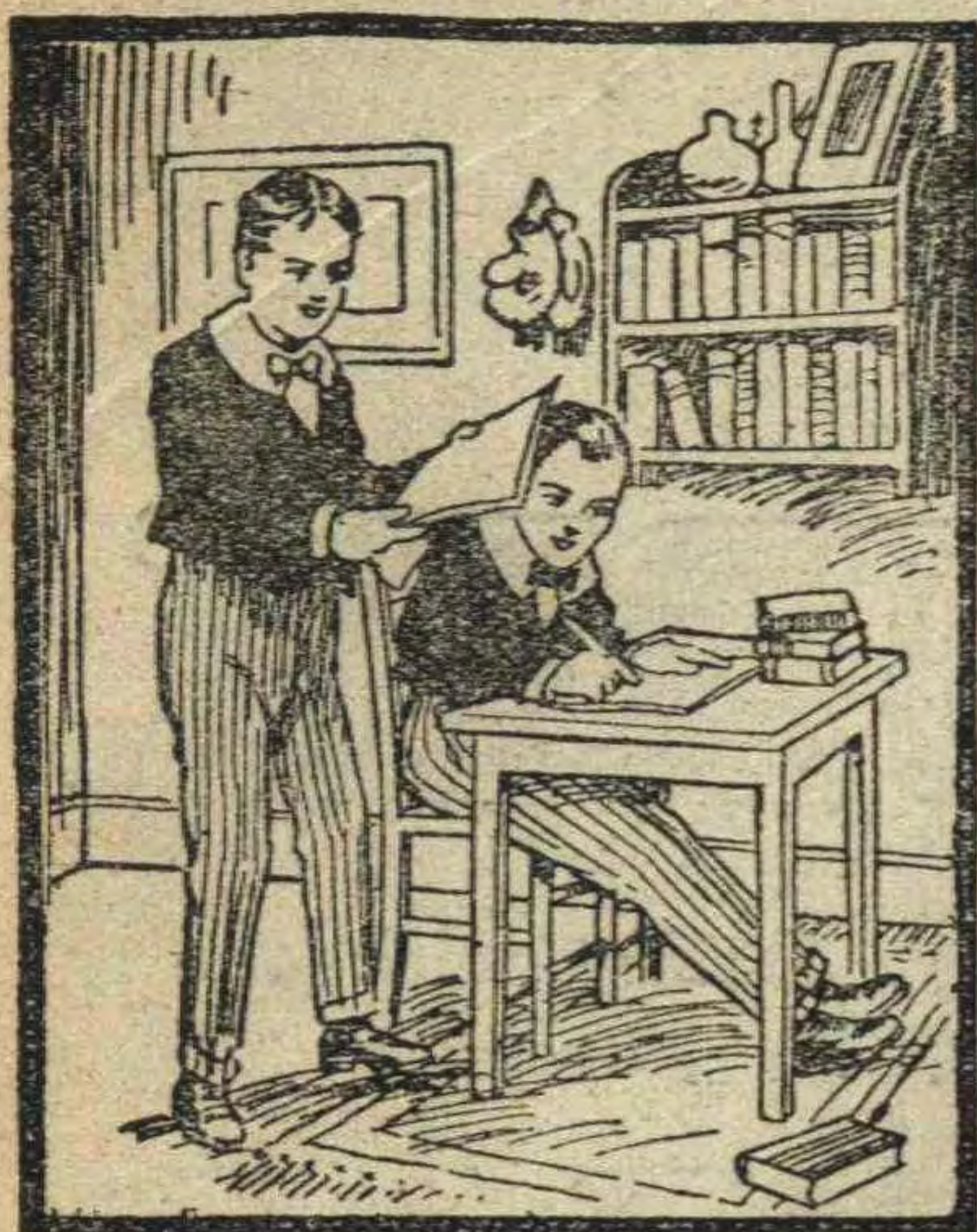


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The Foes of the Fourth



LONG COMPLETE
SCHOOL STORY.

R. H. EVANS. 1922.

AN INTERRUPTED FIGHT!—DRAMATIC SCENE IN THE STORY OF ST. KIT'S.



The orthography left much to be desired, but Cuthbert Archibald Booties had made his meaning clear. "Message from the enemy," grinned Durance. (See page 6.)

THE FIRST CHAPTER.

The Ragging of Bob Rake.

"HERE he is!"
"Here's the rotter!"
"Here's the cad!"
Bob Rake grinned.
It was a sort of chorus that greeted him as he threw open the door of the top study, in the Fourth-Form passage at St. Kit's, and entered. But certainly it was not a chorus of welcome.

There was quite a crowd of juniors in the top study.

Tracy, the defeated candidate in the captain's election that had taken place that afternoon, stood leaning on the mantelpiece, his hands driven deep into his pockets, and a scowl on his face. He fixed a black and bitter look on the new junior as he entered the study.

Lumley and Howard and Verney minor were seated around the fire; but they jumped up at the sight of Bob Rake.

Dick Durance was reclining in the armchair, with his legs crossed, and a slight smile on his face. He was the only member of the happy family of nuts who did not glare at the new fellow, and join in the general chorus that greeted Bob Rake's entrance.

"Here's the beastly cad!" continued Tracy; "here's the rotter that lost us the election."
"He's got the cheek to come here!" said Lumley.

"Some cads have cheek enough for anythin'!" remarked Howard. "I'm glad he's come," said Tracy, with a venomous look; "we can deal with him now."

"Yes, rather."

Bob Rake looked at the glowering faces round him, and did not seem very much disturbed. There were five juniors in the study, and they were all his enemies; the new junior from Australia was venturing into something like a lion's den in entering the top study. But it was evident that Bob Rake dared to be a Daniel!

"Hallo, old tops," he said, cheerily; "what's biting you? This is a pretty sort of welcome to give to a new fellow, in his own study, on his first day at St. Kit's. Have I had the awful misfortune to displease your High Mightinesses in any way?"

"You rotter!"
"You cad!"
"You outsider!"

"Don't get on with the list," said Bob Rake; "I've got that by heart already. Besides, I don't allow fellows to call me names like that. It looks to me as if somebody is going to have his nose punched pretty soon."
"You rotten outsider!"—re-commenced Lumley.

Bob took a step towards Lumley, a glint coming into his blue eyes. Lumley broke off quite suddenly. "Enough of that!" said Bob, quietly; "you've paid me enough compliments. What's the trouble?"

"You know what the trouble is, you—" Tracy paused at the word "rotter." He did not like the glint in the Australian's eyes, any more than Lumley did. "You

know well enough. There was a tie in the election for form-captain this afternoon, and you wedged in and voted for Harry Lovell, and did me out of it. That's the trouble."

"Jolly glad that I arrived at St. Kit's on this merry Saturday," said Bob; "just in time to frustrate your knavish tricks, Tracy, what? You wouldn't cut much ice as form-captain in the Fourth. I don't know much about Lovell, but I fancy he's ever so much better a man for the job."

"What?"
"Ever so much better a man for the job."

Tracy breathed hard. There was a slight chuckle from Durance, in the armchair. Durance seemed to find something entertaining in the genial coolness of the youth from "down under."

"This is my study, it seems," said Bob, glancing round him; "Mr. Lathley told me so, at all events. Do all you fellows belong here?"

"No!" snapped Verney minor. "Oh, I don't mind—I'm not particular," Bob Rake assured him; "still, a little more room would be a comfort. How many belong here?"

"Tracy and I," said Durance, as nobody else took the trouble to answer.

"Then we shall be three," said Bob, cheerily; "I hope we shall get on together. We haven't started well, certainly. But you'll find me quite nice on closer acquaintance. I hope I shall find you fellows the same. It doesn't look like it—but I hope so."

"You've got plenty to say for yourself, for a new kid," remarked Durance.

"Always had," said Bob Rake. "You refused to vote for me in the Form election—" began Tracy.

"That's over and done with," said Bob, amicably; "Lovell is captain of the Fourth now. He seems a decent sort of chap."

"He's a rotten outsider."

"Oh, rats!"

"If you'd given me your vote, I should have been form-captain. It needed only one to turn the scale."

"That's ancient history now," urged Bob.

"Do you think we're going to stand you in this study after that?" demanded Tracy. Bob looked at him.

"I don't quite see how you're going to help it," he answered; "the form-master has placed me here, and it's my study, too."

"You're not comin' in here."

"It seems to me that I've come."

"You're goin' out on your neck," explained Tracy.

Bob Rake laughed.

"But before you go, you're goin' to get the raggin' of your life, for votin' against me in the election," added Tracy.

"That's the game," said Howard, and he slipped round behind Bob Rake and closed the door of the study.

"I say—!" began Durance, uncrossing his legs, and sitting up

in the armchair. Tracy interrupted him, savagely:

"None of your rot, Dick! He's goin' through it."

Durance shrugged his shoulders. "Oh, all right!" he said; "might let him off, as he's a new kid. I expect it was Algy talked him into votin' for Lovell. Algy could talk the hind leg off a mule."

"I'll make Algy St. Leger sit up, too, somehow," said Tracy; "and as for Lovell, let him try to come the form-captain over us, that's all! We'll give him somethin' to think about. Now we're goin' to deal with this sneakin' cad who lost us the election. Collar him."

Bob Rake did not seem alarmed, even then. The five juniors made a general move towards him, and he backed to the door, and stood against it, and put his hands up.

His genial face was still good-humoured, but his blue eyes were glinting. As a matter of fact, he had fully expected trouble with the St. Kit's nuts, and he was prepared for it.

"One at a time," he suggested; "fair play's a jewel."

"It's not a fight—it's a raggin'," said Tracy, loftily.

"That's how it stands, dear boy," said Durance; "I advise you not to hit out. You'll get it worse."

"Much worse," said Howard.

"My dear old tops, I shall hit out, hard, if you lay any paws on me," said Bob Rake, coolly. "I'm not looking for trouble; but I don't specially want to dodge it. If you're spoiling for a fight, I'll take the lot of you in turn. I can't say fairer than that."

"Collar him!" snapped Tracy.

There was a rush.

The five nuts came at Bob Rake together, and the Cornstalk, true to his word, hit out—hard!

There was a yell from Tracy, as he caught a fist that felt like solid iron, with his chin.

Tracy went over backwards as if a mule had kicked him, and came down with a bump on the expensive study carpet.

It was Bob Rake's right that had jarred so painfully on Rex Tracy's chin. His left came with a crash on Durance's nose the next moment.

Durance staggered against the study table.

But five to one was long odds. Verney minor closed in under Bob's arms as he was hitting, and grasped him round the waist.

"Back up!" panted Verney.

The next moment Bob's right swept downwards, and Verney minor yelled as he felt it crash on his head.

But he held on, and his comrades came swarming to his aid. Lumley got hold of Rake's right arm, Howard of his left. They held on tenaciously—indeed, they held on for dear life! They were afraid of what might happen if they let that sturdy junior's arms go.

Tracy was on his feet quickly enough, with a blaze of rage in his eyes. He rushed at the Cornstalk, as Bob struggled with three foes, and struck. Bob caught the drive on his chest, without being able to defend himself, and he rolled over, with Lumley and Howard and Verney still clinging to him. The four of them sprawled and struggled on the floor.

Tracy bent over Bob, as he struggled furiously, and raised his clenched fist for another blow. His arm was caught and dragged back, and he turned his head and glared at Durance.

"Let go, you fool!" he yelled.

"Easy does it," said Durance; "you're not hittin' a chap when he's down, in this study."

"You fool—!"

"Raggin' is all very well, but there's a limit," said Durance; "you can give him the fives bat on his bags. But you're not punchin' him on the floor, old bean."

"Shove him across the table, then," snarled Tracy.

"Right-ho."

Bob Rake was still struggling strenuously. But five pairs of hands were on him, and even the sturdy Bob could not deal with such odds. He was swept off the floor, and slammed face down on the study table.

"Pin him!" gasped Tracy.

"We've got him."

"You rotters!" roared Bob; "I'll smash you for this!"

"Quiet, you cad," said Lumley, giving his arm a twist.

"Ow!"

"Mind he doesn't get loose, while I get the bat," said Tracy.

"Hurry up, old bean."

With a pair of hands grasping each arm and leg, Bob Rake was spreadeagled on the study table, and he resisted in vain. Tracy picked up the fives bat and came back to the table, his eyes glittering.

"Go it!" chuckled Lumley.

"Whack! whack! whack!"

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Bob; "I'll—I'll smash you—"

"Whack! whack!"

"Yoooooop!"

"Whack! whack! whack!"

"Easy does it, old bean," murmured Durance.

Tracy snarled, and laid on with the bat with all the strength of his arm. And Bob Rake, helpless in the grasp of the nuts, wriggled and roared, as the shower of vicious blows descended.

"THE SECOND CHAPTER.

Something Like a Scrap.

"THEY'RE goin' it!"

Algernon Aubrey St. Leger, the ornament of the Fourth Form at St. Kit's, made that remark in No. 5 Study.

Bunny Bootles chuckled.

Harry Lovell, the new captain of the Fourth Form, laid down his pen, and rose to his feet, his face darkening.

Harry Lovell—once known as Harry Nameless—had been elected captain of the Fourth that afternoon. He owed his election to Bob Rake's vote. And he knew what the uproar from the top study meant. Tracy and Co. were taking it out of the new junior for their defeat at the election.

Algy glanced at him, as he rose. "Chippin' in?" he asked.

"Yes."

"It's an awful bore," murmured Algernon Aubrey, plaintively; "I hate raggin'." An "I'm quite exhausted with the yeoman's service I put into the election to-day. But I suppose it's up to us."

"Oh, let him alone," said Bunny Bootles; "that chap Rake is a bit cheeky. It will do him good."

"Shut up, Bunny!"

"Well, I think he's cheeky," said Bunny; "got too much to say for himself, you know. I'm not going to chip in."

Algernon Aubrey laughed.

"Don't!" he said; "it wouldn't be fair to the top study, Bunny, to spring such a terrific fightin' man as you on them."

"Oh, I say!"

"Come on, St. Leger," said Harry.

"Yaas, old bean."

Algernon Aubrey carefully disposed his celebrated eyeglass in his waistcoat pocket, and followed his chum from No. 5 Study.

Several of the Fourth had come out of their studies, attracted by the din that was proceeding from No. 9. Nobody seemed inclined to enter the lion's den and interfere, however.

"That new chap's getting it," remarked Catesby, with a grin; "I rather thought Tracy would take it out of his hide."

"Somebody ought to stop him," said Stubbs.

Catesby laughed.

"I'm going to stop him," said Harry, as he came out of No. 5, quietly.

"Hallo! You're startin' pretty soon in your merry new duties as form-captain," sneered Catesby.

Harry did not heed the cad of the Fourth. He mounted the step at the end of the passage that led to the top study. Algernon Aubrey St. Leger followed him, pushing back his spotless cuffs. Algy hated scrapping; it was liable to soil his cuffs and disarrange his elegant attire. But he was quite a good man in a scrap when he set his noble mind to it.

The captain of the Fourth threw open the door of the top study.

A rather startling scene met his gaze.

Bob Rake, spread-eagled on the study table, was wriggling and struggling fiercely in the grasp of four of the nuts, while Rex Tracy was lashing him savagely with the fives bat. The sounding whacks could be heard at the other end of the Fourth-form passage.

"You rotters!" roared Bob; "jever hear of fair play in this study? Yow-ow-ow."

"Whack!"

"Yarooooh!"

Tracy had the bat raised again for another swipe, when Harry Lovell burst into the study.

"Stop!"

The bat came down—but before it reached Bob, Harry's grasp was on Tracy's shoulder, and the chief of the nuts was dragged away. The fives bat swept down into space, and cracked on Tracy's knee. There was a yell from Tracy this time.

"Ow! Oh, gad! Wow."

Lovell flung Tracy aside, and he fell helplessly into the armchair. Then the captain of the Fourth turned to the others.

"Let Rake go at once," he said, curtly.

"Yaas, dear boys," said Algernon Aubrey, in the doorway; "the circus is over—ring down the merry curtain! Don't make me bark my knuckles on your noses. I'm rather particular about my knuckles. Cately on?"

"Mind your own bizney!" yelled Lumley.

"Let him go, I tell you."

Lumley and Howard and Verney looked uncertain. But Dick Durance was made of sterner stuff. He had been only half-hearted in the ragging of the new boy; but he was quite whole-hearted in defying interference. He compressed his grip on Rake, and stared at Harry defiantly.

"Mind your own business," he snapped.

"I think this is my business," said Harry, quietly; "as captain

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"Mind your own business," he snapped.

"I think this is my business," said Harry, quietly; "as captain

of the Fourth, I think I'm bound to stop this sort of thing."

"How long have you been captain of the Fourth?" sneered Durance.

"Long enough, anyhow, to put a stop to a cowardly ragging," answered Harry; "but anyhow I should chip in here. Let him go."

"Rats!"

"Is there goin' to be a fight?" murmured Algernon Aubrey.

"There is, if you interfere in this study," said Durance, savagely.

Algy sighed.

"Isn't it just my luck to have my best waistcoat on when there's goin' to be a scrap?" he said; "I suppose you fellows wouldn't be willin' to hang on, in *statu quo*, while I go an' change my waistcoat?"

"He, he, he!" came from Bunny Bootles, in the passage. The fat junior had followed his study-mates; not to take a hand in the combat. Bunny was quite content to be a spectator when a combat was going on.

"Will you let Rake go?" snapped the captain of the Fourth.

"No."

"Then I'll make you."

"Hear, hear!" said St. Leger. Harry wasted no more time in words. Tracy had staggered to his feet, and stood with clenched hands and blazing eyes; but evidently hesitating to tackle Lovell. The latter made a stride at Durance and grasped him.

Crash!

Durance's fist came into his face in a second, and Harry staggered for a moment. The blow was swift and it was hard.

But in another moment the captain of the Fourth had returned it, and the two were fighting furiously. Tracy made a rush then, to the aid of his comrade; but he found Algernon Aubrey in the way.

"You're my mutton, old bean!" said the dandy of St. Kit's, genially. "Get out of the way, you fool!"

"That's for your boko—"

"Yow-ow!"

Bob Rake, held now only by three, put up a sudden and strenuous struggle. Stubbs, of the Fourth, rushed into the study and laid violent hands on Lumley, dragging him off. Howard and Verney found that their hands were too full with Bob. He wrenched himself loose, and rolled off the table.

He landed on his feet, actively, and spun round on the raggers with a blaze in his eyes.

"Now, then, you rotters!" he panted.

"Go it, old bean!" sang out Algy.

Algy, with all his dandified ways, was much too much for Tracy. That infuriated youth was penned in a corner of the study, Algy's fists keeping him there, and tapping and rapping on him incessantly. Stubbs was rolling on the carpet with Lumley, punching away breathlessly. Harry and Durance were fighting fiercely; and Bob Rake had Verney and Howard to deal with. He dealt with them very effectively.

They faced him together—and Verney was swept off his feet with a terrific right-hander.

He landed on his back on the carpet, gasping; and he stayed there. He did not want any more.

Howard was driven across the study, towards the fireplace, till he stumbled on the fender. He was almost dazed by the shower of blows that rained on him. He dropped his hands at last in sheer desperation.

"Chuck it!" he gasped. "I—I give in."

"He, he, he!" came from Bunny Bootles.

"Lemme alone!" Lumley was howling under the hammering punches of Stubbs. "I give in, you beast! Oh, gad! Yarrah! Lemme gerrup! I chuck it! Peccavi!"

"Had enough?" grinned Stubbs, breathlessly.

"Yow-wow-ow! Yes."

Lumley was *hors de combat*. And Tracy slid down to a sitting position in the corner, where he was penned up by Algernon Aubrey. He, too, had had enough.

Of the happy family of nuts, only Durance was holding out. And good fighting man as Harry Lovell was, Durance seemed to be holding his own.

Bob Rake looked round him, breathlessly.

