

NEXT MONDAY: OUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NUMBER!

# The BOYS' FRIEND Id.

See inside for "Frank Richards' Schooldays!" By Martin Clifford.

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ONE PENNY.

[Week Ending December 8th, 1917.

## BROUGHT TO TERMS!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. at Rookwood School.  
By OWEN CONQUEST.

### The 1st Chapter. A Strange Discovery.

"Hold on a minute!" said Jimmy Silver.

"We're late!" growled Lovell. "Come on!" said Raby. "The Head's coming up from Coombe, and we don't want him to spot us out of gates, Jimmy!"

"Buck up, Jimmy!" urged Newcome.

But Jimmy Silver had halted, and his chums halted too, in some exasperation.

Gates were already closed at Rookwood, and the chums of the Fourth were supposed to be within gates after dark.

They had been over to Latcham Camp to see the soldiers, and they were rather late back, but they hoped to drop in over the school wall in the gloom, and turn up unnoticed in time for call-over.

And as they came through the village they had spotted the stately figure of Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, returning to the school, and, needless to say, they had given their respected Head a wide berth.

They were quite near the gates of Rookwood now, and the moon, coming up from behind Coombe Hill, glimmered on the fine old buildings, the grey walls, and the ancient beeches.

"What are you hanging about for, you fathead?" demanded Lovell. "The Head isn't five minutes behind us!"

"Get a move on, Jimmy!"

"Look at that chap!" said Jimmy Silver. "Hold on a minute! The Head doesn't go at our speed, you duffers, and he won't be along yet. Look at that chap!"

"Eh? What chap?"

"Use your eyes, old scout!"

The Co. looked round rather impatiently, and then they saw the man upon whom Jimmy's eyes had fallen.

A figure in khaki stood by the roadside, looking towards the gates of Rookwood School.

The man stood motionless, as if wrapped in deep thought, his eyes on the old walls and tower of Rookwood. He did not see the juniors, though they were within a dozen feet of him, and his profile was turned towards them.

As he stood a gleam of moonlight fell upon his face, and showed it up pale and troubled.

Lovell & Co., silent now, stared at the stranger in surprise. Their voices had been loud enough to reach his ears where he stood, but he had not moved or glanced towards them.

His face, clean-cut and handsome, gleamed white in the moonlight. In age, he might have been anything between thirty and thirty-eight. Healthy and wholesome as his clean-cut face looked, there were lines upon it that told of trouble.

There was something odd, almost uncanny, in the stillness of the soldier and his fixed gaze at the school.

"Something wrong with that chap," murmured Lovell. "He looks ill."

"He seems to be jolly interested in Rookwood!" said Raby. "Let's



## EXPELLED!

"I shall not expel you publicly, Lattrey," said the Head. "I shall ask your father to call upon me, and shall explain the matter fully to him. You will leave Rookwood with him, and you will not return!"

speak to him. He may be an old Rookwood chap home from the war."

"No reason why he shouldn't go in if that's the case. What's he standing there for, staring at the place?"

"I'm going to speak to him!" said Jimmy Silver.

He moved across the wide road to the silent, motionless figure. It was not till he was quite close to the soldier that the latter saw him.

The man gave a start, and made a hurried step backwards, as if to escape observation. But he stopped again.

"Top of the evening, Tommy!" said Jimmy Silver cheerfully.

"Eh, what? Good-evening!" muttered the man.

"Anything wrong?" asked Jimmy.

"No, no!"

"I thought you looked a bit seedy," said Jimmy Silver. "If so, you've only got to step in yonder, and we'll look after you A. L. We belong to Rookwood, you know," he added, by way of explanation.

The man looked at him.

"Thank you, I am quite well!" he said. "I—I was—" He paused.

"You belong to Rookwood, my lad?"

"Yes, Jimmy Silver, of the Fourth Form!" said Jimmy, with a smile.

"Is Dr. Chisholm still headmaster here?"

"Yes. He's been headmaster for ages!" said Jimmy. "Long before our time, anyway. You know Rookwood?"

"Yes—that is, I knew Rookwood," said the man hesitatingly.

"Trot in with us, if you're an old Rookwooder!" said Lovell. "Everybody at Rookwood has got a welcome for a chap from the Front."

"Thank you, but I have to return to Latcham. I suppose Dr. Chisholm has changed a good deal?"

"Not in our time," said Jimmy Silver. "A bit, I suppose, since you were at Rookwood—if you were at Rookwood."

"Is he well?"

"Hale and hearty!" said Jimmy.

"Quite an athlete, when it comes to laying on the cane."

"Yes, rather!" said Raby, with deep feeling. He knew.

The man in khaki smiled.

"If you want to see the Head you've only got to wait here a few minutes," said Jimmy. "He's just coming up from Coombe."

The man started.

"He—he is coming—" he stammered. "Here?"

"Yes; and by the same token, there he comes!" muttered Jimmy.

"Excuse me. We're out of bounds. We've got to dodge!"

The juniors promptly dodged.

The moonlight, clearer every minute, was falling on the road, and there was no time to scuttle along to the school wall. The Head was already in view, and he would certainly have seen the figures scudding across the patch of white.

The Fistical Four bolted through the gap in the hedge, behind where the soldier was standing, and lay low. The hedge hid them from sight.

Jimmy Silver whispered back through the gap:

"Don't look this way, Tommy! Don't give us away!"

"Sh!" murmured Raby.

The four juniors lay low, without a sound, waiting for the Head to pass.

The soldier did not seem to hear Jimmy's whisper. It seemed as if he had already forgotten the juniors. His eyes were fixed upon the stately old gentleman who was coming up the moonlit road from the village.

Jimmy could see that the man was hesitating, as if in doubt, strange emotions working in his pale face. But as the Head of Rookwood came

up the man appeared to make up his mind, and he stepped out suddenly into the road.

Dr. Chisholm halted abruptly as the soldier standing in his path saluted. He looked at the man inquiringly. The soldier's face, shadowed by his cap, was dim and indistinct.

"Excuse me, sir." The soldier's voice was low and clear. "You are Dr. Chisholm, I think?"

"Yes."

"I have some news for you, sir."

"Indeed!" Dr. Chisholm looked curiously at the stalwart, well-set-up figure before him. "Please proceed."

"It concerns your brother, sir—Oliver Chisholm."

A grim change came over Dr. Chisholm's face. The kind expression was in an instant; the features began to harden, the eyes became

like him.

"I have no desire to hear news of Oliver Chisholm," he said quietly and distinctly. "To me, Oliver Chisholm is dead. I thank you for the trouble you have taken, but I cannot hear you."

The man in khaki stepped aside, without another word, and the Head of Rookwood, with steady tread, passed on.

For a moment or two the soldier stood gazing after him, and then he strode away. His footsteps died on the road towards Coombe.

In the shadow of the hedge Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at one another in amazement. It had all passed so quickly that they had no choice about seeing and hearing.

But it occurred to them, rather painfully now, that they had surprised a secret of their headmaster, for they had never heard of Oliver Chisholm before. His name had never been spoken at Rookwood in their hearing.

And the Head's answer to the soldier hinted of bitter family trouble, evidently carefully concealed from public knowledge.

"My hat!" murmured Jimmy Silver at last. "There's a pretty kettle of fish! I—I wish we hadn't been out of bounds, you chaps!"

"So the Head's got a brother, has he?" said Raby. "Never heard of him. Fancy our terrific old Head having family troubles like a common mortal!"

"For goodness' sake, not a word of this in the school!" said Jimmy anxiously. "We couldn't help being here. But if the Head knew!"

Lovell whistled.

"No need to jaw!" he said. "Let's get in! The Head's clear by this time!"

In a rather troubled mood, the chums of the Fourth crept out of the hedge, and hurried on to the school.

Under the shadow of the trees within, they climbed the school wall, and dropped down inside. They hurried into the School House, just in time to answer "Adsum" to their names in Hall.

(Continued on the next page.)





BROUGHT TO TERMS!

(Continued from the previous page.)

The 2nd Chapter. The Chopper Comes Down!

"Lattrey!" "Adsum!" Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth, was taking the roll, and he gave Lattrey a somewhat curious glance as that junior answered to his name. The roll-call went on. When it was finished, and the Rookwood fellows were dismissed, Mr. Bootles called to Lattrey. "Lattrey, you will be wanted in the headmaster's study shortly. Kindly come to me in a quarter of an hour." Lattrey of the Fourth started, and the colour changed in his face. The Fourth Form fellows glanced at him. The cad of the Fourth was evidently booked for trouble. No one was surprised at that. Lattrey's reputation was bad, and it was growing worse. He had been sent to Coventry by the Lower School for his many rascalities, and his shady manners and customs were so much discussed that it was no wonder something had reached the ears of authority at last. His latest escapade had brought him into collision with Bulkeley, the head prefect and captain of the school, and Bulkeley could scarcely have failed to report him to the Head. Mr. Bootles was moving towards the door after speaking to Lattrey, and the junior hurried towards him anxiously. "Mr. Bootles!" "Well, Lattrey?" "The Head wants to see me this evening, sir?" "Yes."

sacked from Rookwood!" snapped Gower. "Well, that's so! I still think so! But—" "You needn't trouble to speak for me, Jimmy Silver," said Lattrey, with a bitter sneer. "I know how much it's worth! You're glad of this!" Jimmy looked at him steadily. "I'm not exactly sorry," he said. "If you go, it's all the better for Rookwood. You're not in your right place here, I must say!" "A reformatory would be nearer the mark!" grunted Lovell. "Or a convict prison!" remarked Raby. "Cheese it, you chaps!" murmured Kit Erroll. "What's the good of rubbing it in?" "I suggest passin' a resolution of sympathy with Lattrey," remarked Mornington, with a grin. "He's in a sad an' moultin' state, an' entitled to our sympathy!" Lattrey gave the juniors a bitter look, and strode away. There were few, if any, to sympathise with him in his fall. Jimmy Silver felt sorry for him, as he felt sorry for any fellow who was down on his luck, but even Jimmy could not possibly wish that Lattrey should remain at Rookwood. Lattrey was a "bad egg," if ever there was one, and if the Head had found him out it was evident that he would have to go. "But what is the Head after, I wonder?" Oswald remarked. "He can't know anything about Lattrey's trick with Morny and the banknotes. That was kept dark." "He may know about Lattrey's

palling with the sharpers at the Ship," remarked Newcome. "Bulkeley knows, and he was bound to report it." "Phew! That's serious!" "It may have come out, too, about his going to the Bird-in-Hand," said Rawson. "The Head was there this afternoon!" "The Head?" exclaimed a dozen voices. Rawson nodded. "I saw him going into the place," he said. "Howly smoke!" exclaimed Flynn. "The Head—going into the Bird-in-Hand! Does the Head play banker?" "Ha, ha, ha!" "You silly ass! He must have been going there to make inquiries about something!" "About Lattrey!" said Van Ryn. "It looks like it." "Then Lattrey's done for!" remarked Conroy. "Can't help feeling sorry for the poor beast, in a way. But he fairly asked for it." "And now he's got it!" said Lovell. "I don't see anything to worry about, for one. Let him rip!" The juniors dispersed, discussing the matter with some excitement. The general opinion was that Lattrey of the Fourth had reached the end of his tether. There was nothing surprising in that. The surprise was that the crash had not come earlier. The kind of game that Lattrey played could not be played with impunity for ever, though the black sheep's luck had been wonderful for a time. Now that Lattrey seemed to be fairly "landed," some of the fellows dropped the Coventry, and spoke to him civilly. Lattrey's answers were short and savage enough. The sentence of Coventry had been irksome and humiliating, but it weighed little in the balance now, with the prospect of expulsion from the school hanging over his head. At the appointed time he presented himself in Mr. Bootles' room. The master of the Fourth rose as he entered. "Ah! It is you, Lattrey?" "You told me to come!" said Lattrey sullenly. "Quite so!" said Mr. Bootles, taking no notice of the junior's manner. "You will now accompany me to the Head, Lattrey!" Mr. Bootles whisked away, and the cad of the

Fourth followed him, with a black and moody brow, to the Head's study. A good many eyes watched them as they went. Lattrey stalked on without looking to either right or left. If it meant the finish for him at Rookwood, he had nerve enough to go through his ordeal without outwardly flinching. Dr. Chisholm was in his study, his expression very grave and sombre. "I have brought Lattrey, sir!" "Thank you, Mr. Bootles!" The Form-master gave Lattrey a commiserating glance, and left the study. His glance was enough to tell Lattrey what he had to expect, and his face was paler. Dr. Chisholm fixed his severe glance upon the junior. "Lattrey, I am sorry to say that I have received very shocking reports concerning you," he said. "I am sorry, sir."

"I have asked your Form-master his opinion of you, Lattrey. He tells me that he had found you untruthful, unscrupulous, and that he had several times had occasion to punish you for breaking the rules of the school, particularly with regard to smoking and ignoring the food regulations." "Well, he punished me, sir, as you say. I understood that a matter was dropped when a fellow had been punished for it." "That is true. But if your Form-master had been able to speak in your favour, Lattrey, it would have weighed with me in coming to a decision regarding you. I have received a report from the head prefect of Rookwood, Bulkeley of the Sixth Form. It appears that you have made friends—I might rather say confederates—at a low resort called the Ship, a place strictly out of bounds for all boys belonging to this school." "You flogged me for it yourself, sir," muttered Lattrey. "I—I thought that was over and done with." "So did I," said the Head grimly. "I considered that a flogging would be a warning to you. I find, however, that it is neither over nor done with. It seems that, by a cunning trick, you inveigled Silver, of the Fourth Form, into the Ship, and caused him to be detained there forcibly, and then informed Bulkeley that you had seen Silver enter the place." Lattrey compressed his lips. This was the accusation he had feared. "If Jimmy Silver says—" he began. "Silver has said nothing. It is not my custom to obtain information from one boy against another," said the Head, frowning. "My information comes from Bulkeley's report, made in the ordinary course of his duty as head prefect. Bulkeley proceeded to the inn to take Silver away, and if he had found him there it would have appeared that Silver was a habitual visitor to the place, and the consequences to him would have been serious. As it happened, he escaped from the hands of your confederates. Otherwise, a very great injustice would have been done. That was your intention. Lattrey, this is a very serious matter—more serious than you appear to realise."

"I—I—" "Well?" "Bulkeley caned me, sir," muttered Lattrey. "Quite so. It is not my intention to punish you; but the circumstances make it impossible for you to remain in this school, Lattrey. So much duplicity in one so young is shocking—almost appalling. I cannot allow you to stay at Rookwood, where your association with the other boys may be harmful to them." "I—I've been sent to Coventry by the other fellows, sir. They don't speak to me now," Lattrey muttered. "That shows the estimation in which you are held by your school-fellows," said the Head drily. "I am not surprised to hear it—not at all. There are other grave suspicions regarding you, Lattrey. I have been making inquiries to-day. Actual evidence has not been found, but there is grave suspicion that you have been addicted to breaking school bounds after lights out, and visiting places of disreputable character." "It isn't true, sir." "I fear that it is true, Lattrey, and I have no doubt that searching inquiry among your Form-fellows would bring the facts to light. I do not intend to make such an inquiry. I would not willingly turn any lad into an informer. Enough is known, beyond doubt, to make your further stay in this school impossible. That is what I have sent for you to say." Lattrey licked his dry lips. There was no hope, and he knew it. The Head's tone was not unkind, but it was final. He felt some compassion for the miserable fellow who had chosen to follow crooked paths

when the straight way lay so easily before him. He was compassionate; but he had his duty as headmaster to do, and it would be done inflexibly. "So—so I am going to be expelled!" muttered the junior, with a hunted look in his eyes. "I shall not expel you publicly, Lattrey. Had not the head prefect already punished you, I might have done so. As the matter stands, you will leave Rookwood. I shall write to your father, and ask him to call upon me, and shall explain the matter fully to him. You will leave Rookwood with him, and you will not return. That is all." He made a sign to the junior to retire, and Lattrey left the study.

The 3rd Chapter. A Cad to the Last!

