# A STORY THAT WILL IMPRESS YOU!



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ONE PENNY.

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## UNDER THE SHADOW

A MAGNIFICENT NEW LONG COMPLETE TALE OF JIMMY SILVER & CO. AT ROOKWOOD SCHOOL

## By OWEN CONQUEST.

## The 1st Chapter.

Rounding Up the Slackers!

"Tumble up! Jimmy Silver, the captain of the

Fourth, pitched open the door of the first study, and shouted cheerily in. Lattrey, Peele, and Gower, who shared that study, looked round

It was a bitterly cold afternoon, and the snow lay thick in the quadrangle and on the old red roofs of Rookwood School.

Lattrey & Co. had a fire going, and were sitting round it toasting their toes and talking "gee-gees."

That was the way they intended to spend that half holiday, with a game of nap thrown in.

of nap thrown in.

Jimmy Silver hadn't been crouching over a fire, but he looked warm and ruddy and a good deal more

cheerful than the three slackers. "Tumble up!" he repeated, as the

trio did not move.
"Oh, don't be an ass!" said Peele irritably. "What's the game?"

"Snow-fight with the Moderns!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, rats!"

"Ripping weather for it!" said Jimmy. "Snow's nearly a foot thick. Tommy Dodd's got a fort in Little Quad, and we're going to attack-

"Go an' attack, then, if you like muckin' about in the snow!" yawned

Gower. "I don't."
"Too jolly cold!" said Lattrey.
"Tumble up!" roared Lovell, from
the passage. "Rout out the slackers!

Every man's wanted! "Look lively there!" yelled Raby. "Come on, you chaps!" urged Jimmy Silver. "It'll do you no end of good, a good scrap out of doors!

It'll buck you up no end!' "Shut the door after you!" said

Peele. Jimmy Silver frowned.

"Look here, you've got to line up!" he exclaimed. "We want every man to deal with the Moderns! Tommy Dodd's challenged us to capture his snow-fort, if we can, and we've got to do it!"

"Stick to your kid games, and leave us alone!" said Lattrey.

"I'll leave you alone fast enough!" said Jimmy Silver disdainfully. "Squat over a fire, if you like! You

others come along!"
"Don't want to!" said Peele.
"Rats!" said Gower.
"Ready?" called out Mornington,

and he joined Jimmy Silver, with Kit Erroll. "Come on, Silver!"

"I'm routing out these blessed slackers!" growled Jimmy Silver. "They don't want to come! "Oh, come on!" said Mornington.

"It's rippin'! It'll warm you more than squattin' over a fire!'

'You goin', Morny?" asked Peele. "Yes, rather!" Peele and Gower exchanged doubt-

ful glances.

"Stay where you are!" said Lat-ey. "Jimmy Silver's not your master, I suppose? I'm not goin'!"

"You're not wanted, if you come to that!' said Jimmy Silver.
"You're a pariah dog, Lattrey, and you can squat over a fire, or go to Jericho!

Lattrey gave him a savage look. The cad of the Fourth had long been under sentence of "Coventry, and though that was dring away, as it were. he was still a great deal of an outcast in the Classical Fourth.

Jimmy Silver was there to make the slackers join up, but he was willing to leave Lattrey out—a fact that was not exactly pleasing.

Nobody in the Fourth wanted anyhing to do with Lattrey.

Even his study mates were hesitating nov. simply because though they did not want to join in the snow-fight, they wanted still less to be classed as utter outsiders like Lattrey.

Townsend and Topham, the great nuts of the Fourth, glanced in, in passing.

"Tumble up, Peele! Tumble up, Gower!" said Towny.

Towny did not address a remark to Lattrey.

"Oh, you're goin'?" said Gower.

"Oh, yaas! Why not?"
"All right! I'll come!" said Gower, making up his mind.
"Same here!" said Peele.
And, without asking their study-

mate if he would care to come, too, Peele and Gower joined the lively crowd in the passage.

Lattrey was left gritting his teeth. Jimmy Silver & Co. went along to study after study, routing out the fellows who were preferring to slack.

Tubby Muffin was found crouching over a fire, and led out by the ear, yelling.

Tom Rawson was discovered "swotting" over Latin, and the Fistical Four cheerfully scattered his books to the four walls of the study, and dragged him into the passage.

"Tumble up!"
"Buck up, Classicals!"

There was a heavy tramp of feet on the stairs, as the Classical Fourth went down, ready for the battle with their old rivals.

Lattrey was left alone in his study and in the quarters of the Classical

Even Tubby Muffin had been forcibly joined up, but Lattrey was

The Fourth could not have shown their contempt more plainly for the outcast of the Form.

Lattrey did not want to go, but certainly he did not want to be passed over in this scornful way.

He stared sullenly from the window at the cheery crowd of juniors starting for Little Quad.

Nobody gave him a thought. "The rotters!" he muttered. "Oh, the rotters! And I owe it all to Mornington! It's Mornington first and

ast! Hang him!" It would have been more correct to say that he owed it all to his base plot against Morny, in revenge for Morny having disassociated himself I from him and his rascally ways.



"Blind!" muttered Mornington. "It's true them! I-I can't see! It's all dark! I'm blind -blind-blind!" It was a cry of anguish, a cry from the depths of misery and despair -a cry that rang long in the ears of the Rookwood juniors.

to looking at matters in their true

His vision was always coloured by the envy, hatred, and uncharitableness that ran riot in his breast.

But a gleam came into his narrow eyes, and he turned to the door. •
"There's Algy Silver, after all!"

And Lattrey went downstairs, and made his way to the quarters of the Third Form, looking for Jimmy Silver's cousin Algy.

That sportive youth, in spite of Jimmy, persisted in being friendly with the black sheep of the Fourth, and Lattrey's intention was to improve the shining hour by initiating the reckless fag into the mysteries of banker and poker.

But a fresh disappointment awaited

The Third Form-room was empty; there were no fags to be seen in the

passages or the Common-room, The fags had lined up with Jimmy Silver's army-even including the sportive Algy.

Even the diminutive heroes of the Second were gone, headed by Jones minimus and Mornington II., to share in the fray.

Lattrey growled, and stopped at the fire at the end of the Form-room

passage to warm his toes. Certainly, he could have joined the Classical army of his own accord, if

They did not want him, but they

would not have said nay. But he was too much of a slacker for that. He lounged over the fire, in a sullen mood. There was a heavy

But Lattrey was not accustomed | tread in the passage, and Bulkeley of the Sixth came along. The captain of the school stopped as

he saw Lattrey by the fire. "Hallo! Why aren't you out of doors?" he demanded.

"I suppose I can stay indoors if I

want to," said Lattrey sullenly.

Bulkeley gave him a look.

"No, you can't," he said. "Slacking round the fire isn't healthy and isn't manly, and isn't good enough for Rookwood. There's a snow-fight on. Go and take part in it!'

"I don't care for it. "Do you care for a licking?" asked Bulkeley politely.

> The 2nd Chapter. The Snow-Fight.

Lattrey scowled, and went.

"Yah! Classical duffers!" That was the greeting of Tommy Dodd & Co., fortified in Little Quad, as the Classical army came pouring

through the archway from Big Quad. There was to be a battle of giants that sharp, wintry afternoon. Footer was impossible, with inches of snow on the ground.

Something had to be done-something better than "mooching" about

A snow-fight was exactly the thing, and it gave the rivals of Rookwood one more opportunity of testing one another's quality.

The Moderns were in a minority as to numbers, so it was agreed that they should hold the fort; and if they kept the Classicals out, it counted a win for the Modern side.

But the Classicals did not mean to be kept out.

Tommy Dodd & Co. had laboured like Trojans on the building of the fort ever since dinner. It was quite an imposing fortifica-

tion of piled-up slabs of snow, with

walls tremendously thick. Within, there were mountains of snowballs ready-made-an unlimited

supply of ammunition for the defenders. The Moderns lined the walls, standing on snow steps made within, the

walls being higher than their heads. Jimmy Silver halted his numerous force just out of snowball range, to

survey the position. "My hat! They're jolly well entrenched!" remarked Newcome.

"'Tain't an easy proposition," agreed Conroy. "But we'll take it!" "Oh, yes, rather!"
"Yah! Come on, Classical funks!"

roared Towle.

"Come on, Jimmy, let's go and mop them up!" exclaimed Lovell.
"Hold on, fathead!"

"Look here, what are we waiting for? They're calling us funks!" ex-

claimed Lovell hotly. Jimmy Silver smiled a superior

"That's only to make us charge

like a bull at a gate and let them have everything their own way, fathead! Strategy is required here! "Not a strategic retreat?" grinned

Van Ryn. "No, ass. We're going to take them. on all four sides at once," said Jimmy Silver sagely. "A frontal attack would be simply no good. But four frontal attacks at once will give them

the kybosh.' (Continued on the next page.



promoted captain. Separate into four

"Couldn't spare you from my lot, old chap," said Jimmy Silver diplomatically. "I want you to back me up."
"Oh, all right."

The Classical army was soon in four divisions, captained respectively by Jimmy Silver, Mornington, Erroll, and

It was just then that Lattrey came sullenly from Big Quad to join the

"Hallo, you linin' up?" exclaimed Townsend, with a grin.