"All down but one!" he exclaimed. "Thanks, no end, for backing me up like this, you fellows."

"Don't mench, dear boy," said Algernon Aubrey. "Sure you won't have any more, Tracy?"

"Owl! wow!" moaned Tracy. "I don't want to persuade you, of course, old bean, if you'd rather chuck it," said Algy, considerably.

"But if you want any more—"

"Grooogh!"

"Then I'll sit on the table and watch the circus," said Algernon Aubrey, with a deep yawn.

There was a yell from the passage.

"Cave! Here comes Oliphant!"

St. Leger sighed.

"I thought this dashed rumpus would bring a prefect up! Now there's goin' to be a row!"

THE THIRD CHAPTER.

After the Fray.

OLIPHANT of the Sixth, the captain of St. Kit's, strode into the top study with a frowning brow. Behind him the passage was swarming with juniors now—all the Fourth had turned out of their studies. Rows and rags were far from uncommon in the Fourth-form passage at St. Kit's; indeed, the Fourth rather prided themselves on being an unruly form. But a battle-royal on this

STUNG ITS TONGUE!



Farmer: "Look! There's one of my sheep stung in its mouth!"

Bookkeeper: "Well, where else would you expect to find its tongue but in its mouth?"

scale was rather out of the common; and it was not surprising that it had brought the head prefect on the scene.

"Stop that!" roared Oliphant. And as Harry and Durance did not seem to heed, the big Sixth-former grasped them both, and dragged them apart.

Harry Lovell dropped his hands at once. Durance, breathless, with a red stream trickling from his swollen nose, leaned on the wall and gasped for breath.

Oliphant frowned at them.

"What does this thumping row mean?" he exclaimed. "Do you know that you can be heard downstairs?"

"Yaas, I shouldn't wonder," murmured St. Leger.

"A precious set of hooligans you look," continued Oliphant.

"What's the row about? Sharp!"

"That meddlin' cad—" gasped Tracy.

"That nameless rotter—" panted Howard.

"A row over the result of the election, I suppose," said Oliphant.

"Yaas, dear boy," said Algy.

"Well, stop it at once," said Oliphant.

"You fellows seem to have come into this study, so I take it you started the row—"

"Ahem!"

"Of course they did," said Tracy.

"I know it's the custom for the top study to belong to the captain of the form," said Oliphant.

"But you might give the other fellows time to clear before you wade in to take possession, Lovell."

Harry flushed.

"It's not that," he exclaimed.

"I wasn't thinking of that when I came here."

"Then what did you come in here for? Just to pick a row with Tracy?"

"Just that!" snapped Tracy.

Harry closed his lips. But Bob Rake chimed in:

"Lovell and St. Leger came in to lend me a hand, Oliphant. I was getting a ragging."

Oliphant understood then.

"Oh, I see! You've been ragging this new kid for voting against you, Tracy—is that it?"

"Only—only a lark, really—"

stammered Tracy.

"That will do. Have they hurt you, Rake?"

Bob made a grimace. He had

been very considerably hurt by the thrashing with the fives bat. But he was not at all disposed to complain to a prefect. He was prepared to deal out Tracy's punishment himself, for that matter.

"Oh, I'm not made of putty," he said, cheerfully. "I can stand a bit of a licking. I'm not complaining."

"Good man!" murmured Algy.

"Well, let there be no more of it," said Oliphant. "You hear that, Tracy?"

"Yes, Oliphant," muttered Tracy.

"If there's any more row in this study to-night, you'll hear from me," said the captain of St. Kit's.

"You fellows that don't belong here, get out."

"Come on, old bean," said Algy, gracefully, to his chum. "We'll shake the dust of this merry study from our feet—till Monday."

Harry did not speak. He left the study quietly with his chum. Oliphant gave the dishevelled and gasping nuts a warning look, and followed them. Bob Rake was left alone in the lion's den.

But it was not much of a lion's den now. Tracy and Co. had been tamed. After the prefect's warning they would hardly have cared to proceed with the ragging; and they were feeling far from fit for any more rags. There was not one of the noble army of nuts who was not showing very plain traces of the combat.

Bob Rake looked at them, and grinned, and dabbed his nose with his handkerchief.

"Is it peace, my pippins?" he inquired.

"Oh, go an' eat coke!" growled Tracy.

"We'll make you squirm, some time!" muttered Lumley.

"Any old time you like," grinned Bob.

Tracy and Co. left the study together, to clean up after that terrific scrap, in the dormitory. Bob Rake dabbed his nose again, and looked round him rather ruefully.

"Looks as if I shall have a merry time in this study," he murmured.

"Nice cheery study-mates—I don't think! But what's the odds so long as you're 'appy?"

And after attending to his damages Bob Rake found room for his personal belongings in the study, and proceeded to arrange them; an occupation that kept him agreeably employed till bedtime.

When he joined the Fourth on their way to the dormitory, he was looking little the worse for his experiences in the top study. But Tracy and Co. were looking a great deal the worse—and they scowled at Bob in the dormitory. Only Durance did not seem bitter. He came over to the new junior, as he sat on the edge of his bed taking his boots off.

Bob looked up at him quickly, half-expecting assault and battery.

Dick Durance smiled slightly.

"All serene," he said. "I'm not on the giddy war-path."

"Glad to hear it, old top," said Bob.

"Your nose looks as if it wouldn't stand much more damage."

"Yours isn't exactly a beauty."

Bob rubbed his rather swollen nose.

"It doesn't feel one," he said, good-humouredly.

"I want to tell you I'm sorry about the ragging," said Durance, in a low voice. "It was rotten cad-dish, and I'm sorry. That's all."

"Good man," said Bob, rather surprised. "It was a bit rotten, you know—a crowd piling on to one chap. But I don't bear malice. I hope we shall get on all right in the study."

"I hope so," said Durance.

And he walked away—to meet a savage stare from Rex Tracy.

"We're goin' to cut that cad," said Tracy, angrily. "What are you speakin' to him for, Durance?"

"Oh, rats!"

"Look here—"

"Go and eat coke!" said Durance, impatiently.

Which was all the satisfaction that the chief of the nuts received from his rather unruly follower.

Bob Rake had had a rather exciting time on his first day at St. Kit's. But he slept soundly in the Fourth-form dormitory; and when the rising-bell clanged out in the morning he was the first out of bed, in cheery spirits. And as Bunny Bootles seemed disinclined to rise, Bob obliged him by dragging off his bed-clothes and rolling him out, in sheer exuberance of spirits—a service for which he received anything but thanks from Bunny.

THE FOURTH CHAPTER.

No Trade.

"JOLLY old show!"

Bob Rake made that remark to himself as he strolled in the old Quad at St. Kit's on the following morning.

It was Sunday—and Sunday was a very quiet day at St. Kit's. "Good form" required that "rags" should be barred on Sunday. There were two services that day, scripture with the form-master, and Milton; but it was an easy day for the St. Kit's fellows. Generally "Sunday walks" filled in the leisure time; though Tracy and Co. found solace also in surreptitious cigarettes, and in Compton's time there had even been "nap" in the top study. Bob Rake walked round the Quad, looking about him, much interested in the grey old buildings, the ancient ivy that clung to them, and the still more ancient oaks—some of which had been standing when the Plantagenets reigned in England.

It was all new enough to the youth from "down under," and he liked it all. He thought that he was going to be happy at St. Kit's; but, as a matter of fact, the cheery, good tempered junior would have been happy anywhere. Quite content with his own company Bob Rake was sauntering round when Bunny Bootles came along and joined him.

Bunny bestowed an amiable grin on him.

"Bit dull to-day here," he remarked.

"Not at all," answered Bob.

"Awful bore, Sunday," said Bunny. "But there's no construe, you know—that's a compensation."

"Paradise Lost is a frightful bore, and awful rot, but it's not so bad as construe, what?"

Bob laughed.

"Feeling a bit lonely, I suppose?" said Bunny.

"Oh, no."

"You don't pull with your study-mates, of course."

Bob Rake whistled a tune. He was not inclined to make a confidant of the fat junior.

"You'll have a new set to-morrow," said Bunny.

"How's that?" asked Bob, in surprise.

"You see, top study always belongs to the form-captain," ex-

GAVE PA THE PIP!



Willie: "Pa, if I planted this pip would an orange tree grow up from it?"

Pa: "Certainly, my son, and oranges would grow on it."

Willie: "That's wonderful, Pa, 'cos this is a tamen-pip."

plained Bunny. "It's always been so, ever since anybody can remember. Compton had it when he was here—and Tracy would have had it, if he'd been elected. Now Lovell's captain of the Fourth, he will claim the captain's study."

"Oh, I see!" said Bob, thoughtfully.

"He chooses his own study-mates," continued Bunny. "He won't let Tracy or Durance dig in the study, you bet. They'll have to turn out into No. 5. If you make yourself agreeable to Lovell he may let you stay."

"I'm not likely to make myself specially agreeable to Lovell or anybody else for that sort of reason," said Bob, drily.

"Hoity-toity!" said Bunny, with a grin. "You're a bit cheeky for a new kid, Rake. You'll get that taken out of you at St. Kit's."

"Fathead!" said Bob, politely.

"Of course, Algy will be in the top study with Lovell," said Bunny, "and, of course, little me. Lovell couldn't part with me. He's expecting me to back him up in the captaincy, and show him the ropes, and all that—in fact, I hardly think he could

carry on without my assistance. I'm going to help him," added Bunny, generously, "though really, with so many calls on my time it will be a bit of trouble for me. But I'm the chap for standing by a pal."

"You look it!" said Bob. "If you like, old fellow, I'll use my influence with Lovell, and get him to let you keep on in the top study."

"Bow-wow."

"It's the best study in the Fourth," urged Bunny. "You don't want to be turned out of it, I suppose."

"No, I don't!" said Bob, rather shortly.

"Well, you will be, unless Lovell consents to let you stay. You see, as form-captain, he decides."

Bob Rake was silent.

He had seen little of Harry Lovell, so far, but he rather liked what he had seen of him. But he was conscious now of a feeling of annoyance. Perhaps it was not Bunny's intention to make mischief. But certainly he was succeeding in doing it, whether intentionally or not.

"If you'd like me to use my influence—"

"Oh, don't be an ass, Bootles," said Bob Rake, rather impatiently.

Bunny coughed.

"All the more room without you, of course," he said. "It practically depends on me whether you're turned out of the study to-morrow or not."

"Give us a rest, fatty."

Bob Rake walked away; but the fat Bunny trotted along by his side. Evidently Bunny was not yet done with the new junior. Although Bob was not yet aware of it, Bunny had a special regard for new fellows—they were Bunny's game, so to speak. New fellows did not know him so well as old fellows, and were naturally less on their guard against Bunny's wiles.

"There's another matter I want to speak to you about, Rake," continued the fat junior. "It's rather important."

"Go ahead."

"Like a silver penknife?"

Bob stared at him.

"A silver penknife?" he repeated.

"Yes."

"Are you giving silver penknives away?" ejaculated Bob.

"Practically!" said Bunny.

"You see, I'm selling some articles—"

"Selling some articles?"

"That's it! You send a postal-order to a firm, you know, and they send you ten articles to sell among your friends," explained Bunny. "You make a profit—I mean, I'm not doing it for profit. I wouldn't! My idea is to supply fellows with things they need, cheap. Now, I've got a silver penknife that is just the thing you want! Look."

Bunny rooted in his pockets, and produced a penknife. Bob Rake looked at it.

It was a penknife, certainly; and equally certainly it was not silver. Bunny opened the blades, which looked as if they would cut cheese, provided that it was not a hard cheese.

"Ripping, ain't it?" said Bunny, enthusiastically.

"It might rip butter," said Bob. "Looks as if it wouldn't rip anything else—except margarine."

"Hem! I'm selling this knife at seven and six," said Bunny.

"I hope you'll find a purchaser," said Bob, cordially. "Bit sorry for the purchaser, though."

Bunny Bootles coughed again.

"You being a friend, I'm going to let you have it for five bob," he said.

"Your mistake," said Bob Rake. "You're not doing anything of the kind, old top."

"How much will you give me for it, then?"

"Nothing at all."

"Shall I say half-a-crown?"

"Say anything you like," said Bob, cheerfully. "It's a free country; and speech is free. Say fifteen pounds if you care to."

"Look here, Rake," said Bunny in a burst of generosity. "I like you! You're the kind of chap I can pal with. I'm going to let you have this splendid silver penknife for eighteenpence."

"I think not!" said Bob, with a grin.

"Dash it all," said Bunny. "I never was a chap for haggling. Make it a bob, and the penknife's yours."

"Try again, old top."
"Don't you want this magnificent silver penknife?" demanded Bunny, in a tone more of sorrow than of anger.

"Nix!"
"Well, if you don't want it, don't have it. Don't walk away, Rake—I haven't finished yet. How would you like this ink-eraser? Sixpence."

"I shouldn't like it at all."
"As a pal you can have it for three D."

"Take it away and bury it!"
The ink-eraser disappeared into Bunny's pocket. But the St. Kit's merchant was not finished yet. He dived a fat hand into another pocket and produced a corkscrew. "That's what I call a bargain," said Bunny, holding up the corkscrew with an ecstatic expression. "That's only two shillings."

"I hope you'll meet somebody who wants to buy a corkscrew," said Bob, who was beginning to be rather entertained.

"Every fellow needs one, of course," said Bunny. "You can have it for eighteenpence."

"I'll wait till I feel the need."
"I say, Rake, you're jolly hard to please, you know. But I've got a musical-box here, look—"

"My hat! You are a sort of walking Whiteley's!" said Bob.

"It plays Elgar's Pomp and Circumstance march," said Bunny. "Tinker Smith was delighted with it—Smith's musical, you know. He offered me seven-and-six, but it couldn't be done. But I'm letting you have it for five bob."

"You're not," said Bob, shaking his head.

"I am, really—"
"I may be mistaken," chuckled Bob Rake. "but I really think you're not."

"Well, look at this fountain-pen—"

Bob Rake walked away instead of looking at the new article produced from Bunny's capacious pockets. The fat junior shouted after him.

"Don't you want this splendid fountain-pen, Rake?"

"No thanks," said Bob, over his shoulder.

"Only four bob—"
"Four rats!"

"Look here, you cheeky cad—"

Bob Rake chuckled, and walked off. He was growing fed-up with the St. Kit's merchant and the many articles he had for sale.

"Rotter!" roared Bunny, in great wrath.

And the fat junior wandered away disconsolately—doubtless seeking another purchaser for his many valuable "articles."

THE FIFTH CHAPTER.

Quite a Good Stunt.

"AFTER you with that match!"

Tracy was the speaker.

The nuts of the Fourth were gathered in the top study, after going through the pains and pangs of Milton with Mr. Lathley. Perhaps they felt that they were entitled to a little relaxation after exploring the beauties of the great blind poet. Their relaxation took a form that would have earned them a severe caning from Mr. Lathley if he had beheld it. Probably Dr. Cheyne, the reverend Head of St. Kit's, would have almost fainted if he had seen Tracy and Co. smoking cigarettes round the study fire on a Sunday afternoon.

Durand passed the match to Rex Tracy, who lighted his cigarette and scowled over it. Tracy was not in a good temper. His nose was a little swollen, and one of his eyes had a "mouse" under it—relics of the scrap in the study on Saturday evening. He was not feeling at peace with himself or with the universe; and the Head's eloquent sermon that morning in school chapel had had no effect whatever on Tracy—probably because he had slept through it.

So Rex Tracy smoked and scowled, and Durand smoked and smiled cynically, and Verney minor, Howard, and Lumley smoked and looked vacant—as they generally looked whether they were smoking or not.

"That cad's leavin' the study alone, anyhow," Lumley remarked. Apparently he referred to the breezy youth from "down under."

"He'd better," growled Tracy.

"Just like him to butt in," said Howard.

"Fellows do butt into their own studies," remarked Durand.

Tracy turned on him with a snap.

"You're bound to have something to say for the rotter," he said. "You spoke to him in the dorm last night. You know we're goin' to cut him."

"Yes, rather!" said Verney, emphatically.

"Dear men," said Durand, "Let your Uncle Dick address you for your own good. Are we givin' up this study to-morrow to the cheery new captain of the Fourth?"

"No!" hissed Tracy.

"Can you help it?" asked Lumley. "Top study has always belonged to the form-captain. It's the rule. I remember old Compton collared it fast enough when he was elected, and you backed him up, Durand, and you, Tracy. I don't see—"

"Lots of things you don't see," yawned Durand. "The fact is, this is the most comfy study in the Fourth. I don't want to turn out."

"I don't, either," said Tracy.

"It's so nice to have a decent study to ask our pals into—dear chaps like these fellows," Durand nodded towards Lumley and company. "The fact is, I think it's time a new rule was made about the top study. Harry Lovell is form-captain right enough. But he's practically a new fellow at St. Kit's. I rather admire the chap."

"Oh, you do, do you?" snarled Tracy.

Durand nodded with irritating coolness.

"I do! I detest him like poison, personally! But from a reasonable point of view, as a reasonable chap, I rather admire him. And I'm determined that he's not goin' to bag this study if I can help it."

"You're a queer fish, Dick," said Tracy. "Give me half a chance to keep the study, and see how I'll jump at it."

"We'll back you up," said Howard, dubiously. "But—but—if the prefects are called in—"

"Nameless—I mean Lovell—isn't the kind of chap to go howlin' to the prefects," drawled Durand.

"Well, that's so, too," assented Howard.

"He's the kind of chap to stick up for his rights—I mean, what he may be pleased to consider his rights," remarked Verney.

"Quite so! But he's the kind of chap to depend on himself to get them."

"He's rather hefty," suggested Howard.

"You don't feel inclined to take him on with the mittens, old nut?"

"No, thanks," said Howard, very hastily.

"I was fightin' him last night," said Durand. "I gave him a bit of a tussle. But if Oliphant hadn't interrupted us he would have knocked me right out."

"Oh, no!" said Howard. "You could lick him!"

"Rubbish! I couldn't," said Durand, calmly. "And I'm the only chap present who'd got the nerve to tackle him at all—"

"Look here—" roared Tracy.

Durand waved his cigarette at his exasperated chum.

"Shush, old man! Let's deal in facts," he said. "Now, last evening that Cornstalk covey, Rake, put up a terrific scrap against us."

"We're goin' to make him squirm for it," said Tracy savagely.

"Listen to the merry voice of wisdom," said Durand, amicably. "We're not goin' to make Bob Rake sit up. We're goin' to take him to our manly bosoms and treat him as one of the happy family."

"We're not!" yelled Howard, rubbing his nose.

"We are!"

"You silly ass—"

"You cheeky chump—"

"Hold on, you fellows," said Tracy. "Dick's got some stunt in his queer brain—you know him. Go ahead, you ass, and tell us what you're thinkin'."

"I'm thinkin' of keepin' the top study," said Durand. "Don't you see? Bob Rake is the heftiest fightin' man who ever happened at St. Kit's. There are fellows in the Shell, and even in the Fifth, who couldn't stand up to him. Under the peculiar circs., Bob Rake is goin' to be an asset to this study. We don't want him here. Granted! But we'd rather have Rake here than turn out and leave the study to Harry Nameless—I mean Lovell. See the wheeze? We take up Rake an' make much of him—treat him as a pal—and we use him to knock spots off anybody who tries to bag captain's study from us."

Tracy whistled.

"Well, you've got a head on you, Dick," said Lumley, admiringly.

"I always said you had."

"Thanks!" yawned Durand.

Tracy wrinkled his brows in thought. He disliked Bob Rake—as he disliked any fellow who was hearty and wholesome and thoroughly decent. But his dislike of Rake was meek and mild compared with his bitter hatred for Harry Lovell. He would have been willing to greet Bob as a long-lost brother for the sake of a score over the captain of the Fourth.

He nodded his head at last.

"Good man!" he said. "You're no fool, Dick."

