It was evident

that when Herr Kinkel caught those elusive juniors, he would not be content with merely spoiling their little tea-party and marching them back in disgrace to Rookwood. Jimmy Silver had foreseen that; he knew Herr Kinkel's temper.

Silver rose abruptly to his feet.

"Time we were off," he remarked. "Don't you fellows hurry, but we've got to clear. See you again some day, if you live, Panky."

"Well, I'll finish this cake, if you don't mind," said Pankley. "What are you fellows clearing off for? It's jolly comfy here, and nice and shady after the sun."

"I'm not going yet," said Poole.

"No need to," said Jimmy Silver. "But we've got to; time's up for us. Come on, you chaps. I'll settle with Mrs. Tootle as we go out. Ta-ta, Panky!"

"Ta-ta! Lick you next time we see you!" said Pankley.

"Thanks! Ta-ta!"

The Fistical Four went out into the old flagged passage, leaving the Bagshot trio still piling heartily into that substantial tea. There was still plenty on the board, and Pankley & Co. were not inclined to hurry themselves. In the farmhouse kitchen Jimmy Silver found Mrs. Tootle, and settled for seven teas.

"We'll go out this way, as we're here," said Jimmy Silver. "Good-afternoon, ma'am!"

And the Fistical Four passed out of the farmhouse by the back door.

"Now, you burbling idiot, tell us what it's all about!" breathed Lovell. "You've run away from the Bagshot bounders, and you've stood 'em a spanking tea, and you've dragged us away before we've finished. Now, what's the little game? Sharp, before we snatch you bald-headed!"

"Follow your uncle," said Jimmy Silver, "and keep in cover!"

"What for, fathead?"

"Because Kinkel's only a dozen yards away!"

"Well, we don't care for Kinkel now!"

"Oh, shurup and follow your leader!"

Jimmy Silver, keeping under cover of the outbuildings, reached a spot where the

juniors could watch the front door of the farmhouse under cover of a mass of raspberry bushes. His puzzled chums followed suit.

Herr Kinkel was very close at hand now. He halted a minute later outside the open doorway, breathing like a grampus. The Classical Four were within a dozen yards of him, behind the bushes, and they could hear his stertorous breathing. They grinned as they watched his angry, streaming face.

Bang !

Herr Kinkel's stick knocked loudly on the door. Mrs. Tootle came along the passage through the house. The good old lady looked in surprise at the hot and perspiring German. She was not acquainted with the German master of Rookwood.

"Dose poys are here, isn't it, madam ?" said Herr Kinkel.

"Yes, there are some boys in my parlour," said Mrs. Tootle, in wonder. "They are having tea. Are you their master?"

"Ja, ja. I am deir master, and to look for dem I have gum."

Herr Kinkel strode into the house. His fat hand closed tightly on his heavy cane. Herr Kinkel was on the warpath. He rolled in at the open door of the dusky little parlour. Three juniors who were seated round the table stared at him. The Bagshot juniors knew Herr Kinkel by sight.

"Ach ! Den I find you !" shouted Herr Kinkel.

The sudden change from the brilliant sunlight to the shady parlour was dazzling. And Herr Kinkel, as Silver had remarked, was a very short-sighted gentleman. He hadn't the slightest doubt in his mind that he had found the boys he was looking for. If he had paused a minute or two, he would probably have discovered his mistake. But he didn't pause a minute or two. He didn't pause a second. Not a decimal fraction of a second. He rushed at the feasting juniors like a very savage elephant, and grasped the nearest of them by the collar, and dragged him off his chair.

"Hallo !" roared Pankley, who was the unfortunate victim. "My hat ! Oh ! Help ! Yab !"

Whack, whack, whack !

Herr Kinkel's cane came down across the unhappy Pankley's trousers as if he were beating a carpet. Pankley's wild yells might have been heard half-way to Rookwood.

"Oh, my hat !" gasped Lovell, almost rolling over in the raspberry-bushes in his delight. "You hear that ? You hear ? Ha, ha ! You hear Kinkel's taken those Bagshot bounders for us ! Oh, my sainted aunt !"

"Vicked, sheeky young rasgal——"

Whack, whack, whack !

"Yarooooh ! Yah ! Help ! He's mad ! Help."

"Ha, ha, ha !" shrieked the Fistical Four.

They rushed round the house to the parlour window. They peeped in. Herr Kinkel had no eyes for the window. He pitched the roaring Pankley aside, and seized the next fellow. The next fellow was Poole. Poole made a wild attempt to dodge the German. But the German was not to be dodged. His heavy grasp descended upon Poole, and his cane rose and fell.

Whack, whack, whack !

"Yow, yow, yow ! He's mad ! Draggim-off !" shrieked Poole.

"Peastly pad poy ! I bunishes you, isn't it ?"

"Yahooh !"

Whack, whack, whack !

"You makes me valk mit me ofer miles und miles, nicht war ! You sheeks me ! Ah ! Mein Gott ! But I bunishes you, denn !"

"Yahoooh ! Leggo !"

Herr Kinkel hurled the yelling Poole aside, and made a break for Putter. Putter dodged wildly round the table, shouting for help.

"Gum here !" roared Herr Kinkel.

"Keep off ! Help ! He's mad—a mad German ! Help !"

"Vich is tat poy Silber ? I see him not !" Herr Kinkel blinked round furiously. "Vere is he ? Dere vas four !"

"Yow ! Ow, ow !"

"Deary me ! What ever is it ?" exclaimed Mrs. Tootle, in the doorway. "What ever is happening ?"

"This mad old idiot has pitched into us !" shrieked Pankley, almost sobbing with rage.

"Why, I'll—I'll—— I'm not going to stand it! You come near me again, you old ruffian, and I'll brain you with the tongs!"

And Pankley clutched up the tongs, and stood on the defensive.

"Madam, I am sorry I startle you," gasped Herr Kinkel, blinking at the amazed Mrs. Tootle. "Dese vicked poys run away and preak detention, and I gum——"

"You silly old idiot," roared Pankley,

first time a doubt coming into his mind. "Mein Gott! You are not Silber! You are not Lovell! Who are you?"

"We belong to Bagshot, you shrieking old chump!" roared Pankley. "Did you think we were Rookwood fellows, you idiot? We wouldn't be found dead in Rookwood! Ow! My back. We'll jolly well tell our headmaster about this, and Dr. Chisholm will hear of it, I can tell you!"

"Gum down!" bellowed Kerr Kinkel. "Mein Gott, I preaks evry pone in your podies!" "Nice afternoon, sir!" said Jimmy Silver, with friendly solicitude.



"we haven't broken detention; and if we did, it's not your business!"

"Vat!"

"You thumping old chump!" yelled Poole. "You come near me again, that's all! You come here if you want a jam-jar on your silly napper, you German pig!"

"Vat! You speaks to me like tat! I know not your voice!" Herr Kinkel blinked at the juniors through his spectacles, for the

"Mein Gott! Dey are not te poys!" gasped Herr Kinkel dazedly. "Now dat I see dem, I see tat dey are not te poys! Vy for you shall not tell me tat you are not dose poys for vich I gum, isn't it?"

"You silly old josser, how should we know you were looking for them?" hooted Pankley. "How dare you lay hands on us, you dunder-headed Hun?"

Pankley did not measure his words.

"Moin Gott!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came a wild yell from outside the window.

Herr Kinkel spun round and blinked at the window. Four grinning faces were framed in it.

"Ach! Dere are dose poys——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Herr Kinkel made a wild rush for the door, gripping his cane. Pankley caught him with a tart on the ear as he rushed out, but Herr Kinkel did not even heed. He did not stay to apologise for his mistake, which had had such painful results for the Bagshot juniors. He was only thinking of getting at Jimmy Silver & Co. But those merry youths were already on the run.

In the farmhouse parlour Pankley and Poole groaned in chorus. They were feeling hurt. But worse than the damage done was the knowledge that flashed into their minds that the astute Jimmy Silver had planted this on them.

"Oh, that deep beast!" groaned Pankley. "Oh! Ow! He knew that blind old owl was after him, and knew the silly old cuckoo wouldn't stop to talk! He planted this on us! The awful rotter! Ow! I hope that fat pig catches him—yow!—and skins him alive! Wow!"

## THE FIFTH CHAPTER

Very Wet!

"No rest for the wicked!" sighed Jimmy Silver, as the Fistical Four ran.

They were laughing almost too much to run. The Co. understood at last that deep and deadly scheme of their astute leader, and they could have hugged Jimmy Silver.

"Will you stop mit you?" roared Herr Kinkel.

The gasping juniors looked back. The German master came raging out of the farmhouse, brandishing his cane. His fat face was crimson.

With the light and graceful motion of an elephant or a rhinoceros, Herr Kinkel came thundering on the track of the Fistical Four.

They did not stop.

Herr Kinkel did not look safe at close quarters. But they did not exert themselves.

They did not need to exert themselves to keep at a safe distance from the fat and unwieldy German. They slacked down to encourage him. They were willing to give him as long a run as he liked.

"Gum pack mit you!" roared Herr Kinkel. "I preaks efery pone in your pody, isn't it."

"Not good enough," murmured Jimmy Silver. "Do you chaps want efery pone in your podies proken?"

"Ha, ha! No."

"Ach, you young rascals! Vill you gum pack mit you?" panted Herr Kinkel.

He laboured on after the elusive juniors.

The Fistical Four kept ahead. They plunged cheerfully across a ploughed field, and the fat German laboured after them, breathing like a grampus, and streaming with perspiration.

"I say," murmured Raby, "we—we shall get into a row with Bootles, you know—chaps are supposed to stop when they're told——"

"We're afraid," said Jimmy Silver.

"Eh?"

"After what happened at the farmhouse, we are in a state of terror, and dare not come near Herr Kinkel."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell. "That will do for Bootles."

"We fear that he is intoxicated, or has gone mad——"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver looked back. Herr Kinkel was slackening down. He was not in much condition for a stern chase.

"Easy does it," said Jimmy Silver. "Encourage him a bit. Don't shake him off. This way, my infants, and easy does it."

Herr Kinkel had been about to abandon the hopeless chase, but as the juniors slacked down, his hopes were renewed. He fancied they were failing. And he was too furious to think of postponing his vengeance, if he could help it. He began to gain, and his grip closed more tightly on his heavy cane. If only he could get within hitting distance of the Fistical Four, he would show them what he thought of them.

The running juniors disappeared into a grove of trees, Jimmy Silver leading the way. But they were running with an artistically

laboured motion, and Herr Kinkel had the impression that they were at their last gasp. He came lumbering on, puffing and blowing.

A hundred yards through the grove was the bank of a little stream. The little stream was crossed by a single plank. It was an ancient plank, resting loosely on a couple of large stones, and about ten feet long. The juniors crossed it in single file, and Jimmy Silver called a halt.

"I say, we don't want him to catch us," said Lovell. "I don't like his looks."

"Oh, give him a chance!"

Silver bent over the plank, and pulled it towards him. He pulled it, till the other end rested only by a fraction on the stone. His chums gasped with merriment as they watched him. As soon as a foot was set on the plank now, it would slide infallibly from the stone—with disastrous results to the person standing on it.

"Come on!" said Jimmy.

They did not run now. They took cover in the trees, and watched. Through the trees on the other side of the brook Herr Kinkel came in sight at last, puffing and panting. He did not pause at the plank. He had crossed that plank before, and he had no doubts about it. He came on the plank at a run.

The juniors held their breath.

Splash!

"Ach, Gott!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

The heavy foot of the German clumping on the plank drove it from the stone, and it slipped into the water. Herr Kinkel made a wild bound as the plank slid from under his feet. He came down into the water in a sitting posture. The water was shallow; it rose only to Herr Kinkel's neck as he sat in it. But it was very wet.

The Fistical Four hugged themselves with glee.

Wild and weird sounds came from Herr Kinkel. His fat chin went under the water as he wriggled, and his mouth filled. It was a large mouth. Jimmy Silver said afterwards that the level of the water went down when Herr Kinkel's mouth was filled. But that was an exaggeration. Herr Kinkel swallowed

enough, however, to cause him to emit wild gasps and gurgles. He scrambled up, streaming with water, uttering sputtering noises and fiery German words, for which a dictionary would have been searched in vain.

"Oh, my hat!" moaned Lovell. "What a day out for Kinkel! Oh, dear! Oh, dear! Oh, dear!"

"Gurrrrrrgh! Mein Gott! Gurrrrrrrrrg!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Yurrrrrrr! Gurrrrrrrrrg!"

"Oh, come on!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "I shall have a fit if I stay here and look at him. I've got a pain in my ribs already."

Herr Kinkel was scrambling out of the brook on the near side, still uttering wild and whirling words. The Fistical Four trotted on. They felt that they were done with Herr Kinkel for that afternoon. But they were mistaken! Herr Kinkel was a sticker.

## THE SIXTH CHAPTER

### Run Down!

"**M**Y only hat!"

Jimmy Silver uttered that ejaculation in surprise as he looked back when the four had crossed a field. From the wood behind them a dripping figure had emerged, still running. He was soaked with water. He squelched out water and mud at every step. But, like Charley's celebrated aunt, he was still running. Instead of heading for Rookwood to get a change of clothes, which he needed badly, he was heading for the Fistical Four.

"Blessed if he isn't sticking it out!" exclaimed Lovell admiringly. "Never thought he had so much grit. These Germans are obstinate beggars."

The Fistical Four quickened their pace. They had dropped into a saunter, but it was evidently not safe to saunter.

They were heading for Coombe, to quench their thirst with ginger-pop at Mrs. Wicks' little shop in the village. They broke into a trot, and after them came the infuriated German master, squelching.

"Must be off his dot," said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "If I were in that state, I should head for home and a rub down, but let him rip."

Herr Kinkel brandished his cane in the air as he saw the juniors looking back.

"Stop mit you!" he bellowed.

"This way," murmured Jimmy Silver.

He cut across the field towards a haystack, and his chums followed. On one side part of the hay had recently been removed, and it was easy to climb the rick.

"I say, he'll corner us here," said Lovell, in alarm.

"Let him corner us," said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "Follow your uncle."

Jimmy Silver clambered up, and his chums followed him. They sat on the top of the rick and looked back at the German. Herr Kinkel's wet and crimson face lighted up with ferocious satisfaction as he saw them halted at last. He came gasping up to the hayrick and shook his stick at the four juniors above.

"Gum down!" he bellowed.

Jimmy Silver raised his cap politely.

"Good-afternoon, Herr Kinkel!"

"Gum down!"

"You look wet, sir," said Jimmy Silver, with friendly solicitude. "I hope you have not been falling into any water."

"Mein Gott, I preaks efery pone in your pody!"

"Nice afternoon, sir!"

"Vicked poy! I preaks efery pone when I vunce gets hold of you! I gums up and fetches you, isn't it?"

And the fat German essayed to climb the rick. It was not so easy for him as for the active juniors. He had more weight to carry, and he was not much of a climber. But by slow degrees he came up, panting and puffing.

"Time we slid," murmured Jimmy Silver.

He slid across the rick and held on by his hands, and dropped lightly into the field on the other side. It was rather a long drop, but he alighted safely, and his chums followed him, one after another.

They sauntered cheerfully away from the rick. At a distance of about fifty yards they looked back. On top of the hayrick, outlined against the blue sky, was a fat and furious figure brandishing a stick.

"Poor old Kinkel, always getting left in

the lurch!" sighed Jimmy Silver. "These Germans ain't up to our form, you know. They're too slow."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Herr Kinkel, in overpowering wrath and disappointment, brandished his stick madly on top of the haystack.

Jimmy Silver & Co. broke into a trot. They were fed up with Herr Kinkel, and they wanted some ginger-beer. They disappeared from the field at a pace that gave the German master no chance, if he took up the chase again.

The first halt was in the tuckshop in Coombe. There they called for ginger-pop and quenched their thirst, and cheerfully drank confusion to Herr Kinkel. But they kept one eye on the street.

It was about half an hour later that Herr Kinkel hove in sight. He was proceeding at a walk now. He hadn't a run left in him.

Jimmy Silver threw a shilling on the counter.

"Good-bye, Mrs. Wicks! If a fat German inquires after us, give him our love!"

The Fistical Four trotted out of the tuckshop. Herr Kinkel gave a bellow of wrath at the sight of them, and broke into a feeble run. The Fistical Four dodged him round the railway station, and trotted away into the lane towards Rookwood. It was time to get within gates.

Jimmy Silver looked back in the lane.

Herr Kinkel came lumbering out of the village. After him came about a dozen village urchins, yelling. The herr had forgotten his plight when he ventured into the village, but the sight of a fat German, hatless, squelching with water, and daubed with mud, with wet hair plastered round his bald crown, had naturally excited the village youths to visibility.

"'Ere's another guy!" hooted the urchins of Coombe, as they followed on the track of the excited German.

Herr Kinkel turned furiously and shook his stick at them.

"Yah! Look at 'im!"

"'Ere's a guy!"

"Haw, haw, haw!"

The enraged German charged back at the



"Save us, sir!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, as the Fistical Four rushed across Mr. Bootles' study. "What—what!" The master stood up in startled amazement as Herr Kinkel appeared in the doorway.

crowd of young rascals, laying about him with his stick. They scattered, yelling, but they did not go far. They gathered at a safe distance, and a shower of stones rattled upon Herr Kinkel.

Breathing wrath and vengeance, the German beat a retreat, and then the hooting crowd followed on his track again. They accompanied him all the way to Rookwood, with yells and jeers and occasional volleys of stones and turf.

"Oh, what a day out for Kinkel!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Let's get out of this! I'm not going home along with that disreputable old ruffian and his gang of hooligans!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four put on speed and vanished. But Herr Kinkel couldn't put on speed; he had no speed left. He was pumped.

He lumbered, gasping, along the lane, to an accompaniment of hoots and yells, with pebbles clinking on him, snorting with fury.

Not till they reached the gates of Rookwood did the cheery urchins leave him, and then they gave him a final yell before they departed. Old Mack, the porter, came out in a state of great astonishment, and he almost fell down at the sight of Herr Kinkel.

"My heye!" said old Mack. "Wharrermarrer with you, sir? 'Ad a haccident—a bad haccident?"

