

# THE SCHOOLBOY AUTHOR!

(See inside for the Grand Long Complete Story, describing how Frank Richards, the famous author, wrote his First Story at the School in the Backwoods.)

# The BOYS' FRIEND 1d.

See inside for "The Boys of the 'Bombay Castle'!" By Duncan Storm.

No. 856, Vol. XVII. New Series.]

ONE PENNY.

[Week Ending November 3rd, 1917.



"That fellow is innocent!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

## IN ANOTHER'S POWER!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story, dealing with the Adventures of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.

BY OWEN CONQUEST.

### The 1st Chapter. Great Preparations.

"Soot this way!"  
"Here you are!"  
"Some more glue!"  
"Good!"  
"Another bottle of paste!"  
"Right-ho!"  
Jimmy Silver, Lovell, Raby, and Newcome, the Fistical Four of the Classical side at Rookwood, were busy. In fact, they were very busy. Jimmy Silver was sitting by the fire, holding a bucket in one hand. The bucket contained some mysterious concoction, which Jimmy Silver

was laboriously stirring into a very weird mixture.  
Lovell and Raby and Newcome stood near at hand, handing forth various substances as they were required.  
"What about a little treacle?" suggested Newcome.  
"War-time," said Jimmy Silver, stirring hard. "Mustn't waste grub, you know."  
"Sorry," said Newcome quickly. "I forgot."  
"Little more water!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.  
"Good! Say when!"  
Newcome took a jug of water from

the table, and poured the liquid slowly into the bucket.  
The Classical captain stirred, and stirred, and stirred.  
Jimmy Silver's arm was beginning to ache from the exertion, but he kept on working the contents of the bucket into a stickier mess than ever.  
"My hat!" exclaimed the Classical captain. "Won't our dear friend Knowles be pleased!"  
"Rather!"  
"We'll teach him to pull our ears!"  
"What-ho!"  
"We'll show him that we're not going to put up with Prussianism here!"

"Good!"  
"I suppose he can't help being a rotter, seeing that he's a Modern," remarked Jimmy Silver casually.  
"My giddy aunt! Won't he look a picture when he's had this little lot over him!"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
Jimmy Silver released his hold of the bucket, and, sitting back in his chair, surveyed the sticky mess.  
"I think that'll do," he said meditatively. "We'll shove it in the cupboard, and come down for it after lights out."  
"Good bizney!"

"Lend a hand, Lovell, old son. This bucket's jolly heavy!"  
"Right-ho!"

Lovell lent a hand, and the bucket was deposited in the cupboard. Jimmy Silver locked the door, and put the key in his pocket.

The Fistical Four were feeling very pleased with themselves at that moment. Knowles, the unpopular prefect of the Modern side at Rookwood, had come down very heavily on the Classical chums.

Knowles had tweaked the juniors' ears, and, as Jimmy Silver had said, the ears of Classical fellows were not made to be pulled by a beastly Modern prefect.

Knowles must be shown the folly of his ways. Moral persuasion was no good, so some other scheme had to be thought out.

Hence the sticky mess in the bucket. The Fistical Four had worked hard to make that sticky mess; but, as it was all for the good of the cause, they did not complain.

The mixture was complete now, so all they had to do was to wait until lights out, then creep out of the dormitory, and throw the contents of the bucket over Knowles' head whilst he was asleep in bed.

"I've managed to nab the key of the door leading to the Modern passage," said Jimmy Silver. "All we've got to do is to bag the key of Knowles' study, so that he can't lock himself in."

"Oh, good!"  
"I saw Knowles go out about half an hour ago," remarked the Classical captain.

"Gone down to the Bird-in-Hand for a spree, I expect," said Lovell.

"Now's our chance, then."

"Good! Lead the way!"  
Jimmy Silver led the way out of the study, and downstairs to the quad, which was dark and deserted.

A fine rain was falling, but the Classical juniors were little troubled. They pelted across the quad and entered the Modern House.

In a few moments they were in the Sixth-Form passage, and making their way to the prefect's study.

Jimmy Silver knew Knowles' study very well.

He made straight for it, and almost jumped for joy as he saw the key was in the outside of the door.

He took it out quickly, and slipped it into his pocket.

"Might as well pop in and see Tommy Dodd & Co.," he remarked, as they left the Sixth-Form passage.

"Suppose we rag 'em while we're about it," suggested Lovell.

"Well, they have been coming it a bit too much lately," said Jimmy Silver. "It's time we took 'em down a peg or two."

"Rather!"  
"Come on, then, and don't make too much row. Won't do for them to hear us."

"All serene!"  
In another moment the Fistical Four entered the Fourth-Form passage in warlike moods.

Intense rivalry existed between the Modern and Classical juniors, and raggings were almost a daily occurrence at Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver pulled up short a few doors away from Tommy Dodd & Co.'s study.

Cries of anguish of a weird and wonderful nature could be plainly heard emanating from one of the studies.

"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "They've taken to pig-sticking in the Modern House!"

"Sounds as though somebody's been through it," remarked Lovell.

"It's in Tommy Dodd's study, too!"

"We ought to hold an inquiry into the matter."

(Continued on the next page.)





"Rather!"  
"Can't allow anything in the nature of torture to go on at Rookwood."  
"No jolly fear!"  
Jimmy Silver opened the door of Tommy Dodd's study, and looked in. He jumped back in surprise at sight of the Modern chums, their hands tucked under their arms, yelling at the tops of their voices.  
"Ow! Yow!" shrieked Tommy Dodd mournfully. "My fingers! Yow!"  
"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver in surprise. "What the dickens is up with you, Dobby?"  
"Yow-ow! Ow-wow-ow!"  
"Very pretty tune, I must say," remarked Jimmy Silver. "Try another record, Dobby!"  
"Yow! Ow-w-w-w! Oh, dear!"  
"Why, that's the same tune," said Jimmy Silver, grinning hugely.  
"Ow! Buzz off, you Classical rotters! Yow-ow!"  
"I always did say that this Modern show was a madhouse," remarked Lovell.

"Blessed lunatics!" said Newcome. "They ought to be under lock and key!"  
"Yow-ow-ow!" shrieked the Modern juniors.  
Jimmy Silver knitted his brows, and looked at his chums.  
"These silly idiots only seem to know about half a dozen words," he said calmly. "What do you think—"

"They're mad!" said Lovell.  
"Absolutely!" agreed Raby and Newcome.

"Ow! Yow! The rotten beast! The low-down Prussian!"  
"Hullo! Who's a rotten beast?"  
"Hullo! Who's a rotten beast?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Knowles, the rotter! Yow! Ow!" yelled Tommy Cook.  
"Faith an' hes a Hun!" said Tommy Doyle.  
"Oh, it's Knowles, is it!" said Jimmy Silver. "Knowles been piling it on—eh?"

"Yes, the brute! Yow!"  
Jimmy Silver wagged his finger at the Modern juniors.  
"That's what comes from being naughty boys, you know," he said blandly.

"Look here, Silver—"  
"Ha, ha, ha!"  
"It's all right for you idiots to laugh—" began Tommy Dodd miserably.

"Can't help it!" replied Jimmy Silver. "You kids look so jolly funny. Ha, ha, ha!"  
"Yah! You haven't got a rotten prefect like Knowles."

"No, and what's more, we don't want one!"  
"Ow! The rotten outsider! Yow-w-w-w!"

"Look here, Dobby!" said Jimmy Silver calmly. "You Modern kids ain't half up to snuff. You ought to have taken Knowles down a peg long before this."

"Br-r-r!" was Tommy Dodd's emphatic remark.  
"It's no good," went on Jimmy Silver blandly. "We Classical chaps will have to take Knowles in hand!"  
"Fat lot you Classical asses can do!" said Tommy Dodd contemptuously.

"Ha, ha, ha! You wait and see!"  
"What do you mean?"  
"Oh, we couldn't tell youngsters like you!" said Jimmy Silver. "You're far too young to be let into our wheezes!"

"Why, you Classical ass—"  
"Yah! Modern bounders—"  
"Look here—"  
"No fear!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "It fairly makes our eyes ache to look at you helpless kids. Come on, you fellows; let's get away from this madhouse!"

"Right-ho!"  
Tommy Dodd & Co. had now almost recovered from their punishment at the hands of Knowles, and were feeling eager to tackle their rivals.

Jimmy Silver & Co. thought it time to clear.

And they cleared—at a run, too. In another five minutes the Fistical Four were back in the end study, anxiously awaiting for the hour to arrive when they could carry out their great wheeze on the unpopular prefect of the Modern side at Rookwood.

### The 2nd Chapter. A Blow in the Dark.

"It's all right for you to talk, Mister Knowles—"  
"Oh, shut up, can't you?"  
"But think of me. Think of my poor wife and kiddies—"  
"Hang your wife and kiddies!"

It was a very heated altercation that was taking place between Knowles, the Modern prefect, and a man of a very horsey appearance, who ambled along at his side.

The two were walking along the side of the bank of the river that ran through the woods. It was dark, and rain was falling hard.

Knowles dug his hands deep into his pockets, and endeavoured to shake off his unwelcome companion.

But the unwelcome companion would not be shaken off.

He clutched the prefect by the arm and held on tightly.

"Mister Knowles," he said, in pitiful tones, "haven't you got a bit o' sympathy in you? Think of my wife and—"

"Blow your wife!"  
"But where is she going to get food from? I haven't any money to—"

"You've got plenty of money, Jorkins!"  
"I haven't, Mister Knowles—really I haven't!" said Mr. Jorkins cunningly. "I thought you would be sure to pay—"

"Hang it!" snapped Knowles impatiently. "Didn't I give you five pounds yesterday?"  
"But what's five pounds? They went to pay bills—"

"Shouldn't owe bills!"  
Mr. Jorkins reeled unsteadily on his feet. Mr. Jorkins had spent the evening at the Bird-in-Hand. He had certainly not been drinking lemonade. Hence his unsteadiness.

He leered in the prefect's face.  
"I don't want to be hard on you, Mister Knowles," he mumbled. "I'm a most easy-going fellow as a rule. But this time I insist upon your paying me—"

"Didn't I give you five pounds last night?"  
"Yes, but you haven't settled up that little account over the Romphome Stakes, you know. Ten quid you owe me, and—"

"Haven't I told you a dozen times that you shall have it within a week?" exclaimed Knowles.

"It ain't no good, Mister Knowles," said Mr. Jorkins artfully. "My wife and kids will be in the workhouse by then."

"Oh, rot!"  
"It's the honest truth. I must have that ten pounds now, or—"

Knowles endeavoured to break away from the man, but Mr. Jorkins held on tight.

"You can't have it!" he cried uneasily. "I haven't a single penny-piece on me."

"You lie, Mister Knowles! You lie!"  
"I don't, I tell you. You and your blessed pals have skinned me out!"

"Nonsense!" sneered Mr. Jorkins. "Fellows like you, Mister Knowles, have always got money. You're rich, you are, and—"

"Oh, bosh!"  
"But it's true, Mister Knowles. You're only having me, I know. I expect you've got a wad of notes hidden in your pocket!"

"I haven't. I've told you so before."  
"Well, you've got 'em up at the school, then."  
"Not a penny-piece."  
"Some of your pals have got money, then."  
"Hang my pals! I can't beg money from them."  
"You can take it," suggested Mr. Jorkins slowly.

Knowles gave the man a fierce glare.  
"Don't be a silly fool, Jorkins!" he said. "I can't steal money. Look here! It's getting late. I must be getting back. I'll let you have that ten quid within a week."  
"No good, Mister Knowles," said Jorkins. "I want that money this very night."  
"You can't have it. I—"  
"Werry well. I shall have to come up and see your 'Eadmaster, then," said Mr. Jorkins. "I've got to 'ave that money somehow."

"Don't be a silly fool! Let me go!"

"Not, yet. I'm comin' with you, and—"

"You're not coming with me."  
"Worry well; I will go by myself. I know the way, and I'm sure your 'Ead will be werry pleased to see me, especially when I tell 'im—"

"Can't you be reasonable, Jorkins?" begged Knowles.  
"I've been reasonable too long, Mister Knowles," said the rascal. "You've toyed—yes, toyed with me, that's what you've done. But you can tread on a worm, and it will turn. I'm going—"

"You're not!"  
Knowles clenched his fist hard, and his eyes blazed.

"Oh, ain't I?" said Mr. Jorkins, with a sniff. "We'll see about that. Get out of the way, you young whippersnapper. I'm going straight to your 'Ead now, and this werry minute!"

"Stand back!" commanded Knowles, his temper rising.  
"That I won't! I'm—"

"You're going back the way you came, or else I'll give you a thundering good thrashing!"  
"Hoh! That's the game, is it?"

"Be careful!" warned Knowles. "I'm desperate. You've worked me up, and—"

"Get out of my way!" ordered Mr. Jorkins. "I shall 'ave to tell your 'Ead—"  
Smack!

Out swung the prefect's fist full into the leering face of the rascal.  
"Ow!" grunted Mr. Jorkins, as he staggered backwards. "You wait. I'll—"

The rascal ambled towards the enraged prefect, and aimed his fist at the latter's head.

Mr. Jorkins' eyesight, owing to the fact that he had imbibed a good quantity of strong liquor that evening, was none too clear.

His fist passed a good foot away from Knowles' head.

In another moment the prefect had closed with his adversary.

Thud!  
Once again Knowles' fist shot out. It caught the rascal full between the eyes, and he staggered—staggered towards the slippery bank of the river.

Knowles stepped forward in an endeavour to clutch hold of the man.

He reached out with his hand, but he was too late.  
Splash!

The burly form of Mr. Jorkins shot into the river, and he yelled frantically as he became immersed in the water.

Knowles peered over the dark waters.  
"Jorkins!" he yelled.  
"Here I am!" screamed the man. "Help! Help! I'm drowning!"

The voice sounded some distance away from the prefect to the right.

Knowles stepped a few yards along the bank.  
"Where are you, Jorkins?" he shouted. "Where—"

"Ere I am!" yelled the man. "I'm being carried—yarooogh!—down the stream. Yow-ow-ow! I shall be drowned!"

Knowles shivered from fright. The man was caught in the mill-stream. He was being carried to his death. He—

"Jorkins! Jorkins!" he screamed. This time there was no reply.

Knowles strained his eyes in an endeavour to catch sight of the man's form. But all was dark, and the prefect could see nothing but blackness all round him.

"Jorkins!" he shouted anxiously. "Can't you hear me?"  
Still no reply.  
Knowles dashed backwards and forwards, yelling at the top of his voice.

he had been the cause of another man's death!

It was terrible!  
It was not until at least an hour had passed that he rose to his feet, and walked aimlessly towards the school. These were moments of bitter anguish to the bullying prefect. There were still more bitter moments to come.

### The 3rd Chapter. A Surprise for the Fistical Four.

Boom!  
Eleven o'clock struck out from the old clock-tower at Rookwood.

In the Classical dormitory all was quiet and peaceful.

Jimmy Silver sat up in bed, and gazed around.

"You chaps awake?" he said, in an undertone.  
"All serene!" sang out Lovell.  
"Newcome! You awake?"  
"What-ho!" replied Newcome, stepping out of bed. "Just putting my slippers on."

"Same here," said Raby.  
"Oh, good! Don't make any more noise than you can help. We don't want the other chaps to wake up."  
"All right!"

In another moment the Fistical Four were trooping silently out of the dormitory, with Jimmy Silver in the lead.

Straight to the end study the Classics went.

Jimmy Silver had taken his torchlight to bed with him, and he shone the light into the study. He found the key of the cupboard, and, fitting it into the lock, pulled the door open.