"Sacked?" Tubby Muffin, of the Classical Fourth, asked that polite and cheerful question as Lattrey came down the passage. Lattrey's face was white, and his eyes glittered under his bent brows. He was suffering for his sins; but there was no repentance in his breast, only bitter chagrin at discovery and punishment. He gave the fat Classical a bitter look. "Is it the sack?" inquired Tubby. "You look as if it was. Well, you've asked for it, haven't you, Lattrey? I really must say—Yooooop!" "Bump!" Tubby Muffin rolled over on the floor as Lattrey struck him savagely, and the disgraced junior strode on, and left him rolling there and roaring. With a quick, savage tread, Lattrey went up to the Fourth-Form passage. Many curious glances were cast upon him there. The look in his face was sufficient to tell the juniors the result of his interview with the Head. Lattrey gazed at them with hatred and malice in his face. "You've had your way, Jimmy Silver," he said. "You can rejoice now. I'm kicked out of the school!" "I'm not rejoicing," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I'm sorry for you, Lattrey." "Liar!" Jimmy compressed his lips. But he allowed that reply to pass. He would not hit a fellow who was down. "I'm not sorry!" said Lovell grimly. "You're not fit for Rookwood, Lattrey, and you ought to go." "I'm not gone yet," said Lattrey, his eyes glittering; "and if I go some other fellows may go with me." "Any fellow ought to be glad of your company en route," grinned Mornington. "But who's goin' with you, dear boy?" "You, for one!" "What!" "You!" said Lattrey. "I know enough about you to get you sacked, Mornington, if I choose to talk." "So you are going to sneak about other fellows, now you've been bowled out?" exclaimed Erroll. "Why shouldn't I?" "Well, you rotter!" said Townsend, with a rather scared look. "By gad!" muttered Topham. "Look here, Lattrey—" Mornington laughed. "By gad, Lattrey's improvin'," he remarked. "However, you're welcome to talk about me all you want, old scout. Shall I come to the Head with you?" Lattrey scowled savagely, and strode into his study, and closed the door with a slam. His words had caused dismay among a good many fellows, as he had intended that they should. There were some fellows in the Classical Fourth with little secrets to keep, and Lattrey knew their little secrets. Townsend and Topham, Peele and Gower, felt extremely uncomfortable. And when Lattrey's words were repeated they caused alarm and discomfort in some of the Shell studies. Adolphus Smythe, the great man of the Shell, turned quite pale. Howard and Tracy and Chesney were alarmed. The nuts of Rookwood had sportive tastes that the Head certainly would not have approved of, though none of them were quite down to the level of Lattrey. Lattrey, in fact, had been the means of leading them into half their shady escapades. "By gad!" said Adolphus Smythe to a gloomy and worried meeting of the nutty brigade in his study. "Did you ever hear of such a sneakin' worm? Now he's got the chopper, why can't he take it like a man?" "We wouldn't give a chap away if we got it in the neck," muttered Townsend. "Why, it's unspeakable!

It's worse than Prussian! I never heard of such a thing!" "The rotten Hun!" muttered Gower. "We shall all have to stick together and deny it," said Peele desperately. "After all, it will look like spite—as it is, really. The Head won't pay much attention to it. We can brazen it out." "I'm not goin' to stand up to the Head tellin' a parcel of lies," said Townsend sullenly. Towny had his limits. "Do you want to be sacked, you idiot?" "I—I'm not goin' to, either," said Topham. "I—I couldn't! What's the good of lyin' to the Head? He sees right through a chap!" "If anything comes out, we can put it all on Lattrey," said Peele eagerly. "As he is known now as a bad character, it can all be put down to his bad influence, if anythin' comes out." "Oh, draw it mild!" granted Chesney. "That's too thick!" "Haven't we got to look after ourselves?" demanded Peele. "The unspeakable cad deserves anythin' we can do," was the verdict of Adolphus Smythe. "He's simply the outside edge!" "He can't prove anything, anyway," muttered Howard. "I don't see that we need be afraid. He can't prove anythin'." "Some things don't need proving," growled Peele. "They prove themselves. Suppose they searched the studies, an' found some things—" "By gad! My cigarettes are goin' into the fire!" "An' my cards after them, an' the bridge-markers!" "And that pink paper—where is the dashed thing?" exclaimed Tracy. "For goodness' sake, let's find it an' burn it!" There was a dismayed search in several studies for incriminating evidence, and in a short time the nuts of Rookwood were making a burnt offering on quite a large scale. Peele and Gower went back to their study later for prep, and found Lattrey alone there, savage and sullen. He gave his studymates a mocking grin as they came in. He knew what the effect of his threat would be. "Look here, Lattrey, you can't mean to do such a beastly, cowardly, mean thing!" exclaimed Peele. "What's the good of givin' your friends away? It won't save your neck." "My friends joined with Jimmy Silver in sending me to Coventry, I seem to remember," sneered Lattrey. "Didn't you ask for it, you toad? There's a limit." "Besides, we were always willin' to speak to you in the study," said Gower. "You can't say we weren't. We couldn't stand out against the whole Lower School, of course." "Why should I go?" said Lattrey. "I'm no worse than some fellows who are stayin'. You fellows, for example." "Oh, come off!" growled Peele. "D'you mean to say that I'd have played a dirty trick like yours on Jimmy Silver? I may be a bit of a sport, but I'm not a plottin' criminal." "You've done enough to be sacked a dozen times, if the Head knew; and he's goin' to know, if I go." "How will that help you, you rotter?" "Well, you fellows might do somethin' for me," said Lattrey. "There's Smythe, of the Shell; he's got a relation on the Governing Board. So has Howard—and Townsend. They might be got to interfere." "They wouldn't." "They might, if Smythe and Towny and Howard tried hard," said Lattrey sullenly. "Something might be done. I warn you, all of you, that I'm not goin' down alone. I'll drag down anybody I can with me, especially Mornington." "You can do as you like with Morny, but you might be commonly decent with your own friends." "Let my friends stand by me, then," said Lattrey savagely. "I tell you, if I go, I'll make everybody I can suffer for it; and make as big a scandal of it as possible, too, for the benefit of Rookwood. I'll get so many fellows sacked, if I can, that it'll get into the papers." Peele and Gower stared at him. Their own consciences were somewhat tough, but this was a shock to them. It was pretty clear that Rookwood was no place for a fellow of Lattrey's kind. "You'd do that—to your own school?" ejaculated Gower at last. "I would—and will!" "Where does the reptile come from?" said Peele, in wonder. "Haven't you any decency at all, Lattrey? You'd drag the name of

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Rookwood through the newspapers! My only hat! Look here, Gower, I'm not standin' that filthy Hun in this study. Let's chuck him out!"

"What!" exclaimed Lattrey. "Peele threw open the door. 'Get out!' he said. 'The proper place for you is in Prussia. You're not stayin' in this study, anyhow. You make me sick. Go to the Head, if you like—or go to the dickens! Get out!'"

"I won't! I—"  
"You will!"  
Peele and Gower collared their study-mate, and Lattrey, struggling fiercely, was whirled to the door. He landed in the passage with a crash.

"Now come back, an' you'll get some more," said Peele, between his teeth.

The door slammed on Lattrey. With a face white with fury, the cad of the Fourth limped away.

**The 4th Chapter. Woeful Sportsmen!**

Jimmy Silver & Co. were rather amused.

It was the day after Lattrey's sentence had become known. It had leaked out that Lattrey's father was coming down that day, to see the Head and hear his explanation, and to take his son away with him.

Lattrey was facing the music with brazen coolness.

He turned up to morning lessons, as usual, and was impertinent to Mr. Bootles in class several times. His idea appeared to be that he might as well be hung for a sheep as for a lamb.

Mr. Bootles was very tolerant towards him, however. He disliked caning a fellow who was to be turned out of the school in disgrace that day.

Lattrey gave his Form-fellows scowling looks of defiance; and he rejoiced in the dismay of the nutty brigade.

Jimmy Silver & Co. could not help being a little amused by the unconcealed uneasiness of Smythe and his friends.

Adolphus Smythe's face was a study that day.

His friends shared his apprehensions. They repeated to one another that if the expelled junior betrayed them, he had no proofs to offer.

But that was only a very cold comfort.

If they had been innocent of wrongdoing, they would have laughed at Lattrey's threats. Clear consciences would have carried them through.

But they were not innocent, and there was the rub.

Lattrey couldn't prove anything; but facts had a way of speaking for themselves. In a severe examination at the hands of their headmaster, they were well aware that something or other would be blurted out; they were not equal to a passage-at-arms with Dr. Chisholm.

Once the Head was on the track, and they were called into the dread presence, they felt that the game was up. They simply couldn't lie in a convincing way with those keen eyes on them.

And lying, too, went against the grain with some of them, especially Townsend and Topham, who were foolish rather than bad.

They would rather have lied than suffered for their faults, but they knew they could not lie with Lattrey's facility. They would stammer and blush, and give themselves away; they were only too sure of that.

The dismay and apprehension of the nuts was wonderful to behold, and it was quite a standing joke in the Fourth Form that day.

Only Mornington was cool and unconcerned.

Morny had not turned a hair. True, Morny had long given up his former shady ways, entirely or almost entirely, and he had less to fear than the others, his former associates.

But Mornington was incapable of fear, in any case. His only reply to Lattrey would have been a contemptuous smile, if he had had the worst to expect.

After morning lessons the nuts gathered in a dismal group in the quadrangle, and the Fistical Four observed them there—with smiles. The loftiness of the nutty brigade was gone; the glory had departed from the House of Israel, so to speak.

Smythe called to Jimmy Silver, as the captain of the Fourth came along.

"Silver, old chap—"

"Hallo, how long have I been an old chap?" asked Jimmy Silver good-humouredly.

"No rottin' now," said Smythe.

"This is a dashed serious matter for us. That fellow Lattrey is a scoundrel. We've rather dabbled in sportin' matters—"

"You have!" grinned Newcome.

"No doubt about that!"

"Only in a sportin' way," said

Adolphus. "But if that cad peaches, we may be looked on as rascally cads like him, you know—if the Head believes him! Fancy us bein' put in the same boat with Lattrey—us, you know!"

"Us!" groaned Tracy.

"Well, it's hard lines," said Jimmy Silver. "You're not such worms as he is; I agree to that."

"Look here—"

"I know it's no good lyin' to the Head!" groaned Townsend. "I tell you he sees right through a chap."

"Can't you suggest somethin', Silver?" demanded Adolphus. "You're junior captain, an' that's properly my job. Well, then, tell us somethin' to do. You've got a head on you; I've always admitted that."

"My dear ass, your Uncle James is the right fellow to come to for advice," said Jimmy Silver heartily.

"I'll make a suggestion, if you like."

"Go it!" said Adolphus heartily.

"Lattrey hasn't gone to the Head yet with his yarn?"

"Not yet."

"Well, you fellows go to him first, and get first innings."

"Yaas, but what good would that do?"

"Make a clean breast of it."

"What?"

"Confess everything, and promise to be decent in the future, and the Head is sure to let you off lightly."

"You ass!" exclaimed Adolphus.

"That would be all very well if we

trety coolly. "I'm not in a position to let any chances slip."

"Oh, you cad! You worm!"

"You sneakin' traitor!"

"Hard words break no bones, dear boys. If you can't save me you can go down along with me. Some consolation in that for me."

"You miserable cad!" said Townsend helplessly. "The Head won't believe you, anyway."

"What are you worryin' about, then?" asked Lattrey, with a grin.

"We can't speak to our relations for you, Lattrey," mumbled Adolphus.

"It would be like identifyin' ourselves with you, an' backin' you up. Besides, it wouldn't do you any good. They'd take no notice."

"All the worse for you."

"Look here, Lattrey—"

"I want 'Yes' or 'No,'" said Lattrey.

"No!" said Smythe desperately.

"I'd rather be sacked myself than ask my uncle to chip in for you an' tell him you're my friend an' a peck of lies to make out you're not the filthy cad I know you are. I can't do it!"

"That's enough!"

Lattrey walked away to the School House. Adolphus Smythe gave his friends a hopeless look.

"He's goin' to the Head!" he said.

"We've got to brazen it out!" muttered Peele.

"We can't!"

"Hallo! You fellows enjoyin'

"There's fellows in the school now who—"

Dr. Chisholm raised his hand.

"Have you come here, Lattrey, to make accusations against your school-fellows?" he asked sternly.

"I've come to tell you the truth, sir. You ought to know—"

"I decline to listen to a single word, Lattrey. I cannot trust you, and I cannot place the slightest faith in any accusation you might make. I fear that you are malicious and unscrupulous enough to desire to involve others in your own punishment. You may go!"

"But—but I—"

"Not a word more, Lattrey! Leave my study!"

Utterly taken aback, crushed by the cold contempt in the headmaster's look and voice, Lattrey slunk out of the study.

The bitter disappointment and chagrin in his face did not escape Smythe & Co. as they saw him. He gave them a furious look in passing, and Peele caught him by the arm.

"You've told—" he began.

"Let me go!" snarled Lattrey.

He wrenched away his arm, and tramped away. Adolphus Smythe & Co. looked at one another uncertainly.

"I—I—I think it's all right," said Smythe at last. "The Head won't listen to him. Of course, he couldn't, when you come to think of it. A fel-

son. The juniors easily recognised him, and they recognised, too, that Lattrey of the Fourth was a chip of the old block.

The bell called the juniors in to lessons as Mr. Lattrey arrived. They trooped off to the Form-rooms, but Lattrey stayed behind to speak to his father in the porch before he was shown in to the Head.

Mr. Lattrey gave his son a hard look.

"So you are in disgrace here, Mark," he said.

His voice was cold and hard, like his face.

"Yes," muttered Lattrey uneasily.

"I—I—it wasn't so bad, but—"

"Your headmaster tells me you are to leave. I have been asked to come here to-day and take you away with me."

"Can't anything be done, pater?" asked Lattrey in a low voice. "I—I don't want to go. I've done nothing, really. It's all humbug. You won't think it's so jolly bad when the Head tells you."

Mr. Lattrey set his thin lips.

"You will not go," he said. "But I warn you to be careful, Mark. If I can save you this time it may not happen that I can do the same again."

"I shall be jolly careful after this!" muttered Lattrey. His face was brighter. "You think you can manage it, pater?"

"I hope so."

"Oh, good!" Lattrey set his teeth. "Some of the fellows will be surprised, I think. They want me to go, hang them! I—"

"Go in to your lessons, Mark."

"Yes, father."

Lattrey went into the Fourth-Form room, his step lighter and his face almost smiling. Mr. Bootles gave him a glance, but made no remark on his being five minutes late.

He was not likely to stay long in the Form-room, anyway. Mr. Bootles understood that he would be sent for by the Head, and when he left the Form-room to obey the summons he would not come back.

All the Fourth knew it, and they were surprised at the new expression on Lattrey's face.

They could see that his father's coming had "bucked" him very considerably, and they wondered. Any other fellow at Rookwood would certainly have found an interview with his father under such circumstances very disconcerting indeed.

But Lattrey had confidence in his father. Mr. Lattrey did not look on matters as most of the fellows' fathers did. He was not of their kind, and his few words had caused the disgraced junior to hope for the best.

Meanwhile, Mr. Lattrey had been shown into the Head's study. Dr. Chisholm was there, expecting him.

The Head shook hands with his visitor, and the gentleman from London seated himself. It was a painful enough interview to the Head. The task of explaining a boy's rascality to his father was not a pleasant one.

But it was his duty, and he did not shrink from it. Neither did Mr. Lattrey show the emotion most fellows' fathers would have felt at such a time.

"I understand from your letter that you have a serious complaint to make of my son, sir," Mr. Lattrey's voice was sharp and businesslike. "You wish me to take him away from Rookwood. That is a very serious matter. It was not agreeable news to me, Dr. Chisholm."

"I can quite understand that, and I sympathise—"

"Yes, yes; but if my son is turned out of this school under a cloud, sympathy will hardly lighten such a blow. In a word, what has he done?"

The Head compressed his lips a little, and proceeded to explain.

Mr. Lattrey did not interrupt him once.

He sat bolt upright in his chair, his hands resting on the handle of his umbrella, his eyes fixed upon Dr. Chisholm with a steady and somewhat disconcerting gaze.

He was evidently paying careful attention to every word the Head uttered. When the tale was finished, he gave utterance to a sound resembling a grunt.

"And is that all, sir?"

"That is all, Mr. Lattrey."

"You relieve my mind very considerably," said Mr. Lattrey, with an inflexion of sarcasm in his voice. "I had feared worse, from your letter. It appears that my son played a trick upon a boy he disliked—an ill-natured and malicious trick, I grant. It seems that this boy was among those who sent him to Coventry, which amounts, in some sort, to provocation. Surely, sir, a flogging would be a sufficient punishment for my son."