"Dose poys!" hissed Herr Kinkel wildly. "Dose poys! Mein Gott!"

The porter backed away. Herr Kinkel's look was wild, and his eyes were gleaming. Old Mack did not like his looks.

"Yes, yes, sir; it's all right," he said soothingly. "They will do it, the young humps, when a gentleman 'as 'ad a drop too

much. Better go in quietly, sir, afore the 'Ead sees you!"

Herr Kinkel raved. It was too much, after all his sufferings, to be supposed by this idiotic porter to be intoxicated.

"Dummkopf!" he roared. "Fool of a man! I have noting trinken!"

"For goodness' sake, sir, be calm!" urged old Mack, in alarm. "You'll 'ave a crowd round, and the 'Ead— Oh, my eye!"

Old Mack dodged into his lodge, and slammed the door and locked it. Herr Kinkel looked distinctly dangerous.

Herr Kinkel shook a fat and muddy fist at the locked door, and stamped on towards the School House, with curious eyes turning on him from all sides.

Outside the School House the Fistical Four were chatting cheerfully with Hooker and Jones minor of the Fourth. The German master gave a furious grunt as he caught sight of them, and rushed at them.

The juniors scattered in alarm. Hooker and Jones simply bolted. Herr Kinkel looked like a dangerous lunatic at that moment.

The Fistical Four rushed into the House. Herr Kinkel stamped in after them.

"Stop mit you! Now I banish you!" he roared.

"Whither, O King?" murmured Raby. "The study?"

"No, Bootles' study," whispered Jimmy Silver.

"Bootles'?" gasped his chums.

"Yes; we've got to go through it," murmured Jimmy. "And if Bootles sees the old Hun in that state, he won't be surprised that we ran away from him, and led him a giddy dance!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Co. rejoiced in the sagacity of their chief. They made a run for their Form-master's study. Herr Kinkel was close behind now, brandishing his stick. Without even stopping to knock, Jimmy Silver hurled open the door of Mr. Bootles' study, and the Fistical Four rushed in.

Mr. Bootles leaped up from his table in startled amazement.

"What—what—what—" he exclaimed.

"Save us, sir!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver dramatically.

"What—what!"

"Save us!" yelled the Fistical Four, in chorus.

And they dodged behind Mr. Bootles as the pursuer, who had run them to earth at last, came thundering in at the study doorway.

#### THE SEVENTH CHAPTER

Mr. Bootles Protects the Innocent.

MR. BOOTLES stared at Herr Kinkel, his eyes almost starting through his spectacles.

Never had so fearsome an object burst into Mr. Bootles' study.

With wet and tangled hair smothered with mud and dust, crimson with rage, panting for breath, dripping with water from head to foot, Herr Kinkel presented an extraordinary appearance.

"What—what!" said Mr. Bootles feebly.

"Ach! Vere are dey?"

"Herr Kinkel! Is—is that you, Herr Kinkel?"

"Ach! Ja, ja! Dose poys—I bunishes dem—"

"Save us, sir!" shrieked Jimmy Silver, with a terrified accent, which showed that he was a born actor, as the German master strode forward. "He's mad, sir. Save our lives!"

"Help!" shrieked Lovell.

"Spare our lives!" screamed Raby.

"Mercy!" wailed Newcome.

"Silence! Silence!" cried Mr. Bootles. "Goodness gracious! Stand back, Herr Kinkel! Do you hear me, sir? Do you venture to use violence towards these boys in my study, Herr Kinkel?" thundered Mr. Bootles.

"Ach! I tinks——"

"Stand back! Boys, there is nothing to fear. Calm yourselves. I will protect you. Pray calm yourselves!"

"He's dangerous, sir!" sobbed Jimmy Silver. "He's been chasing us all the afternoon, and we barely escaped with our lives!"

"Nonsense—nonsense, Silver! You are mistaken, I am sure!"

"He attacked some of the Bagshot boys violently, sir, and we heard them shrieking

for help!" moaned Jimmy Silver. "Keep him off, sir! Oh, keep him off! I know he means murder!"

"Herr Kinkel, stand back, or I will call for help!" shouted Mr. Bootles, confronting the German master with flashing eyes. "How dare you? I repeat, sir, how dare you? Have you taken leave of your senses?"

Herr Kinkel backed away, in spite of himself. He was in a towering rage, but he had sense enough left not to attack the Form-master. He was greatly inclined to hurl Mr. Bootles aside, but a remnant of common-sense withheld him.

"Now, tell me what this means, Herr Kinkel!" said Mr. Bootles, who was very angry himself. "What do you mean by chasing these boys into my study, and frightening them in this manner?"

"Ach! I follow dem all der afternoon—"

"Then Silver's statement is correct. The Head shall judge of this matter!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "I am shocked—astonished! It is unheard-of! I repeat, have you taken leave of your senses, Herr Kinkel? Or have you been drinking—yes, sir, drinking?"

"Mein Gott!"

"Look at those boys," said Mr. Bootles. "They are trembling!" The Fistical Four began to tremble violently. Whether they trembled with terror or with suppressed merriment we cannot undertake to say, but certainly they trembled. "How dare you, Herr Kinkel, throw these boys into such a state of terror?"

"Ach! I tells you, Mr. Bootles. Dey are sheeky young rascals. Dey preaks detention, and I goes after dem!"

"We didn't break detention, sir!" wailed Jimmy Silver. "We didn't go till Bulkeley came and told us, sir!"

"Ach!"

"You appear to have made a mistake in the first place, Herr Kinkel," said Mr. Bootles severely. "These boys had permission to leave their Form-room when they had written a hundred lines each. Have you written your lines, my boys?"

"Yes, sir."

"But—but—but—" gasped Herr Kinkel.

"It vas till six o'clock. Mit mein own ears I shall hear you tell dem—"

"That was rescinded, and I requested a prefect to tell them so. But if you were under the impression, Herr Kinkel, that these boys had broken detention, you could have mentioned the matter to me, and if they had been guilty I should have punished them. You had no right to take the matter into your own hands. You are a master on the Modern side at this school, sir, and have no authority whatever over Classical pupils. How dare you undertake to punish boys in my Form—to inflict corporal punishment with your own hands?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles indignantly.

"Ach! I tink tat tey preak pounds, and I goes after dem to fetch dem back," said Herr Kinkel. "Den dey plays a trick on me. I finds ozzer poys in a room zat is all in shadow—I whacks dem in mistake—"

"A very reckless and foolish mistake," said Mr. Bootles. "Their headmaster will probably make a complaint to Dr. Chisholm on the subject. I should certainly do so in his place."

"Vy dey not stop venn I call to dem, hein?" roared Herr Kinkel. "I tinks tat I am a master, and tat poys shall obey me!"

"How could we stop when he was chasing us with a big stick, sir?" sobbed Jimmy Silver, still trembling. "And we saw him assault the Bagshot boys, sir—and they hadn't done anything. They were sitting quietly having their tea when he rushed in and attacked them. After that we—we—"

"I see tat dose poys are rasgally young peasts—" roared Herr Kinkel.

"Moderate your language, sir, in this room, if you please!" rapped out Mr. Bootles. "I am not accustomed to listening to bullying, as you will find. In the first place, you made a ridiculous error, for these boys certainly did not break detention; they had my permission to go. In the second place, you have caused them to fall into a state of terror which may be injurious to their health, and have given them the impression that you are not in your right senses. I trust, sir, that upon calm reflection you will realise how utterly absurdly and unjustifiably you have acted."

"Mein Gott!"

"You will now kindly quit my study, sir!"

"Dose ploys——" stuttered Herr Kinkel.

"After all dis dey shall be punished."

"There is nothing whatever to punish these boys for," said Mr. Bootles icily. "I am hardly likely to punish them for being frightened at your actions and your wild appearance, Herr Kinkel. Certainly they shall not be punished."

"Mein Gott!"

"You may go, my boys," said Mr. Bootles. "Herr Kinkel will not touch you. If he should do so, you are under my protection. But dismiss from your minds your fear that Herr Kinkel is insane. He is only excited—very excited. Foreigners are not so self-controlled as English people, that is all. But Herr Kinkel is sane—quite sane."

"You—you are sure, sir?" faltered Jimmy Silver, as if he still had very strong doubts.

"Yes, yes, Silver! You may go."

The Fistical Four ventured out from behind Mr. Bootles. They passed round Herr Kinkel with great caution, keeping their faces towards him and backing to the door as if he were a wild animal that might spring at any moment. But Herr Kinkel did not move. He was quelled.

The Fistical Four reached the doorway, backed into the passage, and bolted. What Mr. Bootles said to Herr Kinkel after that they never knew, but it was probably couched in very plain language.

The Fistical Four were away in the

end study, where they lay on the carpet and kicked up their heels and roared.

"Ha, ha, ha! Oh, dear! Ha, ha, ha!" yelled the Classical heroes in chorus. "Good old Bootles! Bootles is a brick! Did you see Kinkel's face? Oh, dear!"

The wild yells from the end study were heard along the passage, and Fourth-Formers came crowding in to hear what the dickens was the matter.

"What's the matter with you?" demanded Townsend. "What's the matter with Kinkel? I've just seen him, and he looks as mad as a hatter."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Have you been pulling his leg?" demanded Topham.

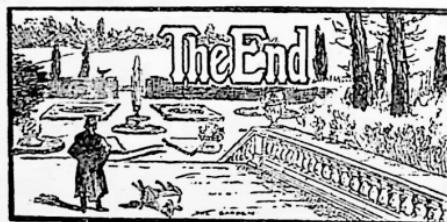
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ye howling gossoons! Tell us all about it, or sure we'll scrag yez!" roared Flynn.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four sat up at last and told the tale. And when it was told there was a howl of merriment from the Fourth. If Mr. Bootles had heard that roar he might have suspected that the cheery four had deliberately led Herr Kinkel a dance that afternoon, and that they had not been so alarmed as they appeared to be when they rushed into his study.

Fortunately, Mr. Bootles was not within hearing, so the Fourth howled with laughter to their hearts' content. And it was many days before the Fistical Four ceased to chuckle over the memory of that stern chase.



# PROUT TELLS the TALE!



"THE Rocky Mountains, as you know,  
Or, if you don't, I'll tell you so,  
Were haunted many years ago  
By bears," Old Prouty said.  
" 'Twas in the spring of '88  
When first I chanced to emigrate,  
As I shall now to you relate—"  
( "No doubt!" agreed the Head.)

• • •

"One morning, doctor, as I strode  
Along the steep and rocky road  
Towards my primitive abode,  
I had a fearful shock :  
For standing at the doorway there,  
Regarding me with fearful glare,  
I came across a monstrous bear—"  
( "Bare what?" asked Doctor Locke.)

• • •

"Did I, dear doctor, turn and run ?  
Not I ! I quite enjoyed the fun !  
With careless laugh I seized my gun  
And shot the creature dead.  
It was a most amazing hit ;  
The creature fell. I thought a bit,  
Before I looked, and found that  
it—"  
( "Was stuffed!" exclaimed the Head.)

• • •

"Well, as I cut the bear in two—  
For bear-meat makes a tasty stew—  
I heard an awful growl, and through  
The hills there came a flock  
Of other bears. I said a prayer,  
But do not think I felt a scare ;  
It was with rage I tore my hair—"  
( "What hair?" asked Doctor Locke.)

• • •

"I gave it to those creatures hot :  
The leading bear I straightway shot,  
Then killed two more upon the  
spot—"  
( "Which spot?" the Doctor said.)  
"But after that I gave a groan,  
And stood like one turned into  
stone—"  
( "I think I hear the telephone.  
Good-morning!" said the Head.)

# MR MANDERS' CHRISTMAS DIARY



The Cross-Grained Modern Master's Intimate Christmas Confessions

*DECEMBER 20th.*—The first thing that struck me this morning was a snowball. Finding that it emanated from those disrespectful young wretches, Dodd, Cook and Doyle, I furiously ordered them to my study. In reply to my sarcastic inquiries as to how they justified their outrageous conduct, they had the brazen effrontery to plead that it was the festive season. Gave the three of them a sound thrashing. Christmas indeed! Br-r-r-r!

Dyspepsia very bad.

*DECEMBER 21st.*—Called to the Head's study, where the Head reminded me that the school will be breaking up to-morrow. Dr. Chisholm seems almost as bad as the boys—had quite a twinkle in his eye! Told him that I intended staying on at the school and devoting the vacation to studying the classics. Offered to take charge of any boys who had no arrangements. Transpired that they were all booked up. So much the better; I shall be well rid of them for a month!

Caned Towle, McCarthy and Wadsley for indulging in uproarious laughter on the Modern House steps. Issued instructions to the House that the breaking-up was to take place quietly and decorously.

Dyspepsia much worse.

*DECEMBER 22nd.*—Breaking-up Day. The school broke up; I nearly broke down at the sudden horrid thought that for a whole

month I should be unable to give out impositions and thrashings. Dreadful! Boys from the Classical House departed in relays, cheering vociferously. I'd give them cheer if they were in my charge!

Called Dodd, Cook and Doyle into my study for a final lecture. Recommended them to spend the vacation in study and self-discipline. Dodd had the impudence to ask me what I was doing myself. Told him that it was no business of his, but that if he wanted to know I should be remaining here, preparing for the next term. The young wretches wished me a merry Christmas as they went out. Managed to grunt a similar compliment. Merry Christmas, indeed! Huh!

Silver and his friends from the Classical House, in leaving the school, so far forgot the respect due to my position as to bombard me with snowballs. They shall be made to smart for it next term!

Dyspepsia awful.

*DECEMBER 23rd.*—Found myself alone at Rookwood—with the exception, of course, of a servant or two. Assembled the House Dame and servants in my study and gave them to understand that perfect quietude must be maintained. Festivities would not be allowed under any circumstances.

Felt peculiarly uncomfortable in the evening. Dead silence everywhere—almost uncanny. Had a walk round the grounds in the

snow. The wind moaned eerily and the trees creaked. Once or twice thought I saw spectral shapes in the distance; only imagination. Wondered whether there were such things as ghosts. Utter nonsense, of course, but still—

Went to bed. Tried to sleep but couldn't. Kept on hearing strange, creaking sounds. Not frightened; perish the thought! Br-r-r-r!

Dyspepsia simply dreadful.

*DECEMBER 24th.*—Awoke feeling the most miserable man alive. Decided I cannot stay on at Rookwood; but where else is there to go? None of the other masters or even the boys gave me an invitation. The whole lot of them are against me. Or—can it be possible? Perhaps I've given some of them cause for misunderstanding. I can see, on reflection, that I haven't always been quite fair. Should not have caned Dodd and the rest so near Christmas, for instance. Wish I hadn't now. If they were here I'd tell them so.

Telegram arrived in the afternoon: "WILL YOU, AS MY SON'S HOUSEMASTER, HONOUR US WITH A VISIT FOR CHRISTMAS?—DODD SENIOR." Goodness gracious—then I haven't been forgotten, after all! Most gratifying!

Hurriedly packed and caught the first train to Mr. Dodd's house. Received a very hearty welcome from the entire household, including Dodd and Cook and Doyle. There are good points in those boys; I wonder I haven't noticed them before!

Dyspepsia surprisingly better.

*DECEMBER 25th.*—Christmas Day. Hurrah! What a jolly experience to join in the innocent fun of a pleasant house-party like this! Everybody most kind; felt quite overwhelmed!

In the evening we all went by car to another party at Mr. Silver's home. How good-natured and charming young Silver and his friends seem to be! Threw myself wholeheartedly into the merriment, and the fun was fast and furious.

Ate roast turkey and stuffing, plum pudding, mince-pies galore, Christmas cake, fruit, nuts, chocolate and Turkish delight and other good things too numerous to mention.

Dyspepsia entirely cured!

## CLASSICS v MODERNS FOOTBALL



*By the Rookwood Rhymester*

UPON a lusty winter day  
In cold and frosty weather  
The Classicals and Moderns play  
A footer match together.  
Full many a time they've played before  
In snowstorms, hail and blizzards,  
And every time the Classics score  
The Moderns play like wizards.

This afternoon the Modern backs  
Aren't any good at stopping  
The rival forwards' smart attacks,  
For Silver's caught them hopping.  
The Classic wingers really shine,  
The inside men are steady—  
A properly well-balanced line,  
They're one goal up already.

Now Jimmy Silver gets control  
And taps the ball to Erroll;  
The Modern backs surround their goal,  
Which stands in greatest peril.  
The winger's tackled swiftly, yet  
He shoots. The goalie grovels;  
A head deflects it in the net  
(The head was Arthur Lovell's).

Two goals up! The Classics crow!  
But Dodd provides the sequel.  
Still twenty minutes yet to go,  
There's time to make scores equal.  
The Moderns, rousing at his call,  
Grow keen and eager wholly,  
Until James Towle obtains the ball  
And taps it past the goalie.

"Hurrah!" the Moderns cry. "Two-one!  
Play up there, everybody!"  
Ten minutes left! Can it be done?  
"It can and shall," says Doddy.  
The game goes on—a desperate fight,  
Till, in the final minute,  
Dodd shoots at goal with all his might—  
'Tis done! The ball is in it!

# A VISION OF THE FUTURE

*A Prophetic Article from the Pen of MARK LINLEY*

IT is the Old Boys' Day at Greyfriars, in the Year of Grace, 1950.

There is a continuous hum of aeroplanes over the old school, and one by one the machines alight on the playing-fields, and "taxi" into the big hangars which are now a permanent part of the school premises.

Waiting outside the hangars to welcome the Old Boys is Dr. Quelch, headmaster of Greyfriars. Dr. Quelch succeeded Dr. Locke as headmaster when the latter retired some years ago. Messrs. Prout, Twigg, and Capper, a venerable and grey-haired trio of masters, are chatting with the Head.

From one aeroplane steps Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry—now come to manhood, and a pair of stalwart, fine-looking Englishmen. Wharton is a squadron-commander in the Royal Air Force, and Bob Cherry is a flying officer in the same squadron. Their friendship has grown even stronger with the passing of the years, and they have shared many adventures, both pleasant and perilous, together.