Bulkeley's told me to!" snapped Lat-

"Better put Lattrey in front," sug-

"What on earth good would he be in

Lattrey gave the dandy of the Fourth

"Good idea," said Jimmy Silver. "Put

him in front of your lot, Morny. I've

got Tubby to look after. Tubby, you fat villain, where are you sneaking off to?"

"I say, Jimmy, I-I forgot my scarf."

"Never mind your scarf," said Lovell, taking Tubby by his fat ear. "You keep here, you fraud!"

Loud yells of defiance and derision

The pause before the attack binted of

few snowballs whizzed out, but fell

The taunts of the Moderns did not

fall short, however, and they would have

undoubtedly caused a reckless rush but

for Jimmy Silver's generalship. But

Jimmy was not giving any chances away.

he rapped out directions, and the four

"Bedad, we're going to have the spal-peens round us," remarked Tommy

to meet the attack on all sides.
He would greatly have preferred to see

the Classicals rush on recklessly at the

front; but he was equal to the occasion.

Shouting defiance, the Modern heroes awaited the attack.

Mornington led his division round to the side opposite from that where Jimmy

Lattrey went with them, and Morning-

Don't hang back, Lattrey!" he said,

'I'm not hangin' back!" scowled Lat-

"Get all the snowballs you can carry,

you fellows," said Mornington. "Give

them a volley when you start, and then rush for it. Bowl out Tommy Dodd the

first, if you can. Lattrey, are you coming

on ahead?"
"Oh, let the blessed funk hang back!"
said Higgs. "We don't want him."

Lattrey, with an evil look, dropped to

There was not much danger in charging

But Morny's mocking look and remarks

The thought had come into his mind

The juniors were gathering up snow for

that here was an opportunity of paying

missiles, and Lattrey followed their

example-and he gathered up a heavy

But that dangerous missile was not in-

Loud and clear, a whistle rang out

With a shout the Classicals rushed on.

From four sides the Classicals closed

in on the snow fort with a tremendous

rush. From the fort whizzing volleys of

snowballs met them, and a good many were fairly bowled over. But they

jumped up again and rushed on.

Jimmy Silver & Co. reached the wall,
and essayed to climb. Whizzing snow-

balls and lunging fists drove them back.

Erroll's party was at close quarters, too; but Conroy's division had retreated

Mornington's followers, with Morny in

But they

"Charge!" shouted Mornington.

off his old score against Mornington.

stone in his snowball.

from Jimmy Silver.

to recover breath.

and attacked hotly.

It was the signal.

tended for the Moderns.

a snow fort and facing missiles no more

dangerous than snowballs; but, such as

roused all the bitterest hatred in his

it was, Lattrey did not care to face it.

ton, as he formed his men up for a charge, glanced at the cad of the Fourth.

"My mistake; I thought you were."

"Oh, go and eat coke!"

Tommy Dodd quickly disposed his forces

Unheeding the howls of the Moderns,

funk to the Modern minds-at all events,

"I-I-I- stammered Muffin-

"Keep by me, you fat fraud!"

came from the Modern fortress.

came from the Modern fortress,

they assumed that it did.

divisions took their posts.

Silver led.

"Can't I captain one lot, you ass?"

What about me?" demanded Lovell.

lots, equal numbers.'

then, form up!"

Classical forces.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

gested Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

a bitter look.

'Kow-ow!'

front?" exclaimed Rawson.

"He couldn't run away."

Conroy.

(Continued from the previous page.)

Over Morny's head, as he clambered on the snow wall, missiles whizzed from his followers, and two or three badlyaimed snowballs smote him in the back.

"Come on!" yelled Mornington, as he plunged over the wall. "We're in first! Back up, Classicals!" "Good idea," agreed Erroll.
"Now, then—Conroy, Erroll, Mornington," said Jimmy Silver. "You three are

"Hurray!"
"Give 'em socks!"

"Back up, Moderns!" roared Tommy

Mornington was right on the snow wall, sinking up to his knees in it.

The Moderns fairly rained snowballs on him, and three or four pairs of hands

reached out at him. Morny held his ground, and his followers pressed on valiantly.

"By gad, you know, I shouldn't mind captainin' one lot," remarked Adolphus Smythe, of the Shell. Even Adolphus had joined up with his nutty pals.

"But I should," said Jimmy. "Now, But there was a sudden yell from Mornington as a snowball, hurled from behind, struck him on the back of the head.

He reeled back, and slid down the snow wall to the ground, and remained there. But his followers, clambering furiously over the wall, hardly heeded his fall.

They did not note that Morny lay groaning faintly in the snow as they swarmed over the wall and engaged handto-hand with the defenders.

"Back up, Classicals!"
"Hurray!"

The assailants were jumping down into the fort now, on Morny's side. There was terrific combat in crowded quarters.

The irruption of the enemy broke up the Modern defence, and the other sides were exposed to attack.

Jimmy Silver & Co. were swarming in now, and Erroll was on the wall. Conroy and his party rallied, and rushed on again, and came swarming in. Snowballs were done with now, and

knuckles were chiefly used. But the odds were on the Classical side now that they were fairly within the defensive works.

Tommy Dodd & Co. were rushed over, pitched into the snow, or pitched out of

their own fort. In ten minutes more the Modern resistance was at an end. Some of them were fleeing, others were

being sat upon, some were too breath-less for further fighting.

It was a Classical victory, and the

Classicals roared out cheers.
"Our win!" gasped Lovell. "Hurry!"
"Hip hip hurray!"
"Yow ow ow!" came from Tommy

Dodd. "Gerroff my neck, Van Ryn, you Dutch villain! It's your win! The South African junior chuckled, and

allowed the Modern leader to rise. Tommy Dodd panted stertorously.
"Oh, my hat! Groogh! Why didn't you silly asses keep 'em out?" he gasped. didn't you, you fathead?

demanded Towle.

"Our win!" chuckled Jimmy Silver.

"How's the casualties? What's the

matter with your arm, Lovell?"
"Wow-wow!" stuttered Lovell. jammed my funny-bone on something-OW-WOW!

"M-m-m-m-m!" came from Raby. "It

was my nose, you silly ass!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's Morny?" asked Erroll.

"Fell outside, I think," said Higgs.

"Yah! He's funking!"

"He's not funking, you fathead!" ex-claimed Erroll angrily.

Well, he didn't get up again," sneered Higgs.

Erroll ran to the snow wall and scrambled over. He was quite aware that if Morny had stayed out of the fight, he must be hurt. Morny!"

A groan answered him.

#### The 3rd Chapter. By a Coward Hand.

Mornington of the Fourth was seated dazedly in the snow, holding his head with both hands. There was crimson on bis fingers.

'Morny!" panted Erroll. "You're hurt!

'Oh! Oh, my head!" muttered Mornington.

Hallo, what's the row, Erroll?"

"Morny's hurt."

"Oh, rats! Snowballs don't hurt," sneered Higgs. "He's malingering."
"Shut up, you fool!" said Erroll fiercely. "His head's bleeding!" said Erroll

'Great Scott!" There was a rush to the spot at once. Classicals and Moderns gathered round

in a crowd. Erroll's strong arm was thrown around

Mornington, supporting him. The dandy of the Fourth was white as the snow about him, and his handsome face was contracted with pain.

"It's-it's all right," he panted, "I-I feel a bit dizzy, that's all. I'm cut. Don't make a fuss."

"Somebody's used a snowball with a stone in it!" shouted Lovell furiously. You Modern cads!"

"Rot!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd. "Nobody on our side would do that!

"Faith, it's a loie intirely!" shouted Tommy Doyle indignantly. "Look at Morny's napper, then!"

"He's cut!" "It was a stone," said Jimmy Silver

quietly, "and the cur who chucked that stone has got to be found."

"It was a stone, right enough," admitted Tommy Dodd, compressing his lips as he looked at the ugly cut under Morny's dark hair. "But Morny's got it on the back of the head. It never came from the fort." the lead, dashed right up to the fort,

"Couldn't have," said Tommy Cook, at I glaring in at the door.

once. "Not unless Morny was running away."

"He wasn't running away," said Higgs.
"He was first over the wall, and facing the Moderns.'

"There you are!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd triumphantly. "That stone was chucked at the fort, and it hit Morny on the back of the head. It was a Classical snowball."

'Yah! Classical cads'" yelled the Modern's.

The Classicals were silent and furious. They could not deny Tommy Dødd's assertion; it was evidently the truth. The stone snowball had been hurled at

the fort, and it had evidently been hurled by a Classical hand. Jimmy Silver's face was dark with anger.

He would have rather lost the snow-

fight, ten times over, than that this disgrace should have fallen upon his side. "Jolly lucky a Classical got it on the head," growled Towle. "It might have knocked our teeth in, if it had reached

the mark. "Sneaking, cowardly trick!" said Lacy,

the Modern.
"Oh, shut up!" was the brotherly rejoinder of Lacy, the Classical.

"It's right enough," said Jimmy Silver, in tones of concentrated anger. "It was a sneaking, cowardly trick. One of Morny's party was putting stones in the snowballs, and Morny happened to get it. We've got to look into this. Help Morny indoors first. That cut will have to be

Mornington rose to his feet, with

Erroll's aid.
"Don't make a fuss about this," he said faintly. "It's pretty certain who did.
That stone it, but you can't be sure. That stone wasn't meant for the Moderns; it was meant for me, and it got me."
"Meant for you!" exclaimed Jimmy

Silver, starting. "Yes, of course." Morny gritted his teeth "Of course it was meant for me, as it hit me."
"But—but—"

"Only one stone was used," said Mornington, leaning on Erroll as he spoke. "And that one got me on the back of the head. There's only one fellow on the

Classical side cowardly rotter enough to play such a trick."