"I say, this little lot is jolly heavy," said the Classical captain, as he dragged the bucket out.

"I'll give you a hand!" said Lovell eagerly.

The two of them took firm grips on the handle of the bucket. Then they left the study, and wended their way along the passage which gave access to the Modern buildings.

The door which separated the two Houses was locked, but Jimmy Silver's foresight in securing the key enabled them to unlock the door and pass through in the direction of Knowles' study.

At last they arrived outside the prefect's door.

"Don't give the rotter-time to jump out of bed," whispered Jimmy Silver quietly.

"Not likely!" said Lovell.  
"Give me your torchlight, Jimmy," said Newcome, holding out his hand. "We must have a look at our dear friend Knowles when we've swamped him."

Jimmy Silver gave his torchlight to Newcome.  
"Here you are!" he said. "Now then, Lovell, let go of the bucket."

"But—"  
"I can lift it all right," said Jimmy Silver. "If two of us hold it, we'll probably muck up the whole business."

"Oh, all right!" said Lovell.  
"Are you ready?"  
"Yes."  
"Then go!"

And Jimmy Silver went.  
He flung open the door of Knowles' study, and rushed inside. He knew exactly the position of the prefect's bed, and he made straight for it.

Swish! Swish!  
Jimmy Silver upended the bucket, and the sticky mess it contained squelched out over the prefect's bed.

It was dark inside the room, and Jimmy Silver could only see the bare outline of the bed. However, he was pretty sure he had upended the bucket over Knowles' recumbent form.

The Fistical Four waited.  
They had quite expected to hear the prefect's gurgling, spluttering voice in the darkness. But the only sound they could hear was the sound of their own breathings.

"Good heavens!" gasped Jimmy Silver, in amazement.  
Wild thoughts filled Jimmy Silver's mind at that moment.  
What was the matter?  
Why hadn't Knowles spluttered and gurgled, as he had expected?

The others were quite as startled as Jimmy Silver. Newcome, in fact, had quite forgotten about the torchlight he was gripping in his hand.

"That's done it properly!" said Lovell, recovering from the shock.

"Absolutely!" concurred Newcome and Raby.

"I reckon we'd better clear off before Knowles returns," said Jimmy Silver wisely. "Ten to one, the rotter's gone on the spree. We ought to have found out first whether he was in bed."

"Just like you to forget the most important thing!" said Lovell disgustedly.  
"Why, I—"

"Oh, don't argue!" said Newcome. "Let's clear. We don't want Knowles to catch us here."  
"No fear!"  
"Hullo! There's somebody coming!"

"By Jove!"  
The sound of footsteps could be plainly heard in the passage without.

The Fistical Four stood rooted to the floor of the prefect's study.

Their escape was cut off; they could not hide. They were caught in the act, and they shivered slightly at the thought of the punishment which Knowles would dole out to them.

Jimmy Silver moved towards the door, and switched on the light. Next instant he started back in surprise as the figure of Knowles, the prefect, entered the doorway.

Knowles' face was as white as a ghost. His eyes were dim, and his clothes and boots were covered in thick mud.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

Knowles fairly shook at sight of the Fistical Four.

"Wh-what are you j-j-juniors doing here?" he managed to stammer out.

"We—er—we thought you were in bed," faltered Jimmy Silver.

"Oh!"  
"We're awfully sorry, Knowles, that we've mucked up your bed," said Jimmy Silver awkwardly. "We wouldn't have done it if we had known you weren't there—I mean—that is—"

"You'd better cut off to bed, I think," said Knowles faintly.

"We're awfully sorry, Knowles, we are really," said Jimmy Silver apologetically.

Knowles was making a big effort to compose himself.

"Oh, all right," he said quietly. "Get back to your dormitory."  
"B-b-but," said Jimmy Silver haltingly. "Aren't you g-g-going to punish us?"

"Eh? What's that?" said Knowles dazedly.

"Aren't you going to lam us for mucking up your bed?"

"Oh, my bed; I forgot," muttered Knowles, sinking down into a chair. "You can take a hundred lines each!"

"A h-h-hundred lines!" said Jimmy Silver, astounded.

A hundred lines!  
The Fistical Four were amazed. A hundred whacks with the cane was usually more in Knowles' line.

"Yes, a hundred lines I said," murmured the prefect. "For goodness' sake clear out, or—"

The Sixth-Former lowered his head.  
"You're not going to cane us, then?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"N-n-no."  
"We're awfully, beastly sorry, Knowles, really—"  
"Oh, for goodness' sake, clear out!"

"All right!"  
The Classical chums walked slowly out of the prefect's study, wondering what ever was the matter with the prefect.



## The 4th Chapter.

## The Price of Silence.

Knowles did not sleep that night. For one thing his bed was not suitable for sleeping in, and for another, he had no inclination to sleep.

When dawn broke he still lay in the easy-chair, his eyes half-closed. The events of the previous night remained visible before him, and, try as he would, he could not sleep.

Another day had dawned, and what was it to bring to him?

He rose to his feet, and making for the window, looked out across the cheerless quad, half expecting to see a police-inspector entering at the gates.

Mack, the old school-porter, was just opening the gates, but there was no sign of a man in blue.

Knowles was not consoled.

His fate was merely being deferred. It was bound to come sooner or later. Ere long, Jorkins would be missed, a search would be made for him, and—

Then his dead body would be found in the river, and the police would get on the track of the person who had sent him there.

What was he to do?

Should he run away from school? Supposing he did, where could he go? There was no chance of getting out of the country, and, if he went up North or down into the West country, the police would probably seek him out.

But to stay at Rookwood!

That was bound to bring disaster. He must go; he must go at once, and put as many miles between him and the school in the least possible time.

He grabbed up a bag and filled it with one or two things for his immediate requirements. Then he jammed a cap on his head, and left his study.

The school was not up yet, and Knowles encountered nobody as he made his way downstairs.

He crossed the quad, and, as the sound of voices raised in argument could be plainly heard, he stopped in his stride.

"What I see is this 'ere," came the voice of Mack, the porter. "You can't see nobody at this time o' the morning."

"I tell you I must see Mister Knowles at once," replied a coarse voice, which the prefect did not recognize.

"E ain't hup yet," declared Mack irritably. "An' besides, I don't suppose he'd want to ave anything to do with the likes o' you."

"Oh, won't he? Mister Knowles wants to see me most pertickler, I give you my word. I'm going in to—"

"You ain't!" snapped Mack resolutely. "My orders is—"

"Ang your orders, mate," snapped the other. "I wants to see Mister Knowles, and I'm going to see him!"

"Look 'ere—"

Mack made a determined effort to prevent the man from entering the quad, but Mack's strength was not up to that of the early-morning visitor's.

The man pushed the porter's outstretched hand aside, and passed through the gates.

Mack stared after him, and caught sight of Knowles standing in the centre of the quad.

"Ang me if that ain't Mister Knowles!" he mumbled.

"Hoh! Is that Mister Knowles?" said the visitor.

Knowles looked all round him for an avenue of escape. But there was none.

Before the prefect could move, the visitor had approached towards him.

"I understand as your name is Knowles," he said craftily. There was an evil gleam in his eye, and the prefect shuddered as he looked at the man.

"No," faltered Knowles uneasily.

"My name is—er—er—"

"Now, come off that," said the visitor warningly. "You can't kid me. I wants to have a quiet talk with you, my son. Just take me somewhere private, and we'll discuss things."

"But—"

"There ain't no buts about it. Do as I tell you, or else I'll tell everybody 'ere that you—"

"Shut up, you silly fool!" exclaimed Knowles hotly. "Come over here!"

Knowles piloted the man over to a secluded part of the quad to a seat beneath a row of beeches, now leafless and bare.

"What the dickens do you want?" whispered Knowles nervously.

"Oh, I only wants to 'ave a quiet chat," said the visitor.

"What about?"

The man laughed coarsely.

"Now, don't try and be funny, Mister Knowles," he said. "You

don't mean ter say you don't know what I've come to see you for?"

"N-n-no!"

"Hoh! Well, perhaps I'd better tell you I saw you down by the river last night, and—"

Knowles started involuntarily.

"Ah! I'd thought, that'd do the trick," said the man cunningly. "Now, look 'ere, I'm not a 'ard chap, I ain't. I'm always willing to do something for other people if they'll do something for me."

"What are you driving at?" asked Knowles haltingly.

"Well, what I mean is, if you care to pay me well, I don't mind keepin' mum about you being a mur—"

"Shut up, man, for Heaven's sake!" snapped Knowles fearfully.

"Oh, all right. I didn't mean to say nothin', only—well, we understand one another, don't we? I know you didn't mean to kill—"

"Hush!" muttered Knowles, between his teeth.

"All right. There's nothing to get jumpy about. I sha'n't say nothin' if you pay me well."

"Pay you?"

"Yes. Pay me five pounds now, and I'll keep my mouth shut for evermore. Five pounds ain't much for a gent like you."

"Great Scott! I—"

"Now pay up and look smart!"

"I c-c-can't—I—"

"Very well, I shall have to tell the police that—"

"Don't, for Heaven's sake, man!"

moaned the unhappy prefect. "Be

Leggett, the cad of the Modern Fourth, had played the eavesdropper. He had heard every word of the conversation between Knowles and the rascal who knew his secret.

Leggett's face was pale as he crossed the quad.

The cad of the Fourth was making towards the House, when the Fistical Four came out. They looked at him in surprise.

"My hat! What's the matter with your face, Leggett?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Oh—er—nothing!" faltered Leggett nervously.

"Anybody would think you'd been seeing ghosts!"

"I've seen something a jolly sight worse," said Leggett.

"Eh?"

"I've heard something that would make you chaps' hair stand on end."

"Oh, rats!"

"But it would," said Leggett, who could never keep a secret for any length of time. "Supposing you knew that—that—"

Leggett halted.

"Well, get on with it," said Jimmy Silver impatiently.

"Supposing you knew a fellow at Rookwood had committed a crime—in fact, had murdered somebody?"

The Fistical Four eyed the cad of the Fourth up and down.

"You've gone dotty, Leggett," said Lovell.

"Absolutely stark raving mad!" added Newcome quickly.

"I tell you, I'm as sane as you

There was a very determined light in Jimmy Silver's eyes at that moment. Leggett noticed it, and he realised that the Classical captain meant business.

The cad of the Fourth turned on his heel, and went into the Modern House. Jimmy Silver's threat had made an impression on the cad, and for the time being he controlled his eagerness to spread his yarn throughout the school.

As soon as Leggett had gone, the Fistical Four looked at one another questioningly.

"Well?" said Jimmy Silver inquiringly.

"It's all a lot of silly rot!" declared Lovell.

"Of course it is," agreed Jimmy Silver. "But, all the same, it's jolly funny about Knowles. He looked pretty strange last night, but—but—"

"But he's not capable of committing a murder," concluded Newcome.

"Quite so," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "He's a beastly outsider, and all that, but he's not blackguard enough to kill anybody."

"Of course not!"

"And yet it's evident that something's happened," said Jimmy Silver. "Knowles has had a shock of some sort, and—"

Clang!

The bell for breakfast tolled out at that moment, and further discussion of the mystery was therefore postponed.

"Because your Uncle James says you've got to get them done."

"But—"

"Br-r-r!" snorted Jimmy Silver. And with that he pulled out pen and paper, and set to work.

Seeing that their leader was immovable in the matter, Lovell and Raby and Newcome followed suit.

For the next half-hour the only sound to be heard in the end study was the scratch, scratch of four fast-travelling pens.

"I'm done!" said Jimmy Silver, at length.

"Sha'n't be a minute," said Lovell.

"Buck up, then," said Jimmy Silver. "We shall have the dinner-bell going soon."

"Here you are!"

Jimmy Silver gathered up the impressions, and, leaving the study, wended his way in the direction of the Modern quarters.

Tommy Dodd & Co. came out of the Modern House just as Jimmy Silver entered.

"Just the chap I want to see," said Tommy Dodd. "You Classical asses been ragging Knowles?"

"What do you want to know for?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Well, it's jolly funny," said Tommy Dodd, nodding his head. "Knowles hasn't shown himself this morning. Frampton says he's ill."

"Oh!"

"Leggett looked into Knowles' study before lessons, and he says that there's some filthy-looking mess on Knowles' bed. It appears that somebody's been ragging him, and carried it too far."

"That's funny!" said Jimmy Silver.

"It's more than funny," said Tommy Dodd; "and I shall be jolly sorry for you Classical asses if you're the guilty party!"

"Oh, rats!" snapped Jimmy Silver; and he dashed into the Modern House.

Right up to the Sixth-Form passage he went, and tapped at the door of Knowles' study.

No answer came from within.

Jimmy Silver tapped again, but still there was no sound.

The junior turned the handle of the door, and walked slowly into the study.

He pulled up suddenly, for, seated in the easy-chair, his face resting in his hands, was the bullying prefect.

The bed was still in a state of disorder. The concoction which the Fistical Four had taken so much trouble to mix the previous evening was still lying on the coverlet of the bed.

Knowles did not look up.

Jimmy Silver coughed, and moved his feet. Knowles immediately raised his head, and gazed vacantly at the Classical junior.

The prefect's face was drawn and haggard, and his eyes were red.

"Well?" he said.

"I've brought the lines," said Jimmy Silver slowly.

"What lines?" asked Knowles surprisedly.

"The lines you gave us last night," explained Jimmy Silver. "You remember, don't you?"

"I—er—yes, all right," stammered the prefect. "Put 'em down!"

Jimmy Silver put the lines down on the table.

"I say, Knowles," he said, "shall I shift this muck off the bed? We're awfully sorry, you know, and—"

"No, no!" snapped Knowles. "Leave it alone."

"But it won't take me a minute," protested Jimmy Silver.

"I'd rather you didn't."

"But—"

"Oh, hang you!" Knowles made a despairing gesture. "Get out of my study, before—"

Never before had Jimmy Silver seen such a fierce, desperate look in the prefect's face.

The Classical captain made for the door of the study at once, and took his departure. He thought he was safer outside than inside.

Firmly convinced that Knowles was either ill or mad, Jimmy Silver hastened to rejoin his chums.

The 6th Chapter.  
Worse than Ever.

"I must have five pounds at once!"

Catesby of the Sixth gazed at Knowles in amazement. If Knowles had asked for the world Catesby could not have looked more surprised.