The next aeroplane to alight is a very rickety, old-fashioned "bus," which gives the impression of having been bought at second-hand—or, rather, fifth-hand. From it emerges Billy Bunter, who has grown even more portly and podgy than ever, and who is now a manager of a West End hotel. He explains that his magnificent saloon airship, in which he usually travels, has been borrowed by one of his titled relations; which made it necessary for him to hire this old "crock" to bring him to Greyfriars.

"The same old Bunter!" cries Bob Cherry. "Still an expert at telling the tale. By the way, has your postal-order turned up yet, Billy? You were expecting it eighteen years ago, you know."



"The same old Cherry!" retorts Billy Bunter. "Still an expert at chipping and chaffing his superiors. No; my postal-order hasn't turned up yet. And I've no use for postal-orders now. I've a big fat bank balance, Bob Cherry, that would make you turn green with envy."

Next, a giant air liner descends, crowded with passengers. And Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry and Billy Bunter rush forward to welcome their old Form-fellows. All have "made good" in various walks of life. There is Peter Todd, the eminent barrister; Percy Bolsover, the amateur boxing champion of Great Britain; Frank Nugent, of the Diplomatic Service; and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, now the dusky ruler of Bhanipur.

Then there is Commander Tom Redwing, of the Royal Navy; Tom Brown, the eminent explorer; Fisher T. Fish, the millionaire oil magnate; Dick Penfold, playwright and poet; William Wibley, the famous film star—and a host of others.

It is a very joyous reunion; and the Old Boys spend a thoroughly happy day "fighting" their schoolboy battles over again, and exploring once more the famous old school to which they have added new lustre and fresh laurels.

# “Stand and Deliver!”

By Cecil  
Fanshaw



## THE FIRST CHAPTER. A Hold-up on the Highway!

**H**ERE comes the London coach! Now for a rich haul o' plunder!"

Highwayman Nat Norris, famed through the countryside as "Swift Nat," uttered that hope excitedly.

Nat was sitting his black horse in the gloom of trees overhanging the moonlit road, and his eyes flashed through his mask-slits as he heard the rumble of wheels, saw the glimmer of approaching coach-lamps. His three-cornered hat was jammed low on his forehead, and his right hand gripped a heavy bell-mouthed pistol; another pistol-butt protruded from a pocket of his long blue riding-coat.

Outlawed by trickery, Nat had been forced to become a highwayman at the age of nineteen. Bold horseman and crack shot, he had come to love his wild life, however.

But he knew the risks of it, for in the year of 1740 "Gentlemen of the High Toby" were

A thrilling old-time yarn  
of the romantic days when  
highwaymen roamed the  
King's Highway.

ruthlessly hunted by Law officers, and always hanged soon after capture.

Several close shaves had even Swift Nat had, but these only made him keener and more resourceful. His nerves thrilled as he heard the approaching din, but little he guessed the trouble in store for him.

"No Runners'll catch me while I ride Midnight." He grinned, and dropped his reins and whipped out a spare barker.

On came the thundering coach with a roar of hoofs and wheels, postillions crouching on the horses' backs. Nat, invisible in his cover, on his black horse he had named Midnight, sat motionless. He saw the leading coach-horses whirl up almost abreast of his hiding-place, then he clapped home his heels.

Forth from the shadows leapt the big black horse, to bar the road; then loudly rang out Nat's challenge:

"Stand and deliver!"

With angry yells, the postillions reined up, seeing Nat's pistols levelled and the road

barred. The coach-guard blazed at Nat with a blunderbuss; but Nat ducked, smashed his weapon with a bullet. Then, like lightning, he pocketed his smoking barkers and whipped out two others from his saddle-holsters.

In a moment Nat had the postillions standing on the ground, obediently holding their horses, and the furious guard disarmed.

Laughing heartily, he rode up to the coach window and looked inside.

Somewhat disappointed he was to see only one passenger, who looked scared out of his wits. A mean old rascal, looked the passenger; wrinkled, hock-nosed, wearing a long travelling cloak, and with his night-cap over one eye.

But he lost no time in turning out his pockets, seeming to know Swift Nat was not to be trifled with. His bony fingers trembled as he spread the contents on the seat.

"A purse o' guineas and a bundle of papers," laughed the masked Nat, eyeing the booty. "Faith, you cowardly old skinflint, you may keep your papers. But I'll have your gold."

Laughing, Nat snatched up the purse, then backed his horse.

All had been done with the speed and skill of an expert highwayman. Less than three minutes after Nat's appearance from the shadows, the mail-coach was thundering on towards London again, with guard and postillions roaring abuse and threats.

Swift Nat only laughed as the coach vanished.

He was not very pleased with his booty, although it had been an easy haul. He never guessed the trouble he had let himself in for when he neglected to take the roll of papers.

Even as he stuffed the purse into his pocket, however, there sounded a fierce drumming of hoofs down the road. Quick as thought, ready for any adventure, hoping for more plunder, Nat reined *Midnight* back into the shadows.

A moment later he made out the dim shape of a solitary horseman, coming along at full gallop. Nat waited breathlessly, then all at once clapped home his heels.

"Stand and deliver!"

Once again Swift Nat's challenge rang out in the night. But this time the summons was not obeyed. With a yell of fury the newcomer let fly with a pistol and rode straight at Nat.

But Swift Nat was not the sort of fellow to be overcome by a wild rush, however bold. He dodged the bullet, deftly reined *Midnight* aside, then drove home his heels again.

Crash!

The newcomer was down in the moonlit road, so was his horse, knocked flying by the clever thrust and drive of *Midnight*'s heavy shoulder. Even as he made to leap from his saddle, however, to secure some plunder, Nat uttered a shout of surprise.

He saw his latest victim was black-masked like himself!

"Zounds! Another tobyman!" Nat laughed. "Up with you, culy! Dog does not eat dog. I'll not rob you; but, i' faith, a pretty sort o' tobyman are you to be bowled over so easy."

The fellow on the ground sprang to his feet with a shout of rage. His mask fell from his face, and Nat saw that he was quite a lad, younger than himself. He looked a dashing young fellow, but, with his powdered hair, laced hat, and ruffled cuffs, he certainly did not look like a hardened highwayman.

"Who the deuce are you?" snapped Nat.

"Ralph Wyndham's my name!" The reply came furiously as the lad helped up his horse, which limped. "Plague take you, tobyman! I lay you've ruined me by stopping me! There's a chance yet! Did you stop the London coach?"

"Zounds, I did!" Nat laughed.

"Did you take any papers?"

"Nay, only a purse! I left the plaguy papers."

"What, not the papers!" Young Ralph looked wild with dismay. "Why, man, that old scoundrel you robbed is my uncle, Squire Medlicott, and those papers are a forged will to cheat me out of my inheritance. I was chasing my uncle, to seize them. Now—too late! You've lamed my horse!"

At that, Nat gasped out words of regret. At once he realised that young Ralph had

donned a mask and become a highwayman for this night only, being desperate to wrest the forged will from his rascally uncle. With his horse lame, Ralph's chances looked hopeless. Doubtless the lad would be cheated out of his money and estates.

He examined his horse's leg; but further pursuit was plainly impossible.

"Listen, cully," snapped Swift Nat, wheeling Midnight. "I'll get yon forged will for you."

"Can you?" cried Ralph. "Nay, 'tis impossible now—my uncle has too long a start."

"Nothing's impossible to Swift Nat, when he's on Midnight," came the laughing reply. "Wait for me near yonder barn, cully. The mail-coach changes horses at the Green Dragon Inn—I lay I'll secure your papers there, and be back in a jiffy."

As he spoke, Nat pointed to an old thatched barn, surrounded by trees, near a sign-post a little way down the road. Ralph uttered a gasp, surprised and delighted to learn that his assailant was the famous Swift Nat. If anyone could seize the forged will before the villainous old squire Medlicott got it registered in London, surely Nat could!

"But hurry, Nat!" shouted Ralph. "I fear Runners, warned by my scoundrelly uncle, are on my trail. Someone told him I meant to seize those papers at any price."

With a reassuring laugh, Nat shook up Midnight, and drummed away down the road, his three-cornered hat pulled low, and the tails of his long blue coat flying in the wind. He glanced back, to see Ralph leading his horse towards the old barn, until a bend in the road hid Ralph from sight.

Nat had not liked the look of old Medlicott, and felt mighty sorry that he had hindered young Ralph, who seemed a dashing youngster, determined to guard his rights at all costs.

Riding full speed, Nat soon came in sight of the Green Dragon, an old, thatched inn, with gabled roof, two-storeyed, and having diamond-paned windows. Black timbers were built into its white walls, and a creaking sign hung over the front door.

At one side stood shadowy out-houses and stables, built round a walled courtyard.

A hum of voices and jingle of harness reached Swift Nat's ears, and, peering into the courtyard, the highwayman saw that the London mail-coach had, in fact, stopped there to change horses.

Lights showed at the inn windows, indicating that supper was being served. Nat chuckled grimly, seeing in the yard the very postillions he had stopped, and the guard whose blunderbuss he had shot to bits. The men were busy with ostlers, clattering around with buckets and harness, and the place hummed with activity.

Anyone but Nat would have hesitated to dive into such a hornet's nest after his quarry. Recognition would bring a crowd of men on him, all eager to earn the three hundred pounds reward offered for his capture—dead or alive.

But Swift Nat delighted in running risks; besides, he had given his word to young Ralph to get the will.

"Wait hidden in these trees, Midnight," he whispered to his horse with a grim smile.

He whipped off his black mask, and crammed it into his pocket. Next he peeled off his long blue riding-coat, and turned the garment inside out. Grey was the inner lining, for Nat had purposely had the cloak made reversible, for purposes of disguise.

Few, indeed, would have recognised Nat as, unmasked and grey-cloaked, he strode into the yard, impudently greeting the very coach-guard and postillions who, a half-hour since, had vowed vengeance on him.

None recognised Nat. The men touched their hats to him.

Laughing inwardly, Nat entered the inn, and passed along a narrow passage into the dining-room.

Half a dozen travellers were having supper, served by the stout landlord in white shirt and brown knee-breeches. Nat's eyes flashed as he saw his quarry, the hawk-faced old Squire Medlicott, seated at one end of the table.

That moment old Medlicott was holding forth to the interested company.

"I tell you, gentlemen," the old rogue croaked untruthfully, "'twas Swift Nat himself who stopped the mail-coach. But he

got nought from me, for I fired my barkers in his face, then jumped out, drawing my sword, and he promptly fled, like the coward he——”

“ By my life, that’s a pretty tale ! ” broke in a ringing laugh.

The diners twisted round, to gape at the grey-cloaked young stranger who had entered unnoticed.

“ Who the plague are you, sir ? ” rasped old Medlicott.

“ Swift Nat, cully ! ”

Gasps of dismay and unbelief broke from the diners. Some of them clapped hands to

coat-pockets ; others made to dive under the table. Squire Medlicott gave one croak of fury, his wrinkled face turned pale, and he looked about to throw a fit. Like magic, however, two bell-mouthed pistols appeared in Nat’s hands, and the agitated company kept their seats.

Nat smiled grimly, nodded, then addressed the speechless squire.

“ Come on, you old braggart ! ” he snapped.

“ I had your purse easily. Now hand over those papers I returned to you, or, or, by thunder——”

No sooner had Nat reached the old barn than there sounded the thudding of hoofs and hoarse yells. Turning quickly he saw a bunch of Bow Street Runners come leaping over the hedge !



The hammers of his pistols rose.

Gone was Squire Medlicott's swagger. He bared yellow teeth in a furious snarl, but his bony hands shook as he quickly pulled out a roll of papers and thumped them on the table.

Nat snatched them up and backed away, keeping the dismayed guests covered. Abruptly he leapt backwards through the door, with a ringing laugh, and banged it behind him.

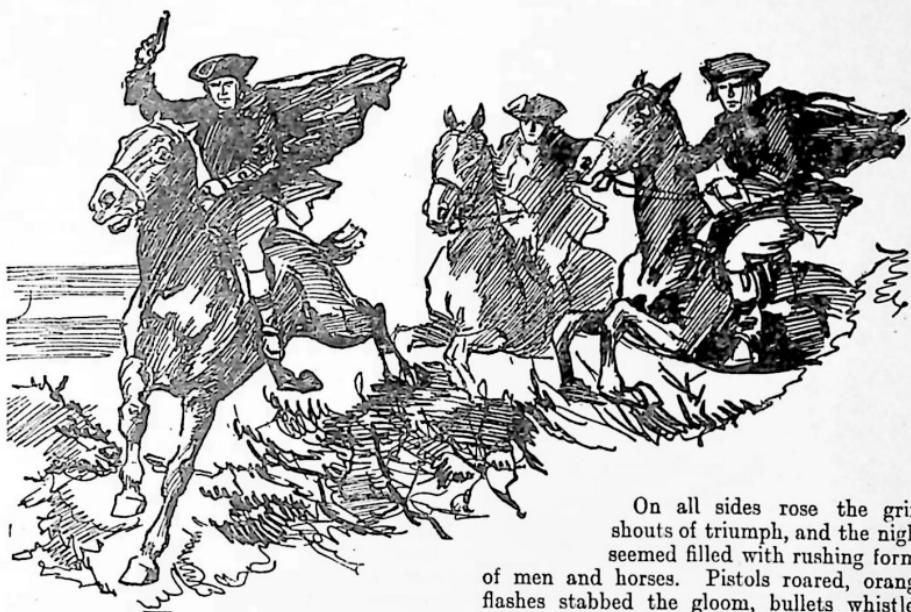
Instantly there was uproar. Yells and

Ralph who fired at him. At that instant sounded a thudding of hoofs and hoarse yells, and Nat saw a bunch of mounted Runners come leaping over the hedge.

#### THE SECOND CHAPTER

##### Twice Trapped !

"By thunder, 'tis Swift Nat! We've got him, lads! Three hundred pounds reward, dead or alive! That's his black horse, Midnight. Ay, and—"



shouts followed Nat as he raced across the yard for his hidden horse. Two minutes later, with bullets humming past him, Nat, mounted on *Midnight*, was galloping away down the road, and his pursuers were soon left behind.

The forged will was safe in his pocket. He put on his mask again, and ere long he was riding up to the old barn. He could see Ralph in the shadows.

"Halloo!" cried Nat. "I've got—"

Bang! came a pistol-shot in reply. To Nat's astonishment and fury, he saw it was

On all sides rose the grim shouts of triumph, and the night seemed filled with rushing forms of men and horses. Pistols roared, orange flashes stabbed the gloom, bullets whistled around Nat, two ripping through the sleeve of his cloak.

"Treachery!" roared Nat. "You young cur!"

He could just make out Ralph in the darkness and confusion, saw the lad trying to pull out another weapon. Nat fired swiftly in reply at Ralph, and uttered a grim laugh as he saw the latter spin round, then drop, clutching his shoulder.

But cloaked Runners were spurring at Nat. With uncanny speed, the highwayman pocketed his smoking barks, drew others, fired again and again. He saw one Runner fall

from his saddle, saw another crash down in the dust with his horse.

Then a bullet scored burning across his ribs. Reeling from the pain of his wound, Swift Nat knew it was hopeless to continue the fight against such odds.

Pistols empty, Nat whirled Midnight round, and was off up the road quick as thought.

Hard on his heels came the pursuers.

There sounded the drum of hoof-beats and yells of triumph. Nat glanced over his shoulder, to see three Runners in cloaks and three-cornered hats spurring after him full-tilt.

Nat was bewildered at the strange turn of events. He had glanced at the roll of papers he took from old Medlicott, and knew that, in fact, the documents formed a will purporting to leave a large estate to the hawk-faced old squire.

As promised, Nat had seized the document for young Ralph. Then why had Ralph fired at him? And how was it the Runners were hiding in ambush?

"I warrant 'twas a trap, after all," Nat gritted, as he galloped. "Old Medlicott and the lad arranged with Runners to snare me, it seems."

In fact, it seemed that a plan had been formed to capture Swift Nat at last; for, elusive as a phantom, he had taken toll of many rich travellers. But the country-folk remained his friends. Apparently the will was a sham, just a scrap of paper to bait the trap for Nat.

Yet, somehow, Nat didn't feel satisfied. Young Ralph had not looked like a treacherous schemer.

"Maybe 'twas not a trap, after all! Then why the deuce did yon lad shoot at me?" Swift Nat muttered furiously.

The problem baffled him.

But this was no time for solving riddles. As he thundered along the road, Nat knew he was in the tightest fix of his wild career.

The pursuing Runners were well mounted on fresh horses, while Midnight had already done a good night's work. Also, Nat felt weak from the wound in his side, and reeled once or twice in his saddle.

Mists seemed to swim before his eyes. He knew if he lost consciousness, or if a bullet lamed Midnight, all would be up with him. He would be captured, and soon afterwards hanged at Tyburn, down in London.

But he clenched his teeth and galloped on. He set Midnight at a bristling hedge and, landing on the other side safely, tore away across moonlit fields; but still the Runners followed him. They didn't mean to lose such a badly wanted quarry as Swift Nat, now that at last they had him in sight.

Away over hill and dale, past wooded coves and sleeping farms, Swift Nat led the chase. Haystacks loomed up, came abreast, were left behind; ditches and hedges were cleared without hesitation.

Again and again Nat glanced back. The Runners were still following. The young highwayman could see them, cocked hats pulled low, cloaks flying in the wind, barely a hundred yards behind him. The grim chase had lasted for an hour, but there seemed to be no escaping the Runners.

"By my life, this cannot last!" Nat gritted. "My only chance is to reach my cave in Burnley Woods, and there, I lay, these knaves will not find me! On, Midnight!"

The black horse put on a gallant spurt and thundered away across the dim meadows, drawing well ahead of the pursuers for the moment. Glancing back, Swift Nat could no longer see them, but could still hear their drumming hoof-beats.

But Midnight now reeled in his stride. He had been tired when Nat started this headlong ride. Now his nostrils were red and wide, his black neck was lathered with sweat; foam blew back from his jaws on to Nat's big riding-boots.

That moment, as he turned into a narrow, hedge-bordered lane, Nat saw a big hay-wagon rolling away some distance down it. The wagon was piled high with hay, and it seemed the farmer must have a good distance to cart his crop, to be out so late at night with it.