"Sorry I can't say the same for you, old scout," said Durand, genially.

"Oh, don't be an ass! Rake's a new fellow and probably won't know about captain's custom," said Tracy.

"If he does we can tell him it's all rot. Stands to reason he'd like to dig in this study, and will resent bein' turned out. We'll rub that in."

"Hard!" grinned Lumley.

"I think very likely he could lick Nameless in a stand-up fight," continued Tracy. "Anyhow, I'd like to see them at it, confound them both!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Dick's right about Nameless bein' unlikely to call in the prefects," said Tracy thoughtfully.

"He's a chap to stand up for himself. If he's chucked out of the study—and kept out—he will have to knuckle under. Form-captain can't go whinin' to the prefects about his wrongs, really."

"That's it!" said Durand.

"Bob Rake will be no end of an asset."

"Sort of bulldog to guard the study," said Howard; and the nuts chuckled.

"So that's why you spoke to him in dorm last night," said Tracy.

"Of course, I couldn't guess that, Dick."

Durand flushed.

"That wasn't the reason," he said, curtly.

"Then what was it?"

"Nothin' you'd understand," said Durand. "I've thought of this stunt to-day—this mornin', in fact, while the Head was wheezin' to us in chapel. I rather think that with Rake to back us up we can keep the study. It's worth tryin', anyhow."

"Yes, rather!" said Verney.

Tracy's eyes glistened.

"What ho!" he said. "We'll have the ruffian here, talk to him nicely, stand him a spread, and enlist him fairly on our side. The beast hits frightfully hard—all the better if he's hittin' Lovell. How are we goin' to set about it, Dick? Give us the programme."

"Easy enough! He's not a suspicious chap—you can see that in his face. Tell him you're sorry for the misunderstanding, and ask him to let bygones be bygones. Make him one of us."

"I'll do it! After all, I can find a chance of takin' it out of him later on," remarked Tracy, thoughtfully.

Durand set his lips.

"There's a limit," he said, icily.

"Oh, rot!"

"I mean it, Tracy. I'm up against Harry Nameless all the time, an' I want to keep the study, but if Bob Rake is taken in here to be one of our crowd, it's goin' to be honest Injun."

"You're gettin' jolly particular," sneered Tracy.

"Perhaps! But I mean what I say."

Tracy shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, have it your own way," he said. "Anyhow, we keep the study. Dash it all, if we keep the study through Rake I shall feel quite nice to him. I'll go and look for the bally prize-fighter now."

"Do!"

And Rex Tracy quitted the top study in search of Bob Rake of the Fourth.

THE SIXTH CHAPTER.

Nothing Doing.

"To equal which the tallest pine, Hewn on Norwegian hills to be the mast

Of some great admiral, were but a wand."

ALGERNON AUBREY ST. LEGER was chanting those lines in dismal tones in No. 5 Study. It was Sunday afternoon, and Algy did not look as if he were enjoying life. He cast a pathetic glance at Harry Lovell, who smiled at him across the study.

"Rotten, ain't it?" said Algy.

"Stick to it," said Harry, encouragingly.

"I've got to," groaned Algy. "Lathley is a beast! Milton was a beast! Fancy a man sittin' down and writin' a thumpin' long beastly thing like 'Paradise Lost' without bein' made to. And fancy the beastly thing bein' inflicted on unoffendin' youths hundreds of years afterwards. I've got to learn twenty lines by heart—oh, dear!"

Algernon Aubrey sighed deeply.

"Just because I got it mixed up in Milton class."

The unhappy dandy of St. Kit's dropped his eyes again to the description of Satan and his spear, and groaned.

"It's not bad stuff," said Harry, with a smile.

"I wish I had your keen appreciation of the classics, old scout," said Algernon Aubrey.

"Or I wish Mr. Lathley hadn't. Still, I suppose this is better than muggin' up Latin. Chap can understand this, anyhow. Hallo! Come in, Bunny, an' interrupt me, my fat old bean. Even you are better than Milton, dear boy."

Bunny Bootles rolled into the study.

"I say, Tracy's kicked me," he said.

"Good old Tracy!" said St. Leger, approvingly. "I never liked Tracy, but he's got his good points."

"Don't be a funny ass, Algy. I went into the top study to warn him to clear out to-morrow, and he kicked me. Hard!" said Bunny, pathetically.

"Go back and tell him again," suggested St. Leger.

"But he'll kick me again."

"Yaas. It will do you good."

"You silly ass!" roared Bunny. "Leave them alone to-day, Bunny," said Harry Lovell.

"Time enough to-morrow to bag the top study."

"That beast Rake was there," said Bunny. "He grinned when Tracy licked me. That fellow Rake is a rank outsider."

"Rot! Quite a decent chap," said Harry.

"Yaas, quite!" said St. Leger. "Shut up, Bunny!"

Bunny gave a fat sneer.

"You'll have trouble with him, anyhow," he said. "He says he's jolly well not going to turn out of the top study for anybody."

"Probably he doesn't know our merry little customs yet," said St. Leger, mildly.

"I've told him," said Bunny, with a vengeful remembrance of Rake's refusal of his valuable "articles." "He said he'd chuck out anybody that came into his study, or words to that effect."

"Bunny, old bean, you talk too much. I've mentioned that before. Oblige me by blowin' out of the door."

"The tuck-shop opens in ten minutes," said Bunny, with a glance at the study clock.

Algy groaned.

"That means that we're goin' to have your fascinatin' society for another ten minutes, I suppose."

"Oh, I say! Look here," said Bunny. "I haven't shown you my musical-box yet. It plays a whole tune—"

"Take it to Tinker Smith; he's the musician."

"He won't have it—I mean he offered me five bob, and I want seven-and-six," said Bunny. "It's a splendid music-box. It plays the 'Dead March' in *Saul* from beginning to end. I could have sold it a dozen times, but I—I was keepin' it for you fellows."

"That's awfully kind of you, Bunny."

"Well, we're pals," said Bootles. "A chap ought to be kind to his pals. That's how I look at it. My idea is, that when we get the top study, a musical-box is just what we want to—to give the place a tone, you know. We'll set it going when we take possession, as a—paeon of triumph, you know. The tune's quite appropriate, as it plays 'See the Conquering Hero Comes.' Just suit you, Lovell, as the giddy conquering hero, you know."

Harry Lovell laughed.

"How many tunes does it play?" he asked.

"Only one; but it's a corker."

"Isn't there any difference between the 'Dead March' in *Saul* and the 'Conquering Hero'?"

Bunny started.

"I—I—I didn't mean the 'Dead March.' I—I meant—"

"You meant to sell the dashed thing, what?" grinned Algy.

"Take it away and bury it, Bunny, there's a good rabbit."

"Just listen to it, and then you'll want it," said Bunny.

"Mercy!"

"If you fellows put half-a-crown each you can have it," said Bunny. "What do you say, Lovell?"

"Rats!"

"What do you say, Algy, old fellow?"

"More rats!"

"Why, you're just rotten beasts like Rake!" exclaimed Bunny, in great disgust. "You're not musical. Turning up your silly noses at one of the greatest masterpieces of Beethoven—"

"Beethoven! My hat!"

"I—I mean Strauss!" said Bunny hastily. "Just listen to its playing the 'Wedding March of the Priests'—"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Algy.

"What are you cackling at?" demanded Bunny, hotly. "Look here, if you don't want this magnificent musical-box—"

Algy rose from the armchair and took Bunny by one fat ear. With a firm grip on Bunny's ear he led him into the passage.

"Blow away!" he said.

And he returned into No. 5 and shut the door.

Bunny Bootles gave an emphatic snort. He rolled away with his musical-box still unsold. But he forgot the musical-box as he caught sight of Verney minor heading for the top study with a bag in his hand. The school shop was open now, and Verney was evidently conveying "tuck" to the top study for tea. Bunny Bootles rolled after him.

"I say, Verney, old chap—"

"Go and eat cake!"

Verney minor went into the top study. Bunny Bootles had a glimpse of a bright fire and a well-spread tea-table, and of a circle of smiling faces. Then the door closed.

Bunny opened it again.

"I say, dear old tops—"

he began.

"Clear off!" shouted Tracy.

"Kick him, Rake, you're nearest," said Durand.

"Certainly!"

Bunny dodged back.

"Yah! Rotters!" he roared.

"You're going to be turned out of this study to-morrow, you cads! Lovell says he's going to lick you, Rake, if you make any bones about it! Yah!"

And Bunny slammed the door and fled.

THE SEVENTH CHAPTER.

Bob Joins Up.

BOB RAKE was surprised.

After his reception in the top study the previous evening he had expected war to the knife with his study-mates.

Tracy and Co. were still showing signs of the combat, and they had not impressed Bob as being fellows of a very generous or forgiving disposition. But they had, apparently, quite got over that early disagreement.

Bob had been walking in the quad by himself that afternoon—perhaps beginning to feel a little lonely. He knew hardly anybody at St. Kit's so far. Certainly he had been received in a rather friendly way by No. 5 Study. But No. 5 Study did not seem to be bothering any further about him.

Algernon Aubrey St. Leger was wrestling with Milton, and Harry Lovell was helping him as it happened, so if they thought of the new boy, they had no time to give him. Bunny's fascinating company certainly could have been purchased along with his "articles." But Bob greatly preferred solitude to Bunny's society.

He began to realise how lonely a fellow could feel in a crowd—there were over two hundred fellows at St. Kit's, and nobody for him to speak to except a chance word in passing to a fellow or two whom he barely knew.

So when Rex Tracy came up to him in the quadrangle with a cordial air, Bob was more than disposed to meet his advances halfway. Bob never bore malice for his own part, and if his study-mates were disposed to be friendly, Bob certainly did not feel inclined to refuse the olive-branch. And Tracy's manner was quite friendly.

"Where are you havin' tea?" was his first question.

"In hall, I suppose," answered Bob.

"We all feed in our studies here," said Tracy. "I hope you're not goin' to keep up that rather unfortunate quarrel, Rake. We're

all ready to admit that we were rather hasty."

At which Bob stared. "You see, I was feelin' no end sore at bein' chucked out in the election," said Tracy, with an air of great frankness. "I called you some names I was sorry for afterwards. I admit I was ratty. But I'd had a dashed big disappointment, you know."

Bob nodded. He hardly knew what to make of this; but he was not a suspicious fellow, and he had no malice or ill-feeling in his composition.

"We're study-mates," said Tracy. "If you feel inclined to let bygones be bygones, come along to the study and feed with us."

"My dear chap," said Bob cheerily, "that's just what I should like. We had a scrap yesterday, but there's no harm done. Let's forget all about it."

"Just what I want, if you'll excuse us for pilin' on you in that really rotten way," said Tracy.

"It's all over and done with," said Bob, reassuringly.

"Then come along, old fellow; we're goin' to make it a bit of a house-warmin', to greet you as a new member of the family circle," said Tracy.

And Bob followed Tracy into the schoolhouse, his heart considerably lighter. That feeling of being "left" alone in a crowd, had quite cordial towards Tracy and Co.

It did not even cross his mind that Tracy had an "axe to grind."

The election was over; his vote was no longer of any consequence. He could not see anything else that Tracy could aim at. Indeed, he felt a little sympathy with Tracy's disappointment about the captaincy, and admitted that the defeated candidate's "rattiness" was rather excusable. Anyhow, he was glad for the trouble to be over.

That it was the prowess he had shown in the fight in the study, and that Tracy had a use for that prowess, did not occur to him.

Naturally, he had no idea of the conversation that had taken place in the top study, or of the remarkable "stunt" propounded by Richard Durance.

He came up the staircase with Tracy, and two or three of the Fourth stared at them; surprised to see them together, and apparently on amicable terms.

In the top study, Rake was greeted with great politeness by Durance, who was Tracy's study-mate there; and by Howard and Lumley and Verney minor, who were honoured guests.

He was soon chatting away quite cheerily with the nuts—the cigarettes having been laid aside for the occasion—and when Bunny Bootles rolled in, and Tracy helped him out with an elegant boot, Bob Rake grinned, as Bunny had reported so indignantly in No. 5.

When the tuck-shop opened in the afternoon, Verney minor departed for supplies, and Durance and Tracy set the table. Bob Rake was not allowed to help—he was a distinguished guest.

"You're our guest for to-day, old fellow," Tracy said to him; "tomorrow you begin as a regular member of the study. But just at present you're the merry honoured guest."

"Right you are," said Bob, with a smile.

And he sat in a comfortable arm-chair, and warmed his toes at the bright fire, while the other juniors were busy.

Verney minor returned with the good things for tea—and Bunny. Bunny's parting shot, as he was excluded, brought a frown to Bob's face. Already he was feeling a little annoyed with Harry Lovell, owing to Bunny's mischievous talk; and that statement that Lovell had declared his intention of "licking him" was more annoying still. Bob did not yet know the estimable Bunny as the other St. Kit's fellows did.

"What's this talk about this study belonging to Lovell?" Bob Rake asked, looking round; "isn't it our study?"

"Yes, rather!" said Tracy. "Tracy's and mine and yours," said Durance.

"But what sort of a claim has Lovell to it?" asked Bob; "Oliphant was saying something about that here last evening, and to-day Bootles—"

"Oh, Bootles is a gas-bag," said Lumley.

"But Oliphant isn't! What does it mean anyhow?" asked

Bob; "does Lovell claim to bag this study if he likes?"

"You see, this study belonged to the form captain in Compton's time," said Durance, blandly. "Now Lovell is form-captain, he's puttin' in a claim to it."

"That doesn't seem very reasonable,"

"It isn't."

"Lovell struck me as being rather a sensible chap," said Bob; "of course, I haven't seen much of him. He treated me rather decently last night, though. If he's got a genuine claim to the study—"

"Let me tell you exactly how it stands," said Durance, while Tracy poured out the tea and Lumley buttered the muffins; "there's been a sort of custom for the captain of the form to choose his own study. This study bein' the best in the passage, he naturally chooses this one."

"I see."

"But it's only a custom—nothin' in it. Of course, when old Compton was captain, he was a friend of ours, and we let him in without makin' a fuss. It's different with

Lovell, who's no friend of ours. Besides, he would want to bring Algy St. Leger and Bunny Bootles with him. That means we should have to clear. Now, why the thump should we clear out of our own study?" said Durance.

Bob Rake nodded.

"Blessed if I see why," he said; "it seems to me rot. If Lovell came in by himself, of course, it would be different—it would make four in the study—but it's a big room—"

"Of course!" said Tracy, with a wink to his comrades which Rake did not observe.

"But if it's an old custom—always observed—"

"said Bob, with a doubtful glance at his study-mates. "More or less of a custom," explained Durance; "it comes to this, that the form-captain bags the study if the chaps in it will let him. Now, Bunny Bootles had an idea of puttin' up as captain—"

Bob chuckled.

"Suppose, by a giddy miracle, he had got in," said Durance; "think anybody would have

turned out of his study at Bunny's order?"

"Ha! ha! Not likely."

"Well, then, if they wouldn't for Bunny, why for Lovell?" said Durance; "I don't see why we're to be bullied out of our study."

"That's what it comes to," said Tracy; "another lump of sugar, Rake? Try these ham patties—they're good."

"Fact is, we're stickin' to the study," said Durance; "we're not goin' to be evicted without a fight for it, anyhow. It's our study for terms, and we're keepin' it."

"Well, I must say it's pretty thick for fellows to be turned out of their study," said Bob; "of course, I don't know much yet about St. Kit's manners and customs. But I think that seems rather thick. What will happen if you refuse to turn out?"

"Oh, a row, I expect," said Durance, carelessly; "No. 5 has always been up against this study, and there will be some more of it. That's all."

"I must say that Harry Lovell struck me as being a decent and

reasonable chap," said Bob, thoughtfully.

"It's not very decent or reasonable to be threatenin' already to hand you a lickin', before's he's even asked you to clear out of the study."

Bob flushed.

"That fat bounder may have exaggerated what he said."

"But don't think I've got a down on Lovell," said Durance, blandly; "I think he's a fine character—and I only backed up Tracy for form-captain because he's my pal. Lovell is no end better suited to captain the form."

"Is he?" snapped Tracy.

"Yes, old duck, he is," said Durance, calmly; "I admire the chap, though I don't like him much—he's all right in his place. But his place is his own study—not ours. If he tries to butt in here, I'm goin' to resist."

"Same here," said Tracy. And he looked at Bob Rake.

"If the whole study stands together, they can do nothin'," said Durance; "but we won't persuade Rake into it. He's a new chap, and we don't want to set him backin' up against his form-captain. If there's a fight, Rake can remain neutral, and leave it to us."

Durance could not have worded it more cleverly.

"I'm not jolly likely to do that!" exclaimed Bob, warmly; "if there's going to be a scrap for this study, you can bet your Sunday socks that I shall have a fist in it."

"Well, the more the merrier," said Durance, amiably; "a chap is expected to back up his own study—but we don't want to drag you into a row—"

"Not at all!" said Tracy with another unseen wink.

"You can count me in," said Bob, at once; "dash it all—if there's an old custom about the study, we'll start a new custom—and a new custom is as good as an old custom any day."

"Ha! ha! ha!" roared the nuts.

Even Tracy beamed on the sturdy Cornstalk. There was no doubt that the recruit had been secured—and that he was an extremely valuable recruit. Tea in the top study that Sunday afternoon was a great success.

THE EIGHTH CHAPTER.

Trouble Ahead.

ALGERNON AUBREY ST. LEGER wore a thoughtful look in class on Monday morning.

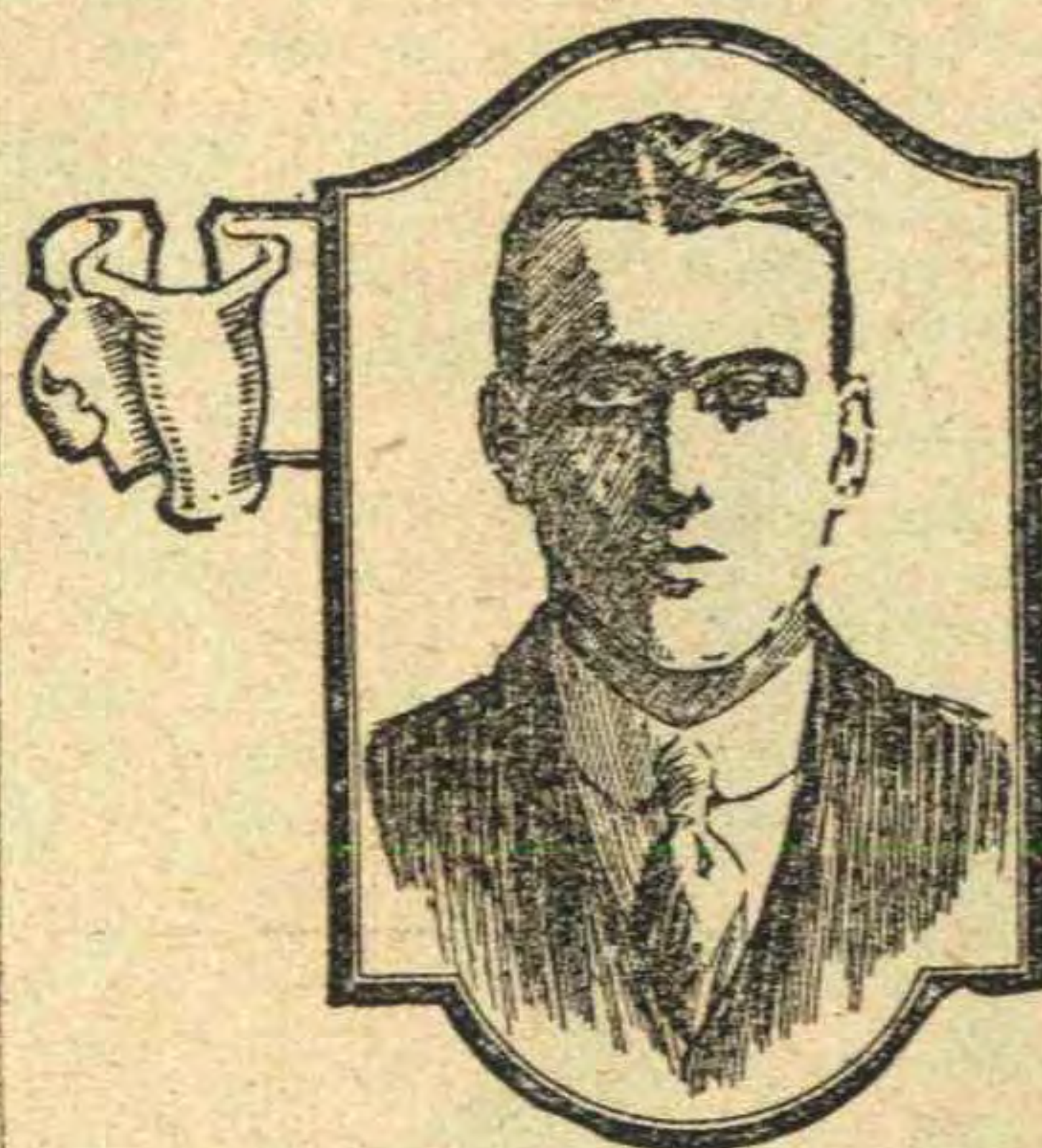
If Mr. Lathley noticed it, and supposed that St. Leger was giving unusual thought to his lessons, Mr. Lathley was mistaken. Algy was thinking of a matter much more important than lessons.