"If that were his only offence, I might consider so," said the Head.

"But he has already been flogged for



"I have some news for you, sir, concerning your brother," said the soldier. "I have no desire to hear news of Oliver Chisholm," said the Head quietly. "To me, Oliver Chisholm is dead!"

were goin' to turn over a new leaf, like good little Georgie in the story. But we ain't."

"No fear!" said Peele.

"Oh!" said Jimmy. "You want to crawl out of this, and then go on playing the giddy ox the same as before, is that it?"

"Well, yaas," admitted Adolphus hesitatingly.

"That's it, Silver."

"Then the best thing you can do is to go to the Head and ask him to sack you along with Lattrey."

"What?"

"You can explain to him that you're not fit to stay at Rookwood. That will be the frozen truth."

"You silly idiot!" roared Smythe.

"That's my advice," said Jimmy Silver, and he walked on with his grinning chums, leaving Adolphus & Co. in a state of great exasperation.

Lattrey joined the worried group under the beeches. There was a sardonic grin on his hard, thin face. He was enjoying the flutter he had caused in the nutty dove-cote.

"Well, what are you fellows goin' to do?" he asked.

"What can we do?" mumbled Adolphus.

"Some of you have got relations on the governin' board. The Head would be bound to listen to them. You can get them to act."

"It's impossible."

"You can try, at any rate."

"We can't!" muttered Howard.

"You must be potty to think of such a thing!"

"It's my only chance," said Lat-

yourself?" chimed in Mornington, coming up with a laugh. "You look happy."

"Lattrey's gone to the Head!" snarled Peele.

"Good old Lattrey! The fellow always was a sneak!"

"You'll get it as bad as we shall!"

"I sha'n't whine if I do!" said Mornington coolly. "Come on, Erroll! Time for some footer before dinner."

He walked away with Erroll, who was looking grave and troubled. Kit Erroll was anxious for his friend, who did not seem anxious for himself.

Smythe & Co. went into the House, and hung about the end of the corridor on which the Head's study opened. They were anxious to know the worst as soon as possible.

Meanwhile, Lattrey had presented himself in Dr. Chisholm's study.

The downfallen cad of the Fourth fully intended to do his very worst. It was a pleasure to him to make other fellows suffer as well as himself, though they had never harmed him.

But the malevolent fellow had a surprise and a disappointment in store for him. Dr. Chisholm gave him a cold look of inquiry.

"I did not send for you, Lattrey. I do not require you here until your father comes. You will be called."

"I have something to tell you, sir," said Lattrey.

"You may speak."

"I think you ought to know, sir, that I'm not the only chap who has done some things against the rules. I've had pals," said Lattrey bitterly.

low like that would say anythin', an' the Head knows it."

"Good old Head!" murmured Tracy.

The nuts were still feeling a little doubtful, but the dreaded summons to the Head's study did not come.

It was clear at last that the cad of the Fourth had not been listened to, and Smythe & Co. were relieved, with an exceedingly great relief.

Adolphus was quite chippy after dinner, and he passed Lattrey in the quad with a lofty glance of contempt and an elevated nose.

And if any fellows had felt sympathy towards Lattrey in his downfall his last malicious action would have destroyed it. There was not a fellow at Rookwood now who would not be glad to see him go.

**The 5th Chapter.**

**Mr. Lattrey Says "No."**

"That's the johnny!" remarked Jimmy Silver.

"Lattrey, senior!" smiled Lovell.

"Well, he looks like it!"

It was just before afternoon lessons when the station hack rolled in at the gates of Rookwood, and a visitor alighted.

He was a man of middle age, with a hard, cold, sharp face, and eyes that seemed like points of steel. Lucas Lattrey, the head of the firm of Lattrey & Co., inquiry agents, was not a prepossessing gentleman to look at.

There was a good deal of likeness between his hard face and that of his





**BROUGHT TO TERMS!**

(Continued from the previous page.)

transgressing the laws of the school in the most flagrant manner. He has associated with card-sharpers and wastrels—

"That seems to indicate some laxity in the governing of the school."

"Sir!" exclaimed the Head, colouring.

"That is how it appears to me, at all events."

"It is not possible, Mr. Lattrey, to institute a watch upon boys. I should be very sorry to see the German system of spying and tale-bearing instituted in an English school. The boys are, to a large extent, upon their honour. There is a general supervision, of course. In most cases the boys can be relied upon. Boyish escapades can be forgiven, or lightly punished. If it becomes known that a boy betrays vicious tendencies, he is especially noted—and corrected. If he persists, he leaves the school. His parents are the proper persons to take charge of him in that case."

"But—"

"Lattrey, I am sorry to say, has chosen the wrong course, and in spite of warnings and punishments, has persisted in it. His latest action shows a degree of cunning and duplicity almost alarming in one so youthful. He simply cannot remain among boys whom he may corrupt." The Head paused. "I am sorry, sir, to wound your feelings by speaking thus of your son, but you have left me no choice."

"You need not mind my feelings," said Mr. Lattrey, unmoved. "It is, in fact, hardly a question of feeling. I have my son's interests at heart, naturally, and my own. The discredit of being turned out of Rookwood will cling to him—it will reflect upon me. I desire to avoid that if possible."

"I regret that it is not possible."

"Any other punishment, however severe—I shall not raise the slightest objection!"

"No punishment will meet the case, sir. There is only one course open to me—to remove Lattrey from the school."

There was a long pause. Mr. Lattrey rose from his chair, walked to the window, and stood staring out into the quadrangle for some minutes, his brows wrinkled.

Dr. Chisholm waited patiently. He was anxious for the disagreeable interview to end, but he was considerate. But he spoke at last.

"I will send for your son now, Mr. Lattrey."

Mr. Lattrey turned round from the window.

"There is no hurry for that," he said. "Dr. Chisholm, I have thought the matter out, and I cannot consent to my son being turned out of Rookwood."

"What?"

"I cannot consent!"

Dr. Chisholm looked at him.

"I am sorry, Mr. Lattrey, but that matter is for me to decide," he said icily. "I have decided, and your son

must leave Rookwood with you this afternoon."

"My son will not leave Rookwood with me this afternoon!" said Mr. Lattrey coldly.

"Sir!"

"He cannot be turned out of Rookwood because—"

"Because of what, pray?"

"Because I shall not allow it!"

**The 6th Chapter. Brought to Terms!**

Dr. Chisholm rose to his feet. Mr. Lattrey's unexpected words had given deep offence. There was a flush in the doctor's cheeks, an unusual sparkle in his eyes. His face was set and grim.

"It is useless to prolong this interview, Mr. Lattrey," he said freezingly. "I have my duties to attend to."

"Kindly hear me out," said the gentleman from London, unmoved. "I regret to have to utter the words I am about to utter, sir, but you have left me no choice. Frankly, I cannot allow my son to be expelled from Rookwood. He has acted badly, I admit it. But—"

"There is nothing more to be said, Mr. Lattrey!"

"There is a great deal more to be said, Dr. Chisholm. My son is not the only person at Rookwood in need of charitable forbearance. There are others here, sir, who have secrets to keep."

"Your son attempted to make some malicious accusation against his schoolfellows," said the Head, with a scornful curl of the lip. "I declined to listen to him, and I decline to listen to you upon the same topic, Mr. Lattrey."

Mr. Lattrey smiled slightly.

"I am not referring to my son's schoolfellows," he said. "I know nothing about them, and care nothing."

"You are surely not referring to any member of the school staff, sir!" exclaimed the Head, with great indignation.

"I was referring to yourself, sir!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You, sir, have a secret to keep—a secret involving the honour of your name and your position in the school!" said Mr. Lattrey, in a voice like steel. "I am perfectly well acquainted with the fact."

Dr. Chisholm's face was crimson.

"Sir!" he stammered. "How dare you? Are you out of your senses, Mr. Lattrey? How dare you?"

"Do you deny the fact?"

"I have not the slightest intention of bandying words with you on that subject or any other, Mr. Lattrey. I request you to take your leave!"

"I shall take my leave when my business here is concluded. If you wish the story of your brother's disgrace to become the talk of Rookwood School, you have only to say so!"

Dr. Chisholm sank back into his chair as if he had received a blow in the face.

The angry and indignant flush faded from his cheeks, leaving him deadly

pale, and looking strangely old and worn.

"My brother!" he said, in almost a whisper. "My brother?"

"Your brother Oliver, sir."

"What do you know of my brother Oliver? How can you know anything of him—you, a stranger to me, almost?" muttered the Head huskily.

"I know the secrets of many people to whom I am a stranger," said Mr. Lattrey calmly. "You are aware that I am the head of a firm of private inquiry agents—in other words, of detectives. During twenty years, sir, many secrets have come to my knowledge in the course of my work. There are men holding their heads high in this country whom I could ruin with a word. Secrets are as safe with me as with a lawyer—it is my profession to know everything and to say nothing."

"But—but—"

"The story of your brother's disgrace has been known to me for years," said Mr. Lattrey. "The whole particulars came to my knowledge during the investigation of another matter with which your brother was very slightly connected. The whole history is pigeon-holed at my office, set aside to be used if there should ever be occasion to use it."

There was something like fear in the glance the Head cast at the cold, emotionless face of the professional spy.

"It does not seem to me possible that you know what you claim to know," the Head said at last. "But granting your knowledge, how does that affect the matter of your son? He cannot remain at Rookwood."

"He must remain at Rookwood, sir," said Mr. Lattrey quietly. "I have known your secret for years, and have kept silent for professional reasons. There is a saying that one good turn deserves another. Take a more lenient view of my son's offence, and give him another chance, and you may depend upon my silence permanently."

"And if I do not?"

"Then I shall speak, necessarily. It will be to my son's advantage if I let it transpire that I took him away from Rookwood, of my own accord, because I had discovered the disgraceful associations of his headmaster!"

"Good heavens!" muttered the Head.

"I am sorry to express myself thus, Dr. Chisholm. But, naturally, I consider the matter wholly from the point of view of the advantage of my own family."

"Do you understand what I mean, Mr. Lattrey? This use you are making of your knowledge—it is called blackmail in law, and punishable by imprisonment!"

"As there are no witnesses present, that does not affect me," said Mr. Lattrey calmly. "It remains for you to decide, sir, whether you will show some consideration to my son, and merit consideration at my hands."

There was a long silence. Dr. Chisholm raised his head at last.

"So far, I have only your statement that you know what you claim to know," he said. "You do not expect me to take, unsupported, the word of a blackmailer?"

A slight flush crept into the detective's cheeks. Even his cool, hard self-possession was penetrated a little by the bitter contempt in the headmaster's voice.

But his voice was quiet and unmoved as he answered:

"I will repeat what I know, if you need convincing," he said. "Your brother, Oliver, was once at Rook-

wood. He was so much younger than you, that he was in the Sixth Form here when you became headmaster. He was guilty of reckless follies, and you sent him away from the school, hushing the matter up as much as possible for the credit of your name."

The doctor winced.

"He went from bad to worse, but he had the grace to assume another name, so that his conduct did not reflect upon his family. When the South African War broke out he joined the Army as a private, and was in several battles, and in the march on Bloemfontein. He was granted a commission for gallantry in the field, and was known as Lieutenant Smith—the name he had taken."

The Head was silent.

"Shortly afterwards he showed that he was quite his old self. He was found out in treacherous traffic with a German agent on the enemy side, was tried by court-martial, and sentenced to death as a traitor. He escaped on the night before the morning fixed for the execution, and disappeared from the knowledge of men. Only one officer knew of his real identity, and he sent the news to you."

Dr. Chisholm's head had sunk upon his breast.

"Such, sir, is the history of your brother, once a Rookwood boy," went on the detective coldly. "Gambler and rascal in his school-boy days, loafer and tout on the race-course in early manhood, traitor to the flag when wearing the uniform of his country! That, sir, is your secret. You know best how your position here would be affected if the facts became generally known."

"How do you know all this?"

Mr. Lattrey shrugged his shoulders. "It was once my duty to investigate a certain affair in connection with the German spy system in South Africa. I came in contact with the German agent with whom your brother had had dealings. From that source, and others, I learned the facts. They could easily be proved. A brother-officer of Lieutenant Smith is now in England—a Captain Erroll, who has a son at this school. He went to British Honduras after the Boer War, but returned to take part in the present war. He knows the facts, but does not know that Lieutenant Smith was your younger brother."

The Head sat silent.

"I am sorry, Dr. Chisholm, but you have forced me to this," said Mr. Lattrey. "Give my son another chance, and I am as silent as a grave."

Dr. Chisholm did not speak.

Mr. Lattrey waited quietly. He knew that he was successful, that the Head of Rookwood dared not face the shame and humiliation that he was threatened with.

The Head spoke at last.

"And you intend to make a base use, Mr. Lattrey, of the knowledge you can only have gained by acting as a spy?"

"I have stated my intentions."

"I—I must have time to think!" muttered the Head. "This—this is an unexpected blow. I had deemed that miserable story dead and gone. I never dreamed that it would rise up against me like a ghost from the past. Perhaps, if your son shows some promise of reform—"

Mr. Lattrey suppressed a smile. "I shall speak very seriously to my son," he said. "I can answer for it that he will be more careful in the future."

"Then—I will send for him."

"Thank you, Dr. Chisholm!" said Mr. Lattrey.

He had won.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at Lattrey when the school-page came to the Form-room to call him to the Head's study.

Lattrey gave them a vaunting look, and left the Form-room.

"Good-bye for ever!" murmured Mornington. "What a loss!"

"Good riddance to the cad!" muttered Townsend.

Nobody in the Classical Fourth expected to see Lattrey again. But a quarter of an hour later the door of the Form-room opened.

Lattrey came quietly in and crossed to his place. Mr. Bootles almost dropped the book in his hand.

"Lattrey!" he ejaculated.

"Yes, sir!"

"What—what—what are you doing here?"

"I have returned for lessons, sir."

"But—but I understood that you were leaving Rookwood this afternoon with your father, Lattrey!"

"Did you really, sir?" said Lattrey calmly.

"I—I certainly—I—"

"My father is going now, sir," said Lattrey. "There was a sound of wheels in the quadrangle as he spoke. 'Shall I take my place, sir?'"

"Do you mean to tell me, Lattrey, that you are not leaving Rookwood?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles.

"It appears not, sir."

"Bless my soul! You may sit down, Lattrey."

Lattrey sat down.

The Fourth Form was in a buzz of astonishment. There was a quiet, sarcastic smile upon Mark Lattrey's face.

"My hat!" murmured Jimmy Silver. "Then it's all spoo! He's not going!"

"How on earth has he worked it?" said Lovell in bewilderment. "That was a puzzle."

When the Fourth Form were dismissed, the juniors surrounded Lattrey in the passage. They were all curious, and not pleased.

"So you're not goin'?" exclaimed Mornington.

"Not at all."

"The Head's let you off?" exclaimed Lovell.

"Exactly."

"Why?" demanded a dozen voices. "Better ask him!" yawned Lattrey. "Perhaps he thought that a shinin' light like myself couldn't be spared. Anyway, I'm not goin'."

Sorry to disappoint you." And he walked away, whistling, leaving the Fourth in a buzz of amazed discussion. Jimmy Silver & Co. simply couldn't understand it. But there it was. Lattrey of the Fourth was still Lattrey of the Fourth. His father had gone, and Lattrey remained at Rookwood. The black sheep of the Fourth had another chance. It remained to be seen what he would make of it.

THE END.