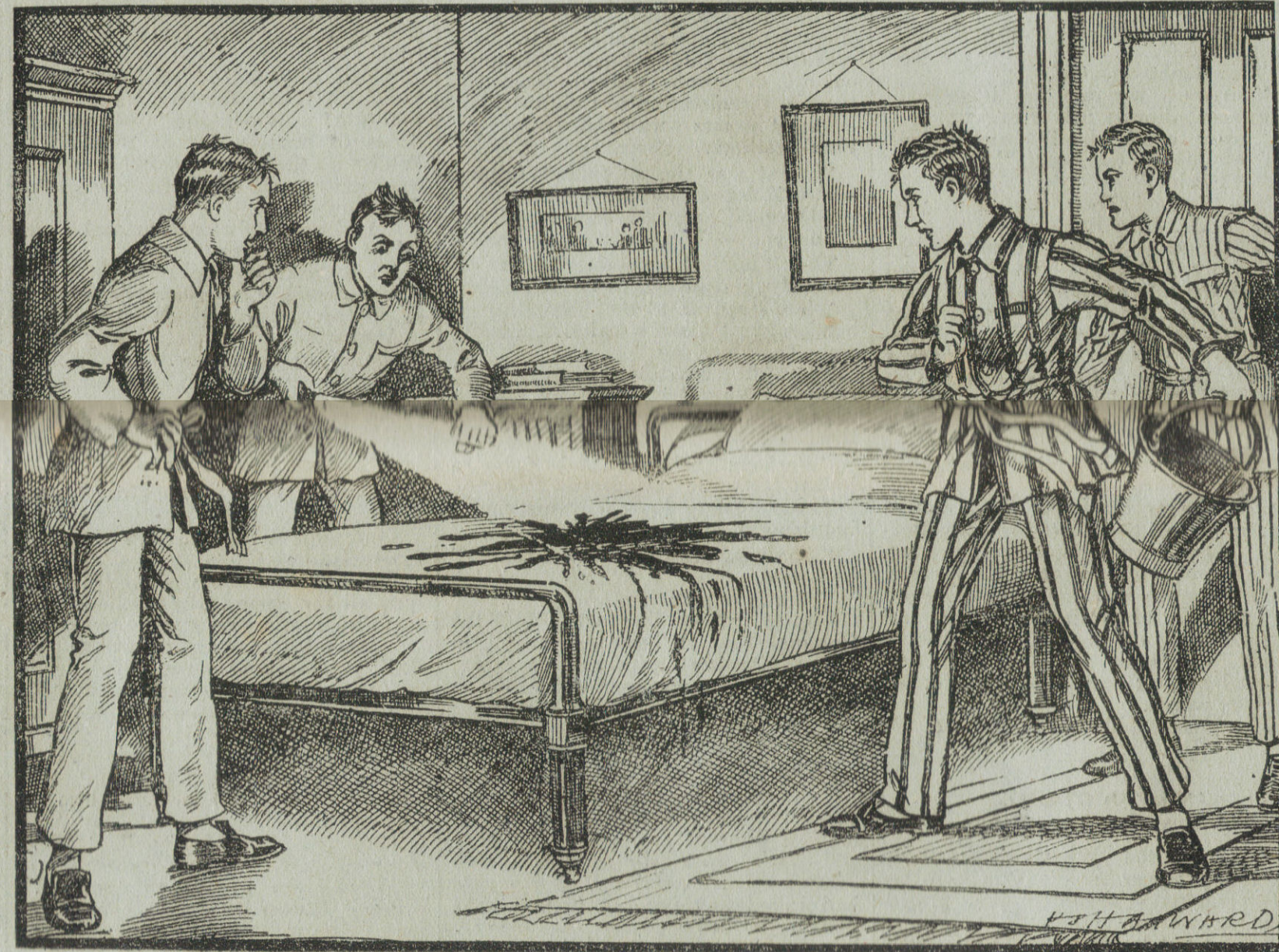
"My dear Knowles," said Catesby, "I simply haven't got it."

"Oh, dear!" moaned Knowles despairingly. "What ever shall I do?"

"Why the dickens don't you tell me what's happened?" asked Catesby.

"I can't—I can't!" groaned Knowles. "I must have five pounds at once. Get me the money at once, and, for Heaven's sake, don't ask questions!"

"But why—"



"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, starting back in surprise as the rays of the torchlight rested on the bed. "He's not here!"

merciful. "I haven't got a single penny-piece. I—"

The man looked up inquiringly.

"I suppose you can get it?" he asked.

"I—er—"

"Borrow off your pals, I mean."

"I don't know. You see—"

"As a last resource, you might steal—"

"Steal! Good heavens! I couldn't—I couldn't—"

"Better than being tried for murder, you know," said the man, nodding his head. "You'd better think it over, Mister Knowles. I'll meet you outside the school at three o'clock. Don't try any hanky-panky tricks, mind. I shall be watching the school, and if you attempt to bunk—well, you can guess what will happen then."

"Good heavens!"

Knowles sank back on the seat as the man rose to his feet and took his departure. Smiling evilly to himself, the rascal walked out through the gates into the road.

Old Mack looked after the man in amazement.

"My eye! Things are 'appening with a vengeance!"

And the old porter was pretty well correct.

The 5th Chapter.  
Very Mysterious.

No sooner had Knowles gone back to his study than the figure of a junior emerged from behind a big elm-tree in the quad.

chaps," said Leggett uneasily. "I didn't think you'd believe me, but, all the same, it's true—dead true!"

"Who's the giddy murderer?" asked Jimmy Silver casually.

"Knowles."

Jimmy Silver stood thunderstruck. All of a sudden he remembered how strange Knowles had been the previous night. Was there any connection between that fact and Leggett's amazing yarn?

No, it was impossible. Blackguard and bully as the Modern prefect was, there was a limit to his rascality.

"You've been dreaming, Leggett!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver slowly.

"Bosh!" said Leggett sneeringly.

"If you don't believe me, you'd better wait until the bobbies come to arrest Knowles. They'll find out soon who killed the man, and—"

"Shut up!" cried Jimmy Silver, advancing towards the cad of the Fourth in a threatening manner. "If you say another word, I'll—"

"I'll say just what I like!" said Leggett, with a sniff.

"You'll do nothing of the kind!" declared Jimmy Silver determinedly. "If you say a single word about this matter to anybody, we'll give you the biggest hiding of your life!"

"What-ho!" said Lovell and Newcome.

"It's all a lot of bosh you've been talking," said Jimmy Silver. "But, all the same, it's not going to be spread all over the school. Say one word, and we'll rag you baldheaded! Mind, I mean what I say!"

The Fistical Four went in to breakfast.

Jimmy Silver said very little during the meal. He was thinking of Leggett's amazing story. It was all nonsense, of course, and yet—

And yet, supposing it was true? Supposing Knowles had really committed some desperate crime? Supposing the police came to Rookwood and arrested him?

It was a terrible thought. It would mean that Rookwood would be disgraced for ever. The school would receive a bad name, from which there would be no escape.

Jimmy Silver could not forget the matter, and during lessons that morning he greatly surprised Mr. Bootles by his absentmindedness. The consequence was that the Classical captain was given two hundred lines for his inattention.

Directly lessons were over, the Fistical Four went straight to their study.

"Look here," said Jimmy Silver. "I'm going to get those lines done for Knowles, and take them along to him."

"They can wait," said Lovell.

"That's where you're mistaken, old son. They can't wait. I want an excuse to go to Knowles' study so as to see what he's like this morning."

"Surely you don't think there's any truth in Leggett's yarn?"

"Er—er—no, of course not," said Jimmy Silver haltingly.

"Well, why not leave them?"





(Continued from the previous page.)

"Hurry up, man, for goodness' sake! Get it from anywhere. Borrow it from Frampton or Medway." "They're as hard up as I am." "Oh, heavens!" Knowles sank helplessly back into the chair. His whole attitude was that of a hunted criminal. Catesby gave one look at him, and left the study. Knowles' condition had made a keen impression on Catesby. Bounder as Catesby was, he could not bear to see his chum in such a downcast mood. He went straight to Frampton's study. "We simply must help him," he said to Frampton. "Goodness knows what he's done, but he looks absolutely broken up!" "He looked potty when I saw him," remarked Frampton. "Potty or not," said Catesby slowly, "he seems to be in a pretty desperate mood. He says he must have five pounds at once—"

Coombe. "If they hear one word, I'm—" "Yes, you're done, of course," said Barton artfully. "I won't say nothin' providing you let me have five of the werry best on Saturday." "All right." "You won't forget?" "For goodness' sake, hurry up and go!" said Knowles impatiently. "They'll hear you in a minute!" "You promise to let me have five pounds on Saturday?" "Oh, yes, yes!" "Very well." Joe Barton ambled off. Knowles turned quickly on his heel, and entered the gates of the school. Jimmy Silver & Co. had not been more than twenty yards away when the blackmailer had left the prefect. Jimmy Silver's keen ears had caught the mention of "five pounds on Saturday." "My hat!" he exclaimed to his chums. "Did you hear that?" "What-ho!" said Lovell. "That low-down ruffian is blackmailing Knowles." "That accounts for Knowles being so pippish." "No doubt about it." "Suppose we rag the bounder!" suggested Jimmy Silver eagerly. "Jolly good idea!" said Lovell. "Duck him in the pond!" "What-ho!" The Fistical Four started in pursuit of Mr. Joey Barton. At the same moment three juniors—Conroy, Pons, and Van Ryn—came round the side of the school. "Hallo! What's the excitement about?" asked Conroy. "We're going to give a chap a good ducking for sponging on Knowles!" explained Jimmy Silver hurriedly. "Eh, what?" "Follow on behind!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. Thoroughly mystified, the Colonial Co. joined in the quest for Joey Barton. The rascal happened to turn round, and caught sight of the juniors. There were warlike expressions on at least four of the juniors' faces, and Joey Barton did not like the look of them. He took to his heels, and started to pelt down the road for all he was worth. The juniors followed in pursuit.

**The 7th Chapter.**  
**A Case for P.-c. Boggs.**  
"Ere, leggo! What's the game?" Jimmy Silver took a firm grip on Joey Barton's shoulder, and pulled him backwards. "We want to have a quiet talk with you," said Jimmy Silver emphatically. "Whaffor?" "You've been sponging on one of the fellows at our school." "And supposing I've?" "You've got to stop it." Joey Barton grunted, and looked at each of the seven juniors in turn. "Hoh!" he growled. "I've got to stop it, 'ave I? And who's goin' to stop me?" "We are," said Jimmy Silver promptly. "Chaps like you have no right to come near the school. We're goin' to show you what we shall do with you every time we catch you near here." "Wot?" "We're goin' to duck you in the pond!" declared Jimmy Silver firmly. "And we'll duck you every time you come near here. Collar him, you fellows!" The fellows collared the rascal, and in a moment he was struggling helplessly in the hands of seven sturdy, determined juniors. "Ow! Yow! Leggo!" yelled Joey Barton. "Fetch him along!" ordered Jimmy Silver. "Stoppit!" Joey Barton struggled and raved, all to no purpose. He was carried along the road right up to the edge of the pond. "Now," said Jimmy Silver, "when I give the word, pitch him into the water!" "Good!" "Go!" Jimmy Silver gave the order, and Joey Barton was hurled with a loud splash in the middle of the pond.

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the juniors. The pond was not very deep, and Joey Barton was able to stand on the bottom. Water streamed off his face in rivulets as he shook his fist at the laughing juniors. "You can laugh!" he roared. "But you wait. You young himps will 'ave to suffer for this!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "You'll look jolly funny," growled Joey Barton, as he struggled towards the bank, "when the coppers march up to your school and arrest one of your pals for murder!" "Murder!" The juniors gasped with surprise. The humorous expressions on their faces disappeared immediately. They were looking as solemn as judges. "What are you talking about?" asked Jimmy Silver. "Hoh!" grunted Joey Barton confidently. "I suppose you don't know that one o' your pals killed a man the other night?" "Don't talk rot!" "It's true!" snapped the rogue. "I knocked a man into the river last night, and drowned 'im. I saw it with my own eyes, and—" "Bosh!" exclaimed the juniors in chorus. "All right! You ask Mister Knowles if it ain't true. 'E knows what 'e did, and—" "Knowles!" "Yes, that's the name o' the chap who did it!" said Joey Barton gloatingly. "And now I'm going to the police-station to tell 'em all about it!" "My hat!" The juniors stood dumbfounded. They looked at one another without speaking, and Joey Barton, stepping out of the pond, walked down the road in the direction of Coombe. The juniors watched him go, thunderstruck. "What was the silly idiot talking about?" asked Conroy, mystified. "Dunno!" replied Jimmy Silver. "And yet—" The Classical captain broke off abruptly, and turned to Lovell. "Don't appeal to me," said Lovell helplessly. "I can't make it out any more than you can." "The chap must have been dotty!" ventured Van Ryn. "Fancy talking about Knowles committing a murder!" "Perhaps he's escaped from a lunatic asylum!" suggested Pons. Jimmy Silver looked at his chums inquiringly. "Shall we tell them all we know?" he asked. "Might as well." Jimmy Silver forthwith told the Colonial Co. of their adventure at Knowles' study the previous evening, and also the amazing story which Leggett had told them that morning. "My opinion is," said Jimmy Silver sagely, "that Knowles really thinks he has committed a murder." "Funny we haven't heard anything about a body being found!" remarked Conroy. "That's just the point," said Jimmy Silver cleverly. "If Knowles had killed anybody, or caused anybody to be drowned, for that matter, his disappearance would have been bound to have been noticed, and we should have heard something about it. As it is—" "We've heard nothing," concluded Lovell. "Quite so," said Jimmy Silver. "Now, knowing that Knowles really thinks he has caused somebody's death, this blessed rascal has been blackmailing him." "My word!" "D'you think I'm right, then?" "Rather!" "Oh good!" said Jimmy Silver. "I don't know whether the chap will carry out his threat and go to the police-station; but, all the same, we're going to track him and see where he goes." "Lead on, Macduff!" The seven juniors started down the road in the direction of Coombe. They were within two hundred yards of the police-station when they caught sight of P.-c. Boggs and another constable making in the direction of Rookwood. "By Jove," exclaimed Jimmy Silver, "they're soon on the track! Keep your eyes open for the other chap!" The juniors gazed all round them for sight of Joey Barton. "My hat!" exclaimed Lovell.

"There he goes. He's just crossing that field over there." "Don't let him see us!" warned Jimmy Silver. The juniors' knowledge of scoutcraft stood them in good stead at this moment. They were able to keep the man in view without him catching sight of them. Across three fields Joey Barton went, and then at length he entered the woods. Owing to the fact that the juniors were able to hide behind the trees, they approached much nearer to their quarry. At length he made straight for a small hut, and entered by the only door it contained. Jimmy Silver crawled along on hands and knees until he lay beneath the window. He listened, and very soon the sound of voices became audible to his ears. "It's no good, Jorkins," Jimmy Silver heard Barton say. "There ain't much chance of gettin' any more money out o' that young feller!" "What do you mean?" snapped Jorkins. "Why," explained Joey Barton, "e'd just paid me five pounds, and I 'ad just told 'im that 'e'd 'ave to find another five by Saturday, when seven young rips grabbed 'old o' me and chucked me into the pond!" "Well, that doesn't make any difference." "Oh, don't it!" growled Barton savagely. "But they told me they'd do the same to me again if I went near to the school!" "What did you do?" "I went straight to the police and put 'em on that feller Knowles' track!" "You silly fool!" exclaimed Jorkins. "What did you want to do that for? We might 'ave got hundreds of pounds out of that chap! Whilst he thought he'd killed me, he would have paid up till further orders. And now—" "And now we've got to make ourselves scarce, mate." "Yes, you silly fool!" Mr. Jorkins strode towards the door of the hut and pulled open the door. At that same moment Jimmy Silver beckoned to his chums.