That day Lovell and Co. were to take possession of "captain's study." And in the top study there was room for a sofa. Algy, being fortunately possessed of great quantities of that necessary article, cash, was going to "stand" the sofa. And Algy was thinking the matter out. Whether to get the new sofa from the little shop in Wicke—or to journey over to Lynne—or to order it from London—constituted a problem. There was another alternative—to write home to Rayfield Park for the necessary article of furniture. This problem occupied St. Leger's powerful brain, almost to the exclusion of lessons, with the result that Mr. Lathley was "down" on the dandy of St. Kit's several times that morning—whereat Algy sighed, like a fellow who felt the problems of the universe weighing very heavily upon him.

Bob Rake's occupation that morning was chiefly listening and looking about him. Harry Lovell had intended to give the new junior a helping hand; but he found that Bob had made unexpected friends—in his study-mates.

Tracy had contrived that Bob's place in class was between him and Durance, with Lumley, Howard, and Verney minor close at hand. Bob was, in fact, almost surrounded by his new friends. Durance, who was, with all his slack ways, a pretty keen scholar, was able to help Bob a good deal, and the other nuts did all they could. They "tipped" him about the Form work, they showed him places in books—they made the new boy's first morning in class roll by quite easily—and un-

"SCHOOL AND SPORT," 154, Fleet Street, London, E.C. 4.



YOUR EDITOR'S DEN

Your Editor is always pleased to hear from his readers. A prompt reply is sent when a stamped addressed envelope is enclosed. Other correspondence is dealt with in these columns.

OUR NEXT NUMBER.

Next Monday's issue of SCHOOL AND SPORT will contain another splendid long complete school story, dealing with the adventures of the chums of St. Kit's. It is entitled

"THE TYRANT OF ST. KIT'S," and is a yarn full of fun and excitement. There will also be another grand long instalment of "THE CRUISE OF THE 'TARTAR'."

John Winterton's great sport and adventure story. And stor yettes, jokes and sporting paragraphs will go to make No. 7 of SCHOOL AND SPORT an issue you cannot possibly afford to miss.

IMPROVEMENTS ALL ALONG THE LINE.

Acting on the advice of thousands of my chums, I am making arrangements to introduce new features into SCHOOL AND SPORT.

A round robin which I received from one hundred and sixty-three readers in Liverpool asked me to have two serial stories in the paper. Requests for a second serial came from many more of my chums, and there does not seem to be any doubt at all that a second serial is required.

I have, therefore, had three interviews with the most popular serial story-writer in the country, and discussed the opening chapters of what will prove to be the most exciting story that has been written for many a long year.

Next week I shall probably be able to tell you more about it.

FOOTERPROBS.

Result of our No. 2 Competition.

The following competitors are to be congratulated, as they have each been successful in winning a splendid full-size match football. These prizes were offered in No. 2 of SCHOOL AND SPORT:—

Albert E. Martin, 52, Kingwood-road, Fulham; Hugh Doyle, 7, Welldale-terrace, Maxwelltown, Dumfries; Stephen Webster, 5, Suffolk-street, Stockton-on-Tees, Durham; George Screen, 12, Milner-street, Newport, Mon.; H. Marriott, Noah's Ark, Seal, Sevenoaks; Sidney Hodkin, 9, Church-lane, Dinnington, near Rotherham.

The correct figures were: 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 10, 11, 9.

HAVE YOU NOTICED IT? At the foot of this page I have repeated an announcement which

appeared in last week's issue of SCHOOL AND SPORT.

I hope that many of my chums will take advantage of the columns I am throwing open to them. So roll up with your small advts.!

WHAT ABOUT THAT FELLOW?

You know that fellow, don't you?

In fact, there is more than one fellow. There is a whole crowd of them.

"What fellow?" do you say. Why, the fellow who doesn't read SCHOOL AND SPORT. Perhaps he has never heard of it. If you know of anyone who does not read our jolly new weekly, show him this copy, and ask him to place a regular order with his newsagent.

SCHOOL AND SPORT is booming ahead in splendid style; but I cannot make it a brilliant success without the help of my reader-friends, so please do your best to gain a new reader whenever you get an opportunity.

Your sincere friend,

Your Editor.

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TO EXCHANGE FOR
SOMETHING ELSE?

doubtedly their kind attentions made things very much more pleasant for the youth from "down under."

Naturally enough, Bob was pleased. His impression was that Tracy and Co. were trying to make up for their savage reception of him in the study on Saturday night, and that unhappy "scrap" was already fading from Bob's cheery mind.

After morning lessons, Harry Lovell had no opportunity of speaking to Bob, if he wanted to; the nuts surrounded him in the corridor, and walked him off.

Never, since Tracy and Co. had honoured St. Kit's with their distinguished presence, had they made so much of a new boy.

Until dinner time, they walked round with Bob, showing him the sights of St. Kit's, and explaining things to him, and "drawing" him on the subject of his home in far-off Australia.

Durance was really interested in Bob's talk about the great Island Continent; Durance was at bottom a really intelligent fellow, and intellectually he had little in common with his comrades. But Tracy and Howard had hard work to conceal their yawns—and Lumley strolled away. Tracy was left with a vague impression that kangaroos were grown on plantations in Queensland, and that hunting gum-trees was an Australian sport.

Only when Bob gave a description of the race ground at Melbourne did Tracy manage to concentrate his mind sufficiently to follow his talk.

At dinner, Bob's place was among his nutty pals; and after dinner they took him for a ramble towards Lyncroft till afternoon lessons.

The object was to keep him out of communication with No. 5 Study—and in that they succeeded perfectly.

There was, in fact, no special overture from the other side.

Harry Lovell rather liked the new boy, on his looks; but he was not the kind of fellow to go out of his way to make friends. He would have taken a good deal of trouble for a new boy left "on his own," but as Bob seemed to have plenty of friends now, Harry did not think about him further. Algernon Aubrey St. Leger was constitutionally indifferent to such considerations. He was amiable and polite to everybody—but Harry Lovell was the only fellow at St. Kit's whom he honoured with his friendship. Bunny Bootles, certainly, was prepared to bestow effusive friendship on the new fellow—for the sake of selling him some of his precious "articles."

But Bob had no desire whatever for closer acquaintance with the fat and fatuous Bunny.

Bob came into the school-house after his ramble feeling very cheery and pleased, and on the best terms with his new friends.

That Tracy and Co. found his friendship rather trying he did not suspect for one moment.

But they did! Durance had warned them to keep cigarettes out of sight, and to keep off the subject of races and betting and cards while they were with the new fellow. He was quite keen enough to see that that sort of thing would not "do" with this sturdy and healthy youth.

But deprived of their favourite topics, Tracy and Co. were reduced to a dismal despondency, and they found Bob's company heavy.

How long they could stand him was a problem Tracy and Co. found it difficult to answer; but they nobly determined to stand him, somehow, until the question of the top study's ownership was finally settled.

So far, the top study had shown no sign of moving.

Harry Lovell had told Tracy he expected to take possession that evening; and Tracy had shrugged his shoulders.

That was all, so far.

But when the party came in from their ramble, they found a paper pinned on the door of the top study. It was evidently the composition of Bunny Bootles—the spelling alone proved that. It ran:

NOTIS!

You cads have got to cleer. Annybody fownd in this study after six o'clock will be chucked out on his nek.

Sined,

Cuthbert A. Bootles.

The orthography left much to be desired, but Cuthbert Archibald Bootles had made his meaning clear.

"Message from the enemy!" grinned Durance.

"Cheek!" said Bob, frowning.

"We'll send a message back."

Durance pencilled across the paper, in large letters:

Any cheeky cad wedging into the top study without permission will be kicked out.

Sined,

R. Durance.

"You fellows sign after me," said Durance.

"You bet!" said Tracy.

And he signed "Rex Tracy" to the paper, and handed it, with the pencil, to the new junior.

"R. Rake" was written as a third signature at once.

Then Durance pinned the paper on the door of No. 5 Study. It was left there to be discovered by the captain of the Fourth at his leisure.

It was not till after lessons that Harry Lovell came up to his study. Then he found the defiance of the nuts on his door.

He knitted his brows as he looked at it.

Algernon Aubrey St. Leger carefully screwed his celebrated eyeglass into his eye, and scanned the paper.

"By jove! Rake's backin' them up!" said Algy.

"They will have to turn out!" said Harry, quietly.

"Yaas, no doubt about that. It's our study. Why, when Compton became captain, a term or two ago, he collared the study fast enough. Durance and Tracy backed him up, and turned out the chaps there."

and crumpled. Nobody would have taken Algy at the present moment for the best-dressed and most fastidious fellow at St. Kit's.

"Ready for the giddy fray," announced Algy. "Is it half-past?"

"Just on," said Harry.

Bunny Bootles rolled rather hastily out of the arm-chair.

"I've got to see a chap about—about selling him an article," he said, hurriedly. "I'll be back by the time you start."

"Hold on," exclaimed Algy.

"I'm in rather a hurry—"

"Hold on, I tell you. We can't do without you, Bunny," said the dandy of St. Kit's, seriously. "We want you in the forefront of the battle, you know, like giddy old Uriah. A fightin' man like you is indispensable. You're going to be the first in the breach."

"Oh, I say—"

"We'll put Bunny in the lead, and march in behind him," said Algy; "with his tremendous prowess, he will make it practically a walk-over for us."

"Of—of course," said Bunny; "but—but I've got to see Catesby—"

"Catesby can wait."

"He's very anxious to hear my musical box," urged Bunny; "I—I promised to play it to him. He's going to give me seven and six if he likes the tune—the the Pilgrims Chorus from Tannhauser. I'll be back in a jiffy."

Algernon Aubrey barred the doorway.

"After the fray!" he said; "Catesby can wait. We can't spare you, Bunny."

"But I'll be back—"

"Can't chance it," said Algy, shaking his head gravely.

"Look here, Algy, now I come to think of it, Mr. Lathley asked me to tea. I—I can't fail to turn up when a form-master asks me to tea, can I?"

"On an occasion like this, Bunny, I think you can."

"Lemme gerout, you rotter—"

"Not till after the terrific battle. We depend on you to knock out at least three of the enemy."

"I—I'll do it, of course," stammered Bunny; "but—but—I say, I've got to see the Head—"

"Really?"

"Yes, really—I can't keep the Head waiting—"

"What a lot of engagements Bunny has, just before the battle," remarked Algy; "if he goes to keep them, I've a presentiment that somethin' will turn up to keep him from comin' back in time for the fray. We're goin' to make sure of you while we've got you, Bunny."

"Oh, I—I say—"

"They may have locked the door," said St. Leger; "in that case, we shall want you to use as a batterin' ram, Bunny."

"Here we are!" exclaimed Stubbs, appearing in the doorway, with Wheatford, Scott, Myers, and Jones minor in the rear; "ready, you chaps?"

"All ready but Bunny," said St. Leger; "Bunny's got an important engagement with the Head, and another important engagement with Mr. Lathley, and another with Catesby—all at once."

"Ha! ha! ha!"

"Oh, I say!"

"Fat funk!" said Stubbs; "kick him out, and let's get on."

"Bunny's goin' to lead," said Algy; "come on, Bunny."

"I—I—"

"This way, my fat old bean."

Algernon Aubrey led the fat junior into the passage. There, Bunny jerked himself away, and fled—not towards the top study.

"That isn't the way, Bunny!" yelled Algy.

"Got to see the Head—coming back!" gasped Bunny, and he disappeared down the staircase.

"Ha! ha! ha!"

Harry Lovell and Co. moved on towards the top study. But doubtless Bunny's engagement with the Head proved a prolonged one—for he did not come back, and the campaign was waged without Bunny's valuable assistance.

THE TENTH CHAPTER.

The Fight for the Study.

HARRY LOVELL threw open the door of the top study.

He stepped in, with St. Leger at his side. Stubbs and Co. brought up the rear.

Rex Tracy gave the newcomers

a bitter look. He was not quite prepared for Harry's following. Only half the form had voted for Harry at the election. But his supporters were evidently prepared to stand by him, not only in voting, but in dealing with recalcitrant members of the form. And Tracy's supporters were not quite so keen on offering support. A number of the fellows who had voted for Rex Tracy in the election had prudently decided to keep clear of the struggle for the possession of the captain's study.

In the first place, Tracy was palpably in the wrong; the custom of "captain's study" was old and well-established, and well-known; and in Compton's time, Tracy himself had helped the form-captain to enforce the custom. Bob Rake, in fact, was the only fellow who did not realise that Tracy and Co. were hopelessly in the wrong—owing to his inexperience of St. Kit's ways and manners and customs.

Lumley and Melton, Verney minor and Howard, were all the supporters Tracy and Durance had been able to muster. Lane and Leigh had found an engagement elsewhere—O'Donoghue pleaded tea with a prefect, and Catesby

and we want it—on the principle of the thing."

"Go and eat coke!" snarled Tracy.

"You're not getting out?"

"No!" said Tracy, desperately.

"Then you'll be put."

Lovell made a step onward—his followers pressed on behind. Tracy's lips were hard set. Possibly, at that moment, he would have retreated—but matters had reached a point at which retreat was scarcely possible.

Lovell was a peaceable fellow enough; but if he had given up his claim to "captain's study," at Tracy's order, certainly he would never have been seriously regarded as captain of the form. And Tracy, if he had yielded now, would have been chipped to death over the brave front he had kept up till—the moment of danger.

All the nuts realised that they were "in for it" now, and they screwed up their courage to the sticking-point.

"Play up, you fellows," said Durance.

"Back up, Rake!"

Bob Rake seemed a little dubious. But it was too late for him to consider the rights and the wrongs of the matter.

Algy frowned for a moment, and then he laughed.

"All serene! I daresay he's too hefty for me. You tackle Achilles, dear boy, while I settle with Patroclus."

"Now, for the last time," said Harry, grimly; "are you fellows going out on your feet or your necks?"

"Enough chin-wag!" retorted Bob Rake; "we're not going out at all."

"That does it! Follow on!" shouted the captain of the Fourth.

"Hurrah!" roared Stubbs and Co.

And there was a rush.

Harry Lovell and Bob Rake singled one another out, naturally. Each was conscious of being the best fighting-man on his side—obviously so. Algy and Durance closed in strife.

Stubbs and Co. had easier tasks. Stubbs started on Tracy, and they fought furiously.

Myers and Wheatford and Jones minor were not called upon to show much prowess. For Verney minor, Melton, and Howard defended themselves very feebly.

Scott had rather a harder task with Lumley, but he had the upper hand from the beginning.

But it bootied not, as a poet would say.

Stubbs was not nearly so elegant or fastidious as Rex Tracy, but he was a much sturdier fellow, and in much better condition.

He cornered Tracy by the fireplace, and hammered him till Tracy, at last, dropped his hands, breathless and spent.

Then Stubbs picked him up with a grasp round his waist, and fairly carried him to the door of the study, and deposited him in the passage, amid yells of laughter from the onlookers.

Tracy sat there and blinked.

Stubbs remained on guard in the doorway, quite ready for Tracy if he should venture back; but Tracy was too spent to make a further attack. He sat and gasped for several minutes, and then picked himself up and leaned on the wall, still gasping.

He was joined at length by Lumley.

Scott and Lumley came reeling out of the study together, in desperate combat, and it was Lumley who went sprawling to the floor. The Scottish junior stood over him breathlessly.

"Any more?" he panted.

"Ow!" gasped Lumley. "No! Ow, ow!"

Scott turned back and joined Stubbs in the doorway.

"Looks like our win," grinned Stubbs. "I say, St. Leger, do you want a hand with Durance?"

"Thanks, no, dear boy."

Durance looked like keeping Algernon Aubrey busy; but as he glanced round the study, and saw that only Bob Rake remained, Durance dropped his hands.

"Call it off, old top," he said.

"Certainly, dear boy," said St. Leger. "It is rather exhaustin' work, punchin' your silly head! But you've got to go."

Durance laughed breathlessly.

"Leave it to the giddy paladins," he said. "I'll go if Rake goes—you go if Lovell goes."

Algy nodded.

"That's not a bad idea," he assented. "Saves trouble, begad! But anyhow we're not givin' up the study."

"Take a rest, old top, and give your chin a rest," said Durance.

The two juniors were glad to sit down.

Only Harry Lovell and Rake were still engaged in combat, now. But that looked like a battle of the giants.

Both of them looked much the worse for wear; but neither showed the slightest inclination to yield.

"By gad!" murmured Durance, "that Cornstalk can scrap."

"So can Lovell, dear boy."

"Yes—it's worth watchin'. Two to one on the Cornstalk, in quids, Algy."

St. Leger shook his head regretfully.

"Nothin' doin', dear boy. Under the benign influence of my pal Lovell, I've given up such naughty things."

"Fathead!" said Durance.

"Shall we begin again?" asked Algy, politely.

"What's the good, ass? Let's watch."

"Oh, I don't mind," yawned St. Leger.

"There'll be a prefect or a form-master along soon," remarked Stubbs. "Go it, you fellows!"

Lovell and Rake were going it, there was no mistake about that. Outside the study, Tracy and Lumley fumed with rage. But they did not venture to attempt to return. Melton and Howard and Verney minor had quite disappeared from view. Bob Rake, the new recruit, was the last of the champions of the top study—and the most redoubtable. Had Lovell's followers lent him their aid, Bob would indubitably have been ejected from the study with ignominy. But Harry did not want help.

How the fight would have ended, no one present knew—but a warning cry came from the passage.

"Cave!"

"Mr. Lathley!"

There was a scattering of the juniors. The master of the Fourth came rustling into the top study. Harry Lovell and Bob stopped fighting at once, and stood breathless and considerably bruised and battered—and Mr. Lathley stared at them in something like horror.

"Upon my word!" exclaimed the form-master.

"Now look out for the giddy fireworks!" murmured Algy to Durance.

"Why the dooce couldn't Oliphant come instead of



Melton was the first "out." He went whirling out of the top study, tripped over the step, and plunged headlong into the crowd in the passage, who greeted him with loud laughter. (See this page.)

shrugged his shoulders and merely laughed, when he was requested to join up. It would have been easy for Harry Lovell to raise odds against the nuts; but he had disdained to do that. It was a match of seven a side, as Algy expressed it—but there was no doubt that Harry's seven were tougher than the opposing septette.