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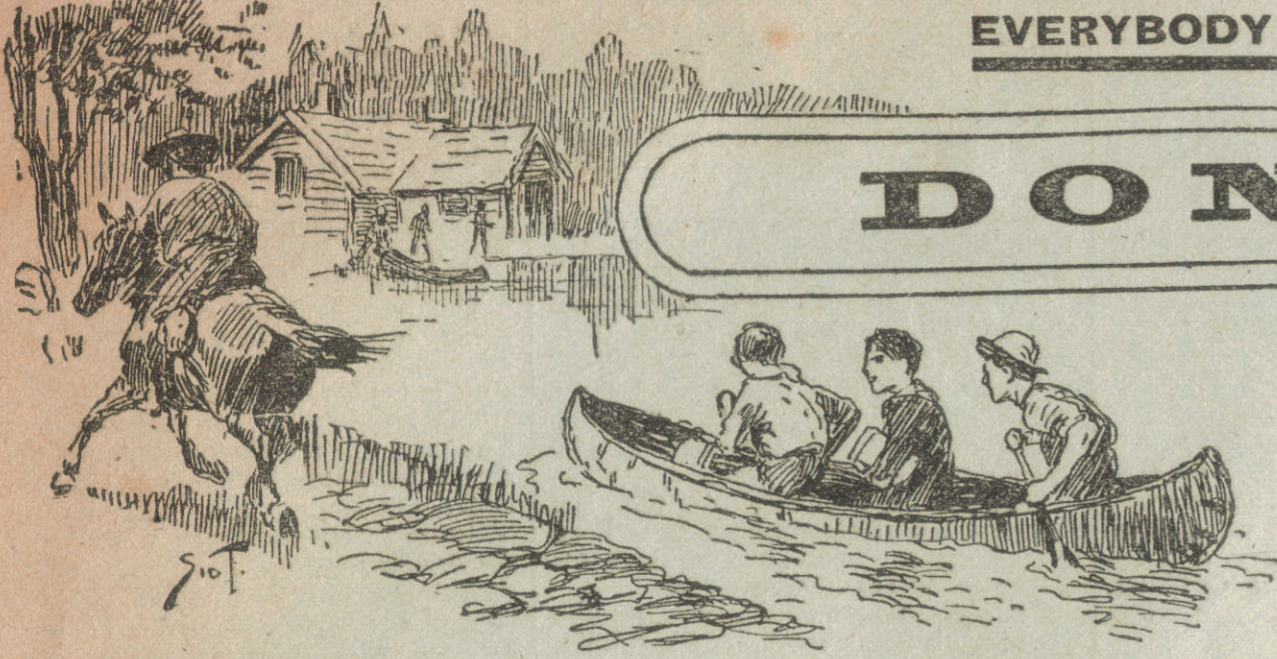


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"Rubbish!" That was Kern Gunten's opinion, and he did not hesitate to express it. "Rot!" remarked Keller, who, like Gunten, was of Swiss nationality. "Tain't a bad idea," said Chunky Todgers. "Let Richards alone. Go it, Franky!"

"Hear, hear!" chimed in Bob Lawless.

"Bosh! Tosh!" said Gunten. "Give a chap a chance," said Tom Lawrence. "Wade in, Richards!" Frank Richards coloured a little.

He was the centre of a little group in the school ground at Cedar Creek. Some of the fellows were grinning—in fact, most of them.

Frank was imparting a new idea to his schoolfellows. Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc backed him, chiefly because he was their chum, but not quite because they thought his idea was a good one.

Gunten, the Swiss, was always "up against" Frank Richards, and he did not lose this opportunity of expressing an unfavourable opinion. Anything Frank Richards suggested was sure of opposition from the cad of the lumber school.

"Go it, Franky!" said Bob Lawless encouragingly.

"Go it, Franky!" said Bob Lawless encouragingly.

"Yep; pile in!" said Eben Hacke. "And don't keep us waiting," remarked Dick Dawson. "Tain't too warm standing in the snow."

Some of the Cedar Creek fellows were snowballing outside the school fence, but seven or eight fellows were giving Frank Richards a hearing.

"Well," said Frank, "it's only a suggestion."

"And a rotten one," remarked Gunten.

"Shut up, Gunten!" snapped Bob Lawless.

"We used to do amateur theatricals at home, when I was at school in England," continued Frank. "We had a stage club in my form. Now the winter's here, we've got long evenings before us. Why shouldn't we start a dramatic club in this school? We can get some props from Fraser on the railway. The store-wagon will bring them up the valley."

"Who's going to pay for them?" grinned Keller.

"The funds of the dramatic society, of course. Every chap pays a subscription to the club."

"And you pocket the proceeds!" sneered Gunten.

Frank Richards' colour deepened, and he fixed his eyes on the Swiss.

"You can speak for or against, as you like, Gunten," he said quietly.

"But if you say anything like that again I'll knock it back down your throat. That's plain English!"

Gunten sneered, and shrugged his shoulders.

"Never mind that foreign trash," said Bob Lawless. "Get on with the business, Franky, before the bell goes."

"Yep; stop chewing the rag, Gunten!" growled Hacke. "You talk too much!"

The Swiss was angry and silent.

Frank Richards went on:

"There's lots of fun in amateur theatricals. I've had some experience, and I can coach you fellows, if you care to take it up. We used to do Shakespeare and things at home. It's a ripping idea, if it's worked properly. Subscriptions needn't be large, either. Treasurers will be elected by all members of the club. If you fellows like the idea, I'll take down names of members."

"You can put me down," said Bob.

"And me," said Vere Beauclerc.

"Count me in," said Chunky Todgers. "I believe I could play Hamlet a treat."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"More likely Falstaff," grinned Lawrence, "or the fat man from Chicago!"

"Look here, you jay—" began Chunky warmly.

"But where are we going to act?" asked Dawson. "Are you going to ask Miss Meadows to chuck lessons one afternoon, while we use the school-room?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course not," said Frank Richards, a little crossly. "We can act in the school-room after lessons, or on holidays, or at any selected place. We can rehearse here all right, in the old corral in fine weather, and in the barn in bad weather. No difficulty about that. We could begin with something easy, and take on Shakespeare later."

"Ahem!"

"If every fellow came into the idea, a subscription of half-a-dollar a term would see us through," said Frank.

"The girls could join, too. They'd be able to take the girl parts. Later on, we might give a performance at Thompson, and charge for admission, and make a good thing of it."

"Oh, Jerusalem!"

"No reason why we shouldn't. Anyway, it would be fun. Now, who's going to put his name down?"

"Hold on!" said Gunten. "Can you act, Richards?"

"Well, I have acted at school," said Frank. "Not quite like Irving, I suppose, but fairly well, I think."

"Blessed is he that bloweth his own trumpet!" grinned Keller.

Frank was reciting quite well, and the Cedar Creek fellows left off grin-

fellows to take it up. But he could see that Gunten was "pulling his leg," and that the other fellows were entering into it to "guy" him.

"Well, go it!" said Tom Lawrence. "Can't you act, after all?"

"Give us Mark Antony's oration," said Dawson, grinning. "I remember having that at school in Ontario."

"Pile in!"

"Oh, he was only gassing!" sneered Gunten. "All he knows about Shakespeare is his name!"

There was a laugh.

"Look here, you want me to recite, I'll recite fast enough!" exclaimed Frank Richards. "I don't mind. Here goes!"

"Silence for Irving the Second!" called out Gunten.

Unheeding the Swiss, Frank Richards began with that celebrated speech of Marcus Antonius:

"Friends, Romans, countrymen, lend me your ears.

I come to bury Caesar, not to praise him.

The evil that men do lives after them,

The good is oft interred with their bones.

So let it be with Caesar. The noble—Yarooooooh!"

Frank was reciting quite well, and the Cedar Creek fellows left off grin-

He sat in the snow, gouging out the fragments of the snowball that had gone into his mouth, and gasping spasmodically.

"You rotter!" he gasped. "Groogh! You worm! Ow-yow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo! There's the bell!" exclaimed Bob Lawless, grasping Frank by the arm, and dragging him up.

"Come on! Ha, ha!"

"What are you—groogh—cackling at, you ass?"

"Ha, ha! Come on!"

"I'm going to punch that foreign beast!"

"You're not; you're coming in to school," chuckled Bob; and he dragged his chum away towards the School House.

Karl Gunten, chuckling, had already gone in. There were grins all round Frank Richards as he sat down at his desk for afternoon lessons.

Chunky Todgers dug him in the back from the next row.

"I say, Richards, give us another recitation after lessons, will you?"

"We'll all get snowballs ready!" chortled Dawson.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Rats!" growled Frank.

"Silence, please!" said Miss Meadows, as she came to take the class.

And the chortles ceased as the lumber school settled down to the serious business of the afternoon.

bably, he expressed them with all the more emphasis.

It was quite evident that if Frank Richards succeeded in forming the Cedar Creek dramatic society, Gunten would do his best to make it a failure.

Beauclerc and Bob Lawless joined Frank, when his hour with Mr. Slimmey was up, and they left the school together.

Bob was grinning.

"Still thinking of the dramatic stunt, Franky?" he asked, as they left the school and walked their ponies down the snowy trail through the timber.

"Well, there doesn't seem much keenness about it," confessed Frank. "I think it's a good idea all the same, especially with the Christmas holidays just coming on. I'm going ahead. The fact is, I've already sent an order for some things to Phipp's store at Fraser—grease-paints and wigs and things, to begin with. They may come along any day."

"It's a good idea," said Beauclerc. "Never mind Gunten. He would be bound to throw cold water on it, if he could."

"Bless Gunten!" growled Frank.

"Well, we'll back you up, old scout!" said Bob. "All the more to put Gunten in his place. That foreign trash talks too much."

Frank Richards' eyes gleamed.

"The rotter says I can't act!" he said. "I'll show him whether I can act or not, pretty soon. I've got an idea about that."

Frank and his Canadian cousin rode on from the fork in the trail where they parted from Vere Beauclerc.

Frank was silent as they trotted home on the snowy trail. He was thinking of the new idea that had come into his mind—of convincing Kern Gunten that he could act—and the other fellows as well. As for Bob, he was thinking of his supper.

At the lumber school, during the next few days, Frank Richards made no reference to the Thespian scheme.

The other fellows concluded that he had dropped the idea, and, as nobody was keen about it, it was not revived.

Kern Gunten felt a considerable satisfaction at the dropping of the scheme. His sneering opposition had been more efficacious than he had expected.

On the following Saturday Frank and Bob were working on the ranch, when the post-wagon came along from Thompson, driven by Gunten, who was the son of the Thompson postmaster.

Frank ran into the trail to meet it.

"Anything for me, Gunten?" he called out.

Gunten grinned as he pulled in his team.

"Yep; a parcel from Fraser."

"Good! Hand it out!"

Gunten tossed a large parcel out of the wagon, and handed out the letters for the ranch.

"So you're keeping up the theatrical stunt, Richards!" he said.

"How do you know?"

"There's that kind of stuff in your parcel from Fraser, I guess."

"It's not marked on the outside," said Frank drily. "You'd better learn not to peep into people's parcels, Gunten, or there'll be trouble sooner or later for the postmaster at Thompson."

Gunten scowled.

He wheeled his team and drove away the post-wagon, and Frank and Bob carried the letters and parcel up to the ranch.

"Let's have a look at the truck," said Bob, when the parcel was taken up to the room the cousins shared in the ranch-house.

Frank was eager to open it, and Bob was interested.

The cord was soon untied and the parcel opened. Bob Lawless stared at the contents—grease-paints in various array, artificial moustaches and wigs, and other requirements of the amateur actor.



Just as Frank Richards got fairly going with his recitation, Gunten's hand came up, and the snowball flew with unerring aim, crashing on the schoolboy actor's mouth.

"I'm not blowing my own trumpet; I'm answering a question."

"Let's see a sample of it," suggested Gunten. "Give us some Shakespeare, and let's see how you do it."

Frank hesitated.

"I guess that's a good stunt," said Eben Hacke. "Get on with the chime-music, Richards."

"Frank Richards is an education in himself," said Gunten, in his sneering way. "Enlighten us. Give us a sample."

"Go it, Richards!"

It was a chorus from the Cedar Creek fellows.

But Frank hesitated.

He was rather keen on the idea of an amateur theatrical club in the lumber school, and he wanted the

ning, and listened with growing interest.

But Kern Gunten had slyly stooped behind Keller for a handful of snow.

Just as Frank was fairly going the Swiss' hand came up, and the snowball flew with unerring aim.

Frank's recitation ceased in a wild splutter as the missile crashed on his mouth.

"Gurrrrrgh!"

Frank Richards staggered back a pace, and slipped in the snow and sat down.

There was a roar of laughter.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Even Bob and Beauclerc joined in the yell, the sudden fall of the orator was so ludicrous.

"Groogh!" gasped Frank Richards.

**The 2nd Chapter.****The Amateur Actor.**

After lessons that day Frank Richards followed Mr. Slimmey, the assistant-master, to his cabin for his Latin lesson, which Mr. Slimmey kindly gave him one evening a week.

Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc joined in the snowballing which went on in the school grounds before the Cedar Creek fellows dispersed to their homes.

There was some discussion of Frank's idea among the fellows. Kern Gunten was loud in expressing his opinion that the English school-boy's sole game was to get into the limelight, and "swank."

Gunten was not popular in the school, and his remarks were not much heeded, for which reason, pro-





## DONE BROWN!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"By gum, what a collection!" he said.

Frank's eyes glistened. The "props" reminded him of earlier schooldays in far-off England.

"How much did they stick you for that truck?" asked Bob.

"Nearly all the tin I had saved up," said Frank. "Twenty dollars! I've got the bill. And if the dramatic club is ever formed, the stuff will be handed over at cost price for common use. If not, I shall have to stand it."

"Oh, we'll form a club right enough!" said Bob. "It's a new notion to the fellows, you know, and they don't quite catch on. We might get up something to give them an idea of what the thing's like."

"I was thinking of that," said Frank, with a smile. "Better get back to work now, or your pater will think we are slacking."

"Right you are!"

But at sundown, when work on the ranch was over for the boys, Frank hurried to his room to look over his new treasures.

That evening he was busy trying them.

That Frank could "act," his Canadian cousin soon had proof. Bob's eyes opened wide as Frank made himself up in several different characters, one after another—as a lumberman, an Indian, a negro, and a Chinaman.

The impersonations were very convincing, and Bob was very considerably impressed.

"You can work the raffle, and no mistake!" he exclaimed at last. "I say, come down like that, and let popper and mopper see you!"

Frank laughed.

He was made-up at that moment as a negro boy, and though his features did not lend themselves to the character, his complexion and his wool were very convincing. Few would have guessed his race, looking at him.

"Right-ho!" he said.

He went downstairs with Bob, and in the ranch-house hall they came upon Mr. Lawless.

The rancher stopped suddenly, staring at the black boy.

"Hallo! Whom have you got there, Bob?" he exclaimed.

"I see Sambo, sah!" said Frank. And Bob almost jumped, so complete was the change in his chum's voice.

"Oh, you're Sambo, are you?" said the rancher, puzzled. "And what may you be doing in my house, Mister Sambo?"

"I see come to supper, sah!"

Mr. Lawless simply blinked at him. "Thunder! You cheeky young snowball, you've asked yourself to supper here!" he ejaculated.

"You expect me to supper, sah, dis evening."

"I? Why, I've never seen you before!"

"Dat a mistake, sah," said Frank gravely. "Me work on ranch dis afternoon, mending de fence for you, sah."

"Eh? Either you're dreaming or I am!" said the astonished rancher. "I've never seen you before, to my knowledge! Who is this kid, Bob?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob, unable to repress his merriment any longer. "It's your nephew, popper!"

"What do you mean?" exclaimed the rancher gruffly. "I've got no nigger nephews!"

"It's Frank!" gasped Bob.

"What!"

"Excuse me, uncle," exclaimed Frank, laughing. "I was only trying some theatricals on you."

"Well, by gum!" exclaimed Mr. Lawless, recognising his nephew's voice now. "By the holy poker, you young rascal, you quite took me in!"

And he shook his finger at his nephew as he marched on.

"It's a corker, Franky!" exclaimed Bob, chuckling. "You let the Cedar Creek fellows see you in something like this. I bet you could take in the whole school if you tried!"

"I'm going to try!" said Frank, laughing.

### The 3rd Chapter. Ten to One!

Frank Richards fastened a large bag to his saddle when he led out his pony on Monday morning.

Bob glanced at it rather curiously as they started down the trail.

"Is that some of the props, Franky?" he asked.

"Yes. Don't say anything at the

school yet, Bob. I've got a stunt I want to carry out, first."

"Right you are! I'm mum!" said Bob.

Vere Beauclerc joined them at the fork of the trail, and from that point they walked to the school, as usual.

"What about the theatrical wheeze?" asked Beauclerc. "Have your things come from Fraser yet?"

"Yes; they came on Saturday," said Frank, with a smile. "I'm going to show you pretty soon what I can do in that line. After that, we'll see about the Thespian Club."

At a little distance from the school, Frank detached the bag from the saddle.

"You fellows go on," he said. "You might take my pony, Beau."

"Certainly. But what's the game?"

"I'll tell you later."