**The 8th Chapter.**  
**Cleared of Suspicion.**

"Collar 'em!" shouted Jimmy Silver. The juniors dashed into the fray excitedly. The two men were of hefty build, but, all the same, they had a strong opposition in seven sturdy juniors. "Don't let 'em go, whatever you do!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "No jolly fear!" cried Lovell. "No you don't, you scoundrel! We've got you, and—" "Hang you!" exclaimed Jorkins, struggling to get away from the three juniors, who were holding him in grips of iron. "Not yet!" said Lovell. "Now, Jimmy, what's the next move?" "Drag 'em up to the school!" ordered Jimmy Silver. "This fellow here"—he indicated Jorkins—"is the chap Knowlesy is supposed to have killed!" "Phew!" "They've been blackmailing him for all they're worth," went on Jimmy Silver. "But we'll soon put a stopper to their little games. Quick, march!" The two villains struggled furiously, but to no avail. The seven juniors had all their work cut out to prevent the men escaping, but they held on like grim death. Yard by yard they progressed the distance back to Rookwood. Many juniors were waiting in the road, with pale and serious faces, and they gasped with amazement at the sight of the Classical juniors and their captives. "Hallo!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "Whatever are you doing with these brutes?" "Knowles been carted off yet?" asked Jimmy Silver, grinning hugely. "No," replied Tommy Dodd. "He's in the Head's study with P.-c. Boggs, and—I say, Silver, have you heard?" "Heard what?" "What—what Knowles is supposed to have done." "Ha, ha, ha!" laughed Jimmy Silver. "Don't look so pippish, Doddy, old son. We'll soon get Knowlesy cleared. You know, it wants clever chaps, like us Classics, to get to the bottom of a matter of this sort." "What are you driving at?" "Give us a hand to get these bounders into the quad," said Jimmy Silver. "You'll have a big surprise in a few minutes." "But—" "Hang your butts! Give us a hand!" Tommy Dodd & Co. lent a hand,

and the two scoundrels were dragged through the gates into the quad. Once inside the gates they pulled up short, for coming towards them was Knowles, in the custody of P.-c. Boggs and another constable. "Stop!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, stepping forward. "That fellow is innocent!" "You know nothing about it, Master Silver," said P.-c. Boggs. "Please step aside, and allow me to do my duty. It's a painful one, but—" "Blow your duty!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver hotly. "You've arrested Knowles for having caused a man named Jorkins to be drowned." "That is quite so, Master Silver." "Well, he didn't do it!" "Don't you talk such nonsense, Master Silver!" said P.-c. Boggs, with a superior air. "A man named Jorkins has been missing since last night, and we've received evidence that—" "Blow your evidence!" snapped Jimmy Silver irritably. "Jorkins is alive!" "Where is he?" "There!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, pointing to the rascal, who was held tightly by no less than five juniors. "Why, hang me if you ain't correct, Master Silver!" said P.-c. Boggs. "That is Mister Jorkins right enough. If you've been trying to play a joke on me"—P.-c. Boggs shook his fist at Joey Barton—"I'll make you suffer for it!" "You'd better take him in charge," said Jimmy Silver. "I accuse him of blackmail! Now then, Mr. Boggs, just be good enough to take your hands off our friend Knowles. The poor chap will faint in a minute." Jimmy Silver was quite correct. Knowles was in a state of collapse. Loss of sleep and food, coupled with an endless amount of worry, was proving too much for him. P.-c. Boggs and the other constable let go their hold on Knowles' arms, and the next instant the prefect sank to the ground unconscious. "Get him inside, quick!" said Jimmy Silver, addressing several juniors who were looking on astounded. "Now, Mr. Boggs, just take charge of these two gentlemen." "Werry well, Master Silver," said P.-c. Boggs; and he proceeded to fasten handcuffs on the wrists of Jorkins and Barton. "My word!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "They're fairly nabbed!" "And all through dear little us!" said Jimmy Silver, with a laugh. "Who's top side at Rookwood now?" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Which as I bid you good-day, Master Silver," said P.-c. Boggs. "You'll be wanted to give evidence when these fellows are brought up before the magistrate." "Oh, all right!" said Jimmy Silver. "We'll be there!" P.-c. Boggs walked off with his two charges, and the Fistical Four went into the house. "The Head wants to see you, Silver," said Bulkeley, the captain of the school, coming up to the Classical juniors. "Right-ho, Bulkeley, old son! I'll go along now." And Jimmy Silver went.

The story of how Knowles had been accused of murder was soon known all over the school. Jimmy Silver had to explain to the Head how he had run down the scoundrels, and a dozen or so other juniors wanted to hear an explanation of the affair. Jimmy Silver & Co. got so tired of recounting their amazing capture, that at length they refused to discuss the matter any further, and locked themselves in their study. In due course Jorkins and Barton were brought up before the local magistrate, and, owing to the juniors' evidence, were convicted, and sentenced to terms of imprisonment. Knowles, the prefect, also gave evidence. He had recovered from his terrible experience, but he was still looking pale and worn. It was indeed, a long while before he forgot the anxious moments he had whilst In Another's Power.

THE END.

**NEXT MONDAY!**

**"GENTLEMAN JIM'S SECRET!"**

By OWEN CONQUEST.

DON'T MISS IT!

**TO THE BOYS AT THE FRONT!**

If you are unable to obtain this publication regularly, please tell any newsagent to get it from:

Messageries MACHETTE et Cie., 111, Rue Reamur, PARIS.





# THE SCHOOLBOY AUTHOR!

A Magnificent Long Complete Story,  
dealing with the Schooldays of Frank  
Richards, the Famous Author of the Tales of  
Harry Wharton & Co.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

## The 1st Chapter.

### Bob's Idea.

"What the dickens—" ejaculated Bob Lawless.

Frank Richards looked up, colouring a little.

It was getting near time for afternoon lessons at Cedar Creek School, and Bob Lawless had come along the creek, looking for his English cousin.

He found Frank Richards seated upon a log under the trees, with a big exercise-book open on his knees. There was a pencil in his hand, and a thoughtful frown on his youthful brow.

The open page of the exercise-book was covered with writing. Frank Richards had been very busy when his chum came along.

Bob looked at him, and at the closely-written sheet, in astonishment.

"What's that game?" he asked.

"Oh! N-n-nothing!"

"Miss Meadows given you a chapter to write out, or something?"

"Oh, no!"

"Then what the dickens are you scribbling at that rate for?" asked Bob, quite mystified.

"Why, there's pages and pages of it. I've been hunting for you—I couldn't guess where you'd gotten to. And here you've been scribbling all the time. Anything wrong with your roof?"

Frank laughed, his cheeks very pink.

"No, you dufer!"

"Then what does it mean?"

Frank did not answer, but his colour deepened. He looked like a fellow who had been caught in a fault.

"Not writing to your popper?" grinned Bob. "Life's too short for a letter that length, I should think."

"Oh, no!"

"Well, you are a mysterious guy, and no mistake," said the astonished Bob. "I say, is there insanity in the Richards' family?"

"Look here, Bob, I—I don't mind telling you," stammered Frank, quite crimson now. "But don't jaw about it. The fellows will cackle."

"Go ahead!"

"I—I've been writing."

"Yes, I can see you've been writing by the yard! What for?"

"It's a—a—a—"

"A—a—a—" chortled Bob. "B—b—b—"

"It's a—a—a—story."

Bob Lawless jumped.

"A story?" he shouted.

"Ye—e—os!"

"Great jumping Jerusalem! I never knew you were a thumping author!" yelled Bob Lawless. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here, Bob—"

"I must tell the chaps this—Chunky, and Dawson, and Lawrence—they'll enjoy it!" roared Bob.

"Keep it dark," exclaimed Frank.

"Look here, Bob, I don't want to be cackled at. Why shouldn't I scribble if I like?" Don't be an ass!"

Bob chuckled merrily.

"All serene—I won't jaw!" he said. "But it beats me! When did you begin this game?"

"Well, I've always scribbled," said Frank, rather shyly. "I used to do stuff for the school magazine, when I was at school in England. And—and I've written a lot of yarns, too—and chucked them away when they were finished. Sort of built that way, you know."

"Mind if I read it?" asked Bob.

Frank hesitated.

"I won't cackle," grinned Bob.

"Honest Injun!"

"Well, you see—"

"I don't undertake to read the lot," added Bob. "That's a big order. But let's see what it's like."

"Oh, all right!"

Bob Lawless took the exercise-book, and sat down on the log beside his cousin.

Frank Richards stared at the shining creek, his cheeks still red.

Like most youthful authors he was a little self-conscious about his literary attempts.

There was a slight rustle in the thicket behind the fallen log where the cousins sat, but they did not observe it.

A sallow face, with narrow, cunning eyes, looked out at the two cousins, from the screen of foliage.

It was the face of Kern Gunten, the son of the Swiss store-keeper at Thompson, and the "black sheep" of the lumber school.

Gunten had a "deck" of cards in his hand.

He had retired to that secluded spot, to practise with the cards, to perfect himself in the card-sharping trick of dealing from the bottom of the pack. That was not an occupation he wished the other fellows to see him engaged in.

The voices of the two cousins had reached him, and his curiosity was aroused.

After that glance through the foliage, he drew his head back out of sight, but made no sound to reveal his presence.

The fact that Frank had asked Bob Lawless to keep it dark was quite enough to make the cad of Cedar

Creek determine to hear all that was said. Gunten had no scruples on matters of that kind.

There was silence under the trees.

"By gum, Frank!"

Frank Richards looked at him.

"Rotten?" he asked.

"No; ripping!" said Bob.

"Blessed if I ever thought you could scribble like this! You'll be a terrific author some day, Franky!"

"I wonder?" said Frank.

That was the boy's secret ambition, though he had confided it to no one so far.

"Bet you!" said Bob. "Why, this is tiptop! I couldn't do it for any price. I see you've got something about your English school further back in the book."

"Yes, about St. Kit's. I can't write except about things I know," said Frank, with a smile.

"Well, that's a good idea. All authors don't stick to that," said Bob sagely. "It would be better if they did, I guess. Look here, Franky, I've got an idea. Have you ever been in print?"

"Only in the school rag at home."

"Why not have a shot for it?" asked Bob. "I tell you this is O.K. I can't write, but I can read, and I know a good thing when I see it. There's a literary competition going on in the 'Fraser Advertiser,' and there's a prize of twenty dollars for the best short story. The popper takes in the paper, you know—it comes by the store wagon—and I look at it

house calling the Cedar Creek boys and girls to lessons again.

Frank and Bob rose from the log, and walked away through the trees towards the school.

As they disappeared Kern Gunten stepped out from the thickets.

The Swiss looked after the cousins with a sneering smile.

"How clever we are!" he murmured. "We can box, we can knock down a fellow we don't like—Gunten rubbed his nose—"and we can write stories! How clever! And perhaps we shall win the prize—perhaps! But we shall see!"

And Gunten hurried on towards the school.

## The 2nd Chapter.

### Rivals I

Bob Lawless kept his word.

Having discovered the literary gift of his English cousin, he was determined to keep Frank up to the mark, and see him make something of it.

Frank Richards was ambitious, in a way, but his ambition was mingled with a good deal of modesty, and made him very doubtful about trying his chances.

Bob refused to admit any doubts.

He explained to Frank several times that it would only cost a few cents to send his manuscript in to the paper

a whack in it for making you work. That's not an easy job."

And Frank set to work.

He read the "Fraser Advertiser" from cover to cover, as all literary aspirants should do with the paper they hope to write for. He looked out the terms of the literary competition carefully.

The benignant editor of the "Advertiser" was desirous of encouraging local talent.

Anyone resident in British Columbia, of any age up to twenty-one, was eligible for the competition.

The winning story bagged the prize; others that were good were to have honourable mention.

Frank Richards hoped that he would get an honourable mention, though, when he said so to Bob, Bob asked how he was to go halves in it.

At the ranch, except on holidays, there was little time for scribbling. The cousins had a long ride home every evening, and then there was supper and a chat, and early bed.

Frank's writing was mostly done at the school, in the interval between morning and afternoon lessons, and sometimes for an hour or so when school was over, before starting home.

He wrote, and re-wrote, and re-re-

wrote.

He was determined that his story, whether it won the prize or not, should be the very best he could do.

Meanwhile, the matter was "kept dark."

But it was destined to come out. One morning, when the cousins arrived early at the lumber school, they found Kern Gunten in the school ground, with a crowd of the fellows round him, and a paper in his hand.

"I guess I'm going in for it," said Gunten, his eyes glimmering for a moment at the cousins as they came up. "Why not? Every galoot has a chance."

"You can't write!" sniffed Eben Hacke.

"I guess I can try."

"Blessed if I don't, too!" exclaimed Chunky Todgers.

"Same here!" said Lawrence, laughing. "Let's all try! The poor old editor will be sorry he spoke when he gets the lot!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Here! Fair play!" exclaimed Gunten, still looking at the cousins out of the corners of his narrow eyes.

"It's my idea, and I've told you fellows. 'Tain't fair to go in and compete with me, you know! You wouldn't have known anything about it if I hadn't told you."

"What rot!" said Hacke. "The thing's open to everybody in British Columbia. I guess I could go in if I liked. I'm an American; but it says residents in British Columbia, and I guess I fill the bill."

"Fair play!" repeated Gunten doggedly. "If any other fellow in this school goes in for it, it's taking an unfair advantage, as I've told you all about it."

Chunky Todgers snuffed.

"That's mean," he said. "Still, if you put it like that, keep the blessed competition to yourself, and go and chop chips!"

Frank Richards' face was growing red as he listened, and Bob was looking very uncomfortable.

Neither of them knew anything of Gunten having played the cavedropper in the timber a few days before, or they would have understood better the line the cunning Swiss was taking.

Frank stepped forward. As Gunten was claiming the literary competition all for himself, as the discoverer, so to speak, it was best to speak out at once and avoid misunderstanding.

"That's the 'Fraser Advertiser' competition you're speaking of, Gunten?" asked Frank.

"I guess so. I came across this week's number in Popper's store," explained Gunten. "I thought at



Struggling and yelling, Gunten was collared and rushed down to the creek, and then hurled into the water.

Bob Lawless had intended to read a page or two, in rather a humorous mood, but he found, somewhat to his surprise, that Frank's "scribble" interested him, and he turned page after page.

The "yarn" Frank had written was a description of some of his own experiences; the voyage across the Atlantic, and up the St. Lawrence River, and across Canada on the Canadian Pacific Railway.

Young as he was, Frank had the natural gift of seizing the salient points of an experience, and throwing them into a narrative that carried the reader along with it.

Bob did not cease reading till he came to the last page Frank had written. Then he gave a whistle.

sometimes. Look here, Franky, you have a shot for that twenty dollars."

Frank Richards shook his head.

"It wouldn't do, Bob. Not good enough!"

"Rats!" said Bob promptly. "Ain't I a judge? Look here, I tell you you'd very likely rope in the prize. It won't hurt you to try, anyway. I'm jolly well going to make you! I'll keep you at it every day till you've done a yarn and sent it along."

"I—I say, if you really think—"

"I guess I don't think—I know!" said Bob. "You're going in for that prize, and I reckon you'll rope it in—just a few! Hallo! There's the blessed bell!"

Clang, clang!

It was the bell from the log school-

at Fraser City, and that if it came back, "Declined with thanks!" it wouldn't hurt him.

While, if it was successful, twenty dollars was a handsome sum of money—four pounds in English money.

Four pounds was a consideration.

Mr. Lawless made no distinction between his son and his nephew at the ranch, and Frank had the same allowance of pocket-money as Bob. But, of course, it did not run into large sums.

"I'll do it!" Frank said at last. "But if I bag the prize, Bob, we'll go halves! You'll have earned it as much as I."

Bob laughed.

"All serene! I guess I shall deserve





## THE SCHOOLBOY AUTHOR!

(Continued from the  
previous page.)

once of having a shot for the prize. You agree with me that fellows here oughtn't to try to cut me out, after I've told them about it?"

"I don't know about that," said Frank. "The competition's open to everybody. But, as a matter of fact, I am entering myself, and I began my story last week."

Gunten sneered. "You mean, you put it like that?" he said. "You never heard of the thing till this morning."

Frank's eyes gleamed. "I tell you I knew of it last week!" he said. "Bob showed me the paper at the ranch, and persuaded me to enter for it."