"Lattrey!" exclaimed Erroll.

"Lattrey, of course. But don't you fellows touch him—leave him to me. Help me indoors, Erroll, old chap."

"Come on, Morny!"

Monny, his head still swimming was

Momy, his head still swimming, was helped away by Kit Erroll.

Jimmy Silver Loosed round, with gleaming eres.

"Where's Littrey?" he asked, between his teeth. "Lattrey! Lattrey!"

"Where are you, you cat?"

There was no answer. Lettrey was gone.

The crowd of juniors broke up.
The victory had been with the Classicals, but they were not thinking of triumph now.

They were thinking of Lattrey, and his cowardly revenge upon Mornington-for no one doubted that Lattey was guilty. Lattrey had been among Morny's followers in the attack, and he had been

well behind Morny. His bitter spite against the dandy of the Fourth was well-known. There was no one else in the party who

could be supposed to bear Mornington a bitter grudge.

Lattrey was guilty, and though it might be difficult to prove it, there was no doubt on the subject.

Jimmy Silver's brow was moody, as he strode into the School House with his

chums. Erroll had taken Mornington to the dormitory, and Jimmy Silver & Co. found

them there Kit Erroll was bathing Mornington's head. The cut had ceased to bleed, but

Morny's expression showed that it was painful enough. 'Feel pretty bad?" asked Jimmy.

Mornington gave him rather a twisted

"Yes-but it's nothin' serious. Nothin' to make a fuss about. I shall have a merry headache for some time, I expect." to make a fuss about. Jimmy Silver felt relieved.

Angry as he was, he did not want the matter to have to be reported to the masters, as would have been inevitable if Morny had needed a medical man's attention.

"You don't think you ought to see a medical johnny?" he asked. "No fear!" "All the better, of course. But as for

that cad Lattrey-I-I suppose there's no doubt that it was Lattrey. "Not in my mind," said Morningtor quietly. "But you can leave him to me." said Mornington You're not in a state for a scrap, if that's what you mean. Morny.'

"Not to-day. But Lattrey will keep!" said Mornington, with a glitter in his

Jimmy Silver nodded, and left the

With a grim brow, he made his way to Lattrey's study. He found the cad of the Fourth there, with a cigarette between his lips.

"Lattrey, you hound!" Lattrey blew out a little cloud of smoke, and looked round carelessly. "Hallo! What's the row now?" he asked lazily.

"You know what you've done to Morny!" Lattrey raised his eyebrows.
"Morny! What have I done? What are you talking about?"

Jimmy Silver fixed his eyes upon Lattrey's face. He only read surprised inquiry there. But he knew by experience that falsehood came as easily to Mark Lattrey as breathing.

"You cut Morny's head with a stone in snowball!" he said grimly. " Did I?"

"You know you did!" bawled Lovell,

Lattrey shrugged his shoulders. 'Is Morny's head cut?" he asked. "Why, you spoofing rotter!" shouted Lovell. "Do you mean to deny it?" "Certainly! If Morny's got a stone in a snowball, I should conclude that he got

Lattrey coolly.

then?"

study."

compressing his lips.

what I'm goin' to do."

while you preach, do you?'

his face cark and measy.

at their study mate.

"I know you did"

Lattrey, biting his lips.

"Look here, Gower--"

remarked Peele.

speered Lattrer.

the study

unmistakable.

suggested Lattrey.

from one of the Moderns," said

"It came from behind," said Jimmy

'Perhaps Morny was turnin' tail,"

"Even if it was, I really don't see why

"And only one of them rotter enough

"It's not going to be reported," said

If he had had any doubt before, he

would have had none now. Lattrey's ex-

pression for a moment or two had been

"Anythin' more to say?" asked Lattrey,

taking another cigarette from a case. "I

don't remember askin' you into my

"Only that you've got to answer for it," said the captain of the Fourth.

"That means a raggin', I suppose.
Well, I deny that I did it; and I'm not goin' to stand a raggin'," said Lattrey.

If anybody lays a finger on me I shall

call in a prefect for protection. You can

call it sneakin' if you like. But that's

"You won't be ragged," said Jimmy.

"Oh, I see! Merely a little sermon

from Uncle James!" grinned Lattrey.

"I don't mind! Go ahead with the ser-

monisin'. You don't mind if I smoke

"Morny's asked us to leave you to him," said Jimmy, unheeding. "As soon as Morny's got over that hurt you're

going to answer for it to him. But for

that, Lattrey, you'd be ragged till you couldn't crawl, you cad! That's all."

Jimmy left the study.

Lattrey did not light his second cigar.

Peele and Gower came into the study

ette. He eraphied it in nervous ingers

to tea. They looked blackly and grimly

"You're done it now, you worm!"

"You think I did it?" asked Lattrey.

"You're not so folly ford of Morny

yourselves since he gave you the go by !

that. I pity you when Morny gets well enough to handle you."

"I mayn't choose to fight Morny," said

"Oh, don't talk to me! You make me

And Peele and Gover had their tea

without addressing another word to their

study-mate or answering him if he spoke.

Lattrey, with a sullen, savage face, left

Fellows in the passages and in the

Common-room looked at him. Their looks

Not a word was spoken to him. The sentence of Coventry, which had almost died out, was revived in full force.

Lattrey realised it, and he realised

He had supposed that a stone in a

snowball, hurled among so many others,

could never be traced to him. He knew

He had not expected the whole crowd

He was, as he had said, a dog with a

bad name. There was no actual proof,

but the circumstances amounted to proof

and he was adjudged guilty. And, with all his nerve and bravado, he could not

simulate the indignation an innocent

fellow would have felt at such an accusa-

He had acted on a savage, malicious impulse—an impulse that could only have

Contempt and avoidance were the con-

what was to follow with a sinking heart.

The 4th Chapter.

Called to Account.

tine Mornington in the class next morn-

ing. Mornington's face was pale, and he

The Form-master was not likely to pass

"Mornington, is anything the matter

with you?" Mr. Bootles asked, blinking

"Nothin', sir," replied Mornington.
"You are looking quite ill, my boy."

at the junior over his spectacles.

Mr. Bootles looked sharply at Valen-

come of an evil nature.

looked seedy.

his looks unnoticed.

that there was no proof, at any rate.

too, that he had made what he would have called a "bad break."

were full of contempt and aversion.

to play such a dirty trick!" shouted

"Quite!" said Jimmy Silver.

growing stern-"I trust. Mornington, that

you have not been smoking?"
"Oh, no, sir!" said Morny calmly, while some of the Fourth grinned. "I've had to speak to you on that sub-

ject before, Mornington," said the master of the Fourth severely.

"I've given it up, sir."

"Very well, Mornington. I accept your

assurance on that point. But you are looking far from well."

"I had a rather hard knock in the snow-"You know he was not. That stone was chucked by a Classical." fight yesterday, sir," said Mornington. "It's really nothing—just a rap on the head.

you should select me as the scapegoat," said Lattrey, with a sneer. "There were twenty or thirty fellows behind Morny, 1 Lattrey was breathing hard as he listened.

He told himself that there was no proof; that the suspicion and condemna-tion of the whole Form amounted to nothing if the Form-master came to weigh the matter.

But his heart was beating painfully all the same as he listened.

"I see. Give a dog a bad name, and hang him!" sneered Lattrey. "You've made up your minds that I did it, I can But he was soon relieved. Morny had no intention of mentioning his name. "Well, you can report it to Bootles if you like," said Lattrey. "Of course, I shall deny knowin' anythin' about it. What can you prove?" "You should be more careful, Morning

ton," said Mr. Bootles. "However, if you assure me that it is not serious-" Not at all, sir."

"Not at all, sir."

The bump on Morny's head, hidden by his thick, dark hair, was throbbing as he answered; but he spoke quite calmly.

"Very well, Mornington."

And Mr. Bootles let the matter drop, though he glanced at Morny several times again during the morning Jimmy quietly.
"Oh!" said Lattrey. His command of himself was great, but he could not help betraying the relief he felt at that statement, "Morny isn't badly hurt,

again during the morning. After lessons, when the Fourth Form came out, Lattrey joined Peele and "Not so bad as all that," said Jimmy,

Those two youths stared at him, turned their backs, and deliberately walked

Evidently Peele and Gower, black sheep as they were, wanted nothing to do with Lattrey-at least, until his latest exploit

had had time to blow over a little. Lattrey stood with a flush in his cheeks, his eyes burning.

Mornington came towards him in the Form-room passage.

Lattrey instinctively clenched his hands. and the dandy of the Fourth laughed lightly.

"I'm not goin' to hit you—now," he said. "You'll keep! I want you to set Saturday afternoon aside for me, Lattrey. shall be fit enough to deal with you then."

Lattrey set his teeth. "What do you mean?" he muttered.

"Don't you know what I mean?" smiled Mornington. "You've raised a bump on my head nearly as big as an egg. I'm goin' to make you squirm for it. Did you expect to get off scot-free?" "I did not-

"Goin' to tell lies, deah boy?" Mornington laughed. "What's the good of tellin' lies to a fellow who knows you so ell? You did it, my pippin, an' you're goin' to pay for it on Saturday."
"Hang you, Morny!"