Frank carried the bag into the timber, and his chums, considerably mystified, walked on to the school with the ponies.

A quarter of an hour later Frank rejoined them, breathless with running. The bag was no longer with him.

"Hallo, where are the props?" asked Bob Lawless.

"In a hollow tree by the creek."

"What on earth for?"

"Oh, that's a safe place," said Frank.

"You're up to something," said Bob, giving his cousin a rather suspicious look.

Frank laughed, but did not answer. Kern Gunten was standing near the gates with some other fellows as the three chums came in, and he grinned as he saw Frank.

"How's the amateur theatricals getting on, Richards?" he called out.

"All serene," answered Frank.

"Oh, you're really beginning that rot, then?" sneered Gunten.

"Soon, I hope."

"And you want us to believe that you can act?" sneered Gunten.

"Perhaps you'll be willing to admit that I can act when I've given you a sample," said Frank modestly.

Gunten laughed unpleasantly.

"Perhaps!" he said. "But I'll bet you ten to one in dollars that I don't."

"Well, I don't bet," said Frank, "so I can't take you on. But I'll meet you half-way, Gunten. If I make you admit that I can act, you put ten dollars in the box at the mission; and if you don't admit it, I put one dollar in. That's fair."

"Done!" said Gunten at once. "It will cost you a dollar."

"We shall see about that."

"Why, you jay!" exclaimed Gunten derisively. "I suppose you can't make me admit you can act, if I don't choose!"

"Oh, of course you'll be honest about it," said Frank gravely.

"Of—of course," said Gunten.

"Catch Gunten being honest about anything!" grinned Dawson.

"But you'll have to convince me that you can act, and I'm the judge whether I'm convinced or not," stipulated Gunten.

"Agreed."

"Well, you're done for a dollar!" said Gunten, laughing.

"You may be done for ten dollars!" said Frank coolly, and he walked on, leaving the Swiss chuckling.

Gunten was quite assured that that wager would end in Frank Richards paying up a dollar to the mission. For whether Frank convinced him that he could act or not, Kern Gunten didn't intend to admit it.

The Swiss was not troubled by any honourable scruples in the matter. He simply meant to deny that he was convinced, whether he was convinced or not. And so far as his cunning brain could see, there was no getting round that. Frank Richards was simply throwing away his dollar.

Bob and Vere looked very curiously at Frank as they went in.

"You must be a jay, Franky," said Bob, in wonder. "You surely don't think that foreign cad will own up, in any case, do you?"

"I'm afraid he won't tell the truth, Frank, if you prove to him that you can act like a new Irving," said Beauclerc, with a shake of the head.

Frank Richards smiled.

"He mayn't have any choice," he remarked.

"Blessed if I see it," said Bob.

"Lots of things between the Rockies and the Pacific that you don't see, old chap!" said Frank Richards cheerfully.

"Oh, rats!" grunted Bob. "You're

simply chucking away a dollar, and Gunten will have the cackle."

"Wait a bit and see!" said Frank sententiously.

Gunten, with a grinning face, spoke to Frank Richards as the Cedar Creek fellows went into the school-room.

"You are sticking to that bargain, Richards?" he asked.

"Certainly."

"Well, there's a time-limit, I suppose?"

"Oh, yes. Say by the end of the week, or before," said Frank.

"Right-ho! That's a cinch!"

Gunten was evidently greatly tickled; and the other fellows were tickled, too, and surprised, when they heard of the compact. For if anything was certain at all, it was that Kern Gunten would not "play the game."

That Frank Richards should trust him to "own up" was a proof that Frank was a softie from Softiesville, as Eben Hacke expressed it. But Frank Richards did not mind. It was possible that he knew what he was about.

### The 4th Chapter. The Tramp!

"Where's Franky?"

Vere Beauclerc shook his head, as Bob asked that question after morning lessons.

"Blessed if I know! I think he went towards the creek."

Bob grunted.

"Just like Frank. I'll bet you he's got a Latin book with him, and he's going to mug up lessons," he said.

"Franky wants to keep up his Latin; I'd be jolly glad to drop it. Never mind, let's get some snowballing, to get us warm for dinner. We'll chase Gunten."

"Good!" said Beauclerc, laughing.

It was not unusual for Frank Richards to seek a secluded spot, sometimes to "mug" up the old lesson-books he had brought from his former school.

Mr. Slimmey, who was a good classical scholar, encouraged him to keep up his Latin, and gave him a weekly lesson to help him to do so.

Frank's absence from the snowball game, therefore, called for no special remark.

The Cedar Creek fellows were soon going hot and strong, and snowballs whizzed right and left, amid shouts of merry laughter.

Bob Lawless made it a special point to give Kern Gunten plenty of them. The Swiss was not much given to outdoor games; the game he liked best was poker.

He joined in the snowballing, but he was soon in a furious temper, and then his treacherous nature showed itself.

Bob Lawless gave a sudden yell, as a snowball with a stone in the centre caught him on the head.

"Oh! Ah! Oh!" yelled Bob, clapping his hand to his head.

"Who threw that?" exclaimed Beauclerc fiercely, as he saw a thin stream of crimson oozing between Bob's fingers.

"Some rotten pesky coward, I guess!" exclaimed Tom Lawrence.

"Was it you, Gunten?"

"No!" growled Gunten.

"You, then, Keller?" exclaimed Lawrence.

Keller scowled savagely. The Canadian schoolboys jumped to the conclusion, as a matter of course, that the cowardly trick had been played by one of the "foreign trash."

"I did not!" shouted Keller.

Bob Lawless rubbed the cut on his head. His eyes gleamed at Kern Gunten.

"I guess I know who it was," he said, setting his lips, "and if I had any proof, Gunten, I'd make you sorry for chucking stones in snowballs!"

"Get out of the game, Gunten!" exclaimed Dick Dawson.

"It was not I!" yelled the Swiss.

"Who was it, then?"

"How should I know, hang you?"

"One of you two foreign truck!" said Eben Hacke. "Tain't a white man's trick. Get out of the game!"

Bob Lawless held a handkerchief to the cut, and Beauclerc led him out of the scramble in the snow. Beau's handsome face was anxious.

"Hurt much, old chap?"

Bob tried to grin.

"Not much. I'm not made of putty," he said. "It's a cut, that's all. Of course, it was that pesky coyote, Gunten."

"I think so," said Beauclerc. "The fellows seem to think so, too. It is like him. Hallo, who's this?"

"A pilgrim and a stranger," said Bob, glancing towards the gateway, where a lad had just entered. "New chap for the school, perhaps. There's a new family settled down the Thompson River, I hear."

Kern Gunten, no longer taking part in the snowball game, was standing near the gateway, talking in low tones with Keller.

The stranger who entered looked round hesitatingly, and then walked towards Gunten.

The Swiss eyed him ungraciously as he came up. He could see that the new-comer intended to speak to him.

And the new-comer's appearance did not recommend him to Gunten's favour. Never had Cedar Creek School seen a boy who looked more sadly down on his luck. And the Swiss had no use for fellows who were down on their luck.

The boy was shabby to the last degree; his clothes might have been picked up at a second-hand store for a sum to be counted in cents.

Though there was snow on the ground, his boots were worn and torn, and let in the wet. A rag of a cap was on his head, looking like a frowsy rabbit-skin.

His face was darkly red, as if hardened and coarsened by exposure to all sorts of weathers. His hair was long and untidy, and looked seriously in need of a barber's scissors.

Two or three red marks showed on his red skin, as if from scratches received in the thickets. There was mud thick on his ragged boots, and splashed on his almost equally ragged trousers.

Beggars were practically unknown in the Canadian West. In a land where all men worked there was enough for everyone to lead a decent life. But the lad certainly looked like a beggar, or, at least, a tramp.

Tramps—hoboes, as they were called—sometimes passed through the Thompson Valley, but the Cedar Creek fellows had never seen a hobo so youthful as this.

What he was, in fact, was rather a mystery, and a good many of the fellows ceased their game to look at him.

Bob Lawless ran his hands through his pockets.

"By gum, I've got twenty-five cents, and that pilgrim is going to have it if he wants it!" said Bob.

"Did you ever see such a down-hearted-looking galoot in your natural, Cherub?"

"Poor fellow!" said Beauclerc, his face softening. "He's tackling Gunten—about the last fellow to tackle if it's assistance he wants."

Gunten stared rudely at the ragged lad as he halted, hesitating.

"Well, what do you want hyer?" he demanded. "This isn't a home for tramps, or a refuge for down-at-heel hoboes!"

"Are you—are you Kern Gunten?" faltered the new-comer.

"I guess that's my name."

"I am so glad to see you vunce more, Kern!" exclaimed the stranger in a foreign accent and a voice of deep emotion. "You will welcome me, I zink."

Gunten jumped.

"Eh? Who are you? I've never seen you before!" he exclaimed.

"Hallo, a friend of yours, Gunty?" exclaimed Lawrence, laughing.

"No!" shouted Gunten angrily. "I don't know the fellow. If he makes out that he knows me he's lying!"

"Kern! Kern, mine cousin!"

"Wha-a-at!"

"I zink if I come to you you speak wiz me and make me welcome," said the boy, with a break in his voice. "Your fazzer turn me out of de store when I go to him in Thompson. He does not vant to see his nephew Franz. But you, Kern, is it zat you vill not speak to me?"

Gunten caught his breath.

The schoolboys were gathering round. There was compassion in all their faces. The healthy, hearty Canadians could feel for the miserable-looking specimen before them.

But there was no sympathy or compassion in Gunten's look. He was evidently furious at being claimed as a relation by this wretched-looking tramp.

"It's a lie!" exclaimed Gunten hoarsely. "You tramp! You beggar! How dare you say you are my cousin Franz!"

"Kern, you vil have pity on me, isn't it, ven I am starving?" muttered the outcast wretchedly. "I come to you viz hope in mine heart. I zink zat you giff me ze hand."

"Dash it all, don't be a beast, Gunten!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. "If the poor chap's your cousin, treat him decently."

"He's not my cousin!" shouted Gunten. "I have no cousin in Canada!"

"Oh, come off!" said Lawrence. "I've heard you speaking about your cousin Franz."

"So have I," said Bob; "more than once, too."

"Yes, yes, it is so! But my cousin Franz is in Switzerland, and I have

not seen him since I was a child!" panted Gunten. "I was but two or three years old when my father came to Canada. I tell you that Franz Gunten is in Switzerland."

"It's pretty clear where this chap came from, from his lovely accent!" grinned Dawson. "Swiss or German, and chance it!"

Gunten panted.

The new-comer's strong German-Swiss accent made the matter clear enough to the Cedar Creek fellows, and, indeed, to Gunten himself.

The son of the rich storekeeper at Thompson had little or no doubt that this was his Swiss cousin fallen upon evil days.

Gunten had no desire whatever to see relations who had fallen upon evil days. He was enraged at the bare idea of this wretched vagrant making a claim upon him.

He was still more enraged, because so far as he had known his Swiss relations were well-off, and he had told a good many boastful stories of their wealth and consequence, and the fine fortune that awaited his cousin Franz when he grew up.

His boasts were discounted now with a vengeance.

This seedy, hungry-looking foreigner certainly did not look as if he had been reared in the lap of fortune.

But that was not really surprising. There are ups and downs in the life of a keeper of a gambling-hall, and that was the noble profession followed by Gunten's relations in their native land.

The wealthy branch of the Guntens were getting some of the "downs," to judge by this specimen.

Gunten, hardly knowing what to say or do, backed away, but the ragged stranger followed him up, and the crowd of schoolboys and school-girls thickened round them.

"You vill not speak to me, zen?" exclaimed Franz, and he wiped his eyes with a dirty hand. "You are ashamed of me, like your fazzer, because I am now poor. But if it was not zat ve lose our money, Kern—"

"Gunten would give you the glad hand if you had the spondulicks fast enough!" jeered Eben Hacke, in great disgust. "Give him a welcome, Gunten, you coyote!"

"He is not my cousin!" shouted Gunten furiously, determined to deny the relationship at any cost. "He says himself that my father has turned him out at Thompson."

"Just like old man Gunten, too!" growled Bob Lawless. "He would!"

"Herr Gunten he say he have no use for poor relations," mumbled Franz. "But I zink to mineself my cousin Kern is young, and he vill have ze heart to giff me a welcome, and he vill help me and take me

home viz him and giff me shelter in zis bad wezzer. Kern, I have tramp all ze vay from ze railway to find zis at ze end of mine journey."

"Shame!"

"Play up, Gunten, you toad!"

"I have no money," said Franz, looking round. "We are ruin in Schweiz, and ve come out to Canada, vere mine onkel do so vell in trade. Mine beoples zey are at Fraser, verree poor and vanting help, and I tramp on to zis place to beg of help from mine onkel and cousin. I come to zem starving and freezing wiz mineself, and zis is ze welcome zat I get."

"It's a rotten shame!" said Bob Lawless hotly. "I can't say I'm much gone on foreign dagoes, but if you've got no shelter for to-night, my infant, you'll come home with me."

"You, a stranger, offair me ze shelter, and mine cousin he vill not take mine hand!" murmured the outcast miserably.

"Gunten, you cad—"

"He is not my cousin!" panted Gunten. "If he is, I want nothing to do with him. But I deny it. I will not speak to him. I will give him nothing. If he comes near my home I will set the dogs on him!"

And with that the Swiss swung away, and strode towards the School House. A murmur of disgust and scorn followed him from the Canadian schoolboys. The dinner-bell rang out from the lumber school.

### The 5th Chapter. A Startling Revelation.

Franz Gunten, with a drooping head, turned towards the gates as if to go, but Bob Lawless caught him by the arm.

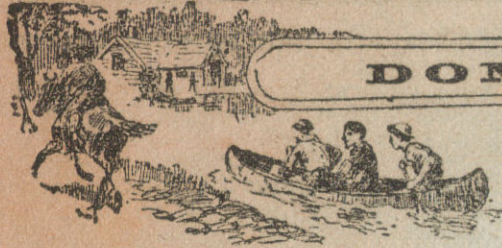
"Hold on, my pippin!" said Bob. "Ain't you hungry? You look it!"

"Ich habe hunger—"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I mean zat I am hungry. I have hunger, isn't it? But mine cousin he do not vant to see me," said the outcast heavily. "It is for me to go, and if I sink by ze trail zat vill not hurt him. I would not treat him like zis."





## DONE BROWN!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Never mind your rotten cousin!" said Bob. "You come in with me, and get some grub. We're just going to have dinner here; and if your folk won't take you in, I'll take you home with me. My popper will look after you a bit till something can be done."

"I zank you from ze heart. You are ver' goot!" faltered the outcast. "Oh, rats!" said Bob good-humouredly. "Come on! And don't be afraid. There's no need for anybody to starve in Canada. If a chap's willing to work, there's plenty for him, and for his old folks, too. Come on!"

Bob Lawless piloted the ragged stranger towards the School House, Vere Beauclerc walking on the other side of him.

The rest of the fellows followed, discussing Gunten's treatment of his relation in terms not at all complimentary to the hard-hearted Swiss.

"Bless my soul! Who is this?" exclaimed Miss Meadows, as the rancher's son entered the school dining-room with his protegee.

"It's Gunten's cousin, Miss Meadows," said Bob. "Gunten won't speak to him because he's down on his luck. I was sure you wouldn't mind my bringing him to feed."

"The poor boy is very welcome," said the schoolmistress kindly. "But I am sure you do Gunten an injustice, Lawless. Is this your cousin, Gunten?"

Gunten gritted his teeth. "No, Miss Meadows. I've never seen the young scoundrel before!" he said deliberately. "He's a liar!"

"I rather think we know who the liar is," growled Hopkins. "And there was a murmur from the rest."

"Silence, please!" said Miss Meadows, her face growing stern. "Gunten, do you say that you do not recognise this boy as your cousin?"

"I do not, Miss Meadows. I've never seen him before."

"He have not to see me since zat ve vas leetle children in Schweiz," said the outcast. "He forget me, and he vish not to know me, I zink, because I am down on ze luck, fraulein. But I ask him for nozing, now zat he vish not to take mine hand. I go my ways."

"I am afraid that the matter cannot rest here. If you claim to be Gunten's cousin, and you are not, you are an impostor!" said Miss Meadows severely. "You are sure of what you say, Gunten?"

She scanned the savage, sullen face of the Swiss doubtfully. "I'm sure," muttered Gunten. "He's a tramp and a liar!"