With the exception of Bob Rake, and perhaps Durance, there was not much good fighting material in the top study.

"Here we are!" announced Stubbs, over Harry's shoulder.

Tracy scowled at him.

"What do you want?" he asked; "you've no bizney here, Stubbs."

"As much as your pals," answered Stubbs; "count them out and you can count us out, if you like. We've only come to make it a fair game."

"Oh, let's mop 'em up while we're here," said Scott.

"May as well!" remarked Myers, with a nod.

"Burnin' for the fray, you see, dear boys," said Algernon Aubrey, amiably; "we're out for scalps."

"Yes, rather."

"I'd rather take possession peaceably, you fellows," said Harry Lovell, looking at Tracy and Co.; "but you can't expect us to back down: This is our study,

The study was invaded; and his study-mates called on him to back up. There was only one answer that Bob could make.

He strode forward to meet the invaders. And his undaunted front encouraged Tracy and Co.

"Get out!" rapped out Bob.

"Can't be done, dear old bean," said Algy; "may I gently suggest your gettin' out yourself?"

"Outside!" roared Verney minor; "kick the cads out."

"Rake, my dear chap—" began Lovell.

"Outside!" shouted Tracy.

"Dash it all," said Algy; "night before last we came in here to rescue you from these bounders, Rake! I wouldn't remind you of it, only to point out that you're backin' the wrong horse, dear boy."

"I'm standing by my study!" said Bob, briefly.

"Then I'm comin' for your wool!" said Algernon Aubrey, genially.

Bob grinned.

"Come on, then!" he said.

But Harry Lovell pushed Algy gently aside.

"You attend to Durance," he said.

"My dear old bean—"

"Rake's my man," said Harry.

In the Fourth-form passage, outside, the rest of the form were crowded—looking on breathlessly.

Melton was the first "out."

He went whirling out of the top study, tripped over the step, and plunged headlong into the crowd in the passage, who greeted him with loud laughter.

Verney minor came next, like a stone from a catapult.

Howard was the third; he came staggering out, and a heavy boot planted behind him accelerated his departure with great suddenness.

The three nuts picked themselves up in the passage, amid loud laughter—and did not return to the top study.

Evidently they had had enough. They limped away, nursing their injuries, and gasping for breath, deserting their great chief in his hour of need.

In the top study, three of the invaders stood idle; fair play restraining them from joining in the combat after each had disposed of his adversary. Myers and Wheatford and Jones minor sat on the study table, and cheered on their comrades.

Tracy was fighting hard, putting up a fight that rather excited the surprise of the Fourth. But for very shame's sake Tracy could not give in without doing his utmost.

the Lath? Can't argue the point with a merry form-master."

"Lovell! Rake!"

"Yes, sir!" gasped the two heroes.

"How dare you fight in this manner—without gloves, too? I am shocked—I am disgusted. What are you fighting about?"

No answer.

"Lovell, you have just been elected captain of the Fourth," exclaimed Mr. Lathley, severely. "Is this how you take up the position?"

Harry bit his lip, but he did not answer.

"I am surprised at you, Lovell!" said the Fourth-form master. "Very much surprised, and shocked! What quarrel can you possibly have with Rake—a new boy in the school? This is scandalous!"

The captain of the Fourth crimsoned.

"I shall report this to the Head, Lovell!"

"Very well, sir!" said Harry, quietly.

"I think it is probable that Dr. Cheyne will deprive you of your position as captain of the Fourth, in view of this, as it appears to me an unjustifiable attack on a new junior."

"Oh, gad!" murmured Algy.

Tracy, in the passage, looked at Lumley, and his eyes gleamed.

But Bob Rake spoke out at once. "Lovell wasn't to blame, sir."

"Indeed!"

"We're fighting for the study, sir," said Bob, loyally. "Lovell thinks he ought to have it, and we think we ought to keep it—and so—"

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Lathley. "So that is the case, Lovell?"

"Yes, sir."

"You should have told me so."

No answer.

"That alters the matter very much," said the form-master. "Am I to understand, Rake, that you and the others refused to give up the study?"

"Just that, sir," said Bob, dabbling his nose.

"As a new boy, you are excusable, Rake—doubtless you do not know our customs yet. But you, Durance—you were perfectly well aware that this is the form-captain's study."

Durance did not speak.

"This study will be given up to the captain of the Fourth immediately," said Mr. Lathley. "You should not have taken the matter into your own hands in this way, Lovell. But undoubtedly the rule must be observed. Durance—Tracy—Rake—you hear my command? This study is to be given up immediately to the proper owners. It should have been given up on Saturday. I will send up the page to remove your belongings. And if any further fighting takes place, I will report every participator in it to the Head for a flogging."

And with that Mr. Lathley swept away.

THE ELEVENTH CHAPTER.

In Possession.

"OUR win!" yawned Algernon Aubrey St. Leger. Durance shrugged his shoulders.

"Can't back up against a form-master," he said. "You shouldn't have had the study otherwise. I'm not so sure you'll have it, yet."

"I rather think so, dear boy."

Harry Lovell and Bob Rake were eyeing one another grimly. Both were excited, and both had received hard knocks. Both were quite prepared to go on with the combat, but for the form-master's command.

"I suppose we've got to chuck it!" said Bob.

"I suppose so," said Harry.

"No reason why we shouldn't finish somewhere else."

"No reason at all."

"I'll see you later, then," said Bob, grimly.

"You'll find me ready."

Bob Rake nodded, and left the study. Dick Durance followed him out, with a shrug of the shoulders.

Algernon Aubrey looked at his chum, with a grin.

"Our win!" he said.

"Looks like it," said Harry, cheerfully. "I wish Lathley hadn't chipped in, though. We could have settled the matter for ourselves."

"Yaas. These form-masters never will mind their own business!" said Algernon Aubrey. "I say, Rake's a decent sort."

"I daresay."

"You'd have been landed in trouble if he hadn't spoken up as he did."

"Yes, he's not a bad sort," said Harry. "I suppose it's not fair to judge him by the company he keeps, as he's new here."

"Well, we keep company with Bunny Bootles, and I shouldn't like to be judged by Bunny!" Harry Lovell laughed.

"Oh, I say!" said a fat voice at the door.

"Hallo, here's the one and only Bunny!" exclaimed St. Leger.

"Just a few minutes too late for the terrific combat. Hard cheese, Bunny!"

"The—The Head kept me talking," stammered Bunny.

"How odd! when the Head's out this afternoon!" said St. Leger, thoughtfully.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Is—is he? I—I mean, Oliphant kept me talking—couldn't bolt out of a Sixth-form study, could I, even to back you up, old chap?"

"If Ananias hadn't died already, Bunny, he would die of grief at being beaten at his own game so easily."

"Oh, I say—"

"Lovell, old bean, come and get a wash. You look as if you want one—and I know I do! Lucky I thought of changin' my clobber, wasn't it?"

And Algernon Aubrey quitted the disputed study with his chum. Bunny Bootles looked round him with great satisfaction.

Having been too late for the scrap, Bunny was at least in time to share the fruits of victory. He had a strong suspicion that Algy and the captain of the Fourth would have been pleased to leave him behind in No. 5 when they changed studies. But Bunny had no intention of being left. When Tuckie, the page, came up for the "moving job," Bunny gave him lofty directions. After the belongings of Tracy and Co. had been taken out of the top study, Algy's expensive carpet was laid there, and then Bunny Bootles' possessions were transferred. Bunny saw to that first. When Lovell and Algy returned from attending to their personal damages, he intended them to find him installed in the study as an inmate.

They came back, and found Bunny ensconced in Algy's luxurious arm-chair, directing Tuckie where to place his books.

Algy turned his eyeglass on Bunny.

"What are you doin' here?" he asked.

"Eh? My study!" said Bunny.

"But we're leavin' you in No. 5."

"You're jolly well not."

"Sort of keepsake for Tracy and Co."

"Rats!" said Bunny.

"Form-captain chooses his own study-mates," said St. Leger, inexorably. "By the way, Lovell, I haven't asked you whether you'd like me to come."

Harry laughed.

"Ass!" was his polite reply.

"I take that as an answer in the affirmative," said Algy, urbanely.

"But Bunny is what some giddy novelist calls the 'Thing-too-Much.' Bunny must blow out! Bunny, old bean, travel! Catchy on?"

Cuthbert Archibald Bootles sat tight.

"You dry up!" he said. "Depends on the form-captain. And dear old Lovell wants me here, don't you, old fellow?"

"Not much."

"After the way I backed you up at the election, and practically got you elected! Have you ever heard of such a thing as gratitude, Lovell?"

"Rats!"

"Oh, I say!"

"There's the door, my fat old bean."

"I'll tell you what, you fellows," said Bunny. "I'll let you have my musical box for three and six, if you'll stop arguing."

"Go and eat coke!"

"It's a splendid article, and plays the Grand March from Tannhauser."

"It's a jolly remarkable musical box, and no mistake," grinned Algy. "Lovell, do you think you can stand Bunny in the study, if I can?"

"Yes," said Harry, laughing. "I'll leave it to you."

"Then we'll let him stay on one condition—that he never tries to sell us any articles," said Algy.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Done!" said Bunny, at once. "But if at any time you're wanting a cheap penknife—"

"Chuck it!"

"Or a silver-plated fountain-pen—"

"Dry up!" roared Algy.

"Or a musical box—"

"Another word, and out you go!"

Bunny did not utter the other word.

The "moving job" was over at last, and Tuckie was satisfactorily tipped and dismissed.

Harry Lovell and Co. settled down at once in their new quarters.

They started prep. in the top study—though Harry found prep. rather painful that evening. His scrap with Bob Rake had told on him. His nose was swollen, and one of his eyes persisted in winking. And he had a good many aches and pains in various parts of his person.

He was glad when prep. was over.

After prep. there was a supper in the top study—a sort of housewarming, presided over by Algernon Aubrey St. Leger.

Supplies were ample; and there were many guests.

Stubbs and Co., of course, came, and Lane and Leigh looked in, and stayed—and several other fellows.

Only Tracy and his immediate pals stayed out. Tracy and Co. were nursing their injuries in No. 5 Study, and vowing vengeance.

But their wrath was quite unheeded in the Fourth; it was only too evident that the star of the nuts was on the wane.

When Bob Rake came into his new study—No. 5—for prep., he found Tracy and Co. there scowling and savage.

The Co. left to go to their own studies, and Tracy and Durance remained with the Cornstalk.

Tracy was in a savage temper, and only prudence restrained him from quarrelling with Rake. Durance was in his usual mood of cynical philosophy. Bob Rake was quite good-tempered. He was damaged quite as much as Harry Lovell, but it did not seem to affect his high spirits. And he had something to say to his study-mates, straight from the shoulder.

"You fellows have been pulling my leg," he said.

"How's that?" yawned Durance, while Tracy scowled without replying.

"About the top study," said Bob, quietly. "After what Mr. Lathley said, I've been asking some questions round about. I've asked Oliphant. It seems that it's the regular rule for the form-captain to take that study—it's called 'captain's study,' in fact."

"You knew that!" sneered Tracy.

"Well, I'm new here," said Bob, "and I took you fellows' word for it that we had a case for keeping the study. But—"

"Well, Lovell's got it now, and he's only got his rights."

"Then you're not thinkin' of pushin' the matter any further?" asked Durance.

"No!" said Bob, curtly.

Tracy broke into a sneering laugh.

"Are you afraid of Nameless, then?"

Bob's eyes glinted.

"If you mean Lovell, I'm not afraid of him, nor of anybody," he said. "And if you don't want trouble on your hands, Tracy, you'd better keep a civil tongue in your head."

"They're standin' a spread in the top study," sneered Tracy.

"You'd better go and ask to be allowed to come in. If it suits you to crawl to that nameless cad—"

"That's enough!"

"Cheese it, Rex!" murmured Durance.

But Tracy's temper was too sore and savage for him to heed his good adviser. He broke out passionately.

"Oh, let me alone, Durance! What good have you done with your dashed diplomacy? What good has that fellow been to us after all?"

"Shut up!" said Durance, as Bob looked up quickly.

"Rot! We took him up, and made much of him, and he was goin' to help us keep that nameless cad out of the top study," shouted Tracy. "And now he's licked, and we're licked, and we're turned out of the study all the same. What good has he been to us, I'd like to know? Just like you, with your clever stunts, that come to nothin' in the long run."

Bob set his lips.

"So you took me up, as you call it, simply to get me on your side in a scrap with Lovell?" he said.

Tracy curled his lip.

"What the thump do you think

we took you up for?" he sneered.

"Think you're the sort of chap we'd care to associate with?"

"I think you're a rotten cad," said Bob Rake; "and the same to you, Durance, and the rest of the crowd."

Durance reddened.

"Tracy hasn't got it quite right, so far as I'm concerned," he said, awkwardly. "But—"

Bob gave a grunt.

"I've dropped into a precious crowd," he said. "Pulling my leg, and buttering me simply to get me to help you chisel Lovell out of his rights. I'm fed up with the whole crowd of you. Do you call it playing the game with a new fellow who hasn't been here three days? I don't!"

"You're goin' to be cut in this study," said Tracy.

Bob eyed him contemptuously.

"Go and eat coke, the pair of you!" he said. "The less you have to say to me, the better I shall like it."

And Bob did not utter another word.

THE TWELFTH CHAPTER.

Diplomatic.

HARRY LOVELL and Bob Rake eyed one another rather grimly for a moment when they met in the Fourth-form dormitory that night.

But neither spoke.

Both were looking, and feeling, damaged; and both would have preferred the inconclusive fight in the top study to have gone on to an end. The two juniors, who seemed formed for friendship, seemed to have been made into enemies by the peculiar circumstances. But for intervention from outside, however, it is probable that the dispute would have died away.

But it was not allowed to die.

Several fellows in the Fourth were interested in the matter, from a scientific point of view. And others were interested from other motives. Bob Rake was evidently the only fellow who could be set up in opposition to Harry Lovell, and so he still had his value for the nuts.

Tracy certainly had put his foot in it by his outburst of temper in No. 5. Bob was not likely to listen to him again. His inexperience had been taken advantage of; but Bob was no fool, and he was not to be used twice.

When Tracy, constrained by Durance, spoke to him civilly in the form-room passage the following morning, Bob stared him in the face, and spoke briefly and to the point.

"You've fooled me once, Tracy!" he said. "Once is often enough! I don't want to have anything to do with you."

Tracy bit his lip.

For the chief of the select circle of nuts to be repulsed in this way, when he condescended to be civil, was exasperating and humiliating. Tracy's eyes gleamed, and his hasty temper got the upper hand again.

"You can go and eat coke!" he said. "You're landed on me in my study, and I've got to stand you there, it seems. As for havin' anythin' to do with you, I couldn't! If you had any decency you'd change out of a study where you're not wanted."

And Tracy stalked into the form-room, determined that, Durance or no Durance, he would not waste another civil word on the junior from down under.

Bob frowned as he went to his place.

He would have changed out of No. 5 Study gladly enough; but, naturally, he did not care to go up and down the Fourth asking for admission to another study. But on such terms with his study-mates and their friends his life in No. 5 was not likely to be a very happy one.

Durance sat beside him in class, and spoke once or twice, Bob answering with monosyllables or grunts.

After morning lessons Durance joined him in the passage.

"Come on, Dick!" called out Tracy, from a distance.

Durance did not heed.

"Comin' along for a stroll, Rake?" he asked, genially.

"No!" said Bob, bluntly.

"Still on the high horse?" yawned Durance.

Bob coloured.

"Look here, after what's happened, I'd rather not talk to any of Tracy's pals," he said, bluntly. "I'm fed up."

"You hit straight from the shoulder, and no mistake," re-

marked Durance. "But you're not goin' to live like a sort of Robinson Crusoe in the study, I suppose. Won't you let me be Man Friday?"

Bob burst into a laugh, in spite of himself.

"You've treated me badly," he said.

"I haven't, really," said Durance, with unusual seriousness. "It's true that my friends took you up to use you against Lovell—Tracy's let that out. But, really, that wasn't my game—not wholly, anyhow. The fact is, I rather like you, old nut!"

"Oh!" said Bob, dubiously. He did not quite make Durance out; and, as a matter of fact, there were a good many fellows at St. Kit's who could not make Durance out. Durance had a rather complex character; and the average Fourth-former was not disposed to worry over problems.

"Besides, I want you to back me up," said Durance.

"More rows?" asked Bob.

"No; a fight."

"With whom?"

"Lovell."

Bob stared a little.

"Excuse me," he said. "I don't want to offend you, Durance—but you'd be well advised not to pick a row with Lovell, man to man."

"You think he would lick me?"

"I know he would."

"I suppose he would have licked you yesterday if Mr. Lathley hadn't butted in, what?"

"I don't know about that! But I had my hands full with him."

"Well, I'm takin' him on," drawled Durance. "You see, the way the affair of the study was settled isn't satisfactory to us or to Lovell really. He didn't want the form-master to butt in any more than we did. He's a dashed unpleasant fellow from my point of view, but he's got plenty of pluck. I think he would be willin' to fight it out."

"I'm sure he would," said Bob.

"But I don't see—you're not thinking of raiding the study again, I suppose. Your crowd will never stand up against Lovell and his crowd."

Durance laughed.

"Quite so," he assented. "Our crowd is a bit too soft for rough and tumble like that. We scored a big defeat yesterday, and I fancy that if the merry paladins were called on for another battle there would be a whole swarm of conscientious objectors. I'm goin' to take on Lovell personally, bein' the only member of the crowd with grit enough to do it. If I lick him he will have to clear out of the study after all. See?"

"You can't lick him."

"I'm goin' to try. Will you be my second?"

Bob hesitated.

"I'm not askin' you to do any more fightin'," said Durance, satirically. "You'll only have to look on, an' throw up the sponge for me when I'm licked, as you seem to expect will happen."

"That's all rot," said Bob, flushing red; "if anybody's going to tackle Lovell—"

He paused. "My fight with him wasn't finished—"

"I remember you said you'd see him later," assented Durance.

"But you seem to have thought better of it."

"It's not a case of funk, if that's what you mean—"

"Oh, I know it isn't! But you don't want to keep it up for reasons of your own," said Durance, blandly. "Well, I admit you're the best fighting man in our crowd. If you back out, it comes to me—and I'm goin' to do my best."

"I'm not backing out," growled Bob.

"Well, don't let's argue. You'll be my second, I suppose, and watch me gettin' a record lickin', what?"

Bob looked as he felt, extremely uncomfortable.

He had left off the fight with Lovell at his form master's order, with every intention of finishing it at a more convenient time. If he did not do so he realised that it would look a good deal like "cold feet." That Durance could stand up to the Captain of the Fourth he did not believe for a moment. And something irked him very much in the idea of Durance taking his place, as it were, in the post of danger.

"I'll tell you what," suggested Durance, "let's toss up for it. Loser takes on Lovell and puts up a fight for the study."

Bob laughed uncomfortably.

"But Lovell has a right to the study," he said.

"If he chooses to let it be settled

by ordeal of battle, it's his look-out.

"Yes; that's so."

Durance took a shilling from his pocket.

"Heads you fight Lovell, tails I fight him," he said. "That's a sportin' offer!"

"You couldn't do it," said Bob.

"You could?"

"I hope so."

"Then I'm takin' all the risk," said Durance. "Is it a go?"

"If you like," said Bob, at last.

"Good; you're a sportsman."

Durance tossed the shilling into the air and let it fall on the floor. The two juniors followed it, and bent to look.

"Head!" said Durance.

Bob grunted.

"You're the giddy champion," said Durance, with a smile. "I'll be your second. Let's go and tell him."

"Oh, all right," said Bob.

And Durance picked up his double-headed shilling and slipped it into his pocket.

THE THIRTEENTH CHAPTER.

Man to Man.

HARRY LOVELL was going down to Little Side, with a football under his arm, with several of the Fourth, when Durance and Bob Rake came up.