"Not spoilin' for a fight—what!" said Mornington banteringly. "You should have thought of that, old scout, before

you biffed a stone on my napper from behind. You've got to learn that you can't treat my napper like that. I shall expect you behind the gym on Saturday afternoon." "I'm going out on Saturday afternoon,"

said Lattrey sullenly.

Morny's eyes gleamed.

"No. But it's a good step from that to crackin' a chap's head from behind with a stone," said Gower, "I never thought even you would come down to "You're not goin' out, Lattrey! You're goin' to put your hands up on Saturday and answer for what you've done, you "I'm going out!" said Lattrey, his face

I don't choose to fight you, Mornington."

"You won't have any choice about it, my pippin. And I hope you'll get a thumpin good lickin'—as you certainly "It isn't for you to choose, after what you've done. If you go out on Saturday, Lattrey, I shall follow you, and thrash you wherever I find you!"

With that, the dandy of the Fourth turned on his heel and walked away. Lattrey moved off by himself, his heart

heavy and his face clouded. He would have undone his savage act now if he could; but it was too late to think of that.

On Saturday he was to answer for it, and he knew that there was no escape. And he knew, too, that by the time Mornington had done with him he would be in a worse state than Morny was now. In the quadrangle he came upon Algy Silver, and approached him. The sports-

"Well?" he snapped.
"Well," said Lattrey, breathing hard. "are you turnin' against me, too, Algy?" "Don't call me Algy!" growled Jimmy Silver's cousin. "I'm sick of you! A fellow who'd do what you did yesterday ought to be in Prussia! Let me alone!" of fellows to jump to conclusions like this. And yet he might have expected

man of the Third gave him a cool stare.

"I give you my word-Algy stalked away. He was Lattrev's last resource, so far as conversation went, and even that smoky young scamp had turned on him-at least, for the

Lattrey was not happy that afternoon. Cut by the Fourth, despised by the whole lower school, avoided by all, and with the prospect of a terrific licking awaiting him on Saturday, he realised clearly enough that the way of the transgressor was hard.

His hatred of Mornington burned at sequences. And after, when Mornington had recovered Lattrey thought of fever heat, but the indulgence of hatred and bitterness was little consolation to

> That day the blackest sheep at Rookwood was probably the most miserable fellow in the school as well.

#### The 5th Chapter. Lattrey's Crime!

There was some little excitement in the Classical Fourth after morning lessons on

That afternoon the fight was to come

Morny was quite implacable, and it was certain that the cad of the Fourth was to

"I'm well, sir."
"I trust," said Mr. Bootles, his brow receive a punishment quite severe enough Funk! Yah!"

behind Mornington now.

and put up your paws."

growled Higgs. "E such a rotten funk!"

been on his guard.

Lattrey.

medicine!"

Lattrey's face became livid.

Lattrey drove his hands into his

"By gad! I can't hit the cad if he won't put up his hands," said Morning-

to be paid for. Lattrey, you'll put up your hands, or else I shall pull your nose!"

Lattrey breathed hard, but he did not

"Pull his nose, and have done with it!"

Mornington stretched out finger and

But that was too much even for

His right hand lashed out of his

Mornington jumped back just in time to escape the sudden, savage blow. He had

"By gad! His fightin' blood is up at last," he grinned. "Hurrah! Put up your paws, Lattrey, an' take your

Lattrey gave a hurried, savage glance

Morny's knuckles tapped him gently on

And, with the desperation of a rat in

round the room, as if he were seeking a

the nose, and he gave a howl of rage.
"Hang you!" he snarled, between his teeth. "Hang you! Come on!"

a corner, he rushed furiously on his

Mornington met him coolly, but he had to give ground before that furious

pocket, straight at Morny's grinning

"But this lump on my head has got

"Blessed if I ever saw

There was no real reason why lattrey should have shrunk from the contest. He was a little larger in build than Mornington, and he was not a weakling. He could not say that the fight was not a fair one.

But he did shrink from it. He had intended to injure Mornington, and to escape punishment, deeming it impossible for his act to be brought home to him.

He would rather have been accused before the Form-master, than called upon

to face Mornington's fists.

But it was the latter punishment he had to meet, and he knew that the dandy of the Fourth would not spare him.

It was no more than he deserved. He had, in fact, fairly asked for it, but he was very anxious to avoid getting what he had asked for.
After dinner he started for the gates

immediately he was out of the House. Lovell and Raby cut down to the gates at once, and when Lattrey arrived there

they smilingly turned him back.
"No exit, dear boy," smiled Lovell. "I'm going out!" said Lattrey fiercely. "All serene—if you can walk over us," grinned Raby. "Not otherwise." Lattrey did not try to "walk over", the

two juniors. That would not have been much use. He turned back into the quad, feeling a good deal like a hunted animal, and Lovell and Raby remained on guard at

the gates. Jimmy Silver bore down on him in the "What time will suit you, Lattrey?"

asked Jimmy, constraining himself to speak civilly.
"What time for what?" snapped Lattrey.

"For your fight with Morny," I'm not goin' to fight Morny."

Will you answer my question?" asked the captain of the Fourth.

No, I won't 'Suit yourself."

Jimmy Silver left him, and went in to report. He found Mornington and Erroll in their study.

Morny looked up with a grin. "Well, what's the hour fixed for the merry execution?" he asked:

"Lattrey won't fix it. He's not keen." said Jimmy, laughing. "You'll have to fix it yourself, if you're bent on the fight coming off."

"You bet I am! I've still got a big bump on my head. I suppose Lattrey can't be allowed to play tricks like that for nothin'.

Jimmy Silver nodded. He wants licking, if a chap ever did." he said, "if only to stop him from doing anything of the kind again. He's not really safe."

"I agree," said Erroll quietly. "He certainly ought to be punished. I don't see why he shouldn't be willing to stand up to Morny, too. He's bigger."
"Not quite so tough, I fancy, though."

remarked Mornington. "Anyway, he's goin' to do it, an' if he won't fix a time, I'll go an' see him, an' the merry circus can begin at once.

Mornington left the study with the two juniors. But they looked round the quadrangle in vain for Lattrey. Stole away, by gum!" exclaimed Mornington.

"Lovell's at the gate—he can't have gone out," said Jimmy Silver. "Not by the gate, anyway. He may have scooted over the wall, the blessed funk!"

"Looking for Lattrey?" asked Van Ryn, joining them. Yes. Seen the cad?"

'He's gone into his study."

"Oh, we'll jolly soon have him out of that!" chuckled Mornington. "We'll have the merry scrap in his study, if he prefers it there. Better get some gloves. I've a suspicion that Lattrey will prefer to have the gloves on." 'Ha, ha, ha!'

Quite a crowd of fellows marched up to the Fourth Form passage.

Lovell and Raby came racing from the

gate to join them.

Nearly all the Classical Fourth crowded outside Lattrey's study, and a good many

of the Moderns. Lattrey had slunk quietly into his room. intending to lock himself in there. But Peele was in the study, so the

locking-in was not feasible. Peele gave him a contemptuous look.

"Why don't you face it?" he asked, with a curl of the lip. "You've got to go through it, you know. You're ownin' up to all the Form that you're a mean funk, dodgin' like this!"

Lattrey's eyes glittered at him like a

He was afraid of Mornington, perhaps, but he was not afraid of Peele, and he was not disposed to stand the sneers of a slacker who had even less resolution than himself. "Are you calling me a funk?" he said,

between his teeth.
"You bet!" said Peele coolly. "Rotten

funk! Why, you rotter-ow!' Lattrey rushed at him, hitting out

Cyril Peele went to the floor with a crash, and Lattrey stood over him with blazing eyes, just as the door was burst open by the crowd of Fourth-Formers.

"Ow, ow, ow!" gasped Peele dazedly,
"Hallo! Fightin' already?" grinned
Mornington. "You're fairly thirstin' for gore, Lattrey, old scout, aren't you? But let Peele's gore alone, and shed mine.' Peele staggered to his feet and backed

He did not want any more, and he was quite content to leave his former pal to Morny's tender mercies.

Lattrey faced the dandy of the Fourth, his teeth set. Hands off, Morny!" he said thickly.

"I'm not goin' to fight-I don't choose to! Better let me alone, I warn you!"
"But what about that lump on my head?" smiled Mornington. "Are you to give me that, free, gratis, and for nothin'?"

Funk!" bawled Flynn from the passage.

piece to save himself, and his hand touched and closed upon a heavy metal Sneakin' funk!" hooted Peele, safe candlestick.

What happened next followed like a

You see what the fellows think of your flash. Whether Lattrey acted deliberately, or whether he obeyed a savage impulse he could not resist, the onlookers never boundin' courage, dear boy." grinned Mornington. "Don't be too proud to fight. Put your pride in your pockets,

The heavy candlestick, grasped in his right hand, swept forward, and came with a terrific crash full in Mornington's face

Mornington of the Fourth recled backward and crashed to the floor, and lay where he had fallen, motionless.

> The 6th Chapter. In Darkness and Despair.

There was a dead silence for one

Utter horror held the juniors spell-Mornington lay on his back on the

study floor insensible, his face white, and blood streaming from his forehead. Lattrey stood panting, furious, the candlestick still gripped in his hand.

But as he looked down on the senseless face of Mornington he shivered, and the metal candlestick dropped from his hand with a clang into the fender.