"Can you prove your assertion, my boy?" asked the schoolmistress, looking at the outcast again.

"I zink zat is so, fraulein. How is it zat I know Gunten by ze sight, if he is not mine cousin, zen? He call me vun liar, and I vill giff proof, isn't it? I vill tell you zat mine cousin Kern, he have mark on ze arm made viz Indian ink ven he was von leetle child. Zat is mark of vun crown viz ze lettairs 'K. G.'"

"Is that the case, Gunten?" Gunten paused. He would have denied it, but many of the fellows knew of the mark on his arm. They had seen it when swimming in the creek in the summer days.

"It's the frozen truth," said Bob. "I've seen it myself when Gunten was swimming. My cousin Frank's seen it, too. I know that."

"And so have I!" exclaimed Dawson.

"And I, too, I calculate," said Hacke.

Miss Meadows' face was very stern now.

"Gunten, if this boy is not your relation, and is a stranger to you, as you say, how can he know of the Indian ink mark on your arm, which is quite invisible when you are dressed?"

"I—I—" "You have spoken falsely, Gunten!"

Gunten snapped his teeth. "He may be my cousin," he muttered. "I—I suppose he is. But I don't want to have anything to do with him. I'm not going to, either. I suppose I can please myself about it."

"You can please yourself, Gunten; but you should not wish to act in a heartless and unfeeling manner towards your relation because he appears to have been unfortunate," said Miss Meadows sternly. "I am very much shocked at this, Gunten. I hope you will think better of it."

Gunten muttered something indistinctly. His feeling towards his cousin was one of poisonous hatred at that moment.

"You may sit down," said Miss Meadows. "Lawless, kindly see that that poor lad wants for nothing."

"Yes, ma'am." "Richards is not present," said Miss Meadows, looking round. "Has your cousin gone home to dinner, Lawless?"

"No, ma'am. I think he's mugging over a Latin lesson somewhere," said Bob.

"Oh, very well!"

Bob Lawless gave all his attention to the outcast. The latter made a very hearty dinner, Bob taking care to supply all his wants.

Gunten watched him malevolently across the table. He wished devoutly that his poverty-stricken cousin from Switzerland had fallen into a snow-drift, and stayed there, on his way to the Thompson valley.

But from nearly every other fellow present the outcast had compassion and kindness.

Bob Lawless could not do too much for him, all the more because he was angry and disgusted at Gunten's heartlessness.

When dinner was over, and they rose from the table, Bob looked at Miss Meadows.

"May the kid stay here, ma'am, till after lessons to-day?" he asked. "I'm going to take him home to the ranch. I know my father won't mind."

"Certainly, Lawless," said Miss Meadows, with a kind smile.

Bob Lawless marched the outcast out with him. Dark looks were cast at Kern Gunten as he went out with the rest. In the school ground the Swiss strode up to the ragged youth.

"Get out of this, Franz Gunten!" he said thickly. "I'm not going to have you hanging about here. Do you understand? Get out!"

"I have ze permission to stay here, Kern. I ask you for nozing. I have found a friend zat is ver' goot."

"Get out, you beggarly tramp, or I'll fire you out!" hissed Gunten, clenching his heavy fists. "I'll smash you if you don't go!"

"You'll smash me first, you mean skunk!" shouted Bob Lawless, push-

ing between them. "Come on, you coyote!"

"I want no quarrel with you," snarled Gunten. "But that tramp—that hobo—"

The outcast pushed Bob Lawless gently aside.

"Let him come on wiz him," he said. "I zink zat I handle mine cousin Kern, if zat he wish to smash me, isn't it?"

"Oh, all right!" said Bob.

He stepped aside rather reluctantly. Gunten, with gleaming eyes, fairly hurled himself upon his cousin from Switzerland. But the Swiss met with a surprise.

The slinking outcast straightened up; his hands went up like lightning. Gunten's fierce attack was brushed aside, and a fist that seemed like a hammer was planted on his thick nose.

Gunten went down, with a muffled yell, as if he had been shot.

"Well hit!" shouted Beauclerc. "Bravo!" yelled Bob Lawless, in great delight. "Get up and have some more, Gunten!"

Gunten staggered to his feet. But he backed away. He did not want any more. Bob clapped the outcast on the shoulder.

"I guess there won't be any smash-

ing!" he chuckled. "Come along with me, kid. I've got to look for my cousin Frank, who's lost himself somewhere. He won't get any dinner before lessons if he don't turn up soon."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Wha-a-a-at! What are you laughing at?"

"All serene, Bob." The outcast's foreign accent was gone now, and Bob Lawless fairly tottered as he heard his natural voice. "Gunten, you worm, do you admit now that I can act?"

There was a gasping yell: "Frank Richards!"

### The 6th Chapter. Spoofer!

"Frank Richards!"

"Franky!"

"Great Jerusalem!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Frank Richards, alias Franz Gunten, burst into a roar of laughter. The amazement in Bob's face was too much for him.

"Frank!" panted Beauclerc, in utter bewilderment. "You! Then who—what—"

Gunten's face was a study. "Richards!" he stuttered. "Frank Richards! You! Then— Oh!"

He fairly gasped.

"Richards!" yelled Chunky Todgers. "Oh, you spoofer!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You spoofer jay!" shouted Bob Lawless.

"Sorry, Bob!" gasped Frank. "It was only a lark, you know. Gunten said I couldn't act. I think he's owned up now that I can. I've acted as his cousin from Switzerland, and he's admitted I'm his cousin. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you hound!" yelled Gunten. "It was a trick. I—I will not pay the ten dollars! I will not pay!"

"I never thought you would," said Frank contemptuously. "Bless your ten dollars! But you've admitted that I can act."

"By hokey he has!" gasped Dawson. "That's a cinch!"

"But—but—but—" stuttered Bob. "So that's why you didn't come in to dinner."

"But I did come in to dinner," grinned Frank Richards; "and you looked after me a treat at table, Bob. Thanks, awfully!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Here's Miss Meadows!" murmured Beauclerc.

The schoolmistress stepped out of the porch. Her face was amazed, and very severe. She scanned Frank's made-up face.

"What is this?" she exclaimed. "Is it possible—"

"Excuse me, ma'am," said Frank meekly. "I'm Richards, made up as a fat-headed Swiss. Only amateur theatricals, ma'am. It was a lark on Gunten, who thought I couldn't act. I—I never meant to spoof you, ma'am; but—but when I was taken indoors, I—I kept it up," he stammered. "I—I'm sure you wouldn't think I meant to be disrespectful, ma'am."

"Then—then you are not Gunten's cousin— But of course you are not!" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "I forgive you, Richards. But kindly do not play these tricks again. You are certainly a very clever actor, however."

Miss Meadows stepped back into the School House, smiling. The school-boys gathered round Frank, even now unable to recognise him, though they knew his voice and his merry laugh.

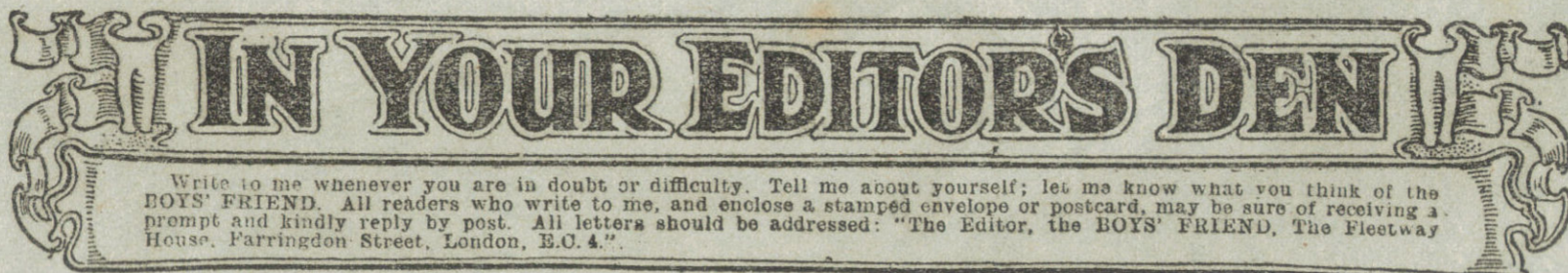
Gunten, gritting his teeth, stalked away. The seedy stranger was not, after all, his cousin, and that was a relief; but his brutal and heartless nature had received a pretty thorough exposure.

"Well, I can act, can't I?" grinned Frank Richards. "I'm going to get a wash now. This complexion won't do for school. But what price the Thespian Club now, you fellows?"

"Hear, hear!" chortled Bob Lawless. "The Thespian Club is a go; and you're first president, Franky! I've a jolly good mind to punch your nose for taking me in, all the same!"

Frank Richards laughed. He was his usual self again in time for afternoon school; and certainly, if he liked the limelight, he had plenty of it now. And the Thespian Club, of Cedar Creek School, dated from that afternoon.

THE END.



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 Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C.4."

### OUR SPECIAL CHRISTMAS NUMBER!

On Sale Next Monday, price 2d.

I am confident that every loyal reader of the BOYS' FRIEND will be delighted to learn that our next issue will be our Special Christmas Number. I have striven my very utmost to make this issue a most attractive one, and I am sure that I have succeeded.

No less than seven magnificent stories are due to appear in our Special Christmas Number, and every one of them is a winner. No matter whether you prefer humorous, adventure, dramatic, or exciting stories, there will be something to interest you in our next issue.

Perhaps the greatest attraction in our Special Christmas Number will be the splendid double-length story dealing with the schooldays of the famous author of the tales of Harry Wharton & Co., entitled

#### "FRANK RICHARDS' CHRISTMAS!"

By Martin Clifford.

"Christmas Eve, and jolly cold," remarks Frank Richards at the beginning of this story. He is quite right, for the plains are snow-covered. Snow lies on all sides of them, and is still falling. It is Frank Richards' first experience of a Canadian Christmas, and, being strong and healthy, the heavy snow makes a strong appeal to him.

But a heavy snowfall has its perils as well as its joys. Frank Richards and his chums undertake a perilous journey to bring happiness to a sick child. The venture is a reckless one, but the chums are undaunted.

They have a stirring encounter with some rascally rustlers, they experience real peril from the ice, and later they have a thrilling adventure when chased by wolves. It is only by sheer grit and determination that they emerge from the very jaws of death, and succeed in their praiseworthy object.

Needless to say, this is one of the finest stories dealing with Frank Richards' schooldays that has appeared in the BOYS' FRIEND. You should, therefore, on no account fail to read it.

The splendid tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. in our Special Christmas Number is entitled

#### "JIMMY SILVER'S GUEST!"

By Owen Conquest.

Jimmy's guest is none other than Lattrey, the cad of the Fourth. Jimmy has never despaired of reforming the rascal of Rookwood. Whether he eventually will is another matter. However, in our next story he takes Lattrey to his home for the Christmas vacation, hoping the company there will have a beneficial effect on Lattrey's character.

Jimmy's efforts are doomed to failure, however. A leopard cannot change its spots, and it seems that a change in the caddish character of the rascal of Rookwood is a sheer impos-

sibility. In this story Algy Silver, a young cousin of Jimmy's, makes his appearance. Algy is a weak-willed, easily-led youngster, and when he comes under the influence of Lattrey there is considerable trouble, as you may guess.

Although perhaps you will not like Algy for his "nutty" ways, you will find him an interesting character. Algy does not come and go in this story. More will be heard of him later.

The next story in next Monday's issue is a special attraction—a long complete tale of the Highcliffe juniors, entitled

#### "DE COURCY'S CHUM!"

No doubt many readers of the BOYS' FRIEND who are also staunch supporters of the "Magnet" and the "Gem" will be well acquainted with

Courtenay & Co. and Ponsonby & Co. You will meet them all in this fine tale.

You will read of a cunning plot on the part of Ponsonby and his chums to obtain their revenge on Courtenay & Co. You will read, too, of the result of the scheme, and of how Ponsonby and his cronies paid the penalty for their rascality. This story has been specially written for our Special Christmas Number, and I have no doubt that you will all vote it a fine attraction.

Another special treat in store for all readers of the BOYS' FRIEND is a grand long complete tale introducing Pankley & Co., the chums of Bagshot School. Many readers have written to me recently saying that very little has been heard of Pankley and his chums just lately. These readers will therefore receive with approval the news that Pankley & Co. will appear in a great tale entitled

#### "THE GHOST OF GRASMERE GRANGE!"

Pankley takes his chums to Grasmere Grange for the Christmas holidays, and on the way have an exciting adventure with a number of juniors who call themselves the "Stalwarts." The latter score off the Bagshot juniors, and collar the trap in which Pankley and his chums are travelling to the Grange.

Pankley & Co. give chase, and when they observe that the Stalwarts are making straight for the Grange their rage knows no bounds. Unknown to Pankley, however, the Stalwarts are guests of his father's. They are staying at the Grange for the Christmas vacation.

Naturally, Pankley is bent on obtaining his revenge on the Stalwarts. The scheme he hits upon greatly appeals to his chums, but somehow it is not carried through. The ghost of the Grange interferes, and causes considerable excitement.

I am sure all my readers will like this story. There is a fine, Christ-massy touch about the yarn, and the mystery it contains will make a strong appeal to all of you.

There will be a grand extra long instalment of our magnificent serial,

### "THE BOYS OF THE 'BOMBAY CASTLE'!"

By Duncan Storm,

in our next issue. Mr. Storm has to be complimented on this instalment, for it is one of the finest he has ever written. You will laugh heartily when you read about the way in which Mr. Parkins gave a chemistry lesson to the boys and a number of the stokers. The latter cause some rare excitement during the lesson.

Mr. Parkins informs the stokers that he will show them how to make a bottle of scent. Mr. Parkins has done this many times before, but in next Monday's instalment something goes wrong with the experiment. Mr. Parkins is amazed, but he little knows that Dick Dorrington and Pongo Walker have mixed up his bottle.

The complete tale introducing Dick, Frank, and Joe in our next issue is entitled

### "THE MYSTERY OF THE WHITE TRADER!"

By Maurice Everard.

There are countless thrilling incidents in this splendid tale, and you will read with great enjoyment of the way in which the little party of adventurers put paid to the account of a cunning German.

The last attraction in our next issue will be a grand tale told in the dormitory by Conroy the Cornstalk, and entitled

### "THE CHRISTMAS MAIL!"

Conroy relates a thrilling yarn of adventure in which he took part in Australia before he came to Rookwood. It is indeed a most exciting one, and I am confident that you will consider Conroy's tale one of the finest in the series.

In conclusion, I wish to urge upon every one of you the necessity for ordering your copy of next Monday's issue in advance. There is bound to be a big demand for this Special Christmas Number, and only those readers who place an order with their newsagents are sure of securing their copies.

### "THE MAHARAJAH'S BELT!"

This Friday "The Maharajah's Belt," being the first part of our recent serial story entitled "The Secret City," will be on sale in threepenny book form. As I told you last week, "The Secret City" ran to such a great length in serial form that it has been absolutely impossible for me to republish it in one volume. Therefore, I have had to break it into two, and the first volume, entitled "The Maharajah's Belt," will appear on the market on Friday next, December 7th. You should ask your newsagent for No. 408 of the BOYS' FRIEND Library.

Your Editor

### NEXT MONDAY!

"FRANK RICHARDS' CHRISTMAS!"

A Double-Length Story.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

DON'T MISS IT!



# TALES OF THE DORMITORY!

A Great  
New Series of  
Short Complete Tales,  
Told by Juniors  
at  
Rookwood School.

THIS WEEK:  
"THE TROUBLESOME  
TWIN!"

BY  
GEORGE RABY.

"I guess it's your turn to spin a yarn to-night, Raby."

Thus Jimmy Silver as the Classical Fourth trooped into their dormitory. "You can leave me till last," said Raby.

"No jolly fear!" said Jimmy Silver emphatically. "I know you're simply longing to tell us a tale!"

"Don't you be so sure," said Raby. "Well, what were you wracking your brains for in the Common-room this evening? You were looking like a boiled owl!"

"Well, I was—er—thinking," faltered Raby.

"Yes, thinking out a yarn to tell in the dormitory," said Jimmy Silver. "And another thing. I saw you scribbling something about a troublesome twin on a piece of paper. I suppose that's the title of the yarn?"

"It might be," said Raby. "Well, you've got to spin the yarn to-night."