Nat didn't bother about that. His keen wits, sharpened by his wild, venturesome life,

at once seized on a slight chance of escape.

" 'Tis a faint hope—but the only one," Nat laughed grimly.

With that, he put *Midnight* at the hedge, and sent the gallant horse sailing over into a field. Then he drew rein, swung to the ground, and clapped *Midnight's* shoulder. The gallant but spent horse dropped down flat in the black shadow of the hedge, knowing its master's signal.

Then away Nat dashed, crouching under cover of the hedge, gasping and stumbling at the pain of his wound. He came level with the slow hay-wagon, then slipped out through a gap into the lane.

A leap and a scramble, and Nat was up atop of the great load of hay. Burrowing downwards, he was soon out of sight.

Not a moment too soon!

Quick as Nat had acted on his plan, the Runners came drumming down the lane a second later. They pulled up and yelled at the wagoner, to ask if he had seen a highwayman.

"Nay!" shouted the old fellow. "No one's been this way."

Followed anxious seconds for Nat, who could hear the movements of the horses and bafled Runners shouting in bewilderment.



With capture imminent, Nat lashed out with his barker, but the rascally squire parried the blow with a chair, and called his menservants into the room!

But suddenly, to his relief, they went on.

"Zounds, he's gone!" roared one. "He must ha' gone on across t' fields, lads, but we'll catch him yet."

Away they thundered, hoping to glimpse Nat again galloping across the moonlit fields on a tired horse, but little guessing he was within a few feet of them.

Nat heard them go. Then he slipped down over the tail of the slow-moving wagon, and hastened back to his hidden horse. The wagoner had never suspected his presence.

"Fooled 'em, *Midnight*," Nat gasped painfully. "We'll reach my cave in the woods, yet. And later I'll learn the meaning of all this from master *Ralph* and old *Medlicott*. They've not finished with me, by thunder!"

"Now to get even with my enemies! I'll learn what the game is from that lad who tried to betray me, or from Squire Medlicott. Come on, Midnight; people don't play treacherous tricks on Swift Nat without paying for 'em!"

Indeed, Swift Nat looked a dangerous fellow to play tricks on, as he rode away from his cave in the woods on his big black horse. Masked, and wearing his blue riding-coat, the highwayman was almost invisible; but two pistol-butts, sticking out of his coat-pockets, gleamed in the moonlight.

It was a week since Nat had been forced to fly so hurriedly to the shelter of his secret cave.

Now he was quite well again, while Midnight danced and fretted, full of life and fire.

Nat knew Squire Medlicott's house, an old stone-built grange, about five miles away from the Green Dragon Inn. He intended to force explanations from old Medlicott, and another fat purse of guineas, as recompense for his narrow squeak.

Few highwaymen would have ventured into the grange, risking encounter with several menservants, to solve a mystery and exact retribution.

An hour's steady riding brought Swift Nat to Highfields Grange. He rode boldly into the park through an open gate, and drew rein amongst the trees. He looked across lawns at the moon-bathed mansion, with its many windows and chimneys. His eyes came to rest for a while on a lighted window.

Then Nat swung to the ground, bade Midnight wait under the trees, and stole towards the house, hugging the shadows, to reach the lighted window.

A few seconds of deft fumbling, then the window opened silently.

Nat entered quietly and halted to peer through a chink in the curtains, to see into a room lined with bookshelves. He clenched his teeth as he recognised the hawk-faced old squire seated at a table, smiling grimly as he read some letters by the light of a hanging lamp.

"You'll not smile in a moment, you rogue!" Nat gritted, and abruptly stepped through the curtains.

There sounded a gasp from the seated man. But it seemed more like a gasp of satisfaction than one of dismay.

For some strange reason old Medlicott did not look aghast at the sudden intrusion of Nat, black-masked, and with bell-mouthed pistols levelled. He leaned back in his chair, regarding the highwayman, and an evil leer crossed his cunning features.

"Ha!" he croaked. "I have been expecting a visit from you, Swift Nat!"

Nat stood rigid. He sensed danger. It was not like old Medlicott to face levelled pistols boldly.

"Have you?" he snapped. "Faith, then you're not disappointed!"

"I assume you've come to try to sell me that document that you stole," leered the old rascal. "I thought you would."

"I've come for a reckoning!" snapped Nat. "You—and a young knave who calls himself your nephew—tried to betray me to Runners!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" The reply came in a croaking laugh. "My nephew did not betray you! Faith, he was caught himself at the farm that night. He's been sentenced, and hangs tomorrow morning at Tyburn Tree."

"What?" Nat gasped in horror.

"Ralph hangs as a highwayman," leered the old wretch. "So I shall get his estate! Fool that he was to ask aid from a real highwayman. 'Tis thanks to your wounding him, and lamming his horse, that he got captured!"

Nat felt as though stunned. After all, young Ralph had not intended to get Nat trapped, but had really wished to seize the documents from his scoundrelly uncle. Why Ralph had fired at him was still a mystery to Nat. He stepped forward angrily.

"Stand still!" snapped old Medlicott, gloating. "This house is surrounded by hidden servants and Runners waiting for you! You're trapped, Nat! One shout from me, and you're doomed!"

### THE THIRD CHAPTER. Doomed to Die!

NAT was shocked for a few moments. Now he realised why the park gate had been open, why he had so easily gained

entrance through the window. For once in his life he had walked into a trap.

Rage filled him. At all costs he must save young Ralph somehow, he told himself, for he had caused the lad's capture.

A lot was now plain. Old Medlicott wanted his nephew hanged as a highwayman, so that he could seize the lad's estate, and he was indeed delighted at the turn of events.

Also, it seemed he wanted back the forged will, so that he could destroy this evidence of his knavery, there being no need for it, once Ralph had been wrongfully hanged a tobyman.

"The will, Nat!" he croaked, extending a bony hand.

"Not likely!" snapped Nat.

"I'll not pay for it," old Medlicott croaked. "But give it to me, and you shall go free."

"Never!" barked Nat, eyes flashing behind his mask. "I mean to save your nephew and prove you to be——"

"Then I'll sound the alarm!"

With that the skinny old ruffian leapt from his chair and hurled himself at a bell-rope. Fearing to fire and raise an alarm himself, Nat leapt forward, a pistol clubbed. But——

Clang!

Medlicott reached the bell-rope just in time, jerked it violently, then flung himself aside. Instantly a bell pealed somewhere in a passage, and all over the house sounded stamping feet and loud shouts. Out in the grounds shouts sounded, too.

Swift Nat realised he was cornered. Heartily he wished he had taken those papers when first he held up the London coach and robbed old Medlicott. Now it seemed the papers would cause the death of Swift Nat, as they surely must of young Ralph.

But Nat kept his head. He had been in tight corners before this.

He lashed out at old Medlicott, who parried the blow with a chair, however, then dived behind a table, croaking and bawling for help. That instant the library door burst open, and in swarmed several men servants with fire-irons, cudgels, and even a blunderbuss.

Nat blazed his barks over the servants' heads. The men threw themselves back-

wards, yelling, falling over each other for fear of getting shot.

Then Nat was out of the window at a bound, and running for his life to his hidden horse.

In the dark grounds outside, however, there were sturdier foes. On all sides sounded yells and shouts. Nat glimpsed men dashing up with lanterns, brandishing hay-forks and other weapons; glimpsed, too, a couple of cloaked runners, armed with horse-pistols.

He reloaded as he ran, and banged into the midst of the men. There sounded howls of pain. Nat raced on, to reach Midnight some distance ahead of his pursuers, and leap into his saddle.

But even as Nat spurred forward, there sounded drumming hoof-beats. Grooms were galloping down from the stables, making to head Nat off from the park gates.

Nat uttered a gasp of dismay as he saw their dim shapes and yellow flashes, heard deafening reports, then the whine of lead. But he thrust out his chin, and rode at full gallop across the moonlit park, with the hue and cry at his heels.

"Come on, cullies!" Nat hooted over his shoulder. "Your trap's not closed on me, and I warrant you can't catch *Midnight*——"

Nat broke off with a shout of anger, however. That instant he heard a dull clang, and, right ahead of him, he saw a lodge-keeper crashing home the big, iron-barred gates. Desperately he drove *Midnight* on, and fired at the man.

Too late!

The tall gates were locked, and the lodge-keeper ducked away out of sight. Swift Nat reined in to glance at the park walls; but these were six feet high, built of stone, and bristling with cruel iron spikes atop. No horse could jump them. From behind came yells of triumph and a thunder of hoofs and footfalls.

"Got ye, Nat, ye rogue!" sounded the screeching voice of old Medlicott. "He mustn't escape, lads! Take him—alive or dead."

Nat whirled *Midnight* round, to see a dozen dim forms rushing towards him. The trap had closed in. What hope had he now of escape? And what chance had he of saving

young Ralph from an undeserved fate? The lad was really no tobyman, had only taken to the road for one night in a desperate effort to guard his inheritance from his scoundrelly uncle.

But Ralph seemed doomed, as also did Swift Nat. Old Medlicott, well in rear of his men, uttered a triumphant screech.

London streets were crowded. The sun blazed down on a vast throng, gathered to see the execution of young Ralph Wyndham, sentenced to hang at Tyburn as a highwayman.

Men swarmed on roofs, at windows, stood packed along the pavements. Shouts of excitement went up as a horse-drawn cart came slowly rumbling along from Newgate Prison, guarded on either side by scarlet-clad soldiers.

In the low cart stood young Ralph, hatless, his wrists bound behind him, but with his hair carefully powdered, and with a brave smile on his face. The lad knew he was doomed to die. Beside the cart walked the ghoulish public hangman, commonly called "Scragsman Peters," clad in a long black cloak, black cocked hat, and wearing an eye-shade.

With muskets and pikes, the redcoats pushed back the eager crowd as the cart rumbled on. From all sides rose excited yells from ground to roofs. Ralph clenched his teeth, seeing over the heads of the crowd the grisly gibbet known as Tyburn Tree.

Outwardly cool, the lad felt bitter inwardly. His uncle would be delighted at his death, for he would then seize all Ralph's estates without any further trouble.

Anxiously Ralph's eyes swept the crowds, but he could see no friendly face. The ghoulish hangman beside the cart began to barter with the crowd.

"A crown an inch for the rope, cullies!" chanted the miserable wretch, pointing to the rope awaiting Ralph. "Ho, ho! Who'll buy souvenirs?" he croaked, according to custom. "A crown an inch for t' rope that hangs this highwayman. It's my right to sell it."

Hoarse laughter and offers made answer.

A few minutes later, the cart, surrounded by soldiers, halted under the gibbet. A breathless silence fell as the "Scragsman" entered it to adjust the noose over Ralph's head.

That instant, however, a startling thing happened.

The "Scragsman" hurled off his cloak, and tore off his eye-shade; then he whipped out a knife and slashed Ralph's bonds.

"Jump, lad!" he yelled. "We'll ha' to fight for it!"

Two pistols appeared in his hands.

Astounded, Ralph could not believe his eyes, could not understand the amazing transformation. Then a yell of delight burst from his lips:

"Swift Nat!"

It was Nat who had suddenly thus revealed himself, having somehow taken the real hangman's place. Instantly roars of glee and excitement burst from the crowd. The famous Nat had many friends among them, it seemed.

The soldiers yelled, and smote around with their muskets. But the crowd rushed at them, and foremost into the press rode a bunch of hard-looking horsemen.

Pandemonium broke loose. On all sides sounded yells, the thud of bludgeons, and the reports of muskets. In a second a fierce battle raged round the cart; backwards and forwards swept fighting men, grappling with soldiers, rolling on the ground. Stones and bottles flew thick and fast.

From out of the cart sprang Nat and Ralph, to fling themselves into the turmoil, battling fiercely. Nat's pistols cracked, men dropped, then he was lashing out with his fists.

"A rescue! A rescue!" rose roars. "Tis Swift Nat to the rescue! This way, cullies!"

The authorities had not feared any attempt to rescue the unknown Ralph. This sudden onslaught by friends of the famous Swift Nat, obviously waiting the signal in the crowd, took them by surprise. Many more soldiers would have been there had Nat's presence been suspected.

Nevertheless, for some minutes escape seemed doubtful. Nat and Ralph were seized by soldiers, dragged back, only to break loose again, aided by friends.

At last, after five minutes of frantic fighting, Swift Nat and Ralph burst out of the crowd, their friends fighting along behind them. In a side-street stood two horses—one was Midnight—held by a masked man.

Up sprang Ralph and Nat, to clap home their heels, and thunder away out of London town. Behind them the din of fighting grew distant and faint. Swift Nat laughed, as they galloped along, knowing his friends were sufficiently numerous to overcome the handful of soldiers and make good their escape.

"But how did you do it, Nat?" Ralph gasped, when at last they drew rein in a country lane.

at the old barn that night with the forged will as I promised? Here it is!"

"'Twas you?" gasped Ralph. "I took you for another highwayman! Though you were masked when you returned, you wore a grey cloak instead of your blue one! Those Runners that appeared were really after me, but recognised your horse, and leaving two men to take me, chased after you."

Swift Nat laughed heartily. He remembered changing his cloak round, for disguise, when he entered the Green Dragon Inn to take the will from old Medlicott. He had forgotten to turn it again when he returned to Ralph! Hence the mistake, resulting in



Guarded by soldiers, with crowds swarming the street, the cart containing the bound Ralph rumbled towards the gibbet—and a highwayman's death!

"Faith, cully, your rascally uncle nearly nabbed me," grinned Nat, relating all that had happened at the Grange. "But I escaped by jumping Midnight over the park-gates. Then I gathered friends, and we rode all night for London.

"As for the real 'Scraggsman Peters,' I suppose he still lies bound in his room in Newgate Gaol, unless he has been found. Ho, ho! I gained access to him in the garb of a Runner, whom I held up on the way. One tap of my pistol-butt silenced him."

Ralph roared with laughter.

"But why the deuce did you shoot at me, cully," said Nat, "when I returned to you

the narrow escape of Ralph from a highwayman's death, and nearly bringing about his own capture twice."

Delightedly Ralph took the will from Nat. Able to prove it a forgery, the lad soon established the fact that he was not really a highwayman, and caused his uncle to fly from the country.

Swift Nat refused to quit the road, however, having learnt to love his wild life. But he knew that whenever he needed a refuge, he would find one at Highfields Grange, actually Ralph's property saved from the villainous old Medlicott by Swift Nat.

THE END

# Billy Bunter's Alphabet

*The likes and dislikes of the Owl of the Remove at Greyfriars are well known, but never before has he put them into the form of a rhyming alphabet.*

**A** is for APPETITE—mine is so vast  
I can always find room for a ripping repast !

**B** is for BUNTER. I'm not in "Who's Who,"  
Though famed the world over, from here to Peru.

**C** is for CHERRY, who wakes me at six  
With the aid of a sponge or a series of kicks !

**D** is for DOUGHNUT, so sticky and jammy,  
Beloved by the Bunters, both Billy and Sammy.

**E** is for EXERCISE—sprints round the quad.  
Will soon make me slimmer than Skinner or Todd !

**F** is for FOOTBALL, a game that I dread,  
Unless the "insides" are always "well fed."

**G** is for GREYFRIARS—great school, I agree,  
But where would it be without W.G.B. ?

**H** is for HOLIDAYS; happy the hours  
Bunter Court will provide—or Mauleverer Towers !



**A** is for APPETITE—mine is so vast  
I can always find room for a ripping repast !

**I** is for "INKY"—I call him a nigger,  
And then down the passage he punts me with vigour !

**J** is for JAM-TARTS, my principal diet;  
If they were abolished, there would be a riot !

**K** is for KEYHOLE—my ear is applied  
Quite closely to one, whilst my shoelace is tied !

**L** is for LINLEY, a bookworm and swot;  
"Digesting" the Classics appeals to me  
not!

**M**'s for Dame MIMBLE, who aggravates  
me;  
She won't make the tuck-shop a "tuck-  
shop," you see!

**N** is for NUGENT, so slender and slim;  
No cannibal chief would make dinner off  
him!

**O** is for OMELETTE, bursting with jam;  
The finest concoction to follow roast lamb.

**P** is for "PREP." I would much rather  
laze,  
For swotting at Greek turns my nights into  
"daze."

**Q** is for QUELCHY, our Form-master  
grim;  
For eating in class, he canes me with vim!

**R**'s for REMITTANCE, a rustling "P.O."  
Mine has been on the way for an eon or so!

**S** is for SAMMY, the scamp of the Second;  
The world's greatest gorger (bar one) he is  
reckoned!

**T** is for TUCK, which haunts all my  
dreams,  
And causes my nightmares and terrified  
screams.

**U** is for UNCLE—I own a good many;  
But titled relations won't part with a penny!

**V**'s for VENTRILOQUIST. How I rejoice  
To cause consternation by throwing my  
voice!



**C** is for CHERRY, who wakes me at six  
With the aid of a sponge or a series of kicks!

**W**'s for WHARTON, who rules the Remove;  
A far better skipper "yours truly" would  
prove!

**X** is for XENOPHON—beastly old bore!  
But cookery books I admire and adore!

**Y** is for "YORKSHIRE"—the pudding,  
not shire;  
Served hot with roast beef, 'tis my dream  
and desire!

**Z** is for ZEAL of the eager tuck-hunter.  
And none is more zealous than W. G.  
BUNTER!

THE END



## MY JOLLIEST CHRISTMAS

*The Considered Statements of Prominent Greyfriars Characters,  
Collected by a "HOLIDAY ANNUAL" Representative*

**H**ARRY WHARTON: The jolliest Christmas I remember is certainly last Christmas, which I spent at Wharton Lodge, my uncle's place, with the rest of the Co. Everything went with a swing from start to finish. Even when Bunter gate-crashed in on us the fun still continued fast and furious. That'll give you some idea !

**LORD MAULEVERER:** The jolliest Christmas I remember is one which I don't remember at all ! The explanation ? Simply that I slept through it, begad !

**MR. QUELCH:** My jolliest Christmas ? Undoubtedly the one which I enjoyed with Dr. Locke some years ago. We spent the entire festive season discussing Sophocles !