What had he done? Lattrey reeled back against the mantelpiece, panting.

'Good heavens!" stammered Jimmy Silver, almost frozen.

Erroll sprang into the study. In a moment more he was on his knees beside Mornington, his face as white as that of the stricken boy.
"Morny! Morny!"
He raised the junior's head.

It fell limply against his knee. For a moment Erroll's heart was contracted by a terrible fear—a fear that his

This will have to come out," muttered Raby. "Oh, that rotten ruffian! The cowardly bound!"

"Jimmy!" muttered Newcome. not-he's not-" Newcome faltered, his lips refusing to form the terrible word. Jimmy Silver shook his head. "No, no, no!"

"Thank goodness!"
"But it's serious. There'll have to be

a doctor," muttered Jimmy.

"And the sack for Lattrey!" said
Lovel! savagely. The cowardly brute!
He ought to be put in prison!"

"He's coming to," said Erroll quietly.

Mornington's eyes opened.
Some of the juniors moved into the study, but Erroll waved them back. 'Give him room!'

"I-I say, what's the row?" muttered Mornington, passing his hand over his eyes, "I-I feel jolly queer."
"Don't move, old chap!" whispered

Erroll. "You there, Kit?"
"I'm here, Morny," said Erroll huskily,

"He-he hit me with something," mumbled Mornington confusedly. hit me with something, didn't he?"

"Rotten hound! Oh, my head!" "Does it hurt much, old son?" asked

Jimmy Silver. "By gad, it does! Have I been in a faint, or anything?" asked Mornington.
"It's all right, Morny. You were

stunned.' By gad!" There was a short silence. Mornington

passed his hand over his eyes again. They were staring straight at Kit Erroll, but there was a strange lack of recognition in their glance, which sent a chill to Erroll's heart, he scarcely knew

"I've been unconscious?" asked Mornington faintly.

"Yes, a little while."



In a dimly-lighted ward a restless lad turned and tossed upon a bed where no sleep could come wakeful, but unseeing, with wide-staring eyes to which all was a blank of dreadful darkness. And beside him, sleepless, but untiring, his chum sat watchful, through the long watches of the night.

desperately, and three or four fierce

blows came home on Morny's face. From that face the mocking grin vanished, and a hard, determined expression took its place

"By Jove! The fellow can fight if he chooses," said Jimmy Silver. "Morny's got his hands full, if he keeps that

"Go it, both sides!" yelled Flynn.
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The merry worm's turned!" chuckled Lovell. "Go it, worm!" Lattrey was going it, with all his

strength. He seemed to have the advantage, at first, and he drew some encouragement, too, from Jimmy Silver's remark.

At all events, he was fairly in for it, and there was nothing for it but to do his best.

The juniors, crowded in the doorway. watched the fight with breathless interest. It was something to see the cad of the Fourth putting up a fight like this. But Lattrey's advantage did not last

Mornington recovered himself, his guard grew better, and he began to give more punishment than he took. Lattrey's attack was stopped, and he was forced to give ground.

Back, step by step, the dandy of the Fourth drove him, raining blows. Lattrey's hitting had grown wild now,

and he was getting nearly all the punish-He backed away, farther and farther, till he was trampling on the fender, and

could go no farther. Then he had to stand up to his adversary, and he stood up desperately, his teeth set, his eyes burning with rage. Mornington's fist came fairly home on

his white, furious face, and Lattrey stag-gered back against the mantelpiece. He threw his arm along the mantel-

Lattrey followed him up, hitting out | chum was dead, that the closed eyes f would never open again in life.

"Morny!" groaned Erroll huskily. There was a faint groan from Mornington, but his eyes did not open.
"Help me away with him!" muttered
Erroll. "Get him into his study!"

Lattrey started forward. "I-I never meant-Erroll pushed him back so savagely

that he fell. No one else gave Lattrey a glance. It was no time to deal with the young

Mornington was lifted up and carried out of the room into his own study.

There he was laid on the sofa—the ele-

gant, silken sofa Morny had bought for the study in his wealthy days. He did not move or speak

"Water!" muttered Erroll. Jimmy Silver dashed away. He came back almost in a twinkling with a basin of water and a sponge.

He supported Morny's head while

Erroll bathed his forehead.

The water reddened as the sponge was squeezed in it. There was a cut on Morny's white fore-

head—an ugly cut. Black bruises were forming about the eyes. If nothing worse happened, he was certain to have two black eyes, but a terror was tugging at Erroll's heart that it

would be worse-much worse. Round the open doorway the juniors stood crowded in dismayed silence The sudden, tragic happening had quite thrown them off their balance. It was

such a thing as had never happened before at Rookwood.

Lattrey's ruffianly brutality was a new experience for the Rookwooders.

"I—I say, we—we ought to call Mr. Bootles," said Lovell through his chattering teeth. "He'll have to see a doctor."
"Bootles is out," said Conroy. "The Head, then."

through his frozen lips.
"Yes." Mornington made an irritable gesture, and sat up on the soia, Erroll supporting him. "What's the matter?

"Only a little while?"

"But it's dark."

"Wha-a-at?

"Yes, yes a few minutes."

haven't you got the light on?"
"The—the light?" stammer

What the merry thunder are we sittin' in the dark for?" A hush fell on the study. The crowded fellows in the doorway

"I must have been off a good time."
id Mornington. "It's dark. Why

stammered Erroll

looked at Morny and at one another. Erroll tried to speak, but his voice died in his throat. Mornington was groping out with his

hand, strangely, eerily, in a way that made the juniors shiver as they saw it. "Erroll! Where are you?"
"Here I am, old fellow!" groaned
Erroll. "Here, Morny, beside you, I'm
holding you, old chap!"

"Well, I can't see you!" grunted Mornington. "For goodness' sake light the gas, somebody!" Erroll groaned aloud. Mornington was touching Erroll. The

Mornington could not see his chum!
"Morny!" muttered Jimmy Silver, with
a sickness at his heart "Morny!" -don't joke now, for mercy's sake!"
"Joke!" said Mornington peevishly.
"Who's jokin'?"

"Morny!" groaned Jimmy.
"I can't see you!" exclaimed Mornington. "Look here, what does this mean? If you won't put on a light, I suppose I

He groped in his pocket for a match-

The juniors watched him in silent horror. Scratch

The match flickered. "Dash these filthy war-matches, they on't light!" growled Mornington.

won't light!" growled Mornington. "Erroll, you fool, why don't you get a won't light? Erroll did not speak. The tears were running unchecked down his cheeks.

Mornington gave a convulsive start as the flame of the match scorched his finger. He threw it down. A sudden scared look came over his

No eyes had ever seen fear in Valentine Mornington's face before. But now there was fear-a terrible, gripping fear.

In a strange, furtive way he passed his hand over his eyes and the cruel bruises round them.

"I—I can't see!" he said brokenly. "I can't see! Kit, why can't I see?"
Erroll choked. He could not speak. "You-you're cryin'," muttered Morn-igton. "You, Kit! I've never seen you ington. "You, Kit! I've novel tell you I cry! What's the matter? I tell you fellows havin can't see. I-I say, are you fellows havin' a lark with me? What's the game?"

His glance turned wildly and un-seeingly about the room. He knew the truth now, but he would not believe it.

"I'm here, Morny," muttered Erroll huskily. His strong arm was supporting his chum as he spoke. "Tell me, Kit! Is-is it still day-

light?" 'Yes, Morny."

"You—you can see me?"
"Yes," groaned Erroll.

"I can't see you." Erroll tried to speak, but his voice broke in a sob. The bitterness of death was in his heart.

"Kit!" Mornington's voice was a frightened whisper. "I'm not blind, Kit—I'm not blind! Kit, tell me I'm not blind, before I go mad!"

"Blind! It's true, then! I—I can't see! It's all dark! I'm blind—blind—blind— It was a cry of anguish, a cry from

the depths of misery and despair, a cry that rang long in the ears of the Rookwood juniors.

> The 7th Chapter. Under the Shadow !

Blind! It ran through the school in horrified whispers.

Mornington, of the Fourth Form, was blind. He lay in bed in the sanatorium, with the school doctor in attendance; but there was little the medical gentleman

could do. Erroll was with him. Morning ton, in his despair and misery, clumg to his

The Head had sent for Jimmy Silver, to demand the full story, and he had heard it. He listened with a grim brow, and com-manded the captain of the Fourth to send

Lattrey to him. Jimmy Silver made his way to Lattrey's study. Lattrey was alone there-crouching

He turned a haggard face upon Jimmy Silver as he came in.

The horror and repulsion in Jimmy's face struck him like a blow. "Let me alone," he muttered thickly.

"I-I never meant it; you know I never meant it! I-I couldn't-

"Don't be afraid of me," said Jimmy Silver bitterly. "I couldn't touch you you reptile! The Head wants you; you're to go to him."

'The-the Head?" muttered Lattrey. "Yes, at once." Jimmy stepped out of the study.

"Silver, I-I-Jimmy did not answer. Lattrey staggered rather than walked from the study. He started and flinched as he saw the

juniors in the passage. But he had nothing to fear from them. They would as soon have touched a leper as Mark Lattrey then.

They watched him in silence as he went-watched him with wonder, horror, and unspeakable aversion. His dragging steps took him to the

Head's study.
His stay there was brief. In a few minutes he emerged, and went unsteadily back to his own room.