"Got a minute to spare, Lovell?" asked Durance.

"Yes, if you like," said Harry.

"About the study—"

Harry held up his hand.

"That's done with!" he said.

"Not quite," said Durance.

"Mr. Lathley is no end of a big gun, but not quite a giddy Czar. We're not takin' his rulin' in the matter. If you want to keep the top study, you've got to prove that you're the best man."

Harry's lip curled.

"You're welcome to get the study away, if you can," he answered.

"After the show your crowd put up yesterday, I fancy you'll find it a job rather above our weight."

"Oh, we're not goin' to rush the study," said Durance. "Too many meddlin' prefects and masters about for that. We're goin' to put up a man to fight you for it. You'll accept if you're not a funk."

Stubbs of the Fourth burst into a chuckle.

"Have you got a man in your crowd?" he asked. "You were all kicked out of top study pretty easily yesterday."

"Do you accept, Lovell?" asked Durance, without heeding Stubbs, though his eyes gleamed.

"Yes," said Harry, at once.

"I'll meet any man you choose to put up."

"Here's our man, then," and Durance indicated Bob Rake.

Harry looked at the Cornstalk.

"We didn't finish yesterday," he said. "Do you want to go on?"

Bob nodded.

"Very well. Any time and place you like," said the Captain of the Fourth, coolly. "If you can lick me, you can turn me out of my study. I'm willing to take the chance."

"Done!" said Bob.

"Behind the chapel, at six," said Durance.

"That will suit me."

"Settled, then."

Harry Lovell and his companions went on to the football ground. Durance walked away with Bob Rake.

Before dinner time all the Fourth Form at St. Kit's knew that the fight was arranged between the new junior and the Captain of the Fourth.

The news created considerable excitement.

Every fellow in the Fourth determined to be present; even Tinker Smith and Lickie, the bug hunter, intended to see that "mill."

As the news spread it reached the Third and the Shell. And a crowd of fags of the Third and Babbie and Co. of the Shell determined to be on the scene. Harry Lovell was known as a redoubtable fighting man, and the new fellow looked very "hefty." It was going to be worth watching. Babbie told his friends in the Shell.

Algernon Aubrey St. Leger, of course, was the form captain's second. Algy was not wholly pleased at the prospect, though he had no doubt of his chum's ability to pull off a victory.

"This has been wangled, old bean," Algy remarked sagely to his chum. "Tracy and Co. are pullin' that new chap's leg, you know."

"I shouldn't wonder," said Harry.

"They're just making use of him

—a giddy catspaw to pull their chestnuts out of the fire," said the dandy of St. Kit's. "Anyhow, you'll lick him."

"I hope so."

"You'll have to go all out, though," said Algernon Aubrey.

"He's the toughest proposition in the Fourth."

"I'll go all out, then," said Harry, with a smile.

Harry Lovell gave the matter little thought during the afternoon lessons. But the rest of the Fourth fairly cimmered with excitement.

At tea in the top study Bunny Bootles showed much solicitude for his study-leader.

"You'll very likely get licked, Harry, old chap," he said, comfortingly.

"If you do I'll take Rake on, and give him a jolly good hiding. I wish there was time for me to give you some tips in boxing. But I'll tell you what I will do. I've got a bottle of splendid embrocation. I was going to sell it for five shillings, but I'll let you have it for three. I got it among some articles, you know, to sell. You'll need it after Rake has done with you. Hand me three bob—"

"I'll hand you a thick ear if you like," said Harry, laughing.

"Dash it all," said Bunny.

"We're pals. You shall have it for half a crown."

"Shut up, Bunny!" roared Algernon Aubrey.

"Make it eighteenpence, Lovell—"

"Fat head!"

"If you're going to grind me down to a bob, Lovell, I think it's rather mean," said Bunny. "I—yaroooooh."

Bunny ceased from troubling, as Algernon Aubrey took him by the collar and bumped him into the arm-chair.

At a few minutes before six Harry Lovell and Algernon Aubrey St. Leger left the school-house, and strolled away towards the rendezvous. Bunny Bootles rolled after them.

Members of the Third, the Fourth, and the Shell were converging in the same direction, in twos and threes and fours.

Behind the chapel was a quiet spot, shaded by old oaks, out of

view of any of the school buildings, and unlikely to be visited by masters or prefects. For which reasons it was often chosen as the scene of combats that were too serious to be settled in the gym.

Quite a crowd had gathered there before the principals arrived.

A row of Third-form fags, headed by Judson minimus, adorned the old rails of the chapel green. Fourth-formers and Shell fellows stood around in groups.

There was a buzz as Lovell appeared.

"Here he is!" sang out Stubbs.

"Yaas, hear we are, dear boys," said Algernon Aubrey. "Did you bring the gloves, Stubbs?"

"You bet," said Stubbs, "and a sponge; and a lacin."

"Good man."

"Here come the merry nuts!" said Wheatford.

Tracy and Co. arrived in a body, with Bob Rake. The nuts seemed to be in a happy humour.

Bob Rake looked cheerful enough but in a rather thoughtful mood.

He was not wholly satisfied with the position he found himself in, as the champion of a set of fellows he liked very little, and respected not at all.

But he was quite determined to go through with the affair and win a victory if he could now that he was booked for it.

The two champions removed their jackets and caps and neckties and collars. Then the gloves were donned.

Babbie of the Shell volunteered to act as referee, as a disinterested party. Babbie's offer was accepted, and he took out his watch.

"Now, then," said Babbie, in a businesslike way. "Ready? Seconds out of the ring."

Algernon Aubrey and Durance retired.

Lovell and Rake were left facing one another.

"Shake hands," said Babbie.

"Time!"

"Go it, ye cripples!" murmured Algernon Aubrey.

Babbie of the Shell looked on, watch in hand. Fifty fellows at least stood in a crowded ring, gazing on breathlessly.

The first round was exciting enough.

It showed up both the combatants as splendid boxers, and as Babbie had sapiently predicted, it was worth watching.

Both the combatants were very wary at first, taking one another's measure.

Bob Rake pressed a heavy attack towards the end of the round, and Harry Lovell retreated before it. Then came the call of time.

Durance gave Tracy a smile and a nod.

"What do you think?" he murmured.

"I fancy he'll win," said Tracy, with great satisfaction.

"Looks like it, I think, so far."

"Time!" rapped out Babbie.

And the rivals of the Fourth stepped up briskly for the second round.

THE FOURTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Great Fight.

ALGERNON AUBREY ST. LEGER looked a trifle anxious as the second round proceeded.

Bob Rake was rather bigger and heavier than his opponent, and he seemed to be carrying things before him.

The captain of the Fourth gave ground a good deal, and several times only a quick side-step saved him from being cornered.

The nuts looked more and more cheerful. They did not like Rake personally—but all their hopes were with him.

"Good man!" sang out Lumley.

"Go it, Rake."

"Let him have it!" chirruped Howard.

"Back up, Lovell!" howled Stubbs.

Algernon Aubrey was silent; but he looked on with keen and anxious eyes.

"Time!"

Harry Lovell came back to his corner, and Algy made a knee for him.

The dandy of the Fourth summoned up a cheery smile; but Harry could read his thoughts easily enough.

"I think it's all right, old

chap," he said. "But he's a good man—a jolly good man."

"Yaas, he looks it," said Algy.

"But you're goin' to beat him."

"I'm going to try!" said Harry, quietly.

"Think of the top study, you know," urged Algy. "I've ordered the sofa."

Harry Lovell laughed.

"If only for that, I'll put all my beef into it," he assured his chum. "It's going to be a stiff proposition, but we've hardly begun yet."

"Time!" sang out Babbie.

Harry Lovell came up promptly, but not more promptly than Bob Rake. The third round was hard and fast.

Bob Rake seemed to have the advantage, and there was a buzz of excitement as he came through Harry's guard, and landed a straight right full on his chin.

Lovell staggered back, and Bob followed it up with his left, and then with his right again, and Harry came down on the turf with a crash.

"Man down!" roared Lumley.

"Hurray."

"Two to one on Rake, in quids!" said Tracy, loudly.

Babbie began to count.

But Harry was on his feet quickly enough, and he stalled off the Australian's attack pretty successfully, till the call of time gave him relief.

In the fourth round, Bob pressed the fighting hard, and again the captain of the form was driven round the ring.

"All over bar shoutin'!" said Tracy.

Durance nodded; but he looked dubious. And his doubts were soon justified. The retreat suddenly stopped as Bob pressed on, and the captain of the Fourth woke up to new life, as it were. He closed in on his adversary, and drove home his right with terrific effect.

Crash!

Rake caught the blow on the point of the chin, and it fairly lifted him off his feet and crashed him to the earth.

There was a deep buzz in the crowded ring. What a drive!

"My hat! What a drive!" murmured Durance. "If the chap stands up after that, he's got grit."

"Get up!" roared Tracy, savagely.

"Shut up, Tracy."

"By gad, he's goin' to be counted out!" said Lumley, blankly.

Babbie was taking the count.

He had reached seven before Bob Rake moved, and the eyes of the eager crowd were riveted on the fallen champion.

"Eight—nine—"

Algy caught his breath.

But at nine Bob Rake dragged himself to his knee, his head swimming, but his courage undaunted. He scrambled to his feet.

"Give him the knock-out, you dummy!" yelled Bunny Bootles.

By all the rules Lovell was entitled to knock his opponent down again, and certainly Bob Rake had no chance just then. But Lovell stepped back, his hands at his sides.

Bob Rake stood unsteadily, but his hands were up, and he was ready to go on.

"Lovell, you ass!" yelled Bunny.

"Shut up, Bunny!" growled Algernon Aubrey.

"The silly ass could have knocked him right out—"

"Dry up!"

"Time!"

Bob Rake almost staggered back to his corner. Durance made a knee for him, and sponged his scorching face.

"Bad, that!" Durance remarked.

Bob nodded, but he did not speak. He needed all his breath.

"Fifth round, and last!" said Stubbs, confidently, when Babbie of the Shell called time once more.

But Stubbs was mistaken.

In the fifth round Bob Rake showed a remarkable recovery, and he stalled off attack while he recovered further. It was Harry Lovell who was pressing the fighting now; but he found the Cornstalk as good at defence as at attack. Two minutes of good sparring elapsed, and then Babbie called time.

"To be continued in our next!" grinned Catesby, and some of the juniors laughed.

"Sixth round!" said Wheat-

OUR OWN SPORTS CORNER

Snappy Pars for Lovers of the Great Game

ARSENAL'S ADVERSITIES.

"We are not out of the wood yet—in fact, we're immersed in the depths of it; but I am not unhopeful."

The speaker was Mr. Leslie Knighton, the manager of the Arsenal Club, whose desperate position in the League table is causing tens of thousands of Londoners so much concern.

"Our luck—the worst I ever met with or heard of in football—cannot continue for ever," he declared.

"Anyone who has attended the games at Highbury this season will admit that, with the exception of the encounter with Sheffield United—who beat us fairly and squarely—we ought to have won them all. Against Oldham 75 per cent. of the play was a bombardment of their goal."

TWELVE HOURS' FOOTBALL.

Owing to five draws, Chobham Reserves and Camberley St. Michaels played football for more than twelve hours to decide a cup-tie. This is believed to be a record.

A WARNING.

Mr. A. W. Turner (the secretary of the Tottenham Hotspurs Club) says that sixteen years with the 'Spurs has taught him that the worst handicap to carry into a cup-tie is over-confidence.

"DEFENCE—NOT DEFIANCE!"

"Generally speaking, defence appears to be the strong point of professional football," says "Traveller," in the "Evening Standard." "In the four divisions of the League eleven clubs have fewer than 20 goals in the 'against' column, but only six have scored more than 40 goals."

The Argyle's defence must be about the soundest in the country, and in Richardson they have a splendid goal-scoring centre forward.

TO READERS OF "S. & S."

The Editor of SCHOOL AND SPORT invites responsible members of school and other junior football teams to send in reports of matches, etc. When space permits, these reports will be published.

THE ENGLISH RUGGER SKIPPER.

Lieut.-Commander W. J. A. Davies, the English Rugby football captain, who was badly kicked about six weeks ago, was not able to play in the English trial match at Twickenham, and it is very doubtful whether he will have recovered sufficiently to turn out against Wales at Cardiff on January 21.

"UP FOR THE CUP" IN STYLE.

Arrangements are already being made in several Northern towns for a trip to the Cup Final at Chelsea next April.

One such instance is the North Noths Football League, who are organising a trip. This League consists of a hundred clubs.

Breakfast will be served on the train, a whist drive will also be held during the journey, and there will be dinner on the train during the return journey—all in addition to the Final and the sights of London. And the cost will only be 27s. 6d. a head.

OLD BOY NAMES.

Some of the titles of "old boy" football clubs are decidedly puzzling to the general reader. "Old Carthusians" is easy, and most people are aware that Dulwich former pupils are "Old Alleynians," but not all would connect Highgate School with the "Old Cholmelians." The latter are so-called after the founder of the school, Sir Roger Cholmeley, a former Lord Chief Justice of England.

Then one has to remember that University College School used to be located in Gower-street to recognise its football players as "Old Gowers."

Why the old boys of Watford Grammar School should be "Old Fullers" one does not know, but such is their designation.

The uninitiated are apt to talk of "Old Shrewsburians," whereat "Old Salopians" scoff or faint, according to temperament. "Old Bancroftians" hail from Woodford Grammar School, and one believes that Hurstpierpoint old boys are correctly "Old Johnians," for the school was originally St. John's.

"NO PLACE LIKE HOME."

"Sleep is the all-important factor for the trainer who is tuning up a team for the F.A. Cup has to bear in mind. Sleep is a delicate problem. The men must have enough or they will wilt in the second chapter. They must not be conceded too much or they will be sluggish from the start."

The speaker was Mr. S. Goodman, the manager of the Crystal Palace team.

"It is because I am convinced of this fact," he continued, "that I am against sending men away to train at the seaside. Whatever benefit they may extract from the invigorating sea breezes is sacrificed in the loss of sound rest through trying to sleep in strange beds."

"There is no place like home" to train for the Cup, in my opinion."

FOOTBALL AND LUDO.

A novel sports competition between the officers on board H.M.S. Barham and H.M.S. Dolphin has just concluded at Portsmouth.

The competition consisted of a number of indoor and outdoor games, such as Attack, Ludo, Billiards, Fives, Rugby, Soccer, Golf, and Water Polo, and a point went to the winners for every opponent engaged in a particular game.

The Rugby match was won by the Barham side, captained by Lieutenant A. E. Thomson, D.S.C., who was capped as a centre three-quarter by Scotland last season.

The Barham followed up the advantage by winning the Ludo contest, at which they are reputed to be experts, but they lost the golf tourney.

THE ENGLISH RUGGER SKIPPER.

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ford. "They're sakers—good men both!"

"Time!"

The sixth round started, and it was hammer and tongs. Both the fighting-men were a little excited, though they held their excitement well in check. The fighting was hard now, and a good deal of punishment was given and taken. One of Lovell's eyes was almost closed, and Bob Rake's nose looked like an enlarged edition of itself. Right up to the call of time the hammering lasted, and both champions were breathless when they sought their corners.

The seventh round was inconclusive. But in the eighth there came a dramatic turn.

Bob Rake succeeded in getting in one of his straight drives with the right, and Lovell went down as if shot.

He crashed on the ground, and lay gasping.

"Oh, gad!" murmured Algy. Tracy and Co. brightened up again.

"If that chap isn't an ox he won't get on his feet again," said Rex Tracy, with a joyful grin.

Apparently Lovell was an ox, according to Tracy, for he was on his feet again in a few seconds.

Bob Rake came on, hard and fast; but he was met and stopped, and the round ended with Bob staggering back under a crash in the ribs, which landed him on his back.

"Time!"

When the adversaries toed the line for the ninth round there was no doubt that both of them looked rather "groggy."

There were few fellows present who could have stood up to such punishment as they had already received. But they were going on, with grim and ruthless determination.

It was such a fight as had seldom been seen, even on the historic battle-ground behind the chapel at St. Kit's.

Each had an eye that was fast blackening; each had a swollen and streaming nose; each had dark bruises forming on face and arms and chest. But the ninth round was fought through determinedly, and at the call of time it was hard to say which had the advantage.

"My hat! There's going to be ten rounds!" said Stubbs, with glistering eyes. "That's a giddy record!"

"Time!"

Harry Lovell moved up rather unsteadily; Bob Rake seemed almost to be groping his way. But both were determined, and the tenth round of that great fight began amidst breathless excitement. But that round was destined never to be finished.

There was a sudden yell from Judson of the Third, seated on the chapel railings.

"The Head!"

Judson turned backwards over the railings, picked himself up on the green, and fled. Round the corner of the chapel came an awe-inspiring figure—the figure of Dr. Cheyne, Head of St. Kit's.

"Oh, gad!" whispered Algernon Aubrey. "The merry fat's in the fire now!"

Some of the juniors bolted; but the rest, realising that it was too late, stood still. And an awed whisper ran round as the battered combatants dropped their hands and separated.

"The Head!"

THE FIFTEENTH CHAPTER.

The Head Comes Down Heavy.

DR. CHEYNE stopped, and looked at the crowd of juniors over his pince-nez.

The Head, in taking his gentle stroll round the quadrangle that fine evening, certainly had not expected to come upon such an Homeric scene.

It surprised him.

He came rustling on, and his expression grew grimmer and grimmer, sterner and sterner as he beheld the two champions—who assuredly were not in a fit state to meet their headmaster's eyes just then.

Lovell and Rake stood unsteadily, with blood streaming from their noses, each with a black eye, and with the other eyes shadowed. It was no wonder that the reverend old gentleman was shocked.

"Upon my soul!" ejaculated Dr. Cheyne.

He stood and looked at them.

Lovell and Rake dropped their eyes. Their faces were red already with exertion, but they grew redder now.

"What is all this?" exclaimed the Head.

It was really a superfluous question. The Head did not need telling that it was a fight.

"You have been fighting!" said the Head, in his most magisterial tone.

"Yes, sir!" gasped Harry.

"Bless my soul! Have you any idea how you look—what a loathsome and disgusting appearance you present to the eye?"

"Nunno, sir."

"Your eyes are blacked!"

"A-a-are they, sir?" stammered Bob.

"You look like—like—" The Head paused for a comparison, but apparently did not find one, for he went on: "This is disgraceful."

The delinquents stood silent. Fellows were detaching themselves from the crowd and slipping away in ones and twos. The Head was evidently in a terrific "wax," and there was no telling upon what devoted heads his wrath might fall. The fags of the Third had vanished helter-skelter round the chapel; Tracy and Co. were walking off as quickly as they could. Of the nutty crowd, only Durance remained on the spot.

"It—it's only a fight, sir!" stammered Algernon Aubrey.

"Silence, St. Leger!"

"Oh! Yaas, sir."

The Head surveyed the culprits grimly.

"I am not opposed, in principle, to a few rounds, provided that the gloves are worn," he said, majestically, "but this—this is a prize-fight! You are injured—you are disfigured! This dispute has been carried on with—with ferocity."

"Oh, sir!" murmured the two combatants, looking anything but ferocious now.

"With unexampled ferocity!" said the Head, impressively.

Silence.

"I am ashamed of you both!"

"Oh, sir!"

"But for the fact that you are both very seriously damaged, I should consider it my duty to inflict a very severe caning!" said Dr. Cheyne.

The delinquents felt some solace, in that remark, for their serious damages!

"But you will certainly be punished," said Dr. Cheyne, sternly. "I shall set you an imposition of a thousand lines each."

"Oh, dear!"

It was agreed at St. Kit's that a hundred lines was better than a caning; but a caning better than two hundred lines. Any caning, however severe, was better than five hundred lines. A thousand lines was almost unheard-of—even a flogging would have been better than that. The unhappy recipients of that tremendous imposition stood in blank dismay.

