

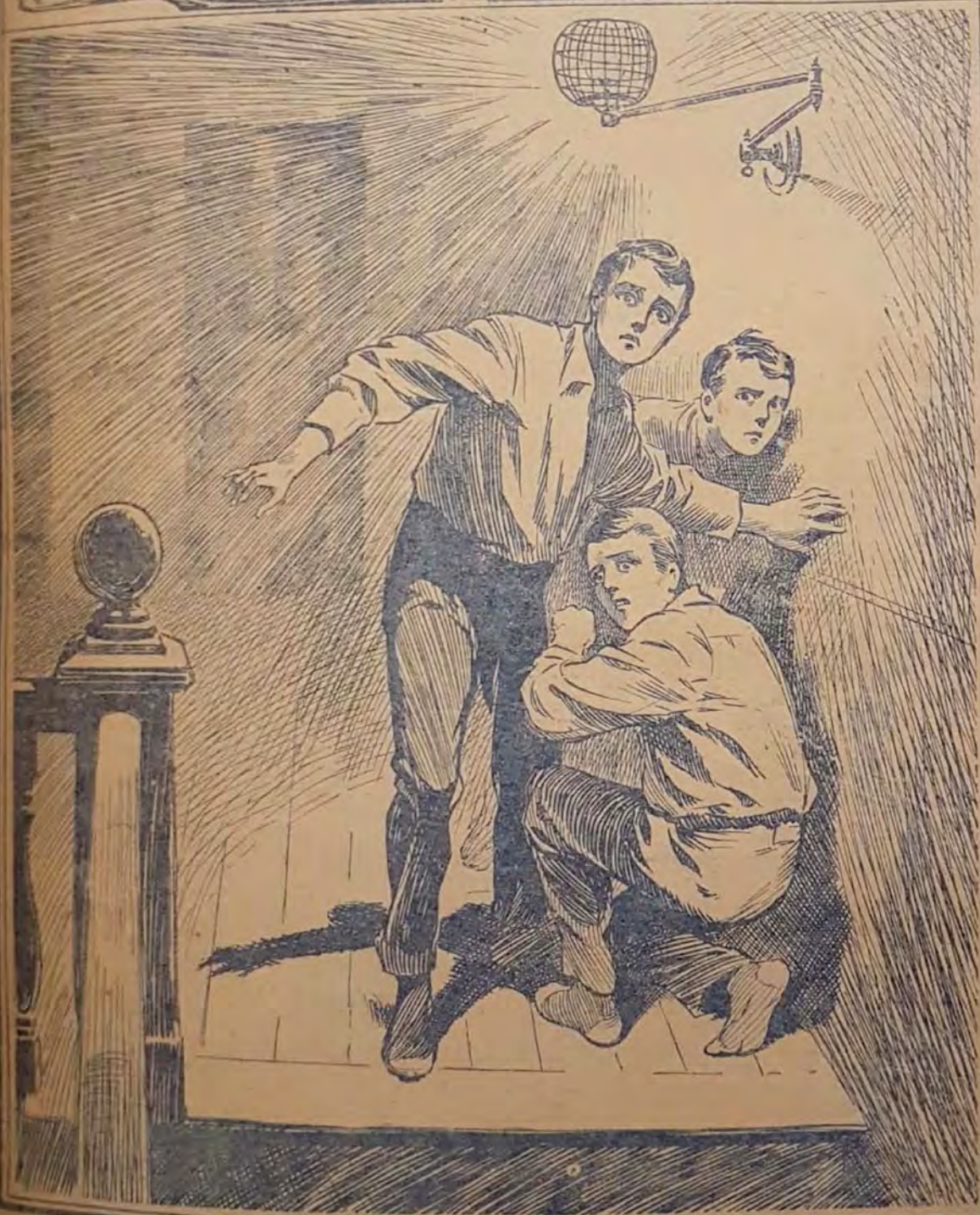
Second to None!

PLUCK

GRAND SCHOOL TALE.

1

THRILLING DETECTIVE STORY.