"Oh, leave it till next week!"

"Not likely!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "To-night's the night, old son. Never put off till next week what you can do to-night."

"But—"

Raby continued to protest, but it was no good. Jimmy Silver had passed the order that it was Raby's turn to tell the next tale, and Raby really had no choice in the matter.

Directly Bulkeley had seen lights out Raby started to tell the tale of "The Troublesome Twin."

## The 1st Chapter. The Twins.

Tom and Dicky Searle were twins, but for all that they did not possess the resemblance of expression that is usually so evident in the case of brothers of the same age.

Tom was fair, Dicky was dark. And whereas Tom's face bore an open, honest, straightforward expression, Dicky looked what he was—an artful, unprincipled little rascal.

Tom was the champion athlete in the junior forms at St. Anthony's. Dicky never played football. He always maintained that footer and cricket were not in his line.

On a half-holiday Dicky was never to be seen in the precincts of the school.

A half-hour's walk would have taken anybody to the Bell Inn, a disreputable public-house, where, without the shadow of doubt, Dicky Searle would have been found indulging in a game of cards with fellows from St. Anthony's equally as bad as himself and a number of low-down companions whose sole business in life was to lead schoolboys on the downward path.

Dicky's behaviour was a matter of great concern to his twin. Tom had used his influence to persuade his brother to mend his ways until he had got absolutely tired of the non-success of his efforts.

He sat in his study, gazing vacantly into the fire. He was thus engaged when Tony Graham, his high-spirited chum, came rushing into the study.

"My aunt!" exclaimed Graham, pulling up short. "What's up with you, Tom, old scout?"

"Oh—er—nothing!" faltered Tom miserably.

"Bosh!" exclaimed Tony impatiently. "You're brooding over something. I can see that by the miserable look on your face. Lost that fiver you had from your guv'nor this morning?"

"No."

"Well, what's up, then? Come on; tell me quickly, or—"

Tony Graham had raised a jugful of water, and was preparing to tip the contents over his chum, when Tom made a sign for him to desist.

"Knock off, Tony, old chap!" said Tom. "I don't feel in the mood for ragging just now. Come and sit down."

"You'll tell me what's the matter, then?"

"Oh, if you like!" said Tom resignedly. Graham sat down.

"Look here, Tony," said Tom slowly. "I expect you'll think me a silly fool, but I can't help worrying about my brother."

"Well, I'm blowed!" exclaimed Tony. "You're always worrying yourself about that little cad. Why don't you let him go his way, and you go yours?"

"I can't, Tony—I can't!" muttered Tom quietly. "The silly fool is going to the dogs fast, and—"



Tom Searle stood in the middle of the track and directed the light of his torch towards the racing monster. Would the driver see the light?

"Well, let him go!" interrupted Tony. "Yes; but if he goes far enough he'll be expelled, and—"

"And a good job, too, I should say!" concluded Tony. "He's a nuisance to the school, a nuisance to you, and a nuisance to everybody. If he was expelled it might do him good and cause him to reform."

Tom shook his head sadly.

"Maybe, Tony," he said. "But if he was to be expelled from St. Anthony's it would be a terrible blow to my people. They look upon Dicky as a picture of innocence, and if they only became acquainted with one-tenth of his behaviour it would worry them no end."

"Doesn't your brother know that?"

"Yes."

"And he makes no attempt to reform?"

"Not a bit."

"Well, I should give him a thorough good hiding if he was my brother," said Tony resolutely. "By the way, where's he got to this afternoon?"

"Goodness knows!" said Tom dejectedly. "I haven't seen him since dinner-time. I expect he's gone out with Arnold and Gordon. Those fellows have a regular mania for gambling, and Dicky seems to be getting as bad as they. Dicky had a fiver from the guv'nor this morning, same as I, and if the truth's known, he's gambling it away."

"Well, there's one consolation—he'll have nothing to gamble with when that's gone," said Tony, in his matter-of-fact sort of way.

Tom shook his head.

"You don't understand, Tony," he said. "Just recently Dicky's been paying his rotten gambling debts with I O U's. You know what that means, don't you?"

Tony Graham whistled.

"Phew!" he remarked. "I didn't know things were as bad as that."

"Well, they are," said Tom. "Only last week I gave Dicky a couple of quid to settle up some debt or other, and I expect that in a day or two he'll be coming to me again. And then—"

"Then I shouldn't give him anything," concluded Tony.

"But think, Tony, old son," said Tom quietly. "If Dicky doesn't pay those rogues they'll come up to the school, and—then will happen the very thing I don't want to happen."

"Dicky will be expelled!"

"Of course."

Tony Graham did not speak again. He realised the difficult nature of his chum's position, and, think as he would, he could not see a satisfactory solution to it.

He admired Tom for his consideration towards his parents, and wished with all his heart that he could have lent his chum some assistance. But what could he do? Nothing—nothing at all!

The two chums were still deep in thought when suddenly the door opened, and Dicky Searle, the scapegrace, peered into the study. There was an anxious, careworn expression on his face, and Tony Graham noticed it.

Tony guessed what was coming. Dicky Searle was in difficulties again, and had come to his brother for assistance.

"I'm sorry, Tom," said Dicky, standing in the doorway. "I didn't know you were engaged."

Tony Graham jumped up from his chair. "Oh, it's all right!" he said. "I'm going now. See you again presently, Tom."

Tony Graham left the study, and Dicky

Searle took a seat by the fire, his hands closing and unclosing convulsively.

Tom looked him straight in the face.

"Out with it!" he exclaimed rather harshly. "Don't let us have any beating about the bush. What's the trouble now?"

"Look here, Tom, if you're going to be nasty—" began Dicky, with an air of indifference.

"I shall be more than nasty with you soon, you little cad!" snapped Tom, his temper rising. "You've been gambling again. Don't deny it. I can see it only by your face."

Dicky hung his head miserably.

"You don't understand, Tom," he faltered. "Arnold simply begged of me to go with them, and—really I couldn't."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Tom. "Haven't you a will of your own? Surely you could have told them you did not want to join in their rascally games?"

"I did, but they wouldn't take no for an answer."

"Oh, you weak-kneed little fool!" exclaimed Tom hotly. "I'm ashamed of you—disgusted to think that you're my brother! If it was only you who would suffer, I should be glad for the Head to expel you! But I've got the pater and mater to think of. You never give them a thought, you shady young rascal! You live entirely for your low-down enjoyment. For two pins I'd give you the hiding of your life!"

Tom's eyes were blazing, and Dicky shrunk back at sight of them.

"I s-s-say, Tom," he stammered, "you need not rub it in like that, you know. Anybody'd think I'd committed a crime, to hear you talk."

"It's pretty well as bad!" snapped Tom firmly. "Why the dickens you can't chuck up those shady games I don't know!"

"I would, Tom, really I would!" faltered Dicky haltingly. "But—but if I do that fellow Morgan at the Bell swears he'll denounce me to the Head. As it is, I owe him three pounds, and—"

"What?" exclaimed Tom. "I gave you two pounds to pay him only last week!"

"I know!" muttered Dicky. "But—but this is another three pounds. You see—"

"I see a thorough young rascal before me!" interrupted Tom savagely. "What have you done with that fiver you had from the guv'nor this morning? Gambled it away, I suppose!"

"Well, you see, Tom—" began Dicky. Then he went on: "D'you know, Tom, I believe those fellows at the Bell use marked cards?"

"Of course they do!" snapped Tom impatiently. "Haven't I told you before they only welcome you because of the money they can cheat you out of? They're a lot of blackguards, and I'd jolly well like to see them landed in prison!"

"Oh, I don't know!" said Dicky. "They're not as bad as all that. Morgan's been pretty decent to me on the whole."

"Decent be hanged!" snapped Tom. "You said just now that the man's threatened to come up to the school. I don't call that being decent, if you do!"

"Well, it's not very nice to have money owing to you, now is it, Tom?"

Tom Searle made an impatient gesture. "Drop the subject, do!" he exclaimed hotly. "I'm fed up with it all; and with you—for that matter! What is it you want? Come on; tell me at once!"

"Well, Tom, I thought perhaps you might lend me three quid to square

Morgan," said Dicky. "You wouldn't like me to be expelled, would you? And that is what it'll mean if I don't pay him soon."

"I should be jolly glad to see you expelled if there was no one to grieve about your downfall!" said Tom. "But I've got to think about the mater and pater. For their sake, I've really got to encourage you in your shady ways. He felt in his pocket, and drew out a notebook. "Here you are," he said, handing his brother three one-pound notes, "and for goodness' sake, let this be the last! If you don't give a thought to the mater and pater and to me, think of yourself and of your future."

"I will, Tom, really I will!" faltered Dicky.

"Yes, you've told me that before."

"But I mean it this time, Tom. Honest Injun, I'll chuck up Arnold and his gang at once!" declared Dicky. "I won't have anything more to do with them. I say, Tom, is there any chance of my getting into the footer eleven if I practise hard?"

Tom Searle raised his eyebrows and looked his brother straight in the face. Next moment, however, he lowered them again.

"Don't talk to me, you little cad!" he exclaimed savagely. "When I see evidence of your trying to reform, then I'll help you to get into the footer team. At present I don't trust you! You've no more desire to play footer than you have to fly!"

"Oh, I say—"

Tom waved his hand towards the door. "Clear!" he exclaimed angrily. "If you stay much longer I shall probably do you an injury. You've tried my temper too much already, and—"

Dicky Searle did not wait to hear the rest of his brother's remarks. He turned and left the study, and made his way towards his own quarters.

Arrived in his study, he sat down by the fire, and chuckled to himself.

"I worked that pretty well!" he muttered. "But I shall have to be a bit more careful in future. The old bird's getting his rag out a bit now, so I mustn't tread on his corns too much. Take up footer! Phew! He must think I'm green if he thinks I'm going to chuck up Morgan and his set and take to playing a kid's game!"

## The 2nd Chapter. In Direst Peril.

Boom!

Eleven o'clock tolled out in solemn tones from the old clock-tower at St. Anthony's.

Tom Searle turned restlessly in his bed. He had fallen asleep after lights-out, but it had been a troubled sleep.

He sat up in bed and gazed around him. The dormitory was as dark as a dungeon, and not a sound could be heard save for the breathings of the sleeping juniors.

Tom felt for his coat at the side of the bed, and, drawing forth his torchlight, he shone the light up and down the dormitory.

Suddenly the rays of the light fell upon a vacant bed, and Tom started as he realised that it was his brother's bed that was empty.

"Great Scott!" he gasped. "The young rascal has gone out on the spree again!"

Tom shone the light in the other direction, and saw, to his amazement, that there were two other vacant beds in the

dormitory—the beds belonging to Arnold and Gordon.

In a moment Tom was out of bed and bending over the sleeping form of his chum Tony Graham.

"Tony!" he breathed.

"Gerraway!" growled Tony sleepily. "What's the game? Why, it's dark, and—"

"Hush!" bade Tom. "Look here, Tony, old son, I'm jolly sorry to have woke you up, but—but I wonder whether you'd care to do me a favour?"

Tony Graham raised himself on his elbow.

"What's the game, Tom?" he muttered. "My brother!" whispered Tom quietly. "He's gone out with Arnold and Gordon. I expect they're gambling at the Bell. I wish you'd come along with me and help me to drag the young idiot back."

"I'll come like a shot," said Tony willingly. "But I say, Tom, you won't mind if I give your brother one on the nose when I bag him, do you?"

"Do what you like," said Tom. "But buck up, for goodness' sake!"

The two chums commenced to dress, and were successful in not disturbing the sleeping juniors.

At length they left the dormitory, and made their way downstairs to a window, through which Dicky had evidently made his departure, for the catch was slipped back.

In less than two minutes they had climbed through the window and over the school wall. Then they pelted for all they were worth in the direction of the Bell Inn.

They crossed the railway-lines and then came in sight of the disreputable public-house. They had taken a short cut, and had left the road, but they returned to the road again about two hundred yards from the Bell Inn.

Suddenly they pulled up in their stride, for, coming towards them at a great speed, were two racing figures.

Tom gazed at them spellbound. They had come from the direction of the Bell. Surely they were not St. Anthony's fellows. Next instant he gave a gasp of amazement, as one of the racing figures came level with him.

The fellow was wearing a St. Anthony's cap.

The next instant Tom had turned and grasped the fellow by the shoulder. He turned him round quickly, and recognised him as Arnold of the Fourth.

"Let me go!" pleaded Arnold desperately. "The police—"

"What about them?" exclaimed Tom hurriedly.

"They've raided the Bell Inn, and—Oh, for goodness' sake, let me go!"

"Where's my brother?" asked Tom quickly. "He was with you, I know! Has he escaped, or—"

"Y-y-yes!" faltered Arnold, shivering with fright. "He came out with us, and—and I think he took the cut across the railway!"

"Why, we've just come that way!" said Tom. "He didn't pass us; I'm pretty sure of that."

Arnold attempted to drag his captured arm free.

"Let me go, Searle, please!" he begged. "If the police get on my track, I—I—"

"You'll be sacked, and a jolly good job, too!" exclaimed Tom. "Clear off, you beastly outsider! Just like you rotters to think only of your own skins!"

Tom released his hold on Arnold's arm, and the latter dashed off like a bound from the leash.

The two chums gazed at one another inquiringly.

"Well," said Tony, "what's the next move, Tom?"

"Goodness knows!" said Tom despairingly. "It's no good us going to the Bell. The chances are that Dicky has escaped, and if that's the case, we don't want to go there asking for a St. Anthony's fellow."

"We'd better go back the same way as we came," said Tom. "I expect the young idiot is pelted back to the school for all he's worth."

"Right-ho!" said Tony. And the two chums commenced to walk towards the school.

They had not gone more than a hundred yards when a faint cry fell upon their ears. It was a pitiful cry—a cry of somebody in distress:

"Help! Help!"

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Tony. "It sounds like—"

"Like Dicky's voice," concluded Tom. "What ever's happened to him, now? Come on, Tony!"

The two increased their speed, and ran in the direction from which the cry came.

"Help! Oh, help!"

Louder and louder grew the call for assistance, and faster and faster the two chums ran.

At length they came to the embankment at the side of the railway, and, stopping, they gazed to right and left of them.

"Cooo-ee!" called out Tom; and in an instant came the reply:

"Help! Help!"

There was no doubt about it being Dicky's voice now; and it came from the direction of Barnham Station.

Tom and Tony slipped down the embankment on to the railway track, and broke into a run again.

They had not gone more than thirty yards when Tony gave a startled exclamation, for, standing in the middle of the track, was Dicky Searle, calling at the top of his voice for assistance.

"What ever's the matter?" cried Tom fearfully; and in another moment he had pulled up before his scapegrace brother.

"Tom!" gasped his brother.

"What's the matter?" gasped Tom.

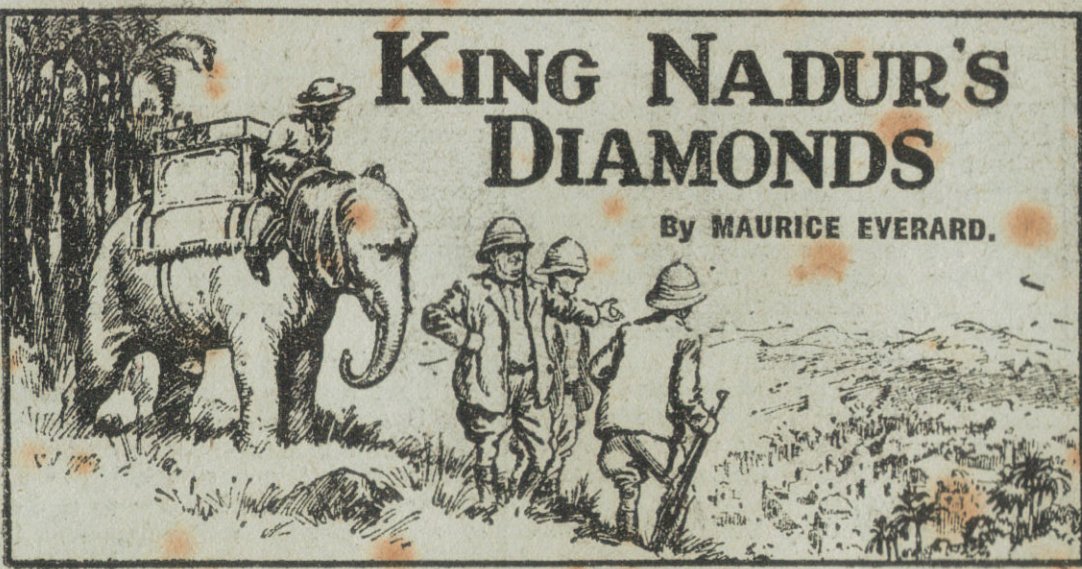
"What are you standing here for?"