**MICKY DESMOND:** Shure an' it's meself that'll niver forget the foine holiday I spent with me ould grandfather, Paddy Desmond, at Kilkenny. Bejabbers, an' that would have been the happiest Christmas I iver had, but for the fact that it was Easter !

**BOLSOVER MAJOR:** Last Christmas Day I spent gorging and reading big fight stories. On Boxing Day I went to a boxing-booth at a circus in the morning, a boxing tournament in the afternoon and a wrestling-match in the evening. If you can suggest a jollier Christmas than that, I'd like to know what it is !

**BILLY BUNTER:** My jolliest Crissmas ? Simple : the one that's just approaching. I've turned down newmerous pressing invitations from frends among the titled jentry and nobility and am honnering Wharton with my prezzence. And if I don't set his uncle's measly little place alite, my name's not Bunter !

**WUN LUNG:** Me spendee jolliest Chlistmas in China. Eatee plenty lats and mice in stew ; velly good !

**MARK LINLEY:** The best Christmas I ever spent was when I went round the hospitals with a concert-party in my home town in Lancashire, cheering up the poor beggars who needed it most !

**CLAUDE HOSKINS:** The happiest Christmas I remember occurred a couple of years ago, when I was a guest at a house-party and had the opportunity of playing a piano from morning till night with scarcely a stop. Most of the guests were unaccountably taken ill half-way through, but I had a really gorgeous time myself !

**HORACE COKER:** Larst Christmas was the jolliest ever. Potter and Greene stayed with me, and by weigh of a joak I rigged myself up as a ghost and raided them in the middle of the nite. They got such a scare they were both laid up for a weak. Larf ! I didn't stop larfing till well into the new term !



F. Hiscocks

#### THE FIRST CHAPTER

##### The Runaway !

THE last of the De Browns drifted gloomily from the south end of Piccadilly towards the north. His aristocratic features showed intense distress, his slender figure drooped within an expensive spring suit which that morning had filled his soul with joy, and his monocle seemed to have lost its accustomed glitter.

For Millicent Manners, the lady for whom Archibald de Brown would have risked his life, had told him plainly that she would never marry him.

"No, Archie," she had said, "it's very nice of you, but I certainly won't marry you. When I marry I want a strong, clever, self-reliant fellow who has made his own position in the world. A creature whom I can respect and fear."

Archie had gulped.

"Now look at you," she had continued. "You've inherited a large fortune, and all

Archie de Brown is an aristocratic dude, but he also has unlimited pluck—as a gang of rustlers in the Wild West find out to their cost!

you do is to drift about and spend money that stronger men have made. You do some things, certainly—you play polo and drive a racing-car that someone else tunes for you. But those things *mean nothing*."

Archie had opened his mouth.

"And, further," Miss Millicent had continued, "you haven't a thought above the crease in your trousers and the parting in your hair. You expect a girl to be interested in a man like that? No, Archie; not this girl, anyway. I like you awfully. But when I marry, I'm going to marry a *man*. Sorry!"

"I see," Archie had managed to ejaculate.

"You mean, my dear old beautiful person, that before our marriage you would like me to sort of ginger up the old intellect and infuse more zip into the beef and biceps. Eh, what?"

But Miss Millicent had risen with some suddenness and proceeded to the door.

"I said nothing about a marriage," she

told him heatedly. "I never shall. There isn't going to be one as far as you and I are concerned—never! I hate to be cruel. But do you understand?"

Whereupon, without waiting for an answer, she had disappeared into the fastnesses of the house. So Archie disappeared, too. He tottered into the south end of Piccadilly and wandered dully towards the north.

Now it so happened that from the north end of Piccadilly upon this fateful morning there walked a grim-looking young man of about Archie's age, heading south. His usually kindly eyes held the glint of steel, his strong mouth looked as though it had been cut out of granite, and his name was Buller. Upon his back was a well-cut but distinctly shabby suit, and in his right-hand trouser pocket three shillings and fourpence-ha'penny—which articles constituted Mr. John Buller's entire fortune and effects in this world.

Mr. Buller had behind him twenty-five years of an extremely varied life. His people had lost their money just after he had left the great school where he and Archie de Brown had been educated; so he had gone to Canada, where he was given employment on a relation's ranch. From this he had drifted away on a gold-prospecting trip into the United States; but finding a depressing scarcity of anything that looked even faintly like gold, he worked his way to the West coast.

A job on a tramp ship took him to the South Seas, where he laboured in a pineapple-canning factory in the Fijis. Further restlessness and a growing dislike of the constant smell of pineapple, sent him wandering on various occupations through the Malay Islands into China. Here he won a considerable sum at fan-tan, bought a share in a rice plantation, and started to make real money.

Two years later he sold out and came home to have a good time. But he found his father and mother in stark poverty instead of the modest comfort that he had imagined was their lot. So without hesitation, he presented them with the whole of his bank balance, and got himself a job in a City office,

meaning to save up his fare to India, where he had heard money was to be made.

Office life and people who inhabit offices did not suit Mr. Buller, however. He stuck it for the inside of a week and put up with the petty hectoring of his stout and bald employer. Then his temper broke.

He up-ended the stout and bald gentleman into a waste-paper basket with a simple but impressive movement, formally tendered his resignation to the wildly-waving legs, and marched out, minus salary. Slightly ruffled, he walked into Piccadilly and turned southwards, debating upon his future.

Whereupon a passing horse took fright at the sudden back-firing of a motor-engine and bolted, drawing behind it a large van which rocked violently and threatened to crash over amongst the traffic at any moment.

Buller ran out instinctively to catch the reins on the off-side, so that the horse might not swerve on to the crowded pavement when it was checked. He noticed another figure dashing at the animal from the wrong side, and he yelled to him to let go.

But the valiant Archie, who had far more instinctive pluck than Miss Millicent had ever dreamt, paid no attention. He grabbed at the bridle and immediately lost his footing. Wildly, he scrambled about with his feet, and heaved with kangaroo-like movements of the body as he was dragged along, but the sudden check had already proved disastrous.

The horse swerved, the van rocked on two wheels, and the driver was flung out, to land, fortunately unhurt, on the well-sprung back seats of a passing car.

Meanwhile, the runaway went on, and Archie managed to get one of his legs up over a shaft, meaning to get up on to the driving-seat and grab the trailing reins. Mr. Buller had much the same idea, with the result that the two met, reaching for the reins at the same moment. But Archie got them first.

Heartily, he pulled upon them, not realising that the off-side was slack and that he was wrenching the horse's head inwards to the pavement. Buller yelled and grabbed, but he was too late to prevent disaster. The cart-



Archie de Brown and John Buller thought and acted at the same moment. Simultaneously they sprang from different sides and grasped the bridle of the runaway horse.

wheels struck the kerb with a crashing jar, and the shafts snapped off, leaving the horse to gallop on free until it was stopped by a policeman.

But long before that happened that jar had sent the cart clean off its balance. It crashed through the window of an outfitter's shop with a terrific smashing of plate-glass and woodwork, and the two young men plunged head-first into a sea of shirts, ties, socks and gents' natty underwear.

Archie was the first to get his head clear, and he sat up, groping for his eyeglass and blinking about him. His gaze settled upon a tie that was a choice mixture of spring sunset colours, with a suggestion of a forest fire in the background, and he gasped.

With trembling hands he picked up the tie, whilst Buller heaved into sight beside

him, and the scared owner of the shop scrambled through into the wreckage. It was to the latter that Archie turned, however, holding out the tie and waving it.

"Dear old shop-person," he said, shaking his head solemnly, "name your price. It's perfect. You couldn't charge too much for it."

"What on earth—" gasped the proprietor. "Do you mean you'll pay for the window?"

"Window?" echoed Archie. "Dear old pants-peddlar, what are you wiffling about? I want to buy this tie. It'll just go with my fawn tweed that has the cunnin' little red pin-stripe pattern."

But he broke off in hurt surprise as he heard a sudden howl of mighty laughter at his side.

John Buller was still laughing weakly

when he and Archie had left the wrecked shop, given their names to the police, and were walking off arm-in-arm.

"To think," he said unevenly, "that after ten years I should meet you, you blinking tailor's dummy, bang in the middle of a clothes shop! Why, Archie, do you realise that we haven't seen each other since we both left St. Botolph's? Let's drop in somewhere and chat. What have you been doing with yourself all this time? Living on your giddy fortune, I suppose, and making life worth while for the tailors?"

But when they sat down in a restaurant, Archie shook his head and emitted a deep sigh.

"My life," he said forlornly, "is over! Nipped out, Bulldog, old egg! No good to me at all, if you grasp what I mean."

"I get a faint drift of it," said Bulldog gravely. "You are breaking the news gently, but you indicate that there is some little annoyance on what you call your mind."

Archie told him what had happened, describing Miss Millicent at great length.

"So, you see," he finished, "that's the end of all things—the limit, dear old friend of my college days. I can't possibly go on livin' now, don't you see? Or don't you?"

"I don't," grinned Bulldog. "Archie, you're an ass; a cheerful, plucky and good-hearted ass, but an ass, for all that! You could make yourself into all that this Miss Manners desires if you tried. You've only got to travel about the world a bit and work for your living, and any girl will think you a real man."

"Tell me," gasped Archie feverishly—"tell me how it's done, old bird! You look one of the strong, tough chappies that make Millicent shiver with joy. Tell me how you did it."

Bulldog laughed, but launched on a brief story of his travels and adventures. At the finish, he said nothing about his generous action to his parents. He said that his money was lost, and got Archie howling with laughter about the brief but spectacular job in the City office.

In the middle of the laughter Archie stopped suddenly.

"I've got it!" he almost shouted. "The jolly old brain-box has suddenly started firin' on all four, and I've got a fine idea. Listen. I've inherited something of a fortune, as it were."

"That was a good idea, of course," said Bulldog, "but—"

"Wait. Further to that, I want to be a real man for little Millicent's sake," continued Archie. "I want to be a tough, two-fisted, sharp-shootin'—er—what'sisname. Isn't that so?"

"You mean a thingummy," said Bulldog. "Still, go on."

"Well," said Archie, "I'll give you a job—a good, well-paid job. You're to take me away out West and show me the ropes. I'll pay all expenses, and I'll hand out whatever salary you think fair. And all you've got to do is to lead me around the wild and woolly open spaces and show me how to get tough. There, is it a go? Are you on, old chappie?"

It took them fully an hour of argument, discussion, and table-thumping to finally boil down the only idea that Archie was ever known to produce, but at the finish of it they shook hands.

Bulldog, after pooh-poohing the whole thing, had gradually come to see that, amazingly enough, it might be quite a *good* idea.

The hard but healthy life out West would do Archie all the good in the world; would prevent him becoming the aimless fop into which he would develop if he went on as he was. And the arrangement would be a relief to Bulldog, who ached to be out of the stuffy, smoky city.

Finally, therefore, he agreed; but he refused to take any salary.

"You pay expenses, Archie," he finished. "I'll make any pocket-money I want as we go along. I know the ropes well enough not to be ever hard up."

And from that he would not depart. But both of them departed from England three weeks later, en route for Canada, and Archie was in the highest of spirits.

## THE SECOND CHAPTER

### Stampeding Steers!

DOWN in the cup of a dark valley a herd of steers stood together, their drab brown backs making a restless, undulating carpet beneath the clouded sky. Over upon the hillside a coyote yelped dryly, its harsh note seeming to crack through the humid heat of the night. And the ranch foreman swore gently.

"Hey, Bulldog," he said, trotting his horse across to the Englishman, "get out amongst the steers and watch for trouble. This scorchin' heat'll mean a stampede unless we're careful. The beasts are nervous, an' if any of the yearlings start fightin' they'll send the whole herd off."

He stared up at the lowering sky and mopped his brow as Bulldog raised a hand to his sombrero and moved off.

"Darn them clouds! Why don't they

break?" the foreman muttered. "If only the rain'd come, we'd be out of danger."

Much the same thought was in Bulldog's mind as he guided his pony through the restless steers. Cowmen were strung out round the great herd, keeping constantly on the move and singing crooningly, but danger threatened with every second of this baking heat.

Bulldog wondered, too, where Archie was. He hadn't seen him for more than an hour—not that he was hard to see. His gorgeous cowboy outfit made that almost impossible.

They had arrived in Canada a few weeks back, and had drifted down to a mid-western ranch a fortnight later.

This was a place Bulldog already knew, and the owner gave them employment gladly. For one thing, he had a big herd of cattle to be moved some hundreds of miles across the plains, and he was short-handed. And for

"Dear old pants-peddlar," said Archie, as he and John Buller sat up among the wreckage of the shop window, "I want to buy this tie." The proprietor stared at Archie in astonishment.



another, Archie was more than willing to work for nothing in exchange for the experience.

The rest of the cowmen treated the last of the De Browns as though he were some strange animal at first. They played tricks upon him, put lizards in his bunk, and generally pulled his leg until he might have been expected to walk with a permanent list. Bulldog hung round constantly, ready to chip in on his friend's behalf, but hoping that Archie would gain the men's respect by looking after himself.

And Archie did. He stuck it out wonderfully and played tricks back in his turn. Also, his old polo days stood him in good stead, and he soon showed himself to be as good a horseman as anyone else on the range. At the end of a week he was accepted as one of the bunch and genuinely liked; but his marvellous habit of doing the most thick-headed thing at precisely the wrong moment on all occasions didn't improve the foreman's temper.

The herd was two days out on its long journey, and Bulldog stared around in the darkness as he rode amongst them. Archie had gone off on his own after the evening meal, and Bulldog preferred to keep him in view.

Bulldog began to get angry. Conditions were electric. The danger of a stampede was imminent—a flapping piece of paper, a sudden noise, would be enough to send the animals off. And if that happened Archie was certain to get himself into the most dangerous position possible.

Archie, however, was quietly but thoroughly enjoying himself. At a nearly-dry creek on the fringe of the herd he was washing the bright-coloured shirt he had bought a few weeks back. It had been nicknamed the "Forest Fire" by the cowmen, who often pretended to light their cigarettes at it; but a week's wear had soiled its brilliance.

So, with soap and a bottle of petrol, Archie got busy. He wrung the shirt out and then, engrossed in his labour of love, rose and shook it out with mighty flaps. The cattle near him scattered, and within a minute fright had run like an electric shock all through the herd. Hoofs stamped and bodies swayed. Heads butted. But Archie noticed nothing.

He opened the petrol bottle and held it in one hand, splashing the liquid on a bad spot, preparatory to rubbing. But in that moment he heard a chorus of yells, a scatter of shooting revolvers and a sound like low, rumbling thunder.

The whole floor of the valley seemed to be moving as he glanced round. A great, heaving brown carpet swept along it and thundered towards the open country beyond, whilst yelling cowmen raced their ponies at the sides, shooting and cracking their whips in a hopeless attempt to stop the stampede.

"Deah me!" gasped Archie. "Those careless fellows have allowed the beastly cows to run away. Dash it, I'd better make haste and help round them up."

Saying which, he rose and flung himself into the saddle of his nervous mare, spurring it forward. He jammed the petrol bottle which he was still holding into the opening of his vest. He had guarded the cleaning liquid jealously ever since leaving the ranch. Archie bent low over the reins riding blindly ahead through the sudden clouds of flying dust.

Meanwhile, in among the plunging steers, Bulldog and another cowman fought for their lives. They shot down wildly racing steers which charged at their horses, and they tried to forge ahead, for Bulldog's companion had yelled out:

"They're heading towards the canyon. Get ahead and turn 'em if you can, an' if you can't, leave your horse and take a chance, jumpin' out of it over their backs. The whole herd will go over if they ain't turned—the canyon's only half a mile ahead."

Bulldog rode as he had never ridden before. He lashed aside at steers that endangered him and forced his horse into any opening that showed ahead. He was quite near the stampede leaders, and vaguely through the darkness he could see the broken line of the canyon edge. But he realised suddenly that to turn the herd was impossible. In a couple of minutes the herd would have reached the edge, and then—

But still he hesitated. He hated to leave his pony to such a terrible fate, and he checked it in a wild, reckless attempt to battle his way aside out of the herd.

Meanwhile, Archie had been riding hard. In the thick, choking dust he couldn't see which way he was going, and he was only guided by the thunder of the hoofs somewhere near him. Blindly he pushed ahead, spurring his mare until it suddenly slid to a stop and nearly sent him over its head. Archie stared down and saw a yawning abyss a few yards in front. He gasped.

Although he didn't know it, he had ridden a diagonal course that took him clean in front of the stampede. He could hear it coming now, but didn't realise that it was thundering straight towards him. Archie mopped his brow.

"Deah me, how extraordinary!" He pondered. "The herd's somewhere near—I can jolly well hear it gettin' nearer. But which way is it goin'?"

Feeling that now was the time for action, he groped in the pocket of his chaps and produced a box of matches, striking one close to his body between cupped hands. If he could only see the herd—

The match flared; Archie fell backwards off his horse and wondered for an instant if he had been struck by lightning, for that match had been one inch away from the open neck of a well-splashed petrol bottle.

"Ow!" howled Archie, plunging on the ground and tearing the blazing bottle from where it was fondly embraced by his vest. "Ow-wow! Dash it all, I'm jolly well burnin'! Ow, bai Jove! Help! Assistance! Deah me—ow!"

He got the blazing bottle free much quicker than he imagined and flung it away. But it fell into a bush which roared into flame immediately.

Archie, rolling upon the ground, eventually extinguished his burning shirt. Then the thunder of hoofs as the herd drew nearer came to his ears, and suddenly he forgot all about the fire in a new danger, for he realised what had happened.

The great stretch of the thundering herd swept like a brown plunging sea out of the choking dust clouds beyond the burning bushes. The terrified animals were pounding along shoulder to shoulder, with widened nostrils and panic-stricken eyes. As Archie

scrambled to his feet he thought that his last moment had come.

Then the leaders of the stampede saw the fire, and they checked suddenly, bucking, kicking and shouldering aside to get away from the one thing which all animals fear above anything else. Like a wave, the following steers piled up behind, leaping over those which were flung down, horning and fighting madly to try to get out.