There he remained-alone

There were faint footfalls, hushed voices, without, but no one came to the

He started as the door opened at last, and Peele and Gower came in. His eyes fixed upon them with almost a beseeching look.

They did not even look at him.
They took their books, and left the study without a glance, without a word. The door closed with a sound that was like a knell to the heart of the wretched

After that, silence-solitude. And in the dormitory that night his schoolfellows shrank from him as from

one that carried the plague. It was long before Lattrey's eyes closed. But he was not the only one that waked that grim night under the old

roof of Rookwood School. In a dimly-lighted ward a restless lad turned and tossed upon a bed where no sleep could come-wakeful, but unseeing, with wide-staring eyes to which all was a blank of dreadful darkness. And beside him, sleepless, but untiring, his chum sat watchful, through the long watches of the night.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY.

CONDEMNED BY THE SCHOOL! By OWEN CONQUEST. DON'T MISS IT!

THE CO. LEGIS BUILDINGS TO U.S. ASSESSED LINE for him, and pay him the proper fare, which is half-a-crown. Turn her over, strips hanging on clothes-lines." boys!"

The horses were taken out of the cab. and the crowd looked on wonderstruck as the boys, seizing the vehicle, turned it neatly over, with its wheels in the air.

Then Chip, berrowing a hammer from an old-iron stall, straightened out the nails which had held the floorboards in position, and tapped them back into their place.

In twenty seconds the bottom of the cab was as good as new.

"Turn her up, boys!" said Chip.

The cab was nighted.

The three-cornered hat of a policeman showed as he shoved his way through the crowd.

The policeman spoke English, for he had been a waiter in London, and had sold ice-cream from a barrow in the summer and chestnuts and baked potatoes in winter.

chapp-a," he said. "Hallo, you

"Whatt-a trouble?"

Why, sergeant," replied Chip, "this chap says we have knocked the bottom out of his cab, and wants to charge us the floor in the cab again, and she's as believe me, my chums, it had to be good as ever she was. What shall we pay done, him? We took him from the Wharf to As no doubt you all know, the the Aquarium, and back.

"Two bobb-a," said the policeman

And he grinned, because he knew the old cab.

man, who handed it to the purple cabby. "Him try to pull-a your legg-a!" said bringing food to this country. "Now suppose-a you boy the policeman. "Now suppose a you boy the result is there is an immense ret to your sheep. Ze capitan, 'e send shortage of paper, and the shortage arrangement have been made for you to tends to get more severe. Hence the the policeman. go to Vesuvio dis afternoon.

in his palm as though he was hypnotised, and vowing by all his saints, that never

schoolboys.

#### The Ruins of Pompeil.

Arrangements had been made for a party to make the ascent of the famous judge. volcano of Vesuvius, after a visit to the Roman city of Pompeii.

in viewing this wonderful exhumed city as they were in the volcano which had overwhelmed it, and when it was learned that they were going to camp out on the

the charge of Mr. Parkins, who would We have had to say good-bye-or,

Exchange of the city.

they were going to see-the old Roman popular adventurers when the war is city, which on November 9th, 79, over, and the Boys' FRIEND returns over eighteen hundred years ago, was buried under shower after shower of to its normal size. ashes to depths of a hundred, and a hundred-and-fifty feet.

pointing out of the window. "Look, there's millions and millions of white still in the marble counters and perfect. who handed them to the grantied Coell strips hanging on clothes-lines!"

The city was as large as the City of "Now at he mand be good, Coell," said

jars, from which the wine was dipped, I theatre, to be leftly caught by Forgo "Now at he mand be good, Cecil," said

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 postcand, may be use of receiving a prompt and kindly reply by post. All letters should be addressed: "The Editor, the BOYS' EELEND. The Firstwar House, Farringdon Street, London, E.O. 4."

#### AN EXPLANATION!

I want this week to have a very candid talk with my readers. No Sdoubt all of you have observed the reduction in the size of this week's issue. I would hasten to assure you Call that the reduction was a source of four pounds for repairs. But we've put considerable regret to me. But

paper used for printing the Boys' FRIEND has to be brought to this country from overseas. Ships are number of words will, I feel sure, needed for carrying the paper, but, Chip gave half-a-crown to the police- more important than all, ships are required for war purposes, and for

absolute necessity for reducing the The boys trooped off, leaving the size of the Boys' FRIEND. Had it greedy cabman looking at the half-crown been at all possible for me to prevent the reduction, I would most certainly again would he ship a cabload of British have done so. No editor is capable of performing the superhuman. at the price of one penny. Therefore, I had to devise a scheme for keeping the Boys' FRIEND the premier boys' paper on the market. FOR NEXT MONDAY! There was a buzz of excitement on the Whether I have been successful in ship when the boys got on board again. I this object I leave my readers to

This issue of the Boys' FRIEND contains four pages less than usual, but The boys were not so much interested > I hasten to tell you all that the reducthat they were going to camp out on the slopes of Vesuvius that night, everyone was on tiptoe of expectation.

The Glory Hole fellows were all of the party told off for this excursion, and it below the same was announced that they would be under words LONGER THAN BEFORE. give them a lecture on Pompeii in the we have had to say good-bye-or, market place, and outside the Stock rather, I should say, au revoir—to Dick, Frank, and Joe. Their departure I greatly regret; but, neverthe-Mr. Parkins was already busy amongst ture I greatly regret; but, neverthethe boys, telling them of the wonders less, we must all hope to meet these

No doubt you will all wonder how He told them of the old Roman words into this issue of the Boys' desire to get Lattrey turned out of the

fact that I have printed the stories in smaller type. If you reckon the matter out you will be surprised how many more words can be got on to a page by printing in a smaller type.

Just glance at column one of this page, and you will see that my statement is correct. If you still require further proof, count the words in, say, four inches of matter in the first column, and then count the words in the same number of inches in this paragraph. The difference in the amaze vou.

In conclusion, I would impress upon you all that I shall continue to publish in the Boys' FRIEND the best stories that money can buy. Remember, too, that although the good old "B.F." is reduced in size, you are still getting no less than 30,000 WORDS OF MAGNIFICENT READING MATTER, and that is as much as you will obtain in any boys' paper published at the present time

I have no doubt you will all look anxiously forward to the tale of Jimmy Silver & Co., in next Monday's issue, which, by the way, is entitled,

#### "CONDEMNED BY THE SCHOOL!" By Owen Conquest.

Needless to say, the condemned junior is none other than Lattrey, the cad of the Fourth. Who can wonder that the juniors condemn him after his rascally treatment of Mornington. Poor Mornington! He has been an outsider in his time, but to be robbed of his sight is a far greater punishment than all his rascally actions combined demand.

His future is a blank, nothing but blackness and despair stand before him, but still the one-time outsider bears up and keeps cheerful through it all. Jimmy Silver & Co. demand Lattrey's expulsion from the school, and rightly, too. the Head cannot expel the cad-he dare not!

The juniors do not know the Head's I have managed to pack so many secret. They are filled solely with the

FRIEND. It is due, my chums, to the school. You will like this story. It goes with a swing from start to finish, and you are kept on tenterhooks all the time, stolen away from his friends. wordering what will come next

Our next story dealing with the schooldays of Frank Richards, is a topping one crawled close up behind Cecil. in every way. It is entitled

#### "THE OUTCAST OF CEDAR OREEK!"

By Martin Clifford.

monial advertisement in the local paper Gunten finds himself barred by his schoolfellows. Miss Meadows takes a firm hand, and refuses to have the rascally Swiss in the school. Old man Gunten does not approve of his son being ex. through living long on steamships, with pelled from the school and- Well, I will not tell you what eventually happens. There is, however, no likelihood engines, cooking, and cargo, Cecil's senses of your not being satisfied with this tale.

The next instalment of

#### "THE BOYS OF THE BOMBAY CASTLE!" By Duncan Storm,

which, of course, is an extra long one is crammed with laughable scenes. The have allowed an earthquake to shift boys journey to Vesuvius. Pongo Walker? him. is most keen to, as he says, "wangle a bit of an eruption." He succeeds in his object, with what result you will learn close behind him. when you read this grand instalment. would mention, however, that the erup two drew from his pocket a sandbag, or tion does not turn out exactly as Pongo cosh, with which it was his intention to expects, and the chums have to make a desperate dash for life.

The concluding item in our next issue, is a splendid tale of the dormitory,

#### "SETTLING WITH THE SMOKERS!"

By Ernest Hooker.

Hooker describes how Jimmy Barnes & Co., of Ferndale School, endeavoured to settle with a number of smoky bounders in the same Form, how their scheme met. with disaster, and how, by a lucky chance, the bounders were eventually caught in the act, and made to suffer for their misdeeds.

One word in conclusion. Don't forget to order in advance! It is the only way to prevent disappointment, you know.

Chip drew a nut from his pocket, and atted it in the sling of bls pet catapult.

He was roulling the elastic to give the unconscious Cecil a flick on his clean white collar, when suddenly he stayed his hand.

Half-way down the theatre, from behind a huge base of marble which had once supported a great column, rose two slinking, evil figures.

These, too, had been watching Cecil. unaware of the presence of the boys above them.

A couple of Naples hooligans of the werst type they were, lurking amongst the ruins of the dead city on the offchance of robbing some stray tourist.

And here was their chance.

They had spotted what they thought was a lonely British schoolboy, who had The two cowardly brutes, slinking and

dodging through the ruined theatre.