TAPPY ADMITTED AFTERWARDS THAT HE FELT INCLINED TO CUT AND RUN.
NO 141. NEW SERIES.

dangerous path by which, in olden days, the smugglers of the Pennine had been wont to climb. Locke pointed out the beginning of the ascent to Clive, who was inclined to attempt the climb there and then. Locke caught him by the shoulder.

"You can't go now, Lawrence; you'd break your neck, for one thing. Not that that would matter much, of course, but I should be late for breakfast if I had to carry your body home, and so—"

(Clive burst into a laugh. "I shall go up the cliffs some half-holiday," he exclaimed: "I suppose there's no time now. We—Hallo!")

He broke off as a figure appeared among the huge, weed-grown rocks by which they were surrounded—the figure of Franz Stossel.

The German started as he saw the boys, and a red flush of anger overspread his dark face, and his hand clenched hard.

The juniors were equally annoyed at the meeting. They had avoided the spot where they had seen the German, and his explorations among the rocks had unexpectedly brought him right upon them.

He halted for a moment in angry surprise, and then strode straight towards them, the cloud thickening on his dark brow.

"What are you doing here?" he exclaimed.

The boys were too startled to reply for a moment. Franz Stossel seized Clive by the shoulder and shook him roughly.

"You—you are spying upon me again, then?"

Clive flushed red, and shook himself free.

"I am not spying upon you," he exclaimed indignantly: "and I have never done so."

"You young scoundrel! Why are you here?"

Clive Lawrence set his teeth. He easily understood the suspicion that had darted into the German master's mind, but the accusation of playing the spy was too insulting for him to forgive it.

"Answer me!" cried the German angrily.

"I have nothing to say to a man who calls me a scoundrel," said Clive, his eyes flashing fire.

Locke gave a start of uneasiness, and looked anxiously at Clive. The boy's face was flushed with anger, and he certainly did not look afraid of the German master.

"Boy, do you know whom you are speaking to?" exclaimed Stossel, in a voice choked with rage. "Are you aware—"

"You have no right to apply such terms to me, or to anyone."

"Mein Gott, I will have you flogged!" cried the German master.

Clive stepped back. The fury in the German's face was so great that for a moment the boy thought of running about to attack him.

Locke looked amazed. There was no reason, as far as he could see, why Franz Stossel should fly into such a rage. He did not know of the incident at the Jolly Swallow.

But Stossel seemed to realise that his rage was foolish, he made a tremendous effort to calm himself.

"Will you answer my question, boy?" he said, in a concentrated voice. "What are you doing here?"

"I came out for a ramble," said Clive calmly.

"How did you get out? The gates are not open at this hour."

"I got over the wall."

"Ah! You have broken bounds—for the second time during a stay of a day and a half at St. Winifred's."

Clive Lawrence was silent.

"Very well, Lawrence; I will see that you are adequately punished."

"It was not like breaking bounds," said Clive. "Any of the masters would have given me permission to come down to the beach if I had asked, but they were not up."

"But you did not obtain permission?"

"No, as the masters were in bed when I left."

"And you came simply for a ramble, not knowing that anybody belonging to the school was here before you?"

"I have said so."

"Don't answer me in that manner. But I suppose it is useless to expect the truth from you under the circumstances."

"You will get the truth out of me, sir," said Clive sharply.

Locke pulled at his arm nervously.

"I say, shut up, Lawrence!"

whispered. "You only—"

But Clive was not listening. The German master's eyes were fixed upon his face with a savage look.

Franz Stossel seemed to be appalled. He spoke at last.

"Go back to the school instantly," he exclaimed.

"Upon second thoughts, I will overlook this transgression, as you are new to St. Winifred's; but mind you, it will not occur again."

"Go!"

The juniors turned away. The German master stood watching them with a frown as they walked up the beach, and then into the plantation.

Clive was daunted to back, though he was curious to see the juniors' faces as they passed the plantation.

silence for some time.

(An arrow of light flashed from the German master's eyes.)



Next Saturday's two long complete stories: "A Fight to a Finish," a splendid tale of school life, by Lewis Hockley; and "The New Partner," a story of Martin Stern, Detective. Please order your copy of "Pluck" in advance. Price One Penny.