"To-morrow," continued the Head, "is a half-holiday. Both of you will be detained in your form-room to write out your lines."

"Oh, dear!" murmured Bob.

"Very well, sir," said Harry, resignedly.

"I shall request your form-master to see that the imposition is written out to the last line," said Dr. Cheyne; "and now I require you to give me your word of honour that this disgraceful struggle will not be resumed."

Grim silence.

Lovell and Rake looked at one another, and they did not speak. Dr. Cheyne compressed his lips.

"You hesitate to reply!" he said, in his ponderous manner.

"Very good! Unless that promise is given—and unless it is kept when given—I shall send you both away from the school to-morrow morning."

"Phew!" murmured Durance.

The Head was "coming down heavy" with a vengeance.

"Now, your answer!" rapped out the Head.

Lovell and Rake exchanged glances again. Neither wanted to be the first to speak.

"Lovell! Answer me!"

"I give my word, sir," said Harry, quietly.

"And I mine, sir," said Bob, at once.

"Very good. I think I can trust you both to keep your word," said Dr. Cheyne. "Now go at once, both of you, and remove, so far as possible, the disgraceful aspect which is an offence to the sight."

And the Head sailed majestically on, and disappeared round the

further end of the chapel railings, much to the relief of the juniors.

"My only hat!" said Battie of the Shell, with a deep breath. "The old sport was in no end of a bait. Glad he didn't drop on me."

Lovell looked at Rake. He smiled—a rather twisted smile, for his features all felt as if they were in the wrong places.

"That settles it, Rake," said the captain of the Fourth. "We can't go on after that."

Bob chuckled.

"Blessed if I specially want to," he said. "I'm feeling like a hospital case, and I daresay you feel the same."

"I do," said Harry, frankly. "But we've been fighting for the study."

"Oh, rot!" said Bob; "it's your study."

And Bob Rake turned and began to put on his jacket. Durance helped him; he needed help. Algernon Aubrey ministered to his chin; and the principals in the historic struggle departed, and the crowd broke up—full of excited comments upon the terrific fight, and agreeing that the Head ought to have had sense enough not to "butt in" before the finish.

"Rotten, the Head droppin' on us like that," Durance remarked, as he walked away with Rake.

"You'd have licked him."

"I'm not sure of that," said Bob, simply. "He's quite as good a man as I am with the mittens on."

"Feel pretty bad?"

"Yes."

"You'll have to rest over for a few days," said Durance, eyeing him in a sidelong way. "Next time you'll have to tackle him somewhere outside the gates, to a finish."

Bob turned on him.

"I've given my word to the Head!"

"Oh, my dear old nut, that doesn't count! The Head shouldn't have butted in. Pullin' the Head's leg is fair play, you know."

Bob's lip curled.

"My word counts," he said.

"I'm pretty certain that Lovell intends to keep his. I'm keeping mine."

Durance shrugged his shoulders.

Bob Rake went to a bathroom to clean up after the combat. But when he had done all that he could, he surveyed the result in the glass with something like dismay.

One eye black, and the other discoloured, and a swollen nose and cut lip did not make for beauty. It was likely to be a long time before Bob looked his sunny self.

"My hat!" he murmured, as he blinked at the reflection in the glass. "No wonder the Head said it was disgraceful! It is—a bit."

He grinned when he met Lovell in the Fourth-form passage a little later. The captain of the Fourth looked every wit as damaged as Bob Rake.

It was not a happy evening for either of them.

Aches and pains followed the excitement of the combat, and both of them, perhaps, suffered a little in temper in consequence.

In the top study, when Bunny Bootles offered to sell his bottle of embrocation at a reduced price, out of pure friendship, a Latin grammar was hurled at his head, and Bunny yelled and dropped the subject.

And in No. 5 Study, when Tracy made a sneering remark on the subject of the promise given to the Head, and hinted at "funk," Bob Rake took Tracy by the collar and banged his head on the study wall. After which Tracy, like Bunny, dropped the subject and preserved a judicious silence.

THE SIXTEENTH CHAPTER.

From Foes to Friends.

WEDNESDAY afternoon was fine and sunny.

The St. Kit's fellows turned out for the half-holiday cheerily—some to the football ground, some to ramble out of gates, Tracy and Co. to dodge in at a back door of the "Lizard" and play billiards. There were two fellows in the Fourth Form, however, to whom the bright sunshine brought no solace; they were the two detained juniors, Lovell and Rake.

The fiat had gone forth—the Head's sentence had to be carried

out. The staggering "impot" of a thousand lines apiece had to be written out, and that sunny half-holiday had to be spent on the task. The two delinquents felt that punishment more than they felt darkened eyes and swollen noses.

"It's frightfully hard lines, old chap," Algernon Aubrey said, sympathetically. "I almost wish I could do half the impot, though I'm quite sure that I should perish under five hundred lines of Latin."

Harry smiled.

"Can't be helped!" he said.

"It's all in the day's work. You go and get some footer."

"Too much like work, dear boy."

"We're going to try to pull the footer eleven into shape, you know, Algy, now we've got a chance," said the new captain of the Fourth.

St. Leger nodded.

"I'm backin' you up," he said.

"I'll sit in the study and think it out while you're detained. I'll make up a list of possibles for the eleven."

"Put in an hour on the field."

"I'll think about that."

said Algernon Aubrey amiably.

"Hallo, there's the Lath makin' faces at you!"

Mr. Lathley beckoned to Harry from a distance. The Fourth-form master had been assigned the task of seeing the two delinquents through their detention.

"It is time to go into the form-room, Lovell," Mr. Lathley said, rather coldly.

"Very well, sir!"

"Deepest sympathy, old bean!" murmured Algy, as he drifted away with quite a disconsolate expression on his face. And he was not even comforted by a kind offer from Bunny Bootles to sell him several "articles" at unheard-of prices.

Harry Lovell went into the form-room and took the Virgil from his desk, and received a sheaf of impot paper from the form-master.

Bob Rake was already in his place, with a stack of paper before him, a pen in his hand, and a glum look on his face.

"You will remain here until five o'clock," said Mr. Lathley, grimly. "If your impositions are not finished by then, they will have to be completed on Saturday afternoon."

"Yes, sir!" groaned the two juniors.

And the master of the Fourth left them to themselves.

Algernon Aubrey St. Leger drifted about the quadrangle for a time, and almost decided to join the juniors on Little Side for football. He got as far as watching a senior match on Big Side for a few minutes. Then he felt tired, and drifted back to the schoolhouse.

He drifted into the top study, and there he began compiling a list of possible members of a really good junior eleven. Having written down Lovell's name and his own, Algy left off the stupendous task, and took a well-earned rest.

Meanwhile, Lovell and Rake ground out the first book of Virgil, beginning with their old acquaintance, "Arma virumque cano."

"Arms and the man" failed to excite their interest; and the adventures of the "pious Aeneas," and his rather long-winded narrative to Dido, had no attraction whatever in comparison with the open air, the sunshine, and the football ground.

But they ground on with the lines, occasionally pausing for a little rest—not to muse on the beauties of Virgil.

A fat figure loomed up in the form-room doorway.

"Going strong?" grinned Bunny Bootles.

"Rotten!" said Harry.

"Poor old chap—it's too bad!" said Bunny. "I say, I'm running frightful risks in coming here, out of pure sympathy. Lathley would be no end waxy at my talking to chaps under detention. But I'm going to help you fellows out, and chance it," said Bunny, nobly.

"You'd get on ever so much quicker, Lovell, if you used a fountain-pen."

"Br-r-r-r."

"I've got a nickel-plated fountain-pen, among some other articles, that I can let you have awfully cheap," said Bunny.

"Oh, seat!"

"What do you say, Rake?"

"Rats!" said Bob.

"Well, what about the musical-box?" asked Bunny. "It will amuse you during detention; it plays the Funeral March of a Marionette, you know—"

"Go away, for goodness sake!" grunted Bob. "Detention's bad enough without your chin-music, Bootles!"

"Yah!"

"Hallo, here comes another merry visitor!" said Bob, as Dick Durance pushed Bunny aside and entered the form-room.

Durance gave the new fellow a nod.

"I thought I'd give you a look in," he said. "How are you getting on?"

"Beastly!"

"It's hard cheese," said Durance.

"Yes, rather! I wish you'd won the toss," said Bob, with a faint grin. "Then you'd have this eye, and this nose, and this impot."

Harry Lovell glanced up from Virgil.

"You don't mean to say you tossed up for it, which was to take on the scrap, Rake?" he asked.

Bob nodded.

"That's it," he said. "I was the lucky winner—I look as if I'd had a lot of luck, don't I?"

"We've been rather a pair of asses," said Harry, with a smile.

"We've nothing at all to fight about that I can see—and we've marked ourselves for a week, lost a half-holiday, landed a thousand fines—"

"And put the merry old Head's back up," said Bob. "Not to speak of Mr. Lathley frowning at us as if we were a pair of giddy Huns. What a life!"

"He—he—he!"

That musical cachinnation came from Bunny Bootles.

Bob glanced at him, and gripped his Virgil.

"So you think it's funny, do you?" he demanded.

Bunny chortled.

"He—he—he! You are an ass, Rake! You tossed with Durance which was to fight Lovell. He—he—he!"

"What is there funny in that, you fat dummy?"

Bunny roared.

"I'll bet Durance called head!" he said.

"Shut up!" muttered Durance, hastily.

"He—he—he!" cachinnated Bunny.

Bob gave the fat junior a startled look. How Bunny guessed that Durance had called "head" he could not fathom. Bunny certainly had been nowhere in sight when Bob and Durance tossed for the championship.

"How on earth do you know, Bootles?" demanded Bob.

Bunny chortled till the tears ran down his fat cheeks. He was evidently immensely tickled by something.

"You used a shilling to toss up with?" he asked.

"Durance did."

"And it came up head?"

"Yes. What—"

"Durance called head, of course!" exploded Bunny. "He—he—he! You needn't glare at me, Durance! He—he—he!"

"Blessed if I see where the cackle comes in, or what you know about it, Bootles!" said Bob, in utter perplexity.

"He—he—he! I sold him the shilling!" roared Bunny.

"What!"

"I got it among some articles, you know," giggled Bunny, ecstatically. "Fancy his taking you in with it! He—he—he! I sold him that double-headed shilling for eightpence."

Bob Rake fairly jumped.

"A double-headed shilling!" he roared.

"He—he—he!"

"Durance, you rotter!"

"I—I—I—" stammered Durance. Harry Lovell's glance of scorn he did not heed; but he was evidently concerned by the expression on Bob Rake's face. In his own way Durance had taken a liking to the sturdy Australian junior.

"You needn't deny it!" exclaimed Bob, hotly. "You claimed heads for you, tails for me, before you threw up the shilling. I might have known it was another dirty trick."

Durance shrugged his shoulders. He had his limits, more closely drawn than Tracy's; he would not tell a direct lie about it.

Not that a lie would have served him. Bunny Bootles had given him away a little too completely for that.

Bob Rake jumped up and left his desk. Durance breathed rather hard, but he did not retreat. Bob came over to him.

(Continued on page 12.)



A Fight With a Shark.

JACK FEARLESS, swimming with the ball to the submerged goalpost, was hardly aware of the dangerous enemy that was threatening him.

Full of the game, he heard the shouts from the two ships and from the two swimming teams. But he mistook these for the usual shouts and encouragements of a crowd of football fans.

The pair of sharks which had come into the bay were a brace of those hungry creatures which often follow ships up the Spanish coast to a point well beyond Finisterre, where a slackening of the warmer water of the Gulf Stream turns them back southward again.

As a rule, these do not come inshore unless they are sick or mighty hungry.

And this was the case with the pair that were cruising slowly round the queer football ground of the *Tartars* and the crew of the Spanish cruiser *Reina Isabel*.

Hungry as they were, the shouts and splashing of the crowd of men on the sandbank had scared them, for the shark is a timid and cowardly creature.

Even now the shark which was making for Jack did not feel quite certain of his ground. It did not like the shoaling water under it, and it did not like the yelling of the excited crews of the ships.

"Look out!" yelled the British. "Tiburón! Tiburón!—shark, shark!" yelled the Spaniards.

And Jack, taking a squint back over his shoulder, saw that sinister fin slowly sheering through the water, turning on and off in an uncertain manner.

There was only one thing for it. Jack meant to get it all in.

He would score his goal, make a jump for the net, and climb up on the wooden gallows out of reach of this heastly antagonist.

He had nothing to defend himself with save the football.

And an association football is no sort of weapon against an eighteen-foot shark.

He swam as hard as he could. He had a glimpse of Kingaloo, urging his kayak forward over the water with powerful digs of the double paddle.

He saw the fin disappear.

The shark was close to him now, close enough to turn on its back and to make its dash for its prey.

Jack had a few yards to go yet.

And it was the football that saved him after all.

Lifting it from the water, he lobbed it lightly into the air, dropping it on the water just ahead of the swirl, which broke and showed the ugly, shovel nose and the kite-shaped mouth with its triple rows of ugly teeth.

The jaws opened wide and closed with an ugly snap on the football. There was a pop like the explosion of a bicycle tyre and a little fountain of water.

Then a yell of delight and relief went up as Jack, with a final dash, reached the upright of the goal-post and climbed swiftly astride of the pole, whilst the perplexed and disappointed shark turned right

way up, and with a great sweep of his tail swung round, heading straight into the net.

The sight of the brute had driven Kingaloo almost mad.

His kayak was rippling through the water now, close behind the shark.

Kingaloo was excited by the shouts of the football players and by the boxing. He, too, wanted a chance to distinguish himself.

The Eskimo is not used to crowds. All the Eskimos within a thousand miles of Kingaloo's Arctic home would not have made a respectable football crowd for a junior club. And Kingaloo was intoxicated by the noise and the limelight.

He, who had so often paddled his frail little craft far out to sea to tackle the big bull walrus on the sea floes alone and unaided, wanted to show his mettle to these white men who shouted so loudly and who were so quick to appreciate the points of the sport that, beyond the Arctic Circle, were merely the events of the daily struggle for existence.

Up there, in the frozen north, a mistake or a slant of bad luck means merely a lonely death. A maddened walrus, or a snarl in the line gets a grip on the frail canoe, and all is over.

Half the men of Kingaloo's tribe were destined to die in this fashion. His father had been pulled down by a bull walrus, his grandfather had been killed by a wounded Polar bear. His great grandfather had been caught by a sudden storm far away out at sea, hunting seals on the new ice, which parted and carried him away into the unknown.

So Kingaloo did not make many bones about attacking the shark.

As it ran its flat nose into the net and swirled suddenly round, Kingaloo, paddling almost into the goal, snatched up his long walrus spear from the rack on the deck of his little craft.

The spear sped from his hand swifter than lightning.

Fat and tubby though he was, Kingaloo could strike as swiftly as a cat.

And a roar of applause went up as this strange goalkeeper got in his shot, and the water in the goal was suddenly torn up into masses of foaming spray.

Kingaloo went astern like a flash. Jack, perched on the top rail of the goalposts, clung for dear life as the net and posts were shaken violently by the astonished shark, which, feeling a walrus spear suddenly driven through it, chased its tail in goal, lashing the water with mighty blows and barging into the net again in a frantic endeavour to escape.

It had not liked the football. It liked the goal net worse. The decks of the Spanish cruiser buzzed like a nest of hornets. Here was something that the Spaniards understood and appreciated.

The boxing had partially amused and partially shocked them, for the Spaniard has a deep and natural distaste for blows of the fist. These appear to him very brutal,

THE CRUISE OF THE "TARTAR"

A Great Story of Sport and Adventure

By **JOHN WINTERTON**

JACK FEARLESS
JOE LAWLESS
BILL CARELESS

Featuring

of Great Yarmouth
of Bradford
The Trapeze Artist

AND

CAPTAIN BOB OAK

Master of "The Tartar"

Captain Bob Oak, of the s.s. "Tartar," advertises for three boys to join his ship. They must be willing to do anything and go anywhere. Out of thousands of boys who go down to the docks to join up are Jack Fearless, Joe Lawless, and Bill Careless. These three boys are chosen because they rescue Captain Oak from drowning. The "Tartar" sets sail, and the three boys soon make friends with the various members of the crew. There is Mr. Dark, Ching, Kingaloo, Bucko, Viscount Swishington, Wilfred the seal, Harold and Clifford the penguins, and Whiskers, a leopard. Their first stop is on the coast of Spain, where a shore party from the "Tartar" have trouble with brigands who had captured a great Spanish lady. When things become quieter again a football match is arranged between a "Tartar" XI. versus a Spanish warship. The game is played on a sandbank, and is interrupted by the arrival of a shark when the tide has half covered the football ground.

infinitely more brutal than a stab with a knife.

The football had partially pleased and partially puzzled them. They could not quite understand the desperate struggle for a mere leather ball, in which there seemed to be no particular danger, and in which no one was killed. And when the ground had been submerged by the tide, and the football had turned into a game of water-polo, they had been more mystified still.

But when the water-polo turned to a fight with a shark, they were all on deck and yelled and clapped with all the delight of a bull fight crowd.

This was a sort of marine bull fight, and somebody or something looked like being killed.

"Bravo, Esquimo!" they yelled, giving Kingaloo the endearing diminutive that they give to a popular bull fighter.

"Viva el matador!" yelled others.

The gang of captured bandits on the foredeck of the cruiser forgot all their troubles in this splendid sight. They shook and jingled their irons in applause, and yelled for the shark's blood.

Jack, clinging to the goalposts, nearly shaken from his perch by the struggles of the shark, appeared to them like the bull fighter who slips behind the shelters of the arena.

They compared Kingaloo to the picador, the horseman who attacks with the spear, or the bandarillero who thrusts the barbed darts into the maddened bull.

Kingaloo, sitting straight in his canoe, watched the wooden shaft which had floated up from his spear, his black slit eyes glittering and intent.

The shark made a sudden dash out of the net, pulling the line almost at right angles to the tiny craft.

This was what Kingaloo was waiting for. Nine hundred and ninety-nine canoists out of a thousand would have been overturned by that sudden jerk. But Kingaloo was an expert, who had learned to play touch and go with his life in the heavy seas and ice of Baffin's Bay.

The kayak swung round like a teetotum, and in another second was racing away over the water in tow of the maddened shark, travelling like a fast motor-boat as two glittering feathers of spray flickered from its sharp little bows.

Then the Spaniards on the cruiser had a magnificent sight.

The shark was thoroughly bewildered by the water.

On each side of him he had a large steamer, with all the vibrations and disturbances which pass from a steamer, even when she is at anchor. And between these steamers lay the shoal water of the sandbank, crowded by the cheering, yelling crowd of football players, who were splashing about or standing with the water up to their shoulders, yelling at the top of their lungs.

He charged round the deep water course that surrounded the football ground, trying to find some

way of heading to the sea, and thrice did he circle in this fashion, Kingaloo gradually closing up behind him, pulling on the line with a second spear in his hand.

"Bravo, Kingy!" yelled the Tartars. "Put it across him! Pass the dirty dog a jolt in the liver! Hooray!"

Kingaloo had closed on his prey, the bow of the kayak was overlapping that great fin.

Down went the second spear, like a flash of lightning.

The shark hit out with a mighty lash of his tail, and the kayak and man rose like a steeplechase rider from the water.

And a deep sigh of wonderment went up from both ships, and the frail little craft flopped down again, perfectly safe and right side up, ripping in the wake of the shark.

Then Kingaloo lifted his hand and fell behind his prey.

He knew that the flurry was coming. That second deadly thrust had gone clean through Jack Shark, finding out the vital pump of life.

And a second later came a whirl and breaking of white water. Then slowly the terror of the seas rolled over in the shallow water, showing his white under side, his ugly mouth, and his rows of evil teeth.