Fear had set them going, but fire was in front, and that saved the disaster which had seemed imminent. Within a few more seconds the whole herd had turned. They had swept aside from the canyon edge, which was now fringed with flame, and they were running up the steep slope amongst the undergrowth where they soon came to a standstill, exhausted, but glad to be beset by no further terrors.

In a daze Archie watched, as a crowd of horsemen rushed up and jumped down to beat out the flames which he had caused.

Archie helped them, but at the finish they crowded round him and raised him shoulder-high. With yells and cat-calls, they marched him round, for every one of them thought that he had recklessly risked his own life to get ahead, fire the bushes, and thus turn aside the herd from disaster.

Archie accepted the applause with slight mystification, but great pleasure. He waved his sombrero and smiled from left to right.

But Bulldog fell off his horse. He was neither injured nor exhausted. He was, in fact, the only one who had seen all that had happened.

And he was laughing like a hyena.

### THE THIRD CHAPTER

#### Bulldog's Brain-wave

ARCHIE DE BROWN polished his eyeglass with considerable vim, and then fitted it carefully into its accustomed place.

"Bulldog," he said, "I've been thinkin'." Solemnly he nodded and settled himself more comfortably in the saddle of his horse. "It's about time that some of us—er—jolly well did a bit of—ah—thinkin', if you grasp what I mean. About these rustlers, dash it all."

John Buller grinned amiably and tilted his sombrero, but did not answer.

The two trotted their horses on the fringe of a herd, far away on the sunny plains of South Dakota in America. Already they had been adventuring now for three months. They had drifted down from the ranch in Canada, where Archie had learnt enough to make him quite a useful "hand," and had got jobs on another ranch.

"Dear old laddie, I was talkin'," said Archie. "I remarked that I'd been thinkin'. I said that I'd been thinkin' that——"

"Quite!" said Bulldog cheerfully. "And since you mentioned the subject of rustlers, I think I've got an idea. Altogether, the rotters have stolen a hundred and fifty head of cattle from this range in the last fortnight. We've combed the hills and tried to follow up the tracks, but we haven't found a thing. What's more, the men who've lived all their lives hereabouts are quite certain that no group of cattle-stealers are hiding anywhere."

"Then, dash it all, where *are* they hidin'?" said Archie. "And where are the stolen cattle bein' kept? That's what *I* want to know!"

"They aren't being kept anywhere," said Bulldog. "My idea is that the rustlers run each stolen bunch straight off to the railway ten miles off across the range, and ship them off to stockyard buyers who don't question where they come from."

"Oh!" said Archie.

"And I also think that the rustlers are men of this ranch," continued Bulldog. "That's why they've got away with their cattle each time without any of us knowing about it until the morning. There are a bunch of traitors at work, drawing pay as cowhands and 'tealing their own employer's stock."

"Ah!" gasped Archie. "You mean that—that—deah me! Bai Jove, there's somethin' in what you say, old laddie. Now I might have thought of that myself if only it had occurred to me, don't you know. I'm really somethin' of a detective when I concentrate."

He slapped the beautiful goat-skin chaps that covered his legs, and grinned happily.

"Well, now that we've seen through their rotten little game, what are we goin' to do

about it?" he asked. "I was tellin' you only a little while ago that it was time some of us did a little thinkin'."

"Now that *we* have seen through their little game," said Bulldog, with a grin, "we'll keep quiet about it. I've got an idea all ready fixed up, and you, Archie, are the only man I can trust to help me. Listen, now. You know we had to shoot a couple of steers some days ago, in order to stop a stampede?"

"Yaas," breathed Archie excitedly.

"Well, I had their skins dried out, and on the quiet, I've pegged them up with supports, so that they'll stand. You and I are going to creep in amongst the herd to-night, climb inside those skins, and wait. When any rustling starts we'll see it, and we'll be able to knock the rotters over with our rifles. I've made loopholes in the sides and heads."

"Bai Jove!" said Archie. "Another minute, old laddie, and I should have thought of that, too. It's a fine idea. Dash it all, the rustlers won't see us, an' so they won't be afraid to rustle—if you grasp what I mean."

"I get it vaguely," grinned Bulldog. "Well, Archie, that's what I brought you riding so far away from the other chaps for this morning. I wanted to tell you all about it, with no one overhearing. But now that you know the plan, we'd better not ride together any more. No one on the ranch must have the slightest idea that we're hatching anything, or the traitors will prick up their ears."

"Quite," breathed Archie, glancing from left to right over his shoulders. "Mustn't raise the bad old suspicions—everybody in blissful ignorance—rustlers trippin' into the trap. When do we start?"

"I'll meet you at nine behind the horse-corral," said Bulldog. "Now, buzz off, Archie—and remember, not a word to a soul!"

Archie rode along the southern fringe of the herd, and when he had got a mile or so from Bulldog, one of the other men from the ranch trotted out to meet him.

"Howdy, Archibald?" he said, with a mocking grin. "How's the paradin' clothes-peg, this mornin'? That's a natty line in shirts you've got on. Yellow stripes sure go

well with a purple background and green horseshoes—but ain’t you afraid of settin’ the pampas grass on fire ? ”

Archie snorted. This individual, known to his comrades as “ Smoky ” by reason of his jet black hair, was not a favourite with the last of the De Browns.

Smoky, indeed, was not a favourite with any of the more decent and clean-living men. He was a notorious bully and most of his

Choked with dust and bruised all over, Archie clung on desperately to the tossing horns of the stampeding steer. If he lost his grasp he would be pounded to death by the oncoming herd!

Smoky flung back his head and let out a howl of laughter. He always found Archie an easy target for cheap wit, and he was never happier than when pulling the august leg of the last of the De Browns.

“ Haw, haw ! ” he laughed, imitating Archie’s cultured tones. “ Bai Jove, old fellah, I’m awfully sorry, doncha know, but if you will insist on ridin’ the range dressed up like a cross between a movie hero and a



off time was spent in the saloon of a near-by cattle town.

“ Good-mornin’, Smoky, ” said Archie, with dignity. “ I do not wish to—ah—have words with you, but if you have anything to say about my clothes, I should be obliged if you would—ah—refrain from makin’ me an object of ridicule. Dash it all, I feel bound to point out that your mannah is hardly good form—if you grasp what I mean.”

prairie fire you’re the only one who has anything to do with the ridicule part.”

Archie started to get down from his horse.

“ Smoky, ” he said, in fiery tones, “ I don’t mind ordinary chippin’, but I nevah allow any fellow to be deliberately rude. Therefore, I must ask you to put up your fists and take a really remarkable hidin’.”

“ Is zat so ? ” asked Smoky with a snarl, and he made a lightning movement, so that

when Archie turned to face him, the last of the De Browns found himself looking into a shining revolver. "Stick 'em up!" went on Smoky. "I'm not doin' this because I'm scared of you, but because no one dare touch you on this range. If I got down and beat you up your friend Bulldog would start a lot of trouble. But I'll tell you this. If you hadn't got him behind you, you wouldn't live a day in this bunk."

"Deah me," gasped Archie. "You—you perfectly frightful cad. You jolly well know that isn't true, dash it all! Put that beastly gun away and get down now—I'll give you such a remarkably good hidin' that you'll wish you were never born. And what's more, I'll guarantee that Bulldog doesn't do anything about it whatever happens."

"Oh, yeah!" grinned Smoky, who for all his fine words was genuinely afraid of Archie's well-known pluck and muscle. "Well, I'm not wasting any time givin' you a thick ear, anyhow. You run away and weep your troubles out on your big friend's knees. You'd better keep near him in case the rustlers run you off amongst the cows one dark night—without your hat on you might easily be mistook for a steer."

Archie swung up back into his saddle.

"I'll jolly well make you fight me one day, Smoky," he breathed fiercely—"and let me tell you that I've got my eye on one or two people on this range who might know a lot more about the rustlers than the rest of us. Bulldog was only saying just now— But, dash it all, of course, you can't expect me to say a word about that. Just you look out for yourself, that's all."

Smoky's eyebrows went up so that they nearly touched his sombrero.

"Well—well," he said slowly. "Why, Archie, that's interesting. Come now, p'raps I have been a bit too funny with you this morning, but I've always been one for my little joke and you mustn't mind. What's all this about the rustlers? We're all keen to catch 'em, and if there's any stunt on, you want as many helpers as possible."

"Not a bit of it," said Archie, shaking his head firmly. "Bulldog and I agreed not to jolly well say a word to anyone. Not a

single livin' soul. And what's more, Smoky, I still consider your behaviour has been jolly well unpardonable. Dash it all, yes!"

But a keen light had come into Smoky's eyes, and he slipped his gun away and swung his horse round so that it was beside Archie's.

"Land sakes!" he said. "What a temper you've got, Archie. Can't you take a joke? There now, if I went too far, I apologise, and isn't an apology enough between one gentleman and another?"

Archie was slightly mollified. Smoky's words touched him upon his most sensitive spot—the way in which well-bred people ought to always forgive and forget.

"I—ah—accept your apology, Smoky," he said grudgingly, "and after that, of course, there's nothing more to be said."

"But about this stunt for catching the rustlers," persisted Smoky. "Just to show that you forgive me, Archie, let me in on it. Bulldog gave me a hint earlier to-day, but I didn't quite understand what he meant."

Deep suspicion lived in Archie's eyes as he looked at the other.

"I find that very difficult to believe, Smoky," he said solemnly. "Bulldog told me that he had not given our plan away to a single soul. Dash it all, he said he had a terrible job in fixin' up the dummy steers without anyone else knowin'. Look hear, I believe you're still tryin' to pump me, and I shall make a point of asking Bulldog if he confided in you. If you've been tellin' lies, my friend, I shall administer a most fearful hidin', whether you pull your guns on me or not." He nodded fiercely. "Good-bye!" he almost exploded, and rode off.

Smoky stared after him, and a wide grin came over his lean face.

"Dummy steers," he muttered to himself. "Great jumpin' cat-snakes! If I ever want anything shrieked all over the plain and howled from the hilltops, I'll tell it to Archie in confidence. So that's the idea, is it?"

He suddenly let out a roar of laughter, and swinging his horse round, galloped away to where a group of his special cronies were talking together.

## THE FOURTH CHAPTER Rounding Up the Rustlers!

**F**AR over the floor of a wide valley the brown backs of the herd stretched like an undulating sea beneath the wan moon. Half a dozen men strung out at various points around the edges kept guard, but two of them rode together and talked in undertones.

"There's no one else but our gang on guard to-night?" asked one of them.

"You're sure of that, Smoky?"

"Everything's O.K.," grinned the other. "And what's more, I've ridden amongst the herd and managed to catch sight of those two boobs in their dummy cow-skins."

He stretched out his hand and pointed.

"See that tree over there on the far side of the herd?" he asked. "Well, look along that line and count twenty steers; the twenty-first and twenty-second are the dummies. Got 'em?"

"Sure I've got 'em," answered the other man, with a grin. "Yes, you can see they're dummies now; they're standing so blamed still. Well, what are we going to do—slip 'em the works?"

Smoky nodded.

"Start cutting out the bunch of cows we've chosen," he whispered, "and if they start any trouble let 'em have it. Don't shoot unless they do because the noise is bound to bring the rest of the boys out from the ranch house, and we don't want that if we can help it. You see, they may be only hidin' there so that they can spot who the rustlers are. If that's so we can quietly put 'em out of the way later on, before they can spill the beans. Now get busy—time's short."

"O.K.," grinned his friend, and obediently trotted away into the darkness. As he went he gazed over the herd and chuckled as he saw one of the dummies rock slightly. As a matter of fact, Archie, within that skin, was not having the best of times. The scent of a newly-cured cow-skin at close quarters is none too pleasant.

The temperature on this hot night made the interior of the skin something like a bakehouse, and the hunched-up position that the

last of the De Browns was forced to adopt gave him cramp in every limb.

However, he stuck it manfully. Through the loopholes provided by the inventive-minded Bulldog, who lay concealed beside him, he could see all round the herd, and watch the riders.

A Winchester repeating rifle was hugged close to his chest and he had stuck the muzzles of his two revolvers through a couple of convenient slits.

Meanwhile, he was getting bored.

"What ho! What ho!" he whispered hoarsely. "How's things goin' with you, Bulldog? Bai Jove, after this I shall take my hat off to every jolly old sewerman I pass. What heroes those laddies must be."

"Shut up," came a growl from the next hide. "If you start talking, Archie, I'll—I'll plug you before the rustling starts. Now, for heaven's sake keep your entertaining views to yourself."

"Sorry!" breathed Archie. "I won't say a word, dear old boy."

It was at that moment that Bulldog noticed the riders coming together towards one end of the great herd, and he stiffened, swinging up his repeater rifle ready for action.

"Gosh!" he gasped to himself, as he watched proceedings. "The whole lot of 'em are at it. I see how they've been doin' it now. Well, here goes."

As he sighted his rifle at one of the distant horsemen he raised his voice slightly and called out to Archie in a hoarse whisper.

"They're starting," he breathed. "Get busy now, Archie, and let 'em have it. That bunch of riders right at the end there."

Archie, who had been too occupied with his own discomfort to keep his attention on the herd, became wildly excited in a second. He heard the sharp crack of Bulldog's repeater and the answering yell of a distant horseman who spun out of his saddle clutching a shattered forearm.

Wildly the last of the De Browns fumbled for his own rifle, caught the trigger by mistake—and lost eyebrows and front hair in one instant of blazing sound that made him think that the house of De Brown was finished for ever.

Finding himself still alive, however, he rammed the rifle out, sighted it vaguely, and pulled the trigger.

It was only then that something rather like a wasp stung that portion of his back which rose highest within the steer's skin. He gave a yell and flattened himself out, shooting out his legs with a convulsive movement.

This upset the dummy steer, which canted over, thudded against that occupied by Bulldog and brought both down with a crash. Then something like powerful rain began to pitter into the hot sand all about the fallen dummies, whilst the live steers scattered in terror, leaving a clear space.

Archie plunged about in the smelly darkness, emptying both his revolvers in a willing attempt to do something helpful, and thereby shot the heel off one of Bulldog's boots and smashed the butt of the rifle he was holding.

Bullets now kicked up spurts of sand all around, thudded through the tough hides and ricocheted off the horns—and Bulldog realised that the whole plan had somehow gone wrong.

It was perfectly clear that their position must have been known from the start, or otherwise that volley of shooting would not have been so accurate. As it was, flight was the only thing possible.

He kicked himself out of his skin, yelled to Archie to do likewise, and then dived in amongst the cattle, staggering and falling to his knees as a bullet ploughed a furrow along the side of his head, stunning him with its force.

Archie lost no time in following suit.

Still holding one of his revolvers he, too, plunged in amongst the steers, and then threaded his way through them, making for the group of shooting men. His temper was up. The blood of the De Browns boiled, and he was going to teach that crowd something in no uncertain manner.

But before he could reach them the section of the herd in which he was now began to move off. The riders had broken up and were swiftly cutting out the group of cattle which they had arranged to steal. In the darkness they had not seen Archie—and so he now found himself in the middle of a minor stampede.

He was shouldered and knocked from side to side several times, almost missing his footing as the cattle swept forward in a gallop. His position now was one of wild danger, and he knew it. If he once fell those pounding hooves would leave very little trace of the last of the De Browns, and at this rate he could not hope to keep his feet. What was more, he dare not climb up on to one of the plunging backs or he would be seen and shot down by the rustlers.

Desperate, choked with dust, and bruised all over, Archie grasped at a tossing pair of horns to steady himself. Then he lost his feet altogether, was charged sideways by a frightened beast at his elbow, and then found himself in a difficult position.

With his hands gripping the horns of the steer, he was hanging below its neck with his feet trailing along the ground between its front legs. It was an uncomfortable manner of travel, but Archie gasped with relief when he saw what it meant.

So long as he could hang on he would be taken wherever the herd went, unseen by the rustlers, and he would be able to hold them up, as he fondly imagined.

By now, however, the herd were going at full gallop and shots were ringing out from far behind. Bulldog had recovered consciousness, and men had also come running out from the ranch house, attracted by the shooting.

Archie heard, and thought that the day was saved. The followers would be easily able to keep off the rustlers and catch them up; but that was just where he was wrong, for Smoky, in the lead, yelled out a sharp order and the herd was suddenly turned aside into a narrow defile which apparently ended in a blank wall of rock.

The ground all along this part was thickly covered with prickly cactuses and thorny bushes, and Archie's appearance began to suffer. His beautiful goat-skin chaps dissolved like snow before sunshine. The cactuses tore them to shreds and great portions were wrenched away and left fluttering upon the sharp spines.

One by one his boots followed suit, together with large portions of his underpants, and the tail of his gorgeous shirt.



Presenting an amazing figure on the back of the steer, Archie blazed his guns at the rustlers. "Put your jolly old hands up!" he bawled. "I've got you covered!"

But the last of the De Browns hung on.

He couldn't see where the herd was going, and he was too occupied with the loss of his beloved finery to notice that the rock wall at the end of the defile had a narrow passage through it which would not be noticed by any man at a distance of ten yards.

Smoky evidently knew it well, however, for he led the herd and the riders through it, and within a couple of minutes they had apparently disappeared off the face of the earth.

This indeed was how things appeared to Bulldog and the rest of the men from the ranch as they came tearing up. The Englishman had leapt up behind the ranch foreman's saddle, and as that worthy brought his horse to a standstill, he stared around him.

All the men were nonplussed.

"Gosh!" gasped the foreman. "Am I dreaming or what's happened! The whole darned bunch of steers have gone into thin

air and the russians with 'em. They swung along somewhere by this line of rocks. But where, for the love of Mike, have they gone to?"

Bulldog drew a deep breath and stared around as the moon drifted from behind a cloud and bathed the empty plain in its pale radiance. He noticed the cactus bushes, and saw curious patches of white stuff scattered in a rough line amongst them. Then he caught sight of a shred of cloth that looked something like a small sunset, and he let out a yell.

"Gosh!" he shouted, "look at that. Look at those lumps of white stuff—it's goat's hair. And there's not another piece of cloth with that gorgeous pattern on it anywhere else in the United States. Archie's been along this way. It looks as though he's been dragged right up to that wall of rock there. He was with me five minutes ago, and where he's

gone there we'll find the stolen herd. Come on, boss."