"I guess that's so!" chimed in Bob Lawless. "Oh, pile it on!" said Gunten contemptuously. "I've just let on about it, and you're going to try to cut me out. That's your game."

"I guess you might leave it to Gunten, if he spotted the thing first, Richards!" said Hacke.

"It's only fair!" said Gunten. "But I tell you I was working for it three or four days ago!" exclaimed Frank Richards hotly. "Bob knows."

Gunten shrugged his shoulders. "And what have you been keeping it dark for?" he sneered. "Afraid of letting another galoot hear of it?"

"You don't want anybody else to enter, same as Gunten?" asked Chunky Todgers. "I'm surprised at you, Richards! That's mean!"

Frank's face was crimson. "Nothing of the kind!" he exclaimed. "I was keeping it dark because I don't expect to get the prize, and I didn't want to be cackled at. That's all. I never even thought about any other fellow wanting to enter. I've certainly no objection to the whole school taking it up."

"Go in and win, the lot of you!" grinned Bob Lawless. "I back old Franky against the crowd."

"I don't believe a word of it!" said Gunten coolly. "It's my idea, and Frank Richards is bagging it, and trying to cut me out, and I call it unfair."

Frank clenched his hands. The Swiss backed away promptly. He had had trouble with Frank once, in a fistical way, and he did not want any more in that line.

"Keep your wool on!" he exclaimed. "You'll admit yourself that it looks suspicious, I suppose. You never let on a word about it till you heard me speaking now."

"There's no need to mention it." "Well, I guess—"

"You've as good as called me a liar," said Frank Richards, his face very angry. "You'll take that back, Gunten, or put up your hands."

"I guess I'm sticking to what I said."

"Then you'll answer for it, you cad!"

Gunten had to put up his hands to save his nose. The Cedar Creek fellows gathered round in a ring.

But the voice of Miss Meadows, the schoolmistress, was heard. "Richards! Gunten!"

The two dropped their hands at once. "Yes, ma'am!" stammered Frank. Miss Meadows gave them a severe glance.

"Go into the school-room at once." "Yes, ma'am!"

It was not yet time for morning lessons, and the two had the big schoolroom to themselves.

Frank sat down at his desk without another look at Gunten.

But the Swiss came towards him. "Richards!"

"Do you want to begin again here?" exclaimed Frank fiercely. "I'll give you what you've been asking for after lessons, you rotter!"

"Never mind that," said Gunten quietly. "Perhaps I was a bit hasty; but you'll admit that it looked suspicious."

"Only to a suspicious cad!" said Frank grimly.

Gunten bit his lip. But his tone was civil as he went on: "Let that pass! You say you were writing stuff for this competition last week. If that's so, it proves what you said, and I take back what I told you. Show me the stuff, and prove it."

Frank hesitated. He was not in the least inclined to show his literary efforts to the Swiss, whom he disliked intensely. But there was a certain amount of reasonable-ness in Gunten's request.

"You keep it at the ranch, I suppose?" said Gunten, in a careless tone, but eyeing Frank sharply.

"No; I keep it in my satchel." "You do your writing here, then?" "Yes."

"I guess I've noticed that you generally keep to yourself between lessons the last few days," said Gunten, more amicably. "I dare say what you say is quite right. Show me the stuff, and prove it, then!"

Frank nodded curtly, and took the exercise-book out of his satchel. The work was done in the book, to be copied out later upon foolscap. His order for foolscap had already been sent to Gunten's store at Thompson.

It was not an article for which there was much demand in the Thompson valley.

He handed the book to the Swiss. "There it is!" "Thanks!"

Gunten opened the book, and ran his eye over the contents. He grinned as he read. Frank had written the story of the Mexican "rustler," who had lately been run down in that section by the North-West Mounted Police. It made quite an interesting story, too, and it was entitled, "On the Trail."

Frank had expected the Swiss to hand him back the book when he had glanced at the pages covered with writing—a sufficient proof of Frank's statements.

But the Swiss was reading it steadily. Frank watched him restively. "Look here, that will do, Gunten!" he exclaimed at last. "You don't want to read the whole thing, I suppose?"

Gunten handed him back the book. "Right you are!" he said. "If you want any further proof,

you can find out that last Saturday I sent an order to your father's store for a quire of foolscap," said Frank sarcastically.

As a matter of fact, Gunten was well aware of that already. He made no reply, however, as the school came trooping in at that moment. The Swiss went to his place, and morning lessons commenced.

### The 3rd Chapter. Gunten's Luck!

"Here's the post-waggon, Franky!" It was Saturday afternoon. Saturday was a free day, and Frank Richards had spent most of it in his room at the Lawless Ranch, with pen and ink and foolscap.

The story was finished, the foolscap had come from the store, and all Frank had to do was to make a "fair copy," wrap it up carefully, and despatch it by post to the offices of the paper in Fraser City.

As a rule, Frank and Bob helped in the ranch work on Saturdays; but that morning Frank had been busy with his pen.

By the time the post-waggon called the parcel for the "Fraser Advertiser" was ready, tied up, and sealed, and addressed.

Frank came downstairs as Bob called, with the parcel in his hand. The post-waggon had stopped on the trail outside. It was driven by Kern Gunten. The storekeeper of Thompson was also the postmaster, and on Saturdays his son made the round of the farms and ranches with the post-waggon.

"Letters?" called out Gunten. "Here you are!"

Among the letters was Frank's manuscript for Fraser. Gunten tossed it carelessly into the sack with the rest.

"Your stuff going in to-day, Gunten?" asked Bob Lawless. "It's gone in," said Gunten. "I sent my yarn along on Thursday. I guess I shall get a polite 'No.' So long!"

The Swiss cracked his whip, and drove away. "Well, the deed is deeded, Franky!" grinned Bob Lawless, clapping his cousin on the shoulder. "Behold the blushing author!"

"Oh, rats!" said Frank, laughing. "I don't suppose there's a chance for a moment of the twenty dollars coming this way."

"I fancy you'll beat Gunten's stuff, anyway."

"Very likely; but there's sure to be a good many others—maybe competitors from the big schools in New Westminster and Vancouver," said Frank. "Never mind. It's been fun

writing it. They're welcome to use the merry manuscript for pipe-lights if they like."

"Well, I suppose most of the manuscripts will end their career as pipe-lights," said Bob Lawless laughing. "But I rather think you've got a chance. I'm betting on that twenty dollars for this ranch."

And the chums dismissed the matter, and went along to join the "hands," and help in splitting logs for the winter.

Meanwhile, the post-waggon rattled away down the trail.

Gunten drove at a good pace, his next destination being Simpson's Farm. The waggon entered upon a stretch of trail through the timber, and there, under the overhanging trees, Kern Gunten drew his horse to a halt.

He stood up in the waggon, looking about him with sharp, cautious eyes. The spot was very solitary; there was no sound or movement in the timber, save from a stray gopher in the under-brush.

After a cautious survey, Gunten knelt in the waggon, and opened the letter-sack.

He dived his hand into it, and it came out again, with Frank Richards' neat little parcel in it.

Again Gunten cast a quick, guilty glance round him.

Then, for nearly a quarter of an hour he was busy. After that time he rose, and looked, with a somewhat pale face, round at the trees. But the trail through the timber was as solitary as ever.

Gunten closed the post-sack, and resumed his place at the reins, and drove on at a rattling speed, to make up for lost time.

His face was still a little pale; but it wore a malicious smile of satisfaction, for all its pallor.

If Frank Richards had known of that mysterious halt of the post-waggon in the timber, it would have puzzled him, but if he had seen all Gunten's action, he would certainly have given up his last hope of "bagging" the twenty-dollar prize from the "Fraser Advertiser."

But Frank knew nothing of Gunten and his doings, and was far from guessing the end of the lumber school a thought that busy afternoon.

On Monday morning the chums rode to the lumber school as usual, and they found Vere Beauclerc there. Beauclerc had been away from school for a week, as a result of his boxing encounter with the Dakota Kid, in Thompson. His chums were glad to see him again.

"Feeling chippy—what?" asked Bob, greeting him with a tremendous clap on the shoulder.

Beauclerc jumped. "Oh! You ass! Yes, I'm all right now."

"Still got a mouse under your eye," said Frank Richards, smiling. "What about your literary works, Frank?" asked Beauclerc.

Beauclerc knew all about it, Frank having ridden over to the shack on the creek to see him a few days before.

"It's gone," said Frank cheerily. "Only one other chap here is competing—Gunten. But I expect there's about a hundred others from different parts."

"When is it settled?" asked Beauclerc. "Next week's number gives the decision, and the winning yarn comes out in print the following week," said Frank.

"And we're going to see 'On the Trail,' by Frank Richards!" said Bob Lawless. "We've been entertaining a great author unawares, you know. Some of these days editors will be competing far and wide to secure Franky's great works, and when chaps write essays on 'My Favourite Author,' they'll pick Frank Richards as a matter of course."

"Fathead!" said Frank, laughing. Bob Lawless seemed, really, a good deal keener about the result than Frank himself. He showed much more anxiety to see the latest issue of the "Fraser Advertiser." That publication did not reach the Thompson valley till the following Sunday, and the eager Bob had to wait impatiently.

But on Sunday, when Billy Cook, the foreman, went to Thompson, he brought back the paper with him.

Dinner was over at the ranch. Beauclerc had been there to dinner, and the three chums were strolling by the ranch-house when Billy Cook came home. They bore down on him at once for the paper, and it was duly sorted out, and handed over.

The chums of Cedar Creek retired to a quiet spot under the trees, to look at it.

"Shall I find it for you, Franky?" asked Bob.

"Oh, yes!"

Frank was lying in the grass, look-

ing as indifferent as he could. Bob, with his back against the tree-trunk, turned over the leaves of the paper.

"Here we are!" he said. "Result of the Literary Competition! Oh, great thunder and jumping snakes!"

Bob stared at the paper in blank astonishment and dismay. Beauclerc gave Frank a rather quick look.

"What is it, Bob?" he asked. "The editor of this paper is a dangerous maniac!" said Bob Lawless.

"Rats! Who got the prize?" asked Frank. "Gunten!"

"Wha-a-at!" "Gunten!" exclaimed Beauclerc. "Carry me home to die!" ejaculated Bob. "Gunten—that fathead? Listen to this! The editor's potty, of course."

"The prize of twenty dollars is awarded to Master Kern Gunten, of Thompson, for his excellent story, 'Running Down a Rogue.' We compliment Master Gunten, not only on the literary excellence of his story, but upon his very clear calligraphy and the neatness of his manuscript. The story will be published next week."

"Oh, my hat!" said Beauclerc. "Fancy, Gunten!" said Frank. "I shouldn't have thought he could do it. He must have done his manuscript jolly carefully. Miss Meadows has slanged him lots of times for his scrawl at school."

"It beats me!" said Bob. "Neatness, you know—and Gunten! The most slovenly guy at Cedar Creek! It beats me hollow!"

"Any honourable mentions?" asked Frank. "Yes; about fifty."

"You'll find Frank there, surely!" said Beauclerc. "I'll soon see."

Bob scanned the page. But the name of Frank Richards did not appear.

There were "honourable mentions" for over forty competitors, but among them Frank had no place. Frank's face was a little pink.

He had not really hoped for much. He was too modest to think that an editor would regard his story as favourably as the enthusiastic Bob did. But among so many honourable mentions he had rather expected to find a place.

"Rotten!" said Bob. "The editor's a silly ass, of course!" "A champion ass!" said Beauclerc. "Better luck next time, Frank."

Frank smiled rather constrainedly. "The editor's all right," he said. "The first rule of the game is not to swear at the referee, you know. The man knows his business, and I don't. I don't think there will be a next time."

"Rats! You'll be scribbling again in a day or two; you can't help it!" said Bob.

And on that point, at least, Bob Lawless was right.

### The 4th Chapter. Dark Suspicions.

"Congratulations, Gunten!" Frank Richards spoke quite heartily when he met the Swiss at the lumber school on Monday.

He did not like Kern Gunten, and he made no secret of it, but he was glad of his success in the competition. He would rather have won the prize himself, of course, but he was ready to congratulate the winner quite sincerely.

Gunten gave him a rather peculiar grin. "Yes, I guess I've been rather lucky," he said. "I never really thought I should pull it off. You had no luck, Richards?"

"None!" said Frank ruefully. "Hard cheese!" said Gunten. "Still, it's something for the prize to come to Cedar Creek at all, isn't it? There were a lot trailing it from all parts."

"Yes, it's one up for Cedar Creek," said Bob Lawless. "Blessed if I don't read that story when it comes out."

"Oh, it's hardly worth it," said Gunten.

"We shall read it, of course!" said Frank Richards. "We get the paper at the ranch, anyhow, next Sunday."

"Do you?" said Gunten. "The popper takes it regularly," said Bob.

Gunten nodded, and they went into school.

There were a good many congratulations for Gunten at the log school. Most of the fellows were surprised at Gunten's luck, for he was not a fellow one would have suspected of literary gifts. But they were glad Cedar Creek had scored.

Many of them were looking forward with keen curiosity to see the paper when the winning story appeared.

There were always two copies of

the "Fraser Advertiser" in the district, one at the Lawless Ranch, and the other at Gunten's store in Thompson. Both, of course, came through the post at Gunten's.

On the following Sunday morning, when Billy Cook came back from Thompson with letters, Frank and Bob ran him down at once.

"Fraser Advertiser—got it?" said Bob.

The ranchman shook his head. "Tain't come."

"But it always comes on a Saturday!"

"Tain't come this time, I reckon. Missed the post."

"Oh, blow!" "We'll ask Gunten to let us see his," said Frank.

And on Monday they did. Eben Hacke and Dawson had already read the story, it appeared, having visited Gunten on Sunday. But Gunten, somewhat to the surprise of the fellows, had not brought the paper to school with him.

"Well, bring it to-morrow!" said Bob Lawless. "Hang it all, we want to see the work of the Cedar Creek author!"

"You're jolly flattering," said Gunten, with a smile. "But it can't be done. I've sent the paper to my uncle in Toronto."

Frank Richards gave Gunten a quick look. "You've got another copy?" he asked.

"No."

"You don't want to keep a copy of your first thing in print?"

"Oh, my uncle will send it back some time!" said Gunten carelessly. "Anyway, I've got the prize, and that's the chief thing."

"Got the cash?" asked Bob. "Yes. Look!" Gunten held up a twenty-dollar bill.

"Bravo!" Frank Richards was very thoughtful as he trotted home with Bob that evening. He asked Mr. Lawless whether the "Advertiser" had come. It had not.

"We miss a copy sometimes," said the rancher, with a smile. "Accidents happen in the post in the back-woods, you know. It doesn't matter."

"Then you won't bother about it, uncle?"

"Oh, no! It's of no consequence." Frank Richards let it drop at that, but he was still thoughtful. The next time Billy Cook went to Thompson he took a letter from Frank Richards to the post, addressed to the "Advertiser" office at Fraser, with stamps enclosed for a copy of the paper.

Bob regarded his cousin rather curiously as Cook took the letter away.

"You're awfully keen about Gunten's prize story," he said. "Not only that," said Frank. "I'm specially keen to see whether this new copy of the 'Advertiser' gets lost, like the other."

"It won't!" said Bob, with a stare. "Why should it?"

Frank hesitated. "Look here, Bob! I'm not a suspicious chap, am I?"

"No. Why?"

"Well, I'm not satisfied," said Frank slowly. "You know Gunten—always swanking and bragging about something. Yet he doesn't want the school to see his prize story. He's sent away the only copy he had. Everybody expected him to bring it to the school and show it round."