"I'm fixed, Tom!" muttered Dicky, in quavering tones. "My foot's caught in the points. I can't move it, and—Oh!"

Dicky's voice dropped to a low groan.

(Continued on page 276, col. 5.)





## KING NADUR'S DIAMONDS

By MAURICE EVERARD.

(Continued from the previous page.)

El Hajar stepped down from his litter of boughs, and pointed to the west.

"Command your braves to search the forest, and bring the white men prisoners here!"

"It shall be done when the sickness has departed," replied the king.

The Arab saw that the black man possessed courage as well as wisdom.

"Very well! I will cause this fever curse to abate from this hour!" he cried, and stepped into the middle of the clearing.

He made a fine figure, standing there, with a long covering made from native grass, and coloured a brilliant red, falling from his shoulders.

Around his neck were rows of shells which jangled noisily as he moved. On his fingers and toes were rings and ornaments of gold.

"Bring forth the sacrifice!" the Arab called.

A goat was dragged forward and killed, its blood being gathered in a shining metal bowl.

With the liquid, El Hajar made sundry marks and crosses on the ground, after which, in a loud voice, he announced that the curse would depart.

Curiously enough, the next day there were no fresh cases of fever. Another day came and went, and still the evil did not spread. Then, when the third day came, the fetish-man went to the king.

"I come to demand my price!" he cried jubilantly. "Send out your warriors in their thousands, and have the white men brought as prisoners!"

### The 3rd Chapter.

#### A Bargain for Life.

Frank Poluan was keeping guard in the glow of the camp-fire, when the whole mass of the forest around him appeared to move.

He ran towards the sleeping quarters to wake Joe and Dick, uttering a cry of warning, and discharging his gun; but before he reached the hut wave upon wave of black forms swept about him, and, carrying him off his feet, surged about the temporary shelters.

Against a horde two thousand strong—a black army which had drawn its invisible net around them in the dark—they were powerless.

Before any of them could so much as cry out, they were gagged and bound, all their camp equipment, including the ponies and the elephant, was gathered in by their assailants, and the coming of the dawn found them prisoners in the native village.

Joe hardly knew what to make of the situation. Certainly he didn't suspect El Hajar and his band of being at the bottom of their difficulties.

"Here's a pretty how-de-do!" murmured the sailor, as they slung him, trussed up like a Surrey fowl, into a dark and evil-smelling hut. "Nice sorter treatment for an old gentleman what has never harmed a blue-bottle! And, for why am I put in this pill-box all on my lonesome? H'm! This wants a bit of thinking up!"

But the more Joe tried to think the matter up, the more puzzled he became.

He did not know that it was by El Hajar's commands.

"Now, I want you, king," the Arab said, when he saw Spageli's men returning in triumph, "to put each of the prisoners in a separate place, you know—one hut to each. Leave them together as they're dangerous. Each, by himself, cannot do much harm."

The king nodded, and with his own eyes saw that the fetish-man's wishes were carried out.

"As these people from the land of the setting sun worked the evil upon my men and women and children, you will have them sacrificed even as the goat?" the king suggested, when

the captives had been safely stowed away.

El Hajar nodded. "That's my notion, king. But first of all, I want them each in turn to speak to me in his own tongue. As they are very silent men, I should like to know of a few of your special tribal tortures which will make them do as they are told."

In a dim sort of way, the simple-minded Spageli understood that the prisoners were to be ill-treated after the dreaded fetish-man had conversed with them.

This was not altogether to his liking, as the few white men he had encountered had always treated him well.

Still, what else could he do? He realised that the future of himself and of his people depended on this wonderful medicine-man, whose magic had already caused the dreaded fever to abate.

He did not, however, concede the point without a struggle.

"When you have quite cured us of this evil, then those who have caused this wickedness to harm us shall be given over to the tortures," he said.

El Hajar was silent for a moment.

He had no intention of killing either Joe or the boys before one of them had revealed the details of the plan entrusted to them by the murdered missionary.

But he still clung to the idea that if only he could inflict suffering enough, sooner or later, in the hope of being spared, one of them would reveal the priceless secret.

The difficulty, of course, was to get the king absolutely on his side, and this he knew could only be done by curing the tribe of the awful scourge which had afflicted it.

So far good luck had befriended him. It was by sheer chance that no more had fallen sick, and that several had made extraordinarily rapid recoveries. But supposing the fever should begin to spread again!

"Leave it to me, O king. I will cure all of them. But I cannot allow anyone to see how the magic is worked. You and all your men must return to their huts, and stay there until I give the order for them to come out—all except those placed on guard over the captives."

To this Spageli readily agreed, and as soon as he felt the way was clear the wily Arab made a descent on Joe's medicine chest.

He understood enough of modern medicine to know that in such cases quinine is generally an infallible remedy; and, arming himself with large quantities of the stuff, he made several of the women administer it in regular doses to the sick people.

The result was miraculous. By the end of a week scores of cases had been cured, while many more were well on the high road to recovery.

Men who had been shrinking visibly away with fever burning the life out of their veins, rose from the shelters and began to go about their business.

In every way the triumph of the witch-doctor was complete.

On the night of the tenth day the king called together all the tribe, and bade them do honour to the fetish-man.

Fires were lit, goats and sheep and oxen sacrificed, and, to the drinking of some vile native spirit, the whole party made merry through the hours of darkness.

And all this time neither of the captives had seen the others. They were kept in utter darkness, fed by armed guards, who never let them out of sight.

Had they been allowed the use of their limbs there might have been a chance to exchange messages by tapping in the Morse code, which each of them understood.

As for Joe, he was well-nigh distracted.

"Our number's properly up this time, and no mistake!" he mused, when the day broke after the long

night of wild excitement and revelry. "This confounded jaboree is the last kick but one. When the next comes we shall all get it where the chicken got the axe—in the neck. I suppose there's no earthly chance of that wonderful Bunjik to save us."

As well sigh for the sun to come out of the sky as to expect the elephant to rescue them this time.

Wonderful and sagacious as the lumbering fellow had proved himself on other occasions, there was nothing he could do with his young master also a prisoner, and more than two thousand savages standing between them and freedom.

And that morning the cloud of perplexity was lifted. Joe learned the worst.

After a very thin breakfast of mealies and water, the sailor was dragged into the open, and the bandage taken from his eyes.

For a long time he could scarcely see at all, so strong and dazzling was the light after the long period of darkness.

At last, however, he began to see dimly, and he found himself standing in the centre of an immense ring of armed warriors, who beat their broad-bladed spears ceaselessly on their shields, while their deep voices filled the air with a weird, monotonous death-chant.

Joe shivered, for he knew the meaning of this dreadful sound.

But he held himself erect, and a ray of hope illumined the darkness, when he realised that the niggers had not dispossessed him of his mascot, the Moorish lamp, which still hung about his neck.

Before him, on a number of felled tree-trunks tied together with stout creepers, sat the African king.

A little way off was a tall, big fellow, whose glistening skin had been painted alternately black and white, and whose head of hair was ornamented with scarlet feathers.

The eyes of the two men met, and a strange look crossed the sailor's face. But he said nothing.

Then the king spoke.

"O, white man, son of the morning, thou hast come from the land of light, and yet hast smitten many of my people with pain and death! What hast thou to say about this?"

"What have I to say?" repeated Joe, who spoke several native African dialects. "I haven't harmed anybody, and what you say, Mr. Chief, is all bunkum! Who is my accuser?"

The king pointed with his spear to the painted figure.

"The great fetish-man who has cured my people of the dreaded sickness."

Joe swung slowly round, and met the glowing eyes fixed on his.

"So Mr. Zebra, otherwise El Hajar, the Arab ruffian, this is more of your dirty work!" he exclaimed slowly.

The other started at the recognition. "I am no Arab. I come from the East, where the friends of the Gwigi live. O, king, you have seen my good work in curing the sick of the fever! I claim my reward—to have this white man and the others put to the torture."

Joe's patience was now run out.

"Don't you believe him, king. He's an Arab slave-dealer—like those who have taken thousands of your men and women away to the coast, and sold them to the big ships on the sea. If he's the medicine-man he claims to be, let him wash his body in water. The white will come off, and show that he lies! There is the test. Let it be done."

At this El Hajar fidgeted uneasily. He knew that once his imposture was discovered he could expect, and would receive, no mercy at the hands of a fair-minded man like Spageli.

"Is what the white man says true, O witch-doctor?" he asked, turning to the Arab.

"It is not true," he answered swiftly; and then, seized by a happy thought, added: "Have not I cured hundreds of your people?"

"Cured them, yes," mocked the sailor. "But how? I will tell you, king. Among my possessions was a case filled with the bark of the cinchona-tree. We call it quinine in our country. It is a certain cure for all fevers of the forest. There was no magic about it. He gave you people quinine, and they became well."

The chief seemed impressed.

"What am I to think when both speak words of truth?" he asked. "How shall judgment be given between you?"

El Hajar laughed.

"Let him be burned in the big fire," he sneered. "If the white man is a better medicine-man than I, then the flames will spare him. Beware, king, lest I bring back the curse on all

your young men and women, and cause them to die!"

Joe began to feel uneasy. He could see that his enemy's words had carried considerable weight, backed as they were by the unmistakable cures he had effected.

How could he best El Hajar in this fight for the lives of himself and his friends?

There seemed no possible way out, when something the chief said gave Joe an inspiration.

"Let all the five prisoners be brought before me, and I will hear them all," Spageli said.

The sailor started. "There were but four, O king," he explained. "Myself, my two white friends, and a boy of your own colour."

The king shook his head. "There were five in all—three whites and two black. See, each has been kept under separate guard."

And he pointed his spear in turn to the five huts.

In a flash Joe understood. As the descent on their camp had been carried out in darkness, the chief's men had made a prisoner of Nobi, his own son.

"They have not yet seen the light of day since they were brought to my village. Now they shall stand before me," Spageli went on.

Joe, however, raised his hand. He swung round again, and pointed to the waiting Arab.

"This villain here says he is an African witch-doctor!" he cried contemptuously. "He claims to have worked great marvels. Very well, chief, I accept his challenge. I will work a greater wonder than he."

"And that is?" questioned the king. "I will produce your own son!" shouted Joe.

The old man shook his head.

"No. That cannot be, for my son went away, seized with the sickness, many suns ago. He wandered in the great forest, and now he is dead."

"But I will bring him here before you," persisted the sailor. "If I fail, then will I and all who came with me die. But if I succeed, then shall that man be my prisoner!"

And he pointed an accusing finger at the astounded Arab.

The thought of having his son restored to him was too great a temptation for Spageli to resist.

"The white man has spoken well!" he cried. "It shall be even as he says. O, great white man, perform this miracle!"

"Not while that bad fellow is near," said Joe. "He must be taken away under guard, the same as I was."

The king nodded, and summoned his bodyguard, who led the Arab away.

Directly he was gone Joe turned a beaming face to the chief.

"Let your warriors surround me, and take me to the huts," he said, pointing to where Dick, Frank, and Pie were lying captive.

A minute later Joe had passed from one to another without a word to the surprised boys.

In the last hut he came upon the prone form of Nobi, still bound. In the darkness no one had recognised him. He was brought out into the light of day, and a mighty shout went up.

"It is Nobi, the king's son!" was the cry that rose from a thousand throats.

No one was more surprised than the chief himself to see his son again. Nobi lost no time in telling his father of the good which the white men had shown to him.

"Let them be freed at once," commanded the overjoyed king. "And now, O white man, him who you claimed is yours!"

Joe Tremorne gripped the hands of each of the boys in turn.

"Come on, you young rascals! I'll give you the surprise of your lives!" he said, pointing to the hut in which the Arab was imprisoned. "I'm going to show you El Hajar, dressed up and nowhere to go, as a medicine-man!"

But the promised treat was never given. When the door of boughs was pushed wide the sunlight streamed through an opening in the back.

El Hajar had cut a way through, and so had made his escape.

And it was well for him he had done so, for Spageli would never have forgiven the false witch-doctor who had deceived him with stolen medicine.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

"THE MYSTERY OF THE WHITE  
TRADER!"  
By MAURICE EVERARD.  
DON'T MISS IT!

## THE TROUBLESOME TWIN!

By GEORGE RABY.

(Continued from page 274.)

"Bear up, Dicky, old son!" urged Tom. "We'll buzz along to the signal-box and tell the chap to shift the points."

"You can't, Tom—you can't!" moaned his unhappy brother. "The train will be coming along in a moment. Listen! I can hear it coming now! Oh, Tom, Tom, whatever shall I do?"

The deep rumble of the engine's wheels could be plainly heard in the distance; the whistle shrieked weirdly through the night air.

Tom was shaking slightly at the thought of the oncoming danger, but he kept perfect control of himself.

"Tony," he said quickly, "hurry for all you're worth to the signal-box, and see if something cannot be done. I'm going along the line to try and stop the train."

"D-d-d-d-don't leave me, Tom!" begged Dicky frightfully.

"I must, Dicky, old son," muttered Tom, his voice shaking. "It's our only chance."

With that he started off at a run towards the oncoming train, shining his torch ahead of him.

Louder and louder grew the noise of the racing express. The engine-whistle was still shrieking for all it was worth, and Tom's heart beat wildly as he saw the lights of the engine in the distance.

To him they seemed to glow like live coals in the darkness. He stood in the middle of the track, and directed the light of his torch towards the racing monster.

Would the driver see the light? And if he did, could he pull up in time to save the helpless lad?

The train was very near now. Tom could feel the track shaking under the weight of the express. But still the brave fellow did not falter.

Nearer and nearer—and with a spring Tom leapt to the side of the track, still pointing his torchlight ahead.

If he had remained for another instant on the track he would have been hurled to instant death!

But his brother! He would be dashed to destruction unless—

Next moment Tom gave a sigh of thankfulness, for the sound that he had been longing for could be plainly heard—the sound of grinding brakes.

Louder grew the sound, and, to Tom's delight, the train slackened speed.

Next instant Tom started to run again. Would he find his brother's mangled form on the line?

The thought sent a shudder through his whole frame, and he almost thought the train would never come to a stop.

At last, however, the racing monster came to a standstill with a jerk, and the whistle of the engine shrieked louder than ever.

Tom pelted towards the engine, and as he came level with the monster towering high above him he gave a sigh of great relief, for, standing no less than three yards in front of the train was his brother, still held prisoner by the catch-points.

Dicky was at his last gasp. He had not fainted, but he was very near it. A moment later there was a click, and the point was slipped back.

Dicky staggered towards the side of the track, and sank unconscious to the ground.

The driver of the train stepped down from the footplate and asked for an explanation. Tom apologised to the man, but thanked him with all his heart for having pulled up in time.

"Well, young feller-me-lad," said the man kindly, "you can thank yourself jolly lucky that I saw your light, otherwise—well, you know what would have happened, then. You ought to keep away from the lines, you know. It ain't safe."

The signalman came rushing up with Tony Graham at that moment. He also wanted an explanation. Tom gave it in halting tones, and in less than ten minutes the train started on its journey once again.

Dicky Searle recovered consciousness, and his brother and Tony led him slowly back to the school. Dicky had received a tremendous shock, and he was bad for at least a week to come.

But the shock proved a blessing in disguise. Never again did Dicky play cards for money, and never again was he seen in the vicinity of the Bell Inn.

He had learned his lesson, and in less than a month he was well on the road to complete reformation. No longer did Tom regard his brother as the Troublesome Twin.

"First-class, Raby, old scout!" said Conroy, the Cornstalk, as Raby concluded his yarn. "Couldn't tell a better one myself!"

"You shall have a try, Conroy," said Jimmy Silver promptly. "We'll put you down for the next. Got one ready?"

"Er—no," said Conroy. "But I'll see what can be done."

"Oh, good!"

And Conroy got into bed with the other juniors, wondering what story he could spin to the Classical Juniors on the morrow.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY!

"THE CHRISTMAS MAIL!"  
By CONROY THE CORNSTALK.  
DON'T MISS IT!