The ranch foreman swung his horse round and led the group through the defile at a gallop. Not until they were right up against the rock did they find the passage through it, and then the whole method of the disappearance became plain to them.

"Get ready, boys!" yelled the foreman, whipping out his gun. "Make it snappy and shoot down any man you see. They may be waiting for us at the other end, so we've got to go through with a rush."

And it was with a rush that they went through that narrow path and came out a quarter of a mile farther on in an unexpected cup-shaped valley.

A big herd of cattle stretched over the floor of this hidden fastness, and a group of horsemen were gathered together, bending over one of their number who had been wounded.

They heard the noise of the newcomers and jerked round at once, putting up their guns; but in the same second they were taken by surprise from behind.

For an amazing figure had scrambled up on to the back of a steer and blazed his gun in the air. A monocle glittered fiercely in his left eye. A gorgeous shirt covered the upper part of his body and a tasteful fringe of long grasses was bunched round his waist, stretching down like the skirt of a hula-hula dancer over a pair of white and badly scratched legs.

"Put your jolly old hands up!" bawled Archie. "Dash it all, drop your guns; I've got you covered if you grasp what I mean."

And by way of illustrating his remarks he put a couple of bullets into the ground at the heels of the amazed rustlers.

The newcomers also fired a volley that kicked up the sand all about the scoundrels' feet, and they were so hopelessly surrounded that not one of them fired a single shot.

Swiftly they were disarmed, and their hands knotted behind them. Then the men of the ranch burst into loud laughter. Archie's comic appearance made it irresistible.

When the punchers had got over their mirth, the rustlers were mounted on their horses and, amid the punchers, led back to the ranch. When it was reached Archie

promptly disappeared, and was not seen for another hour, at the end of which time he reappeared in another smart outfit, his elegant self once again.

Meanwhile, the rustlers had been taken off to the calaboose in the nearest cattle town, there to await their trial.

Archie came in for the congratulations of everyone for the part he had played in rounding up the rustlers, for it could not be denied that it was due to him that their hiding-place had been discovered.

And it was with regret that the ranch-owner parted with Archie and Bulldog when the pair decided to move on again.

A few weeks later found Archie and Bulldog working on another ranch, in Texas, and it proved to be the last stage in their travels.

Quite unexpectedly, one morning, a letter arrived for Archie, and when he saw the writing his heart-beats increased. He tore the letter open eagerly and hastily read it.

Bulldog, watching Archie, saw a gleam come into his eyes and his face break into a smile. He knew who that letter was from, for, unknown to Archie, Bulldog had written to Miss Millicent Manners, telling her of the last of the De Browns' activities in the Wild West.

So Miss Manners had written to Archie, in which she said she would be coming out to visit him.

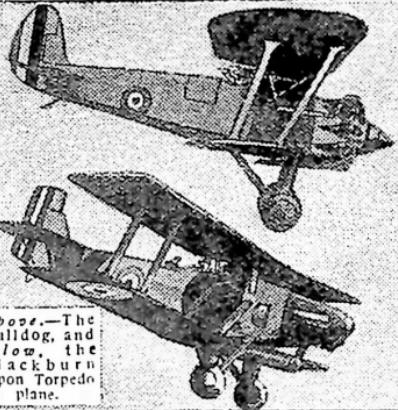
"Bai Jove!" cried Archie, when he had finished reading the letter. "Topping news, Bulldog. Dear old Millicent is coming out to see me!"

"Gee, I'm glad to hear that!" said Bulldog, trying hard not to smile. He didn't wish to let Archie know that he had been the cause of the letter from Miss Manners arriving. And, indeed, it never occurred to the last of the De Browns that it was extraordinary that Millicent should know where to find him. He was too excited over the glad news.

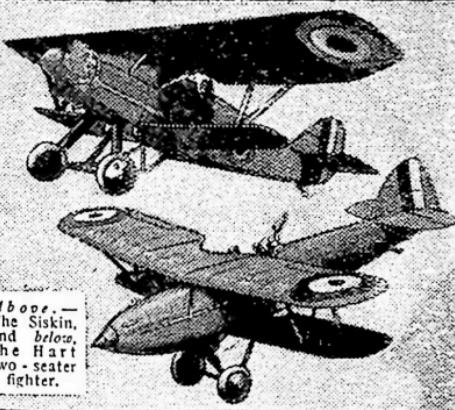
But he learnt six months later, when he settled down on a ranch he bought in British Columbia with Mrs. Archie de Brown. And he was ever thankful afterwards to his foreman, Mr. John Buller.

THE END

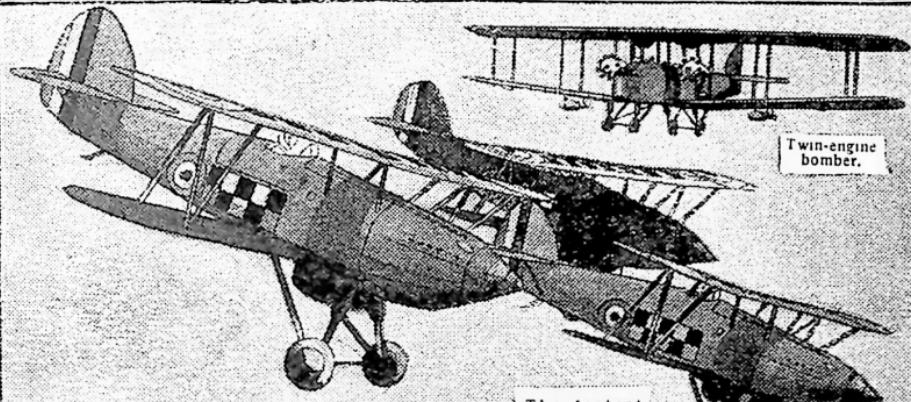
## FIGHTING PLANES OF THE R.A.F.



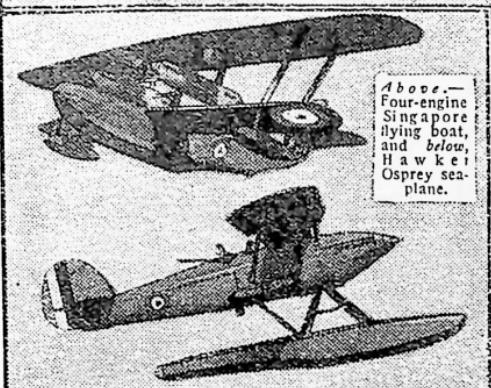
*Above*.—The Bulldog, and  
below, the  
Blackburn  
Ripon Torpedo  
plane.



*Above*.—  
The Siskin,  
and below,  
the Hart  
two-seater  
fighter.



Twin-engine  
bomber.



*Above*.—  
Four-engine  
Singapore  
flying boat,  
and below,  
Hawker  
Osprey sea-  
plane.



The Gamecock.



*The Greyfriars Law Courts are a huge joke, and everybody enjoys it—except the prisoners! By S. Q. I. FIELD.*

CHUMS of ours who remember to have read in the GREYFRIARS HERALD a lot about the cases in the Greyfriars Law Courts may like to know something of this famous institution.

The Law is not taken seriously, of course. From beginning to end the Law Courts are a huge joke. And yet, possibly they may be doing a great deal of good; for cases of caddishness and misbehaviour are often dealt with by the judge—and the sentences are carried out severely.

To start at the beginning, there is the Greyfriars Police. The Remove Police has its headquarters in Study No. 9, which is always referred to as Jotland Yard in the Law Courts. Detective-inspector Dick Penfold is in charge of the Police, and with him are Detective Morgan, Inspector Newland, Inspector Ogilvy, and Constables Kipps, Trevor and Bolsover.

The Law Courts are held once—sometimes twice—a week, and may take place anywhere from the Rag to the woodshed. The ruling force behind all this business is Peter Todd, who is the judge of what he calls the "Class Bench Division."

Fellows who complain of infringement of Study Rights; fellows who have got into debt and have nothing to pay their indignant creditors; footballers who miss open goals and cricketers who muff easy catches; funks who run away from Highcliffe cads—all these are brought before Mr.

Justice Todd in the Class Bench Division.

The Central Criminal Court is presided over by Mr. Justice Wharton, and deals with all criminal cases, from pork-pie pinching to assault and battery.

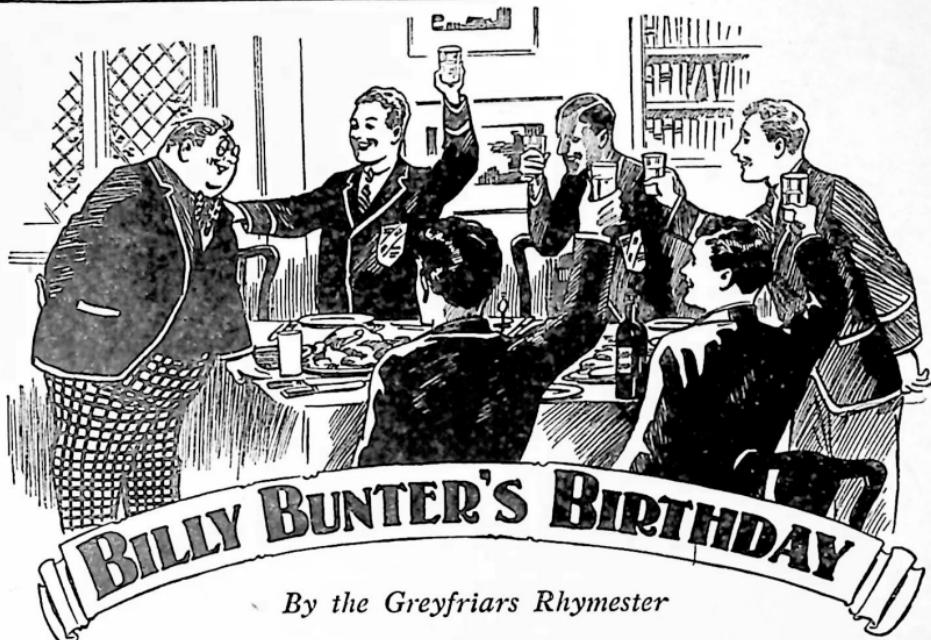
The Divorce and Breach of Promise Court, presided over by Mr. Justice Linley, deals with fags who want a divorce from their seniors, and seniors who impeach their fags for breach of promise.

It is all great fun. Suppose the Remove Police nab you for swindling or sneaking. You are told that you will have to attend before Mr. Justice Wharton on the following Friday. In the meantime you may go to any proper counsel and ask him to take the case up for you.

The counsels are Mr. Bob Cherry, K.C., Mr. Vernon-Smith, K.C., Mr. Herbert Bulstrode, K.C., Mr. H. J. R. Singh, K.C., and Mr. Harold Skinner, C.A.D. The Public Prosecutor (Mr. Frank Nugent) will instruct one of these merchants to speak against you at the trial, and you may instruct any other one of them you like.

The trial comes on. You are found guilty and sentenced—somehow prisoners nearly always are found guilty. It may be a fine, in which case the money goes to the Remove Sports Club. It may be a ragging—in which case you go through it.

But whatever it is, everybody enjoys it—except the prisoner!



# BILLY BUNTER'S BIRTHDAY

*By the Greyfriars Rhymester*

## ACT I.

(SCENE.—*The entrance hall at Greyfriars. Enter the afternoon postman, bearing a sack of letters and parcels, and gasping and grunting from his exertions. He shoots the contents of the sack on to the floor, and pauses to mop his heated brow.*)

POSTMAN :

A policeman's  
lot, they  
tell us,  
Is hardly one  
of glee;  
But, really, I feel  
jealous  
Of every proud  
P.C.  
For he needn't  
sweat, and  
fume and  
fret,  
And moil and  
toil like me!

(Proceeds to sort the letters and parcels, and allot them to their proper pigeon-holes in the letter-rack.)

I'm sick and tired of hiking  
On my eternal track;  
When summer suns are striking  
Upon my burdened back.

Or sleets and  
snows, they  
freeze my  
toes,  
And stretch  
me on the  
rack!

(Enter BILLY BUNTER, blinking  
eagerly at the  
postman.)

BUNTER :  
The afternoon  
delivery's  
here—  
Hooray !

### CHARACTERS

|                |                                  |
|----------------|----------------------------------|
| Billy Bunter   | The famous fat boy of Greyfriars |
| Harry Wharton  |                                  |
| Bob Cherry     |                                  |
| Frank Nugent   |                                  |
| Johnny Bull    |                                  |
| Hurree Singh   |                                  |
| Harold Skinner | The Japer of the Remove          |
| Mr. Quelch     | The Remove Form-master           |
| Mr. Prout      |                                  |
| Mr. Hacker     |                                  |
| Mr. Capper     |                                  |
| A Postman      | Other masters                    |

NOTE.—*This play may be performed by readers of the HOLIDAY ANNUAL without fee or licence on condition that the words "By permission of the Editor of HOLIDAY ANNUAL" appear on each programme.*



The postman gathered up his sack and departed laughing, and the infuriated BUNTER aimed a kick at him as he went.

POSTMAN :

Nothing for my fat friend, I fear,  
To-day.

BUNTER (*gloomily*) :

Nothing for me ? How jolly rotten !  
My birthday, too, and I'm forgotten !  
I was expecting gifts galore,  
Hampers and letters by the score.  
When nothing came for me this morn,  
I was inclined to feel forlorn,  
But murmured, 'Never mind, my friends ;  
The second post will make amends.  
My titled sire, of Bunter Court,  
Will play up like a handsome sport,  
And send me such a weighty whack  
That it will break the postman's back !'

POSTMAN :

Steady, now, Master Bunter, steady !  
I've got a fractured spine already !

BUNTER (*blinking at the mail*) :

Ha ! Here's a letter with a crest !

POSTMAN :

To Lord Mauleverer it's addressed.

BUNTER :

Oh, crumbs ! And none at all for me ?

POSTMAN (*producing a letter*) :

Wait, Master Bunter ! Here you be !

BUNTER (*snatching eagerly at the letter*) :

I knew that you must be mistaken,  
For I should never be forsaken  
At such a special time as this—  
My disappointment's turned to bliss !

(He opens the letter, peering into the envelope to see if there is any enclosure. There is none. BUNTER recites the letter aloud.)

" Dear William,—Just a line to say'

Happy returns of this glad day.  
I would have sent you a remittance,  
But cannot spare one from my pittance.  
Things on the Stock Exchange, alack,

Have never been so slow and slack.  
The Bulls and Bears, and other creatures,  
Have proved most disappointing features,  
With the result (how sad it sounds !)  
I'm down to my last million pounds !  
I send you greetings, fond, sincere,  
Also a five-pound note—NEXT YEAR !  
Now, have a hectic time—yes, rather !  
Your paupered but devoted FATHER.

BUNTER (*in great chagrin*) :

Oh, what a sell ! A paupered Pa !

POSTMAN :

Excuse me larfin' ! Ha, ha, ha !

BUNTER :

Nothing to cackle at, you dummy !

POSTMAN :

His rich relations ! Oh, lor' lummy !

(Gathers up his sack and makes his exit, BILLY BUNTER aiming a furious kick at him.)

BUNTER :

Oh, dear ! This is a crushing blow !

I feel like weeping tears of woe !

(Enter the FAMOUS FIVE, smiling.)

CHERRY :

Hallo ! The porpoise wants to blub ;

Let's lead him gently to a tub !

BUNTER :

All very well for you to smile ;  
I could outweep the crocodile !

WHARTON :

Why, what's the cause of this distress ?

BUNTER :

My pater's let me down, I guess.  
This is my birthday, as you know,  
A time for revelry—not woe.  
A time for grand and glorious feasts  
(What are you chuckling at, you beasts ?)  
I hoped to hold a celebration  
Fit for a fellow of my station ;  
A spread that would delight your hearts—  
Dame Mimble's choicest cakes and tarts ;  
Delicious doughnuts, so divine,  
Washed down with sparkling ginger-  
wine !  
And now—my hopes are rudely shattered ;  
No invitations will be scattered  
Among my vast array of friends,  
So there, alas, the matter ends.  
Unless you chaps would let me borrow  
A pound ; I'd pay it back to-morrow !

NUGENT :

Bunter, we know your funny  
tricks,  
Your assets are exactly nix !  
And, therefore, how could  
you repay  
A loan, you fat and fatuous  
jay ?

BUNTER :

Really, old chap, I promise  
you—

BULL :

We won't advance a single  
sou !

HURREE SINGH :

Has not the worthy Shakespeare said (I keep his  
maxims in my head) :  
" Neither a borrower be,  
nor lend,  
Or you will lose both loan  
and friend." Already,  
you've an ample figure

BUNTER :

Oh, really, you're a cheeky  
nigger !

That is a slander on the slender.

Now, who will be my moneylender ?

CHERRY :

There's nothing doing, Bunty dear,  
What cash we have, we'll hold.

ALL :

Hear, hear !

BUNTER (*glaring at the FAMOUS FIVE*) :

The meanest mob I ever met !  
I won't descend to be in debt  
To such a stingy set of beasts !  
I shan't attend *your* birthday feasts !

WHARTON :

Chance is a splendid thing, my son !

BUNTER :

Bah ! I despise you, every one !

(*He takes out his handkerchief and bursts  
into tears.*)

Boo-hoo ! A beastly birthday, this,  
I'm shunned on every side.  
My titled folks have given a miss  
To me, their joy and pride !  
No gifts, no grub, no celebration ;  
Nothing for me but slow starvation !



BUNTER (*bursting into tears*) : No gifts, no grub, no celebration;  
Nothing for me but slow starvation.

ALL (in chorus) : Boo-hoo !

ALL (in chorus) :

Boo-hoo !

BUNTER :

Pip-please don't mock me any more !  
You see, I'm feeling sick and sore.  
Leave me alone to nurse my woes,  
Or else I'll dot you on the nose !

HURREE SINGH :

If Bunter isn't more pacific,  
The dotfulness will be terrific !  
But Bunter's nose will dotted be,  
Not our illustrious beaks, you see !  
(Suddenly a loud noise is heard "off.")

WHARTON :

Hark ! Sounds like Billy Bunter snoring !

NUGENT :

It's only a loudspeaker roaring.

CHERRY :

The "Children's Hour" is going strong.