"Dawson saw it at Gunten's place."

"Yes; and Dawson's told me it's a yarn about the M.P.'s running down a Mexican rustler."

"Same idea as your yarn, then? Of course, Gunten knew all about that Mexican galoot," said Bob. "Queer he should have pitched on it for his yarn."

"Very queer," said Frank. "Very, when you remember he won't let us see his copy of the story, and that the copy coming to us by post has been lost. And the post passes through Gunten's store."

"Frank!"

"The editor complimented the prize-winner on his good writing and neatness. We know Gunten is a scrawly writer, and slovenly," said Frank. "And my manuscript was given to him in the post-waggon, wasn't it? He had it in his hands that day for hours."

"Frank!" exclaimed Bob breathlessly. "You don't think—"

"No," said Frank. "I don't; but I don't feel satisfied. It's too odd, Gunten sending his copy away before we could see it, and our copy being lost in Gunten's post-office. I'm not a conceited ass, Bob, but I've got more brains than that fat-headed Swiss, and I was surprised when he bagged the prize. It's a story about the Mexican rustler. So was mine. I'm going to see that story in print!"

"By gum!" said Bob. "Well, we shall see it when the 'Advertiser' comes along—the one you have





THE SCHOOLBOY AUTHOR!

(Continued from the previous page.)

written for. It will come Sunday with the regular number."

"That will settle it," said Frank. Both the cousins were looking forward eagerly to Sunday now.

On Sunday morning Billy Cook came along with letters and papers from the post at Thompson. There was the current number of the "Fraser Advertiser," addressed to Mr. Lawless. But the back number, which should have been addressed to Frank Richards, was not there!

It had not arrived. "My word!" said Bob breathlessly, looking at his chum with startled eyes. "That back number's got lost in the post, like the other, Frank!"

"And Gunten has the run of the post-office at Thompson," said Frank, with a curl of the lip. "Now, Bob, how has that paper disappeared?"

"It does look fishy," said Bob. "The other papers have come along all right—only the paper with the prize-winner in it has disappeared—twice! It's too thick! Best if it doesn't look as if Gunten opened your manuscript and read it, and thought it was good enough for a winner, and borrowed it. Why, the galoot may never have written a story himself at all; just bagged yours and sent it in in his name!"

"We're going to know for certain," said Frank Richards grimly. "Not much good writing for another copy of the 'Advertiser'—it has to come through Gunten's post-office, and Gunten sorts the letters for his father. Where can we get it, Bob? We can't go to Fraser."

Bob rubbed his nose thoughtfully. "Nowhere nearer than Kamloops," he said. "That's a long day's ride there and back. They have it in the library there."

"Feel up to a day's ride?" asked Frank.

"You bet!"

"Then let's go!"

And ten minutes later, having obtained Mr. Lawless' permission, the cousins started on their day's ride for the town on the distant railway line. It was long past their usual bedtime when the chums, tired, and with tired horses, arrived at the ranch again, and they went directly to bed. But they were up at the usual hour in the morning, to start for school.

The 5th Chapter.

Frank Richards Wins!

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless were a little restive during morning lessons at Cedar Creek that day.

They were glad when the school was dismissed by Miss Meadows.

As the Cedar Creek fellows crowded out of the school-house, Bob Lawless called out:

"Meeting in the old corral! Roll up!"

"What's up?" asked Kern Gunten.

"Anything to eat?" inquired Chunky Todgers.

"I guess you'll see when you get there," said Bob. "It's a jolly important meeting. Come on, Cherub!"

In a state of surprise, the Cedar Creek fellows gathered in the old corral.

Frank and Bob and Beauclerc came in together. They kept their eyes on Gunten, to make sure that he came.

"Waal, what's it all about?" demanded Eben Hacke.

"Frank Richards has something to say," said Bob. "Go it, Franky!"

Frank stepped on a log, and addressed the surprised meeting.

"Gentlemen of Cedar Creek—"

"Cut it short!" said Gunten.

"Cut the cackle and come to the horses," suggested Eben Hacke.

"Gentlemen," said Frank, unmoved. "I've got something to tell you. You are aware that I sent a story to the 'Fraser Advertiser' competition. It was called 'On the Trail,' and was a description of the M.P.'s running down that Mexican rustler. My story was handed to Gunten for the post, when he collected at the ranch."

Gunten started violently.

"What are you driving at?" he exclaimed.

"This!" said Frank, cool as ice. "While my parcel was in your hands, you opened it, wrote a new title on the story, wrote a new letter to go with it, in your name instead of mine, and sent in my manuscript as yours!"

Gunten staggered.

"Gammon!" said Eben Hacke. "Oh, gum, what a yarn!" said Chunky Todgers. "Don't pile it on, Franky! Blessed if you oughtn't to be a novelist!"

"What does Gunten say?" said Frank coolly.

Gunten pulled himself together.

"It's a lie!" he shouted.

"All serene! We don't believe it," said Hacke. "It's too thin. What on earth are you spinning that yarn for, Frank Richards?"

"It's true!" said Frank.

"It's false!" yelled Gunten. "I know nobody here will believe it! It's a lie, and I know the reason. The hound is jealous of my getting the prize! I'm not going to stay here and listen to this."

Gunten swung away, but Bob Law-

less' grasp on his shoulder swung him back.

"No, you don't!" said Bob grimly.

"Let me go!" shouted Gunten furiously.

"Wait for the finish, dear boy. You're not going, anyway."

There was no arguing with the rancher's son; his grip was like iron.

Gunten, panting with rage, had to remain.

"Keep him there, Bob," said Frank quietly. "I'm going to prove it now, you fellows, so that you'll know Gunten in his true colours."

"It's a lie!" panted Gunten.

"Mr. Lawless' copy of the 'Advertiser,' containing that story, was lost in the post," said Frank. "The post is sorted by Gunten at his father's store. I wrote specially for another copy, and that was lost in the post, too."

"By gum!" said Dawson.

"Yesterday," continued Frank. "I rode down to Kamloops with Bob, and we borrowed the copy from the library. I've got it here. The prize story is in it—and that story is the one I wrote, and handed to Gunten in the post-waggon. It went to the office in Gunten's name, and Gunten has received the prize. He's going to

hand that prize to me, and own up before all the school."

"Prove it!" yelled Gunten, white to the lips now.

"I'm going to prove it. Look at this exercise-book, you fellows—there's the story, as I wrote it at first. I copied it out later on foolscap. Bob saw me writing this at the time, on and off, and can witness. Compare it with the prize story in the paper."

The exercise-book, closely-written, and much-interlined and corrected, passed from hand to hand among the schoolboys, along with the "Fraser Advertiser."

"By gum!" said Chunky Todgers. "It looks a clear case!"

"Jerusalem! It do!" assented Hacke. "What have you got to say, Gunten, you coyote?"

Gunten breathed hard.

"It's a lie—a lie from beginning to end. Frank Richards has written that exercise book out since he's seen my story in print!"

"Oh!"

"That's possible, you know," said Hacke. "It's one chap's word against another's!"

A smile hovered over Frank's lips. He had not finished yet.

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN. Write to me whenever you are in doubt or difficulty. Tell me about yourself; let me know what you think of the BOYS' FRIEND. All readers who write to me, and enclose a stamped envelope or postcard, may be sure of receiving a prompt and kindly reply by post. All letters should be addressed: "The Editor, the BOYS' FRIEND, The Fleetsway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4."

AN AMAZING NEW SERIES!

No. 1 Next Monday!

My chums are in for a rare treat next Monday, for the issue of THE BOYS' FRIEND, on sale a week hence, will contain the first magnificent long complete tale in our amazing new series, entitled:

"KING NADUR'S DIAMONDS!"

By Maurice Everard.

This grand new series, introducing Dick and Frank Polruan, and old Joe Tremorne and Pieface, will be an entirely new and thrilling nature.

Just recently I have received letters from readers in which they express their regret at the conclusion of the Crusoe Island stories. I want to tell all these readers that, although the Crusoe Island yarns were ripping tales, those in our new series will be even better.

You will still be able to follow the adventures of your old favourites, but the scene will be a different one. The amazing quest for King Nadur's Diamonds takes place in Darkest Africa, without doubt the most mysterious and perilous of continents.

Mr. Maurice Everard has put some of his very best work into these new stories, and I feel confident that you will all vote them the finest stories that this famous author has ever written. Don't forget, the first story will appear in next Monday's issue.

The splendid long, complete tale dealing with Frank Richards' school-days in our next issue is entitled:

"A BORROWED IDENTITY!"

By Martin Clifford.

Mr. Slimmey, the master of the school in the backwoods, is very prominent in this story. Mr. Slimmey's brother, a fugitive from justice, comes secretly to the school, and begs the master to assist him to escape from the police.

The fugitive is a desperate man; he knows what capture will mean to him. Mr. Slimmey is naturally anxious to help his brother, but the scheme to enable him to escape which the fugitive outlines to his brother is a rascally one, and the master refuses to have anything to do with it.

The outcome of this is that the fugitive throws caution to the winds, and resolves to elude the police by means of a borrowed identity. Whether he succeeds or not you will learn next Monday.

In next Monday's magnificent long instalment of

"THE BOYS OF THE BOMBAY CASTLE!"

Duncan Storm

Mr. Binks, the sneaking under-purser, makes a big effort to get the boys into trouble, but the boys are up to Mr. Binks' dodge. They scheme amongst themselves, and are successful in turning the tables on the under-purser. Eventually Mr. Binks has cause to wish that he had not interfered with the boys. In this story a new character in Algy the Nut makes his appearance. You will like Algy, I feel sure.

The long, complete tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. in our next issue is entitled:

"GENTLEMAN JIM'S SECRET!"

By Owen Conquest.

Old readers of THE BOYS' FRIEND will remember that Gentleman Jim was a rascal who was at one time supposed to be Kit Erroll's father. Kit Erroll thought he had seen the last of the man, but in our next story Gentleman Jim appears at the school in a peculiar manner. He has a great secret, and Lattrey, the cad of the Fourth, eager to interfere in other people's business, endeavours to discover the man's secret. But Lattrey goes a little too far, as you will learn when you read this splendid story.

The concluding story in our next

issue is that introducing Bob Travers, the boy boxer, entitled:

"THE RETURN TO REDOLYFFE!"

By Herbert Britton.

In this story Bob Travers receives a great surprise. His guardian appears on the scene, and then—Well, I will not tell you what happens after this. It would spoil your interest in the story.

ANOTHER NEW SERIES!

I hope my readers are not forgetting that the first story in a splendid new series, under the title of:

"TALES OF THE DORMITORY!"

will appear in THE BOYS' FRIEND the week after next. The first story, related by Jimmy Silver, the Classical captain of the Fourth Form at Rookwood, will be entitled:

"THE MAKING OF MORLEY!"

Don't forget, the first story will appear in a fortnight's time.

THE PAPER FOR YOUR FATHER.

In conclusion, I would esteem it a great favour if readers would draw the attention of their fathers to the splendid attractions which are at present appearing in the great weekly journal, "Answers," including the most amazing spy serial of modern times, entitled "Inside the Lines." It should be read by everybody. From the first word the reader is held in tense excitement as gripping situations unfold themselves. It is, indeed, a story that nobody should miss reading.

Your Editor

OWING TO THE INCREASED SHORTAGE OF PAPER. We shall in future print only the actual number of copies ordered through news-agents. To make sure, therefore, of obtaining your BOYS' FRIEND regularly, fill in this form and hand it to your newsagent: ORDER FORM. To Mr. Newsagent. Please reserve me each week, until further notice, a copy of the BOYS' FRIEND. Name. Address.

"Not quite!" he said. "The editor, in announcing the winner, stated that the winning manuscript was well-written and neat. You know the kind of slovenly scrawler Gunten is."

"I—I was specially careful with my manuscript, of course," said Gunten. "You still stick to your yarn, Gunten?"

"Do you stick to yours?" sneered Gunten. "That's the question!"

There was silence, as the schoolboys looked from one to the other. The smile still lurked on Frank's handsome face.

"Very well!" he said. "Gunten says the winning manuscript was his, and I say it was mine. We can settle it by getting the manuscript from the office of the 'Fraser Advertiser.' If it's written in my hand—"

"By gum, that will settle it!" said Lawrence.

All eyes were on Kern Gunten. He was pale as death and breathing with difficulty.

"You can't get the manuscript!" he panted.

"I can—and will!" said Frank. "That means making the affair public, of course. I shall ask Mr. Lawless to send a man to Fraser City, with a letter of explanation, showing the editor that there has been a swindle. If the police take up the matter, that will only hurt the swindler. If what I say is right, it will come out that Gunten tampers with the letters in the post-office, and he can answer for it to the law. I'm giving him the chance of owning up before the school. If he doesn't own up, and hand over the money he's stolen from me—that's what it amounts to—the matter goes through to the finish!"

"Let it go through, anyhow," exclaimed Bob Lawless.

Gunten licked his dry lips.

"Well?" said Frank grimly.

"I—I—"

"You deny stealing my manuscript?"

"I—yes."

"Very well! The matter goes to the police," said Frank. "Come on, you chaps!" And he turned away.

Gunten stood quite still for a moment or two. His face was like chalk, and his eyes had a hunted look.

Well he knew what the result of an investigation would be. And well he knew that tampering with the letters in a post-office was a serious offence against the law, for which he would have to answer.

"Hold on!" he gasped. "I—I say—hold on—Richards—"

Frank turned back.

"Well?"

"I—I—" Gunten spoke thickly.

"I—I don't want this to go any farther."

"I thought you wouldn't!" said Frank, with a contemptuous curl of the lip.

"I—I only meant it as a joke, really," muttered Gunten. "I—I never knew your story would win the prize, of—of course. It was just a chance. I—I—"

"Do you own up that you stole my manuscript, and sent it to the office in your own name?" demanded Frank.

"Yes!" panted Gunten.

"You sneaking coyote!" shouted Eben Hacke. "Hand Richards his twenty dollars, you mugwump, and then we'll duck you!"

"I—I—"

"Shell out, you thief!"

With a trembling hand, Gunten passed a twenty-dollar bill to Frank Richards. It was the prize he had so nearly succeeded in "bagging."

Then there was a rush of the indignant Cedar Creek fellows.

Gunten, struggling and yelling, was collared and rushed down to the creek, and there was a mighty splash in the water.

The wretched trickster crawled out, drenched and dripping, and took to his heels. Gunten did not show up in school that afternoon.

"You ought to make him write to the paper, and own up, and have your name put in, Franky," said Bob Lawless, as the chums walked back to the school.

Frank laughed and shook his head. "Can't be did—I don't want him scragged for meddling with the post. He's owned up, and he's shown up, and that will do! And here's the merry twenty dollars! Halves, Bob!"

"And here's the merry author of Cedar Creek!" chuckled Bob. "Three cheers for the schoolboy author! Hurrah!"

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

"A BORROWED IDENTITY!"

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

DON'T MISS IT!



# BOB TRAVERS AT GREYFRIARS!

A Splendid Complete Story of Bob Travers, the Boy Boxer, introducing  
Harry Wharton & Co.

By HERBERT BRITTON.

## The 1st Chapter. Skinner's Scheme.

"It's a fine chance!"

Thus Skinner, the cad of the Remove at Greyfriars, to his cronies, Snoop and Stott.

"What for?" asked Snoop.

"Why," explained Skinner. "You know a chap named Bob Travers is coming here to-day to box Bob Cherry?"

"Yes!"

"Well, why shouldn't we make some bets on the result of the match? After all, what with the cutting down of racing, we haven't had much sport just lately.