The other shark had gone off. His triangular fin had headed out towards the narrow entrance of the bay, saying as clearly as possible:

"This is no place for me!" There are no words to describe the delight of the Spaniards as they clustered along the rail of the cruiser like bees.

They flung their caps into the water, as the nuts at a bull fight fling their hats into the arena to the victorious matador when he has killed the bull, and sword and muleta in hand, marches across the arena to acknowledge the frenzied plaudits of the crowd. They kissed and embraced one another, declaring that Kingaloo was a hero.

Spaniards and British alike were delighted. For a sailor hates a shark above all things.

And Kingaloo, sitting upright in his canoe, tasted for the first time in his simple life the heady delight of public glory.

His little black eyes glittered, and his flat yellow face beamed under the matted black hair which fell in a fringe over his eyes.

"Look at ole Kingy!" exclaimed Bucko. "He's tasting the stuff! The shark has tossed in the alley! Just listen to those Dagoes beeing it out. Ole Kingy's the Bonzer Boy. He's the real Champen. I've seen a lot o' fights, but never have I seen an Eskimo keep a football goal against a shark before. Square an' all, but it was a grand sight to see that savage stoush Jack Sharkey through the bread basket. He won't eat any more poor sailors, he won't. And here's ole Ching! Wants to get his fins for soup, I'll bet a durion!"

Ching, who had come out of the galley to see the fight, grinned all over his yellow face.

"Sharkee him make welly good soup, along him fin. Me catches fin to make soup for dinner Number One Big Swell Lady!"

Number One Big Swell Lady was the nearest that Ching could get to the title of Her Excellency the Duchess of Antequera, who, from the bridge of the *Tartar*, had been watching the shark fight, clapping her white hands as enthusiastically as any of her countrymen.

"I expect Kingaloo will want the liver for his rheumatic oils," said Bucko. "There's nothing better for the screwmatics than shark liver oil. There's Master Jack, climbed down out of his goal-post; and, look out, Chingy!" added Bucko. "There's all the Bong Tong coming off the cruiser. The Dons are coming to tea with the Duchess. Look at 'em, trooping down the side. See their epaulettes glittering? My word," added Bucko, "but ain't they the real Bonanza crowd of swell Archies!"

On What Mission?

THE launch was at the cruiser's side, and down her gangway were trooping the captain and all his officers coming to pay their call and to take the "five-cloq," as they called afternoon tea, with the Duchess.

The quartermasters of the *Tartar* hastened to the gangway to receive these distinguished guests.

And Ching darted into his galley to see that his kettles were boiling.

Spaniards, as a rule, do not understand tea as a beverage. They only drink it at home as a medicine for stomach-ache. But the five o'clock tea is fashionable. And Ching had exerted himself to the uttermost to make a dazzling spread of cakes and Chinese pastry.

Down in the saloon the table was laid with a magnificent show of tea-cakes, cakes of marzipan shaped into Chinese junks, tiny tartlets laced with threads of pink sugar, muffins swimming in butter, bath-buns with Chinese designs in lemon-peel on the top.

These ideographs were not readable by Europeans, but any Chinese getting one of Ching's bath-buns would have laughed like anything, for the daintily-arranged strips of angelica and lemon-peel read with such inscriptions as: "Do not eat too greedily of the bath-bun," "Respect thy parents," "Honour thy ancestors," and other wise maxims.

The glittering crowd of officers trooped up the side, bowing to and saluting the Duchess ere they were led down to the saloon to partake of the "five-cloq."

Bucko gazed at them with admiration, admiring their grave politeness.

"Sure these Dons are the real Bong-Tong," said he. "They know how to behave themselves when they take the intro and the proper knock down to a swell dame. There's none of your 'Ow-de-do, Mar' amongst that lot. It's all Ribuck and dignified. There's no backing the barrer into the crush. Captain introjuces them all in proper order, by rank. The Lady Duchess she smiles an' gives of 'em the same dose of glad eye, according to rank. You can see they are all used ter mixin' in with the Heads. It's a pleasure to get a glimpse at a bit of real high tone society. Now they are all off down to tea!"

Bucko turned suddenly, for Jack Fearless had come on board.

"Hullo young Jack!" said he; "how d'ye like paying full-back to a shark? Fair dinkum! I thought the snake-ed fish was goin' to chew the heels out of your socks!"

Jack laughed.

"They are bringing him on board the quarterboat," said he. "Ching want his fins for soup, and Kingaloo wants his liver for oil and some of the skin for sandpaper."

"Right-o!" replied Bucko; "we'll ship the derriek and hoist him with the deck steam. Slings there!"

The quarterboat had got the carcass of the shark fast alongside, and slowly it was brought to the ship's side.

Bucko rigged the derriek from the aftermast, and the wire-rope was lowered with slings which were passed round the huge body ready to hoist it on board.

Everyone was very curious to see this monster of the deep which had so nearly put a tragic termination to the famous football match.

The crew crowded round as the drum of the steam winch revolved and the wire-rope hoisted the car-

The Cruise of the "Tartar"

(Continued from previous page.)

case of Jack Shark out of the water.

"My word, ain't 'e got a kite on him!" said one worthy, in awed accents. "There's a marth for a tart!"

Old Chips, the carpenter, shook his head.

"You be careful of him, boys!" said he. "I've used the sea forty years, steam an' sail, and I've never seed a shark o' that size killed by the bows an' arrers of the heathen. I don't believe as Kingaloo has put the nails in 'is cawfin. There's nothin' kills a shark but the wip of a nice sharp axe 'cross the tail."

All looked up, as though they were looking at a Zeppelin, as the huge cartase was swung indeck over their heads.

Then the donkeyman at the winch proceeded to lower the prize on to the deck. Ching was there with his long kitchen knife. It was a lovely knife which Ching used for cutting ham sandwiches. He had been cutting ham sandwiches for the Duchess's tea-party down below, the ham cut as fine as paper. So there was an excellent edge to the knife.

"You be careful with that there pigsticker o' yours, Ching!" said old Chips, shaking his head, gloomily. "I don't believe that there shark is as dead as 'e looks!"

But Ching only grinned.

"Me catches sharks, fin!" said he. "Shark fin, him plente good for sloup."

"Mine you don't catch more'n his fin, you yell-faced 'eathen!" replied Mr. Chips. "I don't 'old with sharks, I don't. You can't trust 'em, as you might say."

Jack Shark, in a moribund condition, was lowered on deck close by the wide open skylights of the saloon. These were very large skylights, and under them was a sort of false ceiling of stained and

lead glass which admitted a pleasant soft light to the saloon.

From down below came the merry clatter of teaspoons and cups, and the buzz of conversation in sonorous Spanish. The stateliness was wearing off the Dons, for they were dodging the strange tea, and sweet wines were being handed round.

But the crew of the *Tartar* were mostly interested in Kingaloo's prize.

"My word!" said one seaman, "e'd take a big cawfin, wouldn't 'e."

"I once 'eard tell of a shark that was caught off Sydney 'Arbour," said another, "an' when they opened 'im they found six watches and two pairs of springside boots and a rumberella in 'is inside!"

Ching got round the shark now and prepared to cut off the back fin.

"That's right, ole Crippen. Ack orf 'is whiskers!" said a seaman.

"Shark, 'im plenty dead!" said Ching, contemptuously, as he cut off the big back fin. "You see, me makee plente nice sloup!"

There was a sudden stir amongst the crowd of seamen.

"Look out, boys, here comes the lepper, and he's pretty crusty," called one.

Whiskers, the leopard, had broken away from the rope that moored him to the cask that was his little grey home on the boat deck.

Whiskers was not in a very good temper. He had been disturbed all the afternoon by the shouting which had been going on between the two ships.

He had industriously chewed through a stout length of tarred hemp rope to free himself, and he did not like the taste of the tar.

So he was growling to himself as he came padding along the deck, his velvet coat gleaming like gold

in the sunshine, and his sombre green eyes full of baleful lights.

Whiskers was also disturbed by the smell of shark and of Spaniards. The leopard's nose is very sensitive, and Whiskers was puzzled and annoyed by the strange smells.

He was perfectly familiar with the beer and onions and corduroy and paraffin smell of the British dock worker and sailor.

He knew that men who smelled like this were kind, matey sort of people who would pat him softly, scratch his ears, and call him Pussy, or Joe Beckett, or Crippen.

But the garlic and oil trail of the Spaniards vexed him. His fight with the bandits had taught him that these were men who made fire and who shot off guns.

And on top of this was the smell of the shark. Every shark has a distinct sharky flavour of its own which is not all lavender.

So Whiskers came along, rumbling angrily, to see about it.

The sailors made way for him, and he came in full view of the huge shark at once.

"Sick him, Tig!" called one sailor.

"Bite 'is ear, Whiskers!" called another.

Whiskers had crouched to the deck at the sight of the huge sea monster. It was lying across a coil of hawser where Whiskers hid his bones. And this annoyed Whiskers very much.

He had a fine collection of beef bones hidden away under that coil, and his leopard's mind at once accused the dead shark of pinching his bones.

"G-u-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r-r!" snarled Whiskers, his eyes glowing like opal lamps, and his short ears setting back like the ears of an angry cat, whilst his great tail swished to and fro like a dog-whip.

Then, with one great bound, he leaped upon the shark, nailing the great brute about three feet from the tail.

This was about the point of the shark's anatomy which Mr. Chips had recommended for the slice of an axe.

Whether Jack Shark was really dead after all, or whether Whiskers' teeth woke up some reflex muscular action, will never be known. A shark will retain muscular power for many hours after it is dead.

But as soon as the teeth of the leopard had met in the tail, Jack Shark seemed to wake up. The tail swung round with the leopard clinging to it tooth and claw. It almost touched the ugly shovel nose as the huge brute doubled up like a fried whiting. Then it straightened out with a flick like a watch-spring.

There was a cry of horror as Ching fell backwards through the skylight of the saloon, passing through the stained-glass ceiling with a ripping of leaded glass and a tinkling of falling fragments.

A cry of horror went up from the Spanish tea-party below as the unhappy cook came tumbling down on the table, smashing up cups and saucers, and surrounded by a shower of coloured glass.

But worse was yet to follow.

The body of the shark, with a sudden writhe and twist, flopped in at the open skylight with the leopard, which was now thoroughly annoyed, hanging, spitting, and snarling to his tail.

This time there was no mistake about the crash, for the whole of the inner glass fell with a crash, letting a ton and a half of shark and leopard through with a bang that seemed to shake the whole ship.

Jack Sharp dropped down straight and fair on the whole length of the long saloon table, smashing up the cakes and tarts, the ham sandwiches and the buns.

And amidst the shouts of the Dons who had drawn their swords to defend themselves, he lay where he had fallen, with his ugly mouth open, and a silver teapot tucked under the fin which Ching had not been able to cut off.

And Whiskers still clung to his tail, growling and worrying, till Bucko, rushing down into the saloon, got a rope on to his collar and hauled him, spitting and snarling, out in the alleyway.

The tea-party was a ruin. But no one was hurt, not even Ching, who had tumbled head foremost into a bowl of trifle, so that his head was smothered in raspberry jam and whipped cream.

Ching was a horrible sight as they hauled him out from the polite company to put his head under the pump.

Captain Oak surveyed the huge shark grimly.

"Well, I'd sooner that we had him for tea than that he had us for tea," said he. "And I'm thinking that we had better get out of this bay. It is too lively a place for a quiet lot of chaps like us!"

He escorted the skipper of the cruiser and his bevy of officers to the gangway and bade them a polite farewell.

Tackles were rigged, and the defunct shark was hoisted out of the saloon and given a mock burial overside, covered by the German flag, to the intense annoyance of the prisoner, Ober-Lieutenant Spelwitz, who had a squint at the proceedings from the port of the cabin in which he was confined.

And as the sun went down in a glory of golden red, and the sunset glow cracked from the cruiser, the *Tartar* dipped the red duster to the Spanish flag and steamed out of the bay into the Atlantic.

She headed southward over a smooth sea, and many were the discussions in the fo'c'sle head that night as to her errand.

The crew could see the Duchess promenading the bridge deck in company with the captain and Mr. Dark. But the crew were quick to notice that the course was changed, and that, instead of following the Spanish coast, the *Tartar* was steaming westward, out to sea.

The revolutions of her engines slowed down till she was travelling through the water at such a low speed that the porpoises playing round her, outlined in gleams of blue phosphorescent light, got sick of travelling with such a slow play-fellow, and went off on their own.

A great P. and O. liner, London bound, crossed their bows, her long lines of brilliantly-lit ports glitter-

ing like the windows of a great hotel.

She signalled with a winking light from her masthead. And Captain Oak promptly answered the signal with the answer that he was American steamer *Hiram K. Brown*, from Santander to Philadelphia.

Bucko read the signal.

"The old man is giving false names and addresses, boys," said he, "and he's hanging on and off the coast spilling time. I've a notion that he's getting outside the track of the steamer routes, and that he will stand in and make the Burlings at sunset to-morrow night."

Jack and his chums had heard of the Burlings, the lonely group of rocky islands about fifty miles north of the estuary of the Tagus.

"What makes you think that it's the Burlings, Bucko?" asked Jack.

"Why, shipmate, it's the course he is following and the speed at which he is travelling," replied Bucko.

And Bucko was right. The *Tartar* rolled along all that night at her easiest speed, and at noon the next day turned back on her course suddenly, heading east-south-east, so that in the late afternoon a slight cloud on the eastern horizon showed them that they were within a reasonable distance of the Portuguese coast.

"That little bit of cloud shows the high hills by Cintra, at the mouth of the Tagus!" said Bucko. "Knew I was ringing the pocket-knife all the time. Well see something doing to-night, boys!"

At eight o'clock a flash showed on the horizon at intervals of thirty seconds. It was the light on the highest point of these rocky islets—a white flash visible at twenty-six miles.

The *Tartar* increased her speed, and the order went round to cover all lights. The night had set in pitch dark, and soon not a light showed on the ship but the dim haze of the binnacle lamp on the bridge.

Nearer and nearer showed the flash of the Burlings, and presently Captain Oak sent for the three boys to the bridge.

They found him sitting in the chart-room, with Bucko, Scott standing by his side. He was poring over a large blue-backed Admiralty chart that lay open on the table.

"You three boys can all swim?" said the Captain, amiably.

"Yes, sir!" replied the three, eagerly.

Captain Oak smiled grimly.

"I have a remembrance that you three lads jumped into the dock after an old woman," said he; "but that's no proof that you can swim through a nasty swell running on to the rocks at the Berlen-gas. And that's where you are going ashore to-night. See these islands?"

And the Captain pointed with his dividing compasses to the Burling Rocks marked on the chart before him.

"Yes, sir!" said the boys.

"Well, I've got to land you on the western or the sea side. You have got to cross the island to the eastern side which faces the Portuguese coast. It is on this middle island where the lighthouse is that there is the only safe landing-place on the islands. That is the little sandy bay which is used by the Portuguese lightkeepers who serve the light!"

"Yes, sir!" said the boys, eagerly.

"Now, you have got to keep away from the lighthouse," said the Captain. "I don't want any of the lightkeepers on the island to see you, for you are on a secret mission. That is why this ship has got all her glims doused at the present moment. You will cross the island by a goat-path which runs over the shoulder of this hill, and you will drop down quietly into the bay below."

(There will be an extra long instalment of this grand serial in next Monday's issue of "School and Sport." Order your copy in advance.)

The Foes of the Fourth

(Continued from page 10.)

"Give me that swindling shilling, Durance."

"What for?"

"Give it me, or I'll take it. You're not going to cheat anybody else with it," exclaimed Bob.

Durance hesitated a moment; then, with a laugh, he drew the double-headed shilling from his waistcoat pocket and tossed it to Bob. The latter examined it, with a snort of contempt, and pitched it into the form-room fire.

"That's that!" he said. "Now get out of this form-room, Durance. You make me sick."

Durance opened his lips to speak, but closed them again. It was not much use for him to say anything. He turned and walked out of the form-room without a word.

"He-he-he!" chuckled Bunny. "What a give-away! I say, Rake, you shouldn't have chuckled that shilling away! Might come in useful—tossing for pennies, you know, with a fellow who wasn't on to it—"

"Shut up, you fat cad!" roared Bob.

"Oh, I say!"

"Get out, Bunny, you fat beast!" said Harry Lovell. "Kick him out, Rake—Bunny has to be kicked at least once a day!"

"Yah!"

Bunny Bootles rolled out of the form-room without waiting to be kicked. But there was a kicking in store for the happy Bunny, all the same, for Durance was waiting for him at the end of the passage. And loud yells, that penetrated the form-room, from a distance, seemed to indicate that Bunny was up against it once more.

Bob Rake closed the door, and returned to his place. His face was clouded, and he did not seem able to concentrate his attention on Virgil—though he had, by this time, progressed as far as the famous shipwreck passage.

He was thinking, for the first time, that he was not glad that he had come to St. Kit's. In No. 5

Study he had two companions whom he disliked and despised, and somehow—he hardly knew how—he had been set in bitter opposition to the fellows he could have liked and pulled with. Somehow he had made a bad break at the school, and the prospect before him did not seem sunny.

Harry Lovell was looking at him across the desks.

"Rake!" he said, suddenly.

"Well?" said Bob, rather gruffly.

"Don't you think we've been a pair of duffers to row like this?" said Harry, with a smile. "You seem to have been made use of—and cheated in the process."

"Not much doubt about that!" growled Bob.

"You can't like it much in the study with Tracy and Durance."

"I know I shan't ever speak a word to either of the cads again."

"That won't be agreeable—"

"I know it won't!"

"I owe you this black eye," said Harry. "You owe me that one! Did you really want a fight to a finish, old scout?"

Bob's clouded face relaxed.

"I don't know that I did," he answered. "Oh! dash it all, I never really wanted to scrap with you, anyhow. I've been made a fool of."

"I might have done a bit more thinking," confessed Harry. "But—after all, there's no harm done." He rubbed his eye, and smiled. "Is there any reason why we shouldn't be friends?"

Bob's face brightened.

"None at all, if you'd care to!" he answered.

"I would!" said Harry, frankly. "And if you'd care to change studies, there's plenty of room for one more in the top study. I never wanted to turn you out of your quarters. Will you dig with us in the top study, and let bygones be bygones?"

"My hat!" said Bob.

"St. Leger will be pleased, I

know—and as for Bunny, whether he's pleased or not doesn't count. If you can stand Bunny—"

"Better than Tracy or Durance, anyhow," grinned Bob. "If you really mean it, Lovell—!"

"With all my heart."

"Then it's a merry go!"

Harry Lovell held out his hand, frankly, and Bob Rake gave him a grip. And that settled it.

And it is much to be feared that more time, during that afternoon's detention, was spent in cheery and friendly talk, than in transcribing Virgil. Certainly a great many of the thousand lines remained still to be done when five o'clock rang out from the clock-tower.

Algernon Aubrey St. Leger woke up with a start, from a nap on his new sofa in the top study.

"Hallo, dear old beans!" he yawned, as Harry Lovell came in with Bob Rake. "I almost think I dropped off. Tea-time, what?"

"Yes," said Harry.

"Bunny! Where's Bunny! Why hasn't that fat bouncer got tea ready?" exclaimed St. Leger, indignantly. "Bunny, you fat blighter—Bunny, you ravenous rabbit—"

"Oh! I say—"

"Get a move on, you slacking barrel, or you shan't have any tea. Can't you see we've got a guest?"

"A new study-mate!" said Harry.

Algy jumped up.

"How good! Delighted, old bean!" he exclaimed. "Welcome to the top study! Kick Bunny for me, will you?"

"Certainly," chuckled Bob.

"Yarooooooh!"

And quite a happy party sat down to tea in the top study—and the hatchet was buried for ever between the two juniors who had been the foes of the Fourth.

THE END.

(Next Monday's magnificent long complete school tale is entitled "The Tyrant of St. Kit's." Order two copies of "School and Sport" this week—one for yourself and one for your chum.)