BULL :

Well, we're not children. Come along !

(The FAMOUS FIVE move towards the exit,  
but stop short as a loud voice is heard  
announcing.)

Gay greetings, jolly birthday joys,

To all the following girls and boys :

Anthony Allen, of Acton,

Cicely Clare, of Clacton.

Dicky Drake, of Dorchester,

Philippa Phillips, of Porchester.

Angus MacNab, of Aberdeen,

Tommy Turner, of Turnham Green.

Patrick O'Connor, of County Clare,

Patricia O'Connor, who's also there—

(Hello, Twins !)

Barbara Blake, of Barmouth,

Yvonne Young, of Yarmouth.

Stanley Stokes, of Stoke-on-Trent,

Marjorie Martin, of Margate, Kent.

Larry Lloyd-Jones, of Pontypool,

And—

BILLY BUNTER of Greyfriars School !

BUNTER (beaming with pleasure) :

I say, you fellows ! Fancy that !  
I thought I was forgotten ;  
My birthday seemed to fall quite flat,  
And really, it was rotten !  
But blessings on the B.B.C.  
Somebody has remembered me !

HURREE SINGH :

And Bunter's wistful tearfulness

Is turned to blissful cheerfulness !

BUNTER :

My name is broadcast near and far,  
From China to Peru ;  
From Kent to distant Kandahar  
They'll pay me tribute due.  
The news electrifies the earth :  
"This day marks Billy Bunter's birth !"

CHERRY :

Bunty, you are an artful rogue !  
Birthdays, with you, are quite a vogue.  
You had a birthday, I remember,  
Last May, and also in September !  
Now you've the nerve to claim another.

NUGENT :

He must be older than his mother !

BUNTER :

Really, you beasts ! If you imply  
That I'm a base deceiver,  
I'll whack each nose, and black each eye—

BULL :

He's caught the fighting fever !

WHARTON :

I therefore vote we cool his ardour ;  
So bump him hard—

CHERRY :

Then bump him harder !

(The FAMOUS FIVE advance grimly on  
BUNTER, who yells and expostulates.  
He is about to be bumped, when the sudden  
entrance of HAROLD SKINNER causes his  
captors to release him.)

SKINNER (to BUNTER) :

I've hunted for you everywhere,

My podgy porpoise, I declare !

Here is a note from Quelch to you ;

A really charming billet-doux.

CHERRY :

Open and read it, Billy do !

WHARTON (sternly) :

Punning will be the death of you !

(BUNTER blinks at the letter, and opens it  
with trembling fingers. He is quivering  
with excitement.)

HURREE SINGH :

Read what the Quelchy sahib has written !

CHERRY :

"Come to my study to be smitten !"

BUNTER :

It's nothing of the sort, you chump ;

Listen ! the news will make you jump !

So green  
with en-  
vy you  
will be  
That you  
will  
want to  
slaughter  
me!  
(Recites  
the letter.)

"Dear  
BUNTER  
—to my  
favourite  
pupil

I write with-  
out the  
 slightest  
 scruple  
To send a  
birthday  
invita-  
tion.

I have arranged a celebration  
In honour of my brightest boy ;  
A bounteous banquet you'll enjoy.  
You'll find it set out, neat and nicely.  
Within my room, at five precisely.  
Bring any friends you may desire  
(Your taste in friends I much admire).  
Make yourself free of all you find,  
And have a glorious evening, mind !  
I much regret I shall be out  
(I've a golf-match on with Mr. Prout),  
So I will leave you on your own,  
Eat everything ; leave not a bone !  
Let not a single crumb survive  
Of that grand feast which starts at five ! "

WHARTON :

Bunter, you are a pig in clover !

BUNTER (*smirking*) :

Something to get excited over !

NUGENT :

Quelch must be softening in the head.

BULL :

Bunter's his favourite boy, he said !

CHERRY :

The queerest thing I ever struck.

SKINNER :

Bunter, old chap, I wish you luck !



Bunter was about to be bumped by the Famous Five when Skinner opened the door.

SKINNER (to Bunter): Here is a note from Quelch to you ; a really charming billet-doux.

(BUNTER slips the note into his pocket, and dances up and down in high glee. Then he turns to the FAMOUS FIVE.)  
You chaps have twitted and teased me,  
You've squashed me and you've squeezed  
me :

You've banged and biffed and bumped me,  
You've whacked and smacked and  
thumped me ;  
You've pelted me with crockery,  
And made my life a mockery.  
You've barred a chap from feeding, too.

WHARTON :

Whatever's all this leading to ?

BUNTER :

With wrath and bitterness I burn,  
But good for evil I'll return :  
Heap coals of fire upon your heads,  
And ask you to this spread of spreads !

CHERRY :

Now, that's what I call charity !

NUGENT :

Such virtues are a rarity.

BULL :

Bunter is most magnanimous.

WHARTON :

Our verdict is unanimous !

HURREE SINGH (*making a low salaam*) :

Accept my humble salutation ;  
We will accept your invitation.

BUNTER :

That's settled, then ; and as for Skinner—

SKINNER :

Ahem ! I'm off elsewhere to dinner.

BUNTER :

Oh ! Won't you come and join the fun ?

SKINNER :

Sorry, old scout; it can't be done.

(*Exit Skinner.*)

BUNTER :

My mouth is watering, I confess,

My optics blink with eagerness.

My heart is thumping with excitement !

HURREE SINGH : We, too, feel crazy with delightment !

CHERRY (*consulting his watch*) :

Hallo, hallo ! It's nearly five !

BUNTER : Come on, you fellows ! Look alive !

(*Aside*)

Now for this grand and glorious spread,  
And blessings on old Quelchy's head !

(*Exit Everybody.*)

END OF ACT I.



Highly elated at being invited by Mr. Quelch to a handsome spread, Bunter danced up and down the room in glee.

## ACT II.

SCENE—MR. QUELCH'S STUDY.

(*The table is laden with good things, including a cold chicken ; a large veal-and-ham pie, a dish of fancy pastries, etc.*)

(*Enter BILLY BUNTER, with the FAMOUS FIVE at his heels.*)

BUNTER (*blinking at the festive board*) :

Oh, what a sight for weary eyes !

A banquet fit for Royalty !

Quelchy no longer I'll despise ;

He has my lifelong loyalty !

My senses thrill, my pulses quicken,  
At sight of such a tender chicken !

WHARTON :

Quelchy's a trump to treat us thus.

NUGENT :

Hear, hear !

BULL :

And so say all of us !

BUNTER :

Sit down, you chaps, for goodness' sake ;  
The place of honour I will take !

(*They seat themselves at the table.*)

CHERRY :

The sight of all this tempting stuff

Surprises me—yes, vastly ;  
I thought the feast was Skinner's bluff—

NUGENT :

My hat, that would be ghastly !

CHERRY :

You know what Skinner is,  
the japer !

Methought this was his latest caper,  
And that the feast had no foundation  
Except in his imagination.

WHARTON :

Well, here's the feast, in solid shape,  
So Skinner hasn't worked a jape ;  
Though why old Quelch should be so pressing  
To Billy Bunter, leaves me guessing !

**BUNTER** (*airily*) :

Me and old Quelch are bosom cronies  
(I like the look of those polonies !);  
Quelchy's my pal, as well as teacher  
(This chicken is a handsome creature !).  
He knows how wonderful I am  
(This pie's perfection—veal-and-ham !),  
So when my birthday came along  
(These pastries make me burst with song !)  
He promptly sent, without compunction,  
An invite to this happy function.  
Pour out the good old ginger-wine  
And drink his health—but first drink mine !

*(The glasses are filled, and the FAMOUS FIVE rise to their feet to toast BUNTER.)*

**WHARTON** :

Here's to your fat and famous figure—

**CHERRY** :

And may its shadow ne'er grow bigger !

**HURREE SINGH** :

Your birthday toast we pledgefully sip—

**NUGENT** :

Three cheers for Bunter ! Hip, hip, hip—

**ALL** :

Hurrah !

**BULL** :

Three cheers for good old Quelchy, too !

**ALL**

Hip, hip, hurrah ! Hip, hip, hooroo !

*(They resume their seats.)*

**BUNTER** (*taking up the carvers*) :

Before I carve this king of birds  
I'll speak a few well-chosen words.  
I wish to make it crystal clear  
I'll have no gormandising here.  
I know you're famished, poor and needy,  
But you must not be gross or greedy.  
Just take your cue from me, you men—



Mr. Quelch suddenly entered his study and gazed in blank amazement at the juniors round his table.

**CHERRY** (*aside*) :

Oh, help ! He eats enough for ten !

**BUNTER** :

I don't mind dashing chaps, or doggish ;  
I can't stand fellows who are hoggish !

*(He carves the chicken.)*

A wing between John Bull and Cherry

(Half each is more than necessary) ;

A leg for Hurree Singh and Franky

(Share equally—no hanky-panky !) ;

Wharton, a thin slice off the breast ;

I can accommodate the rest !

**WHARTON** (*aside*) :

He can't stand greed, he does declare,  
Then goes and bags the lion's share !

**BUNTER** :

Tuck in, you fellows, with a will ;

A banquet is a tonic ;

But eat too much, and you'll be ill

With indigestion chronic !

*(The FAMOUS FIVE eat sparingly ; they have no choice in the matter. But BUNTER attacks the chicken with astonishing vigour. They gape at him in amazement.)*

**BUNTER** (*at length, pushing the skeleton of the chicken away from him*) :

Farewell, my worthy Wyandotte !

I have enjoyed you quite a lot !

WHARTON (aside) :

What horrible rapacity !

CHERRY :

What infinite capacity !

NUGENT :

Bunter will be exploding soon—

BULL :

He's swelling like a kite-balloon !

HURREE SINGH :

The burstfulness will be terrific,  
Like an explosion scientific !

BUNTER :

The second course we now will try ;

It looks a poem ! Who says pie ?

ALL :

PIE !

(BUNTER carves the veal-and-ham pie, distributing very small portions to his guests.)

CHERRY (aside) :

This was a very eager meeting,  
But this is very meagre eating !

(Laughter.)

BUNTER :

Although the portions served are biggish  
I trust you fellows won't be piggish !

(He takes the bulk of the pie himself, and



Mr. QUELCH : Be good enough to touch your toes !

SKINNER : Oh, dear ! I'm for it now ! Here goes !

Mr. Quelch administered six severe strokes, and Skinner's

anguished yells awoke the echoes.

attacks it forthwith. Approaching footsteps are heard, "off," but BUNTER pays no heed.)

This is the stuff to give the troops ;  
Better than all your stews and soups !

Old Quelchy's taste I much approve ;  
I wish he catered for the Remove !

Fancy a middle-aged old fogey

To whom all pastry is a bogey,  
A solemn, staid, and sober guy,

Able to choose a perfect pie !

When next I see the Quelchy bird  
I'll slap him on the back—my word !

I'll offer him sincere "congratulations"

And tell him he's the man who matters !  
But if his banquet makes me suffer,

I'll brand him for a mean old buffer !

CHERRY (warningly) :

Shush ! Someone's listening just outside !

BUNTER :

The spying beast ! I'll have his hide !

(Enter MR. QUELCH, in cap and gown. He gazes round the study in blank amazement, then fixes a fierce frown on BUNTER.)

MR. QUELCH :

Bunter, you took my name in vain !

BUNTER :

No, sir !

MR. QUELCH :

I shall correct you with the cane !

BUNTER :

Oh, sir !

You're getting deaf, sir, or mis-heard,

I never breathed a single word !

MR. QUELCH :

Enough ! Such base prevarication

Merits a hearty castigation.

But that's the least of your offences !

Boys ! Are you in your sober

senses ?

How dare you all invade my study

With boots abominably

muddy ?

How dare you sit at my own

table,

Eating as fast as you are able,

Consuming  
this, my  
special  
dinner ?

**BUNTER (aside) :**  
Oh, crumbs !  
We have  
been japed  
by Skinner !

**MR. QUELCH :**  
Explain at  
once this  
rash intru-  
sion !

*Enter Messrs.*  
**P R O U T,**  
**HACKER, and**  
**CAPPER.)**

**MR. PROUT :**  
What is the  
cause of  
this con-  
fusion ?

**MR. HACKER :**  
What are these rascals doing here ?

**MR. CAPPER :**  
Demolishing our feast, I fear !

**MR. QUELCH :**  
Gentlemen ! Great is my surprise !  
I scarcely could believe my eyes !  
To think that these six boys should dare  
To raid my study unaware,  
And help themselves to our supplies,  
Our festal fowl, our savoury pies !

**MR. PROUT :**  
Such conduct has no parallel !

**MR. HACKER :**  
Let us chastise the rascals well !

**CHERRY (aside) :**  
Help ! We are in a fearful fix !  
We shan't escape with less than "six" !

**MR. CAPPER :**  
Well may you quake, for Nemesis  
Arrives upon the premises !

**BUNTER (to Mr. Quelch) :**  
We came, sir, at your invitation—

**MR. QUELCH :**  
Another base prevarication !

**BUNTER :**  
You sent a birthday note to me, sir,  
I have it here, for you to see, sir !



**BUNTER (going down on his hands and knees to Mr. Quelch) :** Oh, let me  
off the execution !  
Think of my feeble constitution !

*(He takes the note from his pocket and hands it to Mr. Quelch. The Remove master peruses it in great astonishment.)*

**MR. QUELCH :**  
Dear me ! I never penned this screed,  
I am amazed—I am, indeed !  
Some rascal, it is clear to see,  
Has copied my calligraphy !  
Who could have been the hardened sinner ?

**BUNTER (eagerly) :**  
Please sir, his name is Harold Skinner !

**MR. QUELCH :**  
Then he's a base deceiver—very !  
Summon him to my study, Cherry !  
*(Exit BOB CHERRY, grinning.)*

**MR. PROUT (calling after him) :**  
Bring also, boy, a supple cane,  
Skinner shall squirm and squeak with  
pain !

**BUNTER (to Mr. Quelch) :**  
Now that we've started on the spread,  
I s'pose, sir, we can go ahead ?

**MR. QUELCH :**  
Put down that knife and fork at once,  
You greedy, good-for-nothing dunce !

BUNTER :

Oh, really, sir ! This lovely pie—

MR. QUELCH :

Be silent, Bunter, and comply !

(Enter BOB CHERRY, dragging SKINNER by the collar, and carrying a cane, which he hands to MR. QUELCH.)

MR. QUELCH :

Skinner, your conduct is outrageous !  
More than sufficient to enrage us.  
You found (by devious ways, I fear)  
That I had planned a supper here.  
My writing, then, you imitated,  
And Bunter you deceived and baited.  
What can you say in condonation ?

SKINNER (wringing his hands) :

I can't invent an explanation !

MR. QUELCH :

Your sense of humour is perverted ;  
By caning, it shall be converted !  
Be good enough to touch your toes !

SKINNER (aside) :

Oh, dear ! I'm for it now ! Here goes !  
(He touches his toes, and MR. QUELCH administers six severe strokes. The other masters look on approvingly. SKINNER's yells of anguish awaken the echoes.)

MR. QUELCH :

There ! You will feel less mirthful now !  
Go from my study !

SKINNER (making his painful exit) :

Ow ! Ow ! Ow !

BUNTER :

I hope I'm not malicious,  
Or venomous, or vicious ;  
But I'm jolly glad the japer

Has suffered for his caper !

The claims of justice have been met—

MR. QUELCH :

No ; there's another victim yet !

BUNTER (quaking with alarm) :

Not meaning me, I s'pose, sir ?

MR. QUELCH :

Bend down and touch your toes, sir !

BUNTER :

Oh, really—I've done nothing—er—

MR. QUELCH :

Over that chair, if you prefer !

BUNTER (going down on his knees to MR. QUELCH) :

Oh, let me off the execution !

Think of my feeble constitution !

Grant me this special birthday plea,

Flog one of these, instead of me !

CHERRY (aside) :

Of all the cheek !

His nose I'll tweak !

MR. QUELCH (smiling) :

Well, Bunter, you shall go scot-free,

I will extend my clemency.

In future, guard your speech with care,

Or Skinner's fate you'll surely share !

BUNTER :

Oh, thanks !

(Glances as the food on the table)

And if you'd be so kind—

MR. QUELCH :

Go, sir ! before I change my mind !

(Exeunt BILLY BUNTER, followed by the FAMOUS FIVE. The masters smilingly sit down to what is left of Mr. Quelch's handsome spread.)

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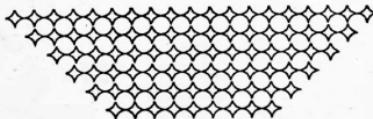
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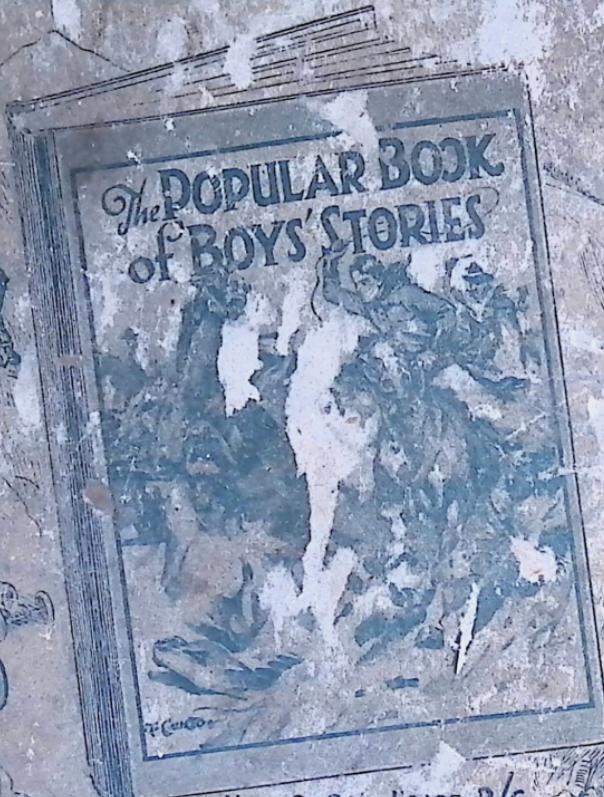
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