"That's a fact!"

"Look here!" went on Skinner enthusiastically. "I'm willing to bet anyone five-to-one that Cherry wins. Personally, I'd sooner see that beast get a good whacking, and—"

"But Travers has boxed in a booth for goodness knows how long," said Stott. "He's bound to be hot stuff."

"Bosh!" exclaimed Skinner, with a sniff. "Don't you remember that chap Belcher who came here once. Look what a fight Cherry put up then. And, besides, this fellow Travers is younger than Belcher was."

"Maybe!"

"Of course, if you chaps want to back Travers, I'll take you on like a shot!"

"Oh, good!" said Stott, feeling in his pocket. "You can put me down for five bob at five to one!"

"Right-ho! Hand the brass over! What about you, Snoop?"

"Couple of bob," said Snoop, laying down a two-shilling piece on the table.

"That's all right," said Skinner. "Now I'm going to canvass some of the other chaps. We don't often get a chance like this for a bit of sport!"

And Skinner went in search of the other "goey" chaps in the Remove. He found several who were willing to fall in with his scheme, and in about half an hour he had a long list of "clients."

Billy Bunter, the Owl of the Remove, was especially keen on laying a pound on Bob Travers, but as he couldn't pay on the nail, Skinner forthwith struck his name out.

At length, Skinner had propounded his scheme to practically every fellow at Greyfriars who was likely to listen to it with favour. He referred to his book, and discovered that if Bob Cherry lost he would stand to lose twelve pounds.

But Skinner did not think of the possibility of Bob Cherry losing. All he thought of was the money he would win if Cherry won.

Anxious to find fresh fields to conquer, the cad of the Remove decided to go in quest of Ponsoby & Co., the Highcliffe nuts. Skinner knew them for "goey" chaps, and he guessed they would be only too willing to fall in with his scheme.

The cad of the Remove left the school, and wended his way down the lane leading to Highcliffe. He had not gone more than two or three hundred yards when who should he come face to face with but Ponsoby & Co.

"You're just the fellows I want to see," said Skinner affably.

"Go hon!" laughed Ponsoby.

"Yes," said Skinner. "I suppose you've heard that a young booth-boxer named Travers is coming to Greyfriars to box Bob Cherry?"

"Well, we did hear somethin' about it," agreed Ponsoby.

"Oh, good!" said Skinner. "Now I'm making a book on the match. I'm willing to give five to one that Cherry wins!"

"By gad!" ejaculated Ponsoby. "Five to one on Bob Cherry?"

"Yes!"

Ponsoby put his hand into his pocket, and drew forth a pound note. "Here you are!" he said. "I'm game!"

"What about you, Monson?"

"Ten bob," said Monson.

"And you, Gadsby?"

"Seven-and-six," replied Gadsby. "I can't afford to miss a chance like this."

Skinner very carefully made a note of the bets in his book. Money was simply rolling in, and already he saw himself having some high old times on the money he was going to win.

He put his book away, and, looking

up, noticed to his surprise that the nuts of Highcliffe were smiling at one another.

"What's the joke?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha! You are, Skinny, dear boy!" said Ponsoby. "Of all the thumping idiots, you are—Ha, ha, ha!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" chorused the other nuts.

Skinner was thunderstruck.

"Look here!" he said slowly. "I don't quite catch on!"

"Ha, ha! You wouldn't, by gad!" exclaimed Ponsoby, doubled up with laughter. "I'll be along for my five quid directly after tea. By gad, I've never won money so easily before!"

"Never!" said Gadsby and Monson hilariously.

"Look here, you idiots!" exclaimed Skinner, rather nervously. "Why the dickens don't you explain!"

"Oh, Skinny, you'll be the death of me," roared Ponsoby. "I suppose you've never seen Travers box!"

"No!"

"Thought as much," said Ponsoby. "If you had you wouldn't have been such a silly fool to bet on Bob Cherry!"

"But Travers is only a beastly booth-boxer, and—"

"Quite so," said Ponsoby. "He's a rotten, low-down blackguard, by gad! Haven't you heard that he's beaten Tom Merry of St. Jim's, Gordon Gay of Rylcombe, Pankley of Bagshot, and me—beaten me!"

"Good heavens!"

Skinner's face had gone ghostly white with fear. No wonder the nuts had been so eager to take on the bets.

Ponsoby & Co. roared.

"Hard luck, Skinner, old son," laughed Gadsby. "You've let yourself in for it this time, by gad! See you this evening. Ta-ta, dear boy!"

The nuts of Highcliffe made off, their faces wreathed in smiles, leaving Skinner rooted to the spot.

"By Jove!" he muttered to himself. "I wonder—"

And he continued to wonder whether there was any truth in Ponsoby's words. Skinner was at length forced to the conclusion that there was.

The cad of the Remove knew the nuts well, and he knew that they only betted on certs. At the time of making the bets this fact had not occurred to him, but now he saw it only too plainly.

Bob Travers had beaten Tom Merry and Gordon Gay and Ponsoby. Then he couldn't be much of a "dud" after all. As he realised his position he shuddered.

Supposing Bob Cherry was beaten! Supposing—How ever could he pay out for all the bets he had taken? It was impossible. He would be ragged. And if the facts got to the Head there would be trouble, and most likely he would be expelled.

Skinner's mind was working very quickly at that moment. He controlled his anxious fears, and slowly a means of getting out of his difficulty occurred to him.

He continued his way in the direction of Courtfield, and, entering a shop in the High Street, he emerged a little later with a small packet in his pocket.

He returned to Greyfriars just as the juniors were going in to dinner. He saw Bob Travers crossing the quad with Harry Wharton & Co., but he gave them no more than a cursory glance.

Dinner proved a most unappetising meal to Skinner that day. At last it ended, and then he followed in the wake of Harry Wharton & Co. and Bob Travers.

He tracked them out of the House to the quad, and he could almost have jumped for joy when he saw Bob Travers break away from the Remove chums at the gate and walk in the direction of Friardale.

Skinner was after the boy boxer like a shot. Things were working out very well for him just then.

He overtook Bob Travers midway between the school and Friardale.

"Very pleased to meet you, old son!" he said heartily. "Going for a walk?"

"Yes," said Bob, in surprise. "But—but I don't remember having seen you before."

"No, no!" said Skinner quickly. "I'm Skinner of the Remove, you know. I'm awfully sorry I couldn't come and meet you this morning, but unfortunately I had an appointment that I was compelled to keep. I say, you don't mind my walking with you, do you?"

"Not at all!" replied Bob.

"Oh, good! Going down to Friardale?"

"Yes," said Bob. "I'm just going to send a telegram, and then I'm coming back for the fight."

Skinner walked with Bob as far as the post-office at Friardale, endeavouring all the while to keep up a steady flow of conversation, and impressing himself upon the boy boxer.

Bob was not exactly impressed with the cad of the Remove, but, all the same, he did not absolutely dislike him. Skinner had gone out of his way to be affable, and Bob did not guess that he was one of the most hated fellows at Greyfriars.

They left the post-office, and were just passing the tuckshop kept by Uncle Clegg, when Skinner clutched Bob quickly by the arm.

"What do you say to a glass of ginger-pop before we go back?" he said.

"No, thanks!" replied Bob.

"Oh, do!" urged Skinner persuasively. "I'm jolly thirsty; and, besides, we may never meet again. Have one, do, just for the sake of friendship!"

"Very well!" said Bob, not caring

middle—Ponsoby, I believe his name is."

"Well, they're three of the biggest rotters going!" said Skinner; and he proceeded to acquaint the boy-boxer with the erring ways of the nuts of Highcliffe.

At the same time, quite unnoticed by Bob, he took a little packet from his pocket, and shook the contents—a little white powder—into Bob's glass of ginger-pop.

All the time he kept up a flow of conversation, and kept Bob's attention on Ponsoby & Co.

His fell task finished, Skinner kept his gaze from the counter, and he neither saw nor heard Wun Lung's small hand pass across the counter and change the two glasses.

The little Chinese had watched Skinner's every movement, and, detecting the cad's purpose, had resolved to defeat his cunning scheme.

When Skinner turned round again and picked up his glass he was quite unaware of the fact that he was drinking from Bob Travers' glass. The powder had completely dissolved, and it would have puzzled anybody to discover the "doctored" one.

"Drink up, Travers, old son!" he said cheerily. "We shall have to buck up. It's one o'clock now, and your boxing match comes off at two-thirty!"

"Right-ho!" said Bob; and he drank the contents of his glass.

Then the two left the tuckshop and strolled back to Greyfriars. Skinner bid the boy boxer good-bye at the gates, and hastened up to his study.

He arrived there to find the room empty, and, flinging himself down in the easy-chair, he wiped the perspiration from off his forehead.

"It's a risk," he muttered to himself. "but it's worth it. That powder will work the oracle, and just when the fight is about to commence it will commence to act. That beast Travers won't be able to put as much power into his blows as he thinks. He'll gradually get weaker, and when Cherry knocks him out no one will have any suspicion that he has been drugged. They'll think that



Quite unnoticed by Bob Travers, Skinner took a little packet from his pocket, and shook the contents into the glass of ginger-pop.

to refuse. And he followed Skinner into the little shop.

The cad of the Remove had not expected to find anybody in the shop, and he started with surprise as he observed the form of Wun Lung, the Greyfriars' Chinese, sitting at the counter.

Next instant, however, he had recovered himself.

"Two ginger-pops, please, Uncle Clegg!" exclaimed Skinner. "We're in a bit of a hurry, so buck up!"

Skinner absolutely ignored Wun Lung. The latter was used to being shunned by the cad of the Remove, and he continued to drink his own ginger-pop as though Skinner was an absolute stranger to him.

Uncle Clegg placed two glasses of foaming ginger-beer before Skinner, and the latter paid for them.

"Here you are, Travers!" said the cad, passing one glass to Bob. "Good luck to you, and may the best man win—what?"

Bob drank half his ginger-beer, and placed his glass on the counter once again.

Suddenly Skinner clutched Bob by the arm, and pointed through the open doorway of the shop to three figures who were passing by.

"Look!" he said. "You see those fellows over there?"

"Yes," said Bob. "By Jove, I know them well. They belong to Highcliffe. I boxed the one in the

Bob Cherry's punches will have caused it."

The cad of the Remove laughed evilly. He little knew, however, that his cunning scheme was doomed to failure, through the timely intervention of Wun Lung, and that it was he, and not Bob Travers, who would feel the effect of the drug.

## The 2nd Chapter. Bob's Hardest Fight.

"Bob, you've done well! You've beaten Tom Merry, Gordon Gay, Pankley, Ponsoby, and Solly Lazarus."

Thus John Matthews, the boxing promoter, as he sat chatting to Bob Travers in the little room they were sharing during their stay at Greyfriars.

"I have purposely left Bob Cherry till last," continued the boxing promoter, "because I consider him the strongest of your opponents. He will make you go all the way, and if only you beat him, as I feel sure you will, I will see at once about getting that new booth which I have promised Joe Barnett, your old showman!"

"I sent a telegram to Mr. Barnett this morning," said Bob. "I told him that I was meeting Bob Cherry this afternoon, and that if I beat him he would be certain of getting his booth."

"Good!" said John Matthews.

"Now, you'd better buck up. It's twenty-past two. You're due in the ring in another ten minutes."

Bob went off in high spirits to change into his boxing things. When John Matthews had promised to purchase a new boxing booth for old Joe Barnett, providing he—Bob—beat no less than six schoolboy champions, Bob had not grasped the size of his task.

However, by sheer grit and determination, he had beaten five of his opponents; and now there only remained Bob Cherry, the Greyfriars' champion, to be contended with.

Right on time Bob entered the ring, to the accompaniment of loud cheering on the part of the Greyfriars juniors who were grouped round the ring.

Skinner, the cad of the Remove, was standing up in a corner, away from the Removites, and Bob did not notice his presence.

At length came the call of "Time!" from Wingate, the captain of Greyfriars, who was acting as referee.

Bob took things very easily at the beginning of the first round. He knew his opponent was not going to present him with a walk-over, and therefore it behoved him to be wary.

For quite a minute neither of the boxers hit out to any extent, and several of the Greyfriars juniors shouted their protest.

"Get a move on, Bob!" shouted one. "You haven't got until next Christmas!"

But Bob Cherry was wise. He took no notice of the Remove juniors' remarks. He was going to understand his opponent before he lunged out.

Bob Travers managed to get his left hand on the Remove junior's head; but a little later Bob Cherry returned the blow on his opponent's body.

The first round concluded with honours even. The two boxers were evenly matched, and there was little to choose between them.

The second round proved to be more exciting. Bob Travers let himself go a little, and Bob Cherry was unsuccessful in dodging two thrusts at his head.

A little later the Greyfriars' junior got his own back. He feinted with his right, and, swinging out his left quickly, lifted Bob Travers slightly off his feet.

"That's better, Bob, old son!" yelled Frank Nugent. "Give him another!"

But Bob Cherry didn't give him another. Bob Travers would have been prepared for it, and the Greyfriars champion knew it.

He contented himself with acting on the defensive, and it was a good thing he did, for suddenly Bob Travers quickened his movements, and swung left and right out quickly at his opponent's head.

Bob Cherry's guard shifted up in the nick of time, and he managed to avoid Bob Travers' blows. It was lucky he did, for there was a tremendous amount of power behind those punches, and they would have given the Greyfriars junior a good shaking had they got home.

"Time!"

The second round was over; and still it would have puzzled anybody to have forecasted the winner.

The third round, however, opened in spirited fashion. Bob Travers led with his left, and, side-stepping quickly, Bob Cherry dodged the blow, and sent a stinging upper-cut to his opponent's chin.

Bob Travers had not expected such a move, and when an instant later Bob Cherry crashed his right home on the other's body, Bob Travers lost his balance, and sank to the floor.

Next moment, however, he recovered his equilibrium, and sailed into Bob Cherry for all he was worth.

Now the fighting was getting exciting with a vengeance. Neither of the boxers spared themselves. They went for each other in determined fashion, and before the third round was brought to a conclusion one of Bob Cherry's eyes was half-closed, and Bob Travers had an ominous lump on his forehead.

"Time!"

The third round was over, and still there was little to choose between the combatants.

The fourth round was full of excitement. A more thrilling fight had never taken place in the Greyfriars gym. A lightning punch from the left sent Bob Cherry to the boards.

He remained down until "Eight!" had been called. Then he rose to his feet, and, after dodging another of his opponent's sledge-hammer punches, he sent his right to Bob Travers' head, and the latter reeled to the floor.

"Well done, Cherry!" yelled the Removites.

"He's done! He's—"

(Continued on page 216, col. 5.)



# CRUSOE ISLAND



(Continued from the previous page.)

### The 2nd Chapter. Mala Returns.

Joe Tremorne, at the head of the table, after considering the matter carefully, thought it best to speak his mind.

"Now look here, you fellows. It ain't no good for an old buffer like me to beat about the bush. Somehow or other, through nobody's fault, we've got ourselves into the most awful mess, and unless something very unexpected happens I don't see how we're to get out of it."

"You mean, the odds against us are too big?" suggested Frank.

The sailor nodded.

"That's it. They're six hundred agen four, and, although we've got weapons, if they mean to make an end of us they can send to the other island, just hull-down on the horizon, and bring another crowd along. True, there's a good deal of ammunition left, but even cases of cartridges won't last for ever at the rate we've had to bang 'em out the last two hours. We might last out two days, perhaps three, but if they make attack after attack they're sure to get us in the end."

"Well, what's to be done?" asked Dick.