Cecil did not notice them. He seemed in a dream.

Perhaps he was thinking of his native

Perhaps he was thinking of his master. Found guilty of inserting the matri- the captain of the Dutch mail-packet. Perhaps he was only thinking of his supper.

In his wild state, he would have scented the two hooligans at once.

their thousand and one strange scents of

Pongo had told him to wait where he

So, like the famous Roman sentinel of Pompeii, Cecil was sticking to his post, and so great was his affection and obedience for Pongo, that he would not

At any rate, he took no notice of the two evil-looking ruffians as they crept up

Nor did he turn when the leader of the deal his victim a stunning blow. Chip did not shout to warn Cecil

Holding the Barcelona nut tight in the sling of his catty, he drew the elastic to full length.

The hooligan lifted the cosh, and swung it ready for a tremendous blow.

At the same moment the catty whanged the nut, hard and straight, for Cecil's ear, Chip letting drive as hard as he could.

Plomp!

Down came the cosh for Cecil's neck.

But it struck nowhere near the fatal spot; for, with a growl, Cecil, clapping his paw to his stung ear, had leaped up. taking the blow on his powerful

Then a dismal howl went up from the hooligan, as, with a sudden bound, the supposed schoolboy leaped upon him, grabbing him with hands and feet.

(Another magnificent long instalment of this amazing serial in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND. I should be glad if readers would write and let me know what they think of this new story.)



The 1st Chapter.

Under a Cloud.

Chunky Todgers met Frank Richards & Co. as they arrived at the gate of Cedar Creek School in the crisp winter morning. Chunky's usually humorous fat face was very serious.

"I guess you're in for it, Richards!" he remarked, shaking a fat forefinger at

"In for what, Chunky?" "A jolly good scalping!" said Chunky impressively.

"Hallo, who's going to scalp Franky?" inquired Bob Lawless. "Is Gunten on the war-path again?"

"'Tain't Gunten!" "Who is it, then?" asked Vere Beau-clerc. "Frank hasn't any other enemies at Cedar Creek.

"Unless it's Gunten's pal, Keller," said Frank, with a smile. "Well, let him trot out. There's time before morning lessons, and I'm feeling specially fit this morn-

"Tain't a scrap!" said Todgers.

"Then what is it, Podgy?" demanded
Bob. "What are you chewing the rag
about, anyhow?"

It's Miss Meadows!"

"Well?" demanded Frank. 'You've been up to something," said Chunky Todgers sorrowfully. "I'd never have thought it of you, Richards!" 'Look here, you fat duffer," exclaimed

Frank Richards, beginning to be impatient, "what are you driving at?"
"It was too bad!" said Chunky. "Just like one of Gunten's tricks, if you like; but you ain't Gunten's sort.

rotten, and I guess I don't mind telling you so. What did you do it for?" The three chums stared at Chunky Todgers. The fat youth was evidently

in deep earnest.
"What have I done?" exclaimed Frank. "Oh, come off! You know jolly well what you've done!" said Todgers warmly. "And it's a shame! Even Gunter's Meadows' study, opp shocked at it! There! A trick must be door in the passage. pretty low down to shock that foreign

"You're talking in riddles," said Frank, in bewilderment. "Is Miss Meadows offended about something?"

"You bet she is! You should have seen her face," said Chunky. "Gunten says she's been crying, and it's a beastly

shame!"

"If you're not potty, tell me what you mean!" exclaimed Frank, in exasperation.

"I've done nothing to offend Miss Meadows that I know of."

"Rats!" said Todgers. "Anyhow, you can tell Miss Meadows that. She's told me to send you in as soon as you came.

me to send you in as soon as you came. You'll find her in her room. She knows what you've done; and so do all the fellows-it's leaked out somehow."

"Miss Meadows wants to see me?" asked Frank very quietly. "Yes, and at once."

"Well, I'll go."

Frank Richards left his chums, and hurried towards the schoolhouse. His face was troubled now, and his mind,

He had a great respect for Miss Meadows, the schoolmistress at Cedar Creek, as all the fellows had. It was news to him-and unpleasant

news-that Miss Meadows had a serious cause of complaint against him. Two or three fellows were standing by the porch as he went in, and Eben

Hacke called out: "Shame!" Frank Richards spun round.

"What do you mean by that, Hacke?" he exclaimed fiercely.

Hacke gave him a grim look. 'Oh, don't snort at me!" he said contemptuously. "You've played a dirty trick. I dare say you thought it was funny. Perhaps it was. But I calculate it was a dirty trick, all the same; and all the galoots will tell you so."

"Rotten, I call it!" chimed in Kern Gunten, the Swiss, with a sneering laugh.

And two or three fellows called out "Shame!"

Frank stood rooted to the ground.

He had always been popular at the lumber school, and this unexpected reception astonished him more than it angered

him.
"I haven't the faintest idea what I'm supposed to have done!" he exclaimed.
"Will you tell me, Lawrence?"

Tom Lawrence gave him a grim look.
"You know well enough," he said.
"It's disgraceful! I don't know how it got out; but it's out now, and everybody knows it. I guess there isn't a decent

"How could you do it, Richards?" murmured Mabel Lawrence, who was with her brother. "It was mean and cruel." Krank looked blankly at the Canadian

"Mean-cruel?" he repeated. "Some-thing I've done?"

Yes, what you've done!" "But I-I don't know what-

Mr. Slimmey stepped out of the porch, and touched Frank on the shoulder. 'Go in at once to Miss Meadows,

'Yes, sir." Frank looked at the young master. The kindly face of Mr. Paul Slimmey was hard now and unshiling. There was wrath and scorn in the glance he gave Frank over his gold-rimmed glasses. "Mr. Slimmey, what have I

"You know very well," said Mr. Slimmey, coldly. "Go in at once?"

Frank Richards turned into the porch, almost dazed.

Mr. Slimmey had always been kind to him; he was kind to everybody. What did his cold and contemptuous look mein? What was Frank supposed to have done? His conscience was dear.

the succeing grin of Kern Gunten, and a suspicion flashed into his mind. He swung round again towards the Swiss. "This is something of your doing, Gunten!" he broke out. "You have been lying about me, you foreign cad!" Gunten shrugged his shoulders.

"Gunten has nothing whatever to do with the matter, Richards," said Mr. Simmey icily. "Your rascally action has been discovered, that is all."
"My—my what?" gasped Frank.
"Miss Meadows is waiting for you. Go in at once!" rapped out the assistant

master.

Frank went in, dumb. He tapped at the door of Miss Meadows' study, opposite the school-room

Come in!" Miss Meadows' voice was low and hard.

Frank entered the room. Miss Meadows was seated at her desk, and she turned her eyes upon the flushed, dismayed schoolboy as he came in. The expression on her face struck Frank like

There was no kindness there. She was a little pale, and her face was set, her lips compressed.

Frank looked at her speechlessly. "Oh, you have come, Richards!" Yes, ma'am!" gasped Frank.

You know why I have sent for you?"

"The trick you played upon me has been discovered." Frank only looked at her in bewilder-

ment. "Trick?" he repeated. "I've played no trick! What do you mean, Miss

Meadows?" The schoolmistress' lip curled. "It is useless to discuss the matter,

Richards, and it is a disagreeable subect to me. No doubt you would not hesitate to lie, after what you have done. could never have believed it of you; I had a good opinion of you. I know better now. I shall give you a letter to take to Mr. Lawless, to explain to him why you cannot remain in this school. And you will leave at once.'

Frank Richards staggered. But indignation overcame his dismay. His eyes flashed, and he straightened up, and met the schoolmistress' eyes fear-

"I will not go! I will not take the letter to my uncle!" he exclaimed. "Tell me what I've done!"

The 2nd Chapter The Accusation.

Miss Meadows compressed her lips. Whatever it was that was laid to Frank Richards' charge, it was evident that the schoolmistress of Cedar Creek fully believed in his guilt, and that the subject was distasteful to her. But Frank Richards stood his ground

firmly. He did not mean to be condemned un-

heard. There was a long pause, but Miss Meadows spoke at last in a low, clear voice cold as steel.

"You have a right to be heard, Richards, even if you are only speaking the most palpable falsehoods. I will hear you if you insist upon it."

"You have no right to say that I am

"I am not a liar, Miss Meadows! Ask any of the fellows whether he has ever known me to tell a lie. Nobody can say

"That is enough!" "It isn't enough!" broke out Frank "You've told me I'm to get out of the school, and you haven't even told me what I'm accused of. I'm only asking for thir play. Everybody has a right to that?

" Very well. The other day I asked you to ride over to Thompson with a letter from me to the office of the 'Thompson

"I did it," said Frank.
"In that letter an advertisement was enclosed for a handy man to help in the work bere.

"I understood so," said Frank. You opened my letter on your way to Thompson and destroyed my advertisement, and placed another in the envelope in its place.