"I've been wondering whether we couldn't harness the bunjik to the row-boat again, and get the fat little rascal to lug it down to the beach. Pie could guide him, while you and me and Frank fight a rearguard action till we get to the water. Of course there's this difficulty: before we get far they'll have a swarm of war-canoes round us, unless we slip 'em in the dark."

Frank looked troubled.

"We couldn't get enough water and provisions down in time," he added wisely. "You see, Joe, adrift in the Pacific in an open boat is no joke, especially when the sun is at its hottest. We shouldn't live two days, and I guess I'd rather be killed by these savages than die of thirst at sea."

"Then there's nothing for it but to see the fight through to a finish."

"That's so," agreed Dick. "We'll keep the old flag flying to the end."

The question once decided, every preparation was made. Their greatest enemy, they knew, when darkness fell, would be fire, so to meet it with the only remedy at hand they set vessels of their precious store of water all round the walls.

Nor did the precaution prove vain, for a few minutes after sundown, when darkness began to settle in rapidly, as it does in the tropics, a stream of fire sailed majestically from the trees, and, mounting into the blue of the night, described an arc, and dropped at an angle to the ground.

They lifted one of the loophole coverings and peered out. Stuck in the turf about ten feet away was a quivering spear, whose haft was wrapped about with a ball of cloth soaked in some oily stuff.

The flare burned steadily for several

minutes, till the stick was charred through, when it dropped to the grass and smouldered down to a dull red glow.

Joe wiped the moisture from his forehead.

"That's the wussett danger we've got to contend with," he breathed. "Half a dozen of those chaps on this roof will set the show burning like a hayrick."

"They're starting already!" shouted Dick, as the sky was illumined at a dozen points with the flaring rockets.

"Then fire low at the place where they start from!" called Joe. "Now Pie, come here, and help me sweep the fringe of trees from end to end with gun-fire. Move your barrel along as though you were working a Maxim. At least some of 'em will get ginger."

A steady and relentless stream of lead was pumped for several minutes into the appointed area, and the many shrieks and groans which were heard proved that a goodly number had gone home.

Still the flares rose steadily and grandly, and, once the range was found, they began to strike the roof. Some of them struck glancing blows and glided off, but more than one stuck, and soon volumes of dense smoke began to gather among the rafters overhead.

In a little while a heavy haze had gathered about the steadily burning lamp, and Joe scented the danger of suffocation as well as from fire.

"Stand aside, Dick, my son! I'm going through the trap to draw those spears out before the roof catches," he said, propping his gun in a corner.

The boy, however, was too quick. In a moment he had darted behind Joe and had mounted the ladder. To push up the trap was the work of a second, but the moment his head appeared in the opening, clearly revealed by the dancing flames, a host of barbs and spears were loosed at him.

Still he did not falter, but, levering himself on to the sloping roof, crawled forward, and one by one snapped the hafts and flung the burning heads to the ground.

Again and again the deadly missiles flashed about him, one even pinning the flap of his coat to the woodwork. He wrenched it free, and started to crawl back.

By this time the night sky was aflame with the burning missiles, and in the red glow Dick saw the savages advancing in little groups. They would dart forward a few paces, use their bows, then fall flat on their faces, and repeat the operation of advancing.

"Fire well along the ground!" he shouted to those below. "They're coming on pretty fast!"

It was evident that if the islanders got much closer in, to aim at them from the shoulder-high loopholes would be out of the question. And every instant the human net was tightening.

"Pie, hand me a rifle!" Dick called. "I've got to dose 'em heavily, or we shall have the place burnt about our ears!"

Now the attackers were resorting to the old familiar but deadly trick of pushing in front of them clumps of dry brushwood, behind which they were fairly immune from haphazard rifle-fire.

Once get that placed around the walls and well alight, nothing could save the defenders.

them!" he said, a trifle white-faced. "Hark! What is that?"

There was a shuttered window in the wall behind, and above the screeches and yells of the frenzied mob without they distinctly heard a series of short, sharp taps on the pane.

"Someone knocking on the window!" gasped Frank. "What shall we do?"

"If we slide back the shutter, like as not a cloud of spears will come in," said Joe. "It's only a wheeze. Hi! What are you doing, Franky?"

"Going to have a squint, and chance my arm!" replied the boy, who, before either of the others could stop him, had moved the shutter cautiously aside and looked out.

He started back, a cry of amaze breaking from him.

"There's that South Sea girl Mala outside, dressed up in man's clothing! I distinctly saw her face!"

"Then let her in, if she's a pal of yours," said Joe.

"She can get through the window, a slip of a thing like her!" Frank answered. "Turn the lamp almost out, Joe, while I take down the shutter."

It was a good thing that something in the nature of a diversion was happening, for now the upper structure of the fort was burning steadily.

All was quiet in the rear of the shed between the side-wall and the outbuildings. As Frank leaned far out he caught sight of a slim form crouched against the wall.

"Is that you, O, white man?" he heard a sweet, soft voice call.

"Yes. And you are Mala," the boy replied. "Do you want us to take you inside?"

In the dull glow, which shot up suddenly from the roof, he caught a vision of a pretty, painted face, lit by a pair of sad, dark eyes.

"No. There is no time," she whispered. "I have come to tell you that there is a big, white man's ship out in the bay. It stopped there nearly half an hour since, and the men aboard do not understand what is going on!"

"Then, for pity's sake, if you dare run the risk, steal down to the shore and swim to the ship. There will be a look-out man. If you hail him when you draw near he will answer you, and lower a boat. Go aboard, and tell the captain that there are four white men here—at least, three whites and a black—and that we are surrounded by savages. Will you do this for me, Mala?"

She looked up into the white, anxious face.

"Yes, for you, who did so much for me long ago, I will do anything!"

When Frank looked down again the slim form had slipped away, and Mala was gone.

Just as the moon was rising above the trees the boom of a big gun was heard and a big shell screamed overhead. It was followed a few minutes later by the rattle of a Maxim and Gatling gun-fire down by the beach.

The joyous sounds drew nearer, and at the end of a quarter of an hour a crowd of lusty British sailormen was seen wheeling a pom-pom into the clearing.

The terrible weapon soon made short work of the natives, who fled helter-skelter, either back to the village, or to what little protection their war-canoes afforded them.

A lusty cheer broke from the defenders when the commander of the armed merchantman brought his crew of marines to the smoke-blackened ruin. They tumbled out, overjoyed to be in safe hands at last.

"Guess we're about fed-up with this old island," Joe said, when he had told the story of their adventures. "If you don't mind taking us all on board, sir, we shouldn't be sorry for a run to civilisation again."

Exactly a week later they were landed in Sydney, impatiently awaiting a boat to take them to England.

"Crusoe Island was all very well in its way," remarked Joe, the morning he booked the passages, "but when it comes to being burned alive by the skunks you've spent ten months in befriending I opine it's about time to make tracks for a more healthy place."

And Dick, Frank, and Pieface, to say nothing of the bunjik—who, of course, accompanied them—thought so, too.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

"KING NADUR'S DIAMONDS!" No. 1 of a Great New Series. By MAURICE EVERARD. DON'T MISS IT!

### BOB TRAVERS AT GREYFRIARS!

By HERBERT BRITTON. (Continued from page 214.)

But Bob Travers was not done just yet. At the call of "Seven!" he staggered to his feet, but it was plain to see that he was slightly knocked.

So was Bob Cherry, for that matter. The call of "Time!" came as a welcome relief to the two boxers. Both were in need of a rest, and they sank down into their chairs with a sigh of thankfulness.

"Time!" It was the fifth round. Would it be the last?

Hammer-and-tongs the two went at it, and it amazed the onlookers to think that they stood the strain so long.

Smack! Thud! Bob Cherry was hammering Bob Travers at close quarters.

He had beaten Bob Travers to the ropes, and was just preparing to deliver a knock-out, when the latter, with a wriggle worthy of an eel, slipped away from the corner to which the Greyfriars junior had forced him.

Bob Travers swung round quickly, and, just as the Greyfriars junior turned, his left arm shot out like a piston-rod, and Bob Cherry was bowled over like a ninepin.

There was a grunt of disappointment from the Removites at the fall of their champion.

"One—two—three—four—five—"

Bob Cherry raised himself to his elbow.

"Six—seven—eight—"

It was a herculean effort that the Greyfriars junior made. He struggled to his feet, resolved to fight to the last.

Bob Cherry could not have struck another effective blow to save his life, and it was no surprise that the tap his opponent gave him an instant later sent him to the floor for the fatal count.

The Greyfriars supporters hung on the timekeeper's every word, but Bob Cherry did not rise. He was counted out!

"Well done, Bob, old son!" said Harry Wharton, helping the Greyfriars champion to his feet. "You fought splendidly. I—Hullo! What's happening over there?"

Harry Wharton had happened to glance towards the corner of the gymnasium. Suddenly Skinner, who had been standing there his face white as a ghost, had fallen to the floor.

Next instant Wharton and one or two other juniors had rushed towards the cad of the Remove. Wun Lung was standing over the latter, grinning hugely.

"What's the matter?" exclaimed Harry Wharton anxiously. "Has Skinner fainted?"

"Skinnel dlugged!" said Wun Lung.

"Drugged!" exclaimed Wharton, astounded. "Who did it?"

"Me explain," said Wun Lung.

And the Chinese junior proceeded to tell the excited Removites of all that had happened in the tuckshop. "The beastly outsider!" exclaimed Wharton, at length. "We'll make him go through it for this!"

And Skinner did go through it. When he had been ragged sufficiently, and when Harry Wharton & Co. had seen the stakes on the boxing-match returned to the rightful owners, there was no more unhappy fellow at Greyfriars than Herbert Skinner.

"We'll go up to town to-morrow and order that new boxing-booth for Joe Barnett!"

John Matthews made the remark when he and Bob Travers were having tea together an hour or so later.

"You've fought well, Bob, and I'm proud of you!" he continued, in hearty tones. "To have beaten the schoolboy champions that you have is to have achieved something, and I am confident that you will make a name for yourself in the boxing world. You have my best wishes, Bob; and I hope that one day I shall be able to call you Champion Bob Travers!"

It was Bob's hour of triumph. He had fought like the plucky young Britisher he was, and had won through by sheer grit and determination.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

"THE RETURN TO REDCLYFFE!" By HERBERT BRITTON. DON'T MISS IT!

hand, take his stand at the loopholes.

Through these the smoke of the firing was blown back in dense, blue clouds, and so thick did the vapour become that the defenders were more than once driven back.

A well-directed volley, however, temporarily saved the situation, and as the fierce brutes went down in heaps and others sprawled on top of them, the ardour died out of the charge, and, without waiting to be rallied, the remainder turned tail and fled.

"Give them a chance!" screamed Joe. "Don't shoot a fleeing man! We'll play the game however it ends for us."

Perhaps this was hardly a wise course to adopt, but Joe had very strong notions about such matters, and no man was ever less prone to take an unfair advantage than he.

As if by magic, the brown forms melted away among the undergrowth, and an eerie peace, broken only by the dull boom of the surf on the shore, and the scream of the frightened gulls in wheeling flights over the lagoon, was heard above the stillness.

They set down their guns, and Dick ventured to open the door a few inches to let the air blow through.

He had good reason to repent the action, for in a flash a strong, brown arm, holding a wide-bladed spear, shot into the opening, and the lunging weapon snagged open the cloth of his sleeve.

"Shove, Pie—shove for all you're worth!" screamed Dick.

Pieface hurled all his weight against the portal with a force that snapped the haft. Then, as quick as lightning, he poked the muzzle of a revolver into the nearest hole, and pulled the trigger three times in rapid succession. A cry, followed by a heavy fall, answered the shots. Then all was still again.

"Just shows how desperate these chaps can be," said Joe, who came forward to ascertain the extent of the damage done. "No wound! That's good; for, don't forget, there's a very likely chance that some of their spears and most of their arrows will be doped with poison."

"What's to be done now?" Frank asked, taking a quick inspection of the defenses, and helping to reload the magazines. "We may get a respite for the rest of the day, but as soon as the sun goes down, and the darkness comes, they'll give us trouble."

"Bet your sweet life they will!" answered Joe, with an assumed cheerfulness he was far from feeling. "But it's up to us to keep the home-fires burning. Pie, old lad, get some tea going. Even 'eroes like us can't fight on empty stomachs."

While Dick and Frank patrolled the room ceaselessly, Pie prepared a hurried meal. Then they all sat down to discuss plans for defence.

**30 DAYS FREE TRIAL**  
 Packed Free. Carriage Paid. Direct from Works.  
**MEAD Coventry Flyers**  
 Warranted 3 years. Dunlop Tyres, Brooks Saddles.  
**£4 - 10s. to £7 - 19s.**  
 EASY PAYMENTS FROM 7/- MONTHLY.  
 Immediate delivery. No delay. Write for Free Art Catalogue & Special Offer of sample machine.  
**MEAD Cycle Co. Inc. Dep. 12 E B**  
 11 Paradise St., Liverpool.

**ARE YOU SHORT?**  
 If so, let the Girran System help you to increase your height. Mr. Briggs reports an increase of 3 inches; Driver E. P., 3 inches; Mr. Ratcliffe, 4 inches; Miss Ledell, 4 inches; Mr. Morris, 3 inches; Mr. Ketley, 4 inches. No drugs or appliances. Send three penny stamps for further particulars and £100 Guarantee to Enquiry Dept. A.M.F., 17, Strand Green Road, London, N. 4.

**CONGO PACKET, 41d.** 50 Stamps, including Belgian Congo (picture), French Congo (panther), Portuguese Congo, Fiji, Nigeria, etc.—Brooks, 48, Edmund Street, Cambridge, S.E. 5.

**IF YOU SUFFER** from nervous worried feelings, blushing, lack of self-confidence, will-power, mind concentration, or feel awkward in the presence of others, you should send at once 3 penny stamps for particulars of the Mento-Nerve Strengthening Treatment, Godfrey Elliott-Smith, Ltd., 485, Imperial Buildings, Ludgate Circus, London, E.C. 4.

**MONTHLY PAYMENTS.**—Buy by post Privately. Boots, Costumes, Raincoats, Suits, Luminous Watches, Gold Rings, Outfery from 4/- monthly. List Free. State requirements.—MASTERS LTD., 6, Hope Street, Rye. (Estab. 1869)

**BECHUANALAND PACKET, 41d.** contains 60 including Malay, Guadeloupe, Johore, Martinique and Bechuanaland Protectorate, etc.—E. Turner, 129, Villa Street, Waltham, S.E. 17.

**FREE** Write for it To-day.  
**PAIN'S Illustrated Catalogue** (for Nov. Xmas, and After) is Gratis and Post Free, and tells you "All About" Bargains Post Free—Electric Pocket Lamps, Fountain or Stylographic Pens, Safety and Ordinary Razors, Strops, Watches (for Day and Night)—Nickel, Oxidised, Silver and Gold, Wrist and Pocket, for Ladies' and Gent's. All Guaranteed Correct Timekeepers, Jewellery, 9-ct. Gold Shell Rings, Leather and Fancy Goods, Smokers' Requisites, Rubber Printing Outfits, Toys, Xmas Cards, Novelties, etc., etc., all too numerous to mention here, but they're all in the "Bargains Post Free" Catalogue. Write for it to-day and see the Bargains for all. Full Satisfaction or Full Money Back.

**PAIN'S PRESENTS HOUSE** (Dept. 7), **HASTINGS.**

Applications with regard to Advertisement Space in this paper should be addressed: Advertisement Manager, THE BOYS' FRIEND, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, E.C. 4.