"I did not!" shouted Frank.
"Slence! The new advertisement,
written by you, was one calculated to bring me into contempt and derision!"

office in Thompson. No one else could have touched it without your connivance, at least. Mr. Penrose is about to publish a special edition of his paper to explain the wicked deception and do me what justice is now possible. It is all that can be done now; but your wicked prank has shamed me before everyone in the section. It was base-Miss Meadows' voice faltered. The break in the schoolmistress' steady

Richards. My letter was in your hands,

and your bands alone, until it was

delivered to Mr. Penrose at the 'Press

voice went straight to Frank's heart. He

made a step forward. "Miss Meadows, if I'd done that I should deserve to be kicked out of the school-and out of my uncle's house as well. And I should be if Mr. Lawless believed it. But-but it isn't true! I never knew the advertisement had been tampered with-I never even suspected at the time. But I know who did it. Miss Meadows, your letter was taken away from me-

"Won't you let me explain?" panted

You may say what you like," said as Meadows wearily. "It will make Miss Meadows wearily. "It will make no difference, but I will hear you."
"I was stopped in the timber on my

chap in the school will speak to you after this or a girl, either!"

"How could you do it, Richards?" mur
"Richards!"

"Was stopped in the timber on my way to Thompson that day," exclaimed Frank breathlessly. "Kern Gunten and Keller were waiting for me there, and Keller were waiting for me there, and they tied me to a tree for over an hour."

"Richards!"

"Richards!"

"Richards!"

"What?"

"Gunten took your letter from me, and said he would deliver it at the office in Thompson, and that he would leave me tied up in the timber all night!" panted Frank. "He came back after an hour or so. I thought he had only taken the letter away to make me believe that he was really going to leave me there all night to give me a scare."

"Richards!" "I don't know how he opened the letter: it didn't look as if it had been opened when he gave it me back," continued Frank. "But he must have done it—and that's why he roped me in in the timber. While I was tied to the tree, he was out of sight in the timber with Keller. I thought then that he was only trying to scare me. I know now-

"You said nothing of all this at the time. Richards," said Miss Meadows, her eyes searching the schoolboy's flushed face.

Of course I didn't !" exclaimed Frank. "I thought it was only a trick on me, and I'm not a sneak! Why should I have complained about him to you? Chaps don't run and inform against a fellow for

followed by Gunten and Keller, and Bob Lawless and Beauclere. Outside there was a buzz of excited voices in the passage.

The 3rd Chapter,

Not Proven. Bob and Vere Beauclerc joined Frank at once. They had already learned from the other fellows what he was accused of. They left it in no doubt that they were standing by their chum.

Gunten and Keller stood together, their heavy faces expressing no emotion whatever. They were not nervous.

They were prepared to lie without fimit; and, so far as they could see, there was no way in which their falsehoods could be detected.

"Gunten!

"Yes, Miss Meadows?" "Did you lasso Richards in the wood when he was riding to Thompson, and take a letter from him?"

Gunten raised his eyebrows. "No, Miss Meadows."
"Did you assist Gunten in doing so.

Keller? "Certainly not, ma'am!" said Keller calmly.

"They are lying!" exclaimed Frank.
Miss Meadows made a gesture for

"Lawless and Beauclerc, Richards says that he told you of this incident after his return from Thompson that day." "I guess that's so, Miss Meadows," said Bob Lawless at once. "He was a

jolly long time gone, and he told us Gunten had roped him in and tied him to a tree for an hour.

"He certainly told us so, Miss Meadows," said Beauclerc, "And we knew that it was true, too." How could you know that, Beau-

"Because we know Frank Richards. ma'am," said Beauclere calmly. "I know very well that he would not tell a lie."

"Same here!" said Bob. "If Gunten

denies it he's lying! "You two boys only know what Richards told you about the matter?" asked Miss Meadows.

Yes, ma'am." "You were not with him or near him?" "No; we were here splitting logs for Mr. Slimmey," said Bob. "But we know Franky told us a straight yarn."
"You cannot know that, Lawless.

Richards may simply have told you that story with the intention of laying the blame on Gunten as soon as his action

was discovered."
"I know he told us the truth!" said Bob obstinately.

"In a word, you know nothing about Mice Meadows' face francises she spoke I trute. I never themselved telling you the matter excepting what Frank "It was an advertigement for invertion though, of curse. I'd have folly well stichards told you on his bare word?"



the Matrimonial Column of the licked Gunten for it, but he made me Thompson Press." "Oh!" gasped Frank.

"Mr. Penrose, the proprietor of the Thompson Press," was surprised to receive such an advertisement from me, but as it was accompanied by a letter in my handwriting, which he knows well, he took it as genuine, and printed it." "L-I saw it in the paper!" muttered

Frank. "Everybody in the section has seen it, I think!" said Miss Meadows bitterly. "It has become a standing joke in every bar-room in the Thompson Valley. What have I done, Richards, that you should hold my name up to scorn in this wicked

"I-I did not!" Frank panted. "It's a trick! Miss Meadows, you can't believe that I would do such a thing?

It was mean and cowardly!" "I am glad you can see that, at all "And-and you believe I did it?"

"I know you did!" "I swear I did not!" "You need not perjure yourself, licked Gunten for it, but he made me promise to let the matter drop before he untied me."

Miss Meadows was still scanning his face.

"Yes, ma'am, But his word's as good as good and we know that."

"Then you cannot give any evidence of value," said Miss Meadows, "excepting your faith in Richards, which I shall bear your faith in Richards, which I shall bear

There was sincerity in the boy's look and voice. But the explanation was a strange one, and it came late. "You give me your word, Richards, that this is true?"

"My word of honour!" said Frank proudly.

"I shall question Gunten, then-and Keller. One moment. Did you mention this occurrence to anyone at the time? "Yes. I told Lawless and Beauclere as soon as I got back. I had to explain

why I had been so long."
"Wait here!" said Miss Meadows. She stepped to the door, and spoke to Mr. Slimmey, who was in the passage. Then she returned to her desk, and

waited there in silence. Frank Richar's did not speak. He was eager to be confronted with the plotting

Swiss.

In a few minutes Mr. Slimmey entered,

in mind. You may go, Lawless and Beau-

The chums reluctantly left the room. Frank Richards was a little pale now, and his face was troubled.

He had only been eager at first to be brought face to face with the scheming Swiss. But he realised now that the weight of evidence was on the side of

There were two witnesses against one. Frank had to prove that Gunten had lassoed him in the forest.

How was he to prove it, when he had been alone at the time? And Keller evi-dently was prepared to swear that Gunten

had not been there at all.
"The matter rests between you," said Miss Meadows, looking alternately at the schoolboys. "Gunten, Richards declares that you tied him up in the wood, with the aid of Keller, and took my letter



Published

the evidence of Gunten and Keller, it was

impossible to find them guilty on the

It was hopelessly perplexing, and there seemed no way out. Yet the matter

could not remain where it was. That

The 4th Chapter.

The Benefit of the Doubt.

Frank Richards took his place in the

The Cedar Creek fellows were surprised

Frank's face was flushed, and he did

not meet the curious and scornful glances

His schoolfellows condemned him; they

Gunten had had his innings first, though

he had been very careful to allow the

story to leak out without betraying that

It seemed impossible to nail the false.

At the best, it was to be Frank

Miss Meadows took no special note of

She had resolved to let the matter

Frank did not heed his school fellows'

looks, but his chums did, and Bob and

Vere gave angry looks in return.

After morning lessons the three chims

left the schoolroom together, and there was a buzz in the schoolground as they

So Miss Meadows has let you off,

"I guess we're not going to let him off!" shouted Tom Lawrence. "Who's

for riding him on a rail out of the

Frank Richards clenched his hands.

'You thumping, silly galoots!" roared

'What's he got to say?" growled Dick

Bob Lawless. "Can't you listen to what

'Give him a chance!" said Hopkins.

Frank's eyes gleamed at the crowd.

believe in givin' every cove a chance. Go

it, Richards, and when you've done we'll

"Good for you, Cockney!" said Chunky

In a quiet voice he told his own ver-

sion of the story, Gunten and Keller listening to him with sneering looks.

of them had had experience of his bitter

"By hokey, that puts a different com-plexion on it, I calculate!" remarked Eben Hacke. "I dare say it was Gunten

'It wasn't!" yelled Gunten furiously

"Well, we know you're a liar, Gunten, and we don't know that Richards is,"

said Tom Lawrence.
"'Ear, 'ear!" chimed in 'Arold 'Opkins.

"I know Richards came to lend us a 'and

at the clearing the day we came 'ere,

and I thought he was a decent cove

And I know Gunten is a swindlin' 'ound!'

but public opinion was veering round in favour of Frank Richards.

It was something to have a reputation for honourable and straight dealing, and

Frank's good name stood him in good

The fellows, at all events, reserved their

judgment, but upon the whole they were more inclined to be "down" on Gunten than upon Frank Richards, now that

Frank had had a chance of putting his

"Silly duffers!" grunted Bob Lawless, when they went in to dinner. "They

ought to know Gunten by this time!"
"I guess it's a clear case," said Dick
Dawson; "for, after all, how did the
story get out? Richards couldn't have

put it round against himself. Must have come from Gunten. And how did Gunten

"Glad you're coming to your senses!"

Frank Richards had a troubled look at

The matter was in abeyance, and it looked as if it never could be decided.

That was a far from satisfactory state

Miss Meadows had been humiliated and

The Swiss strode away, his face furious.

There was no proof possible in the case,

were surrounded by half Cedar Creek.

Richards!" exclaimed Eben Hacke, "Shame!"

school?

Dawson.

Hear, hear!"

'Collar him!'

'That's a cinch!"

a chap has to say first?'

andle you fast enough!

Eben Hacke. all the time!"

growled Bob.

of affairs.

dinner that day.

stand until some fresh evidence was forth-

coming. It was all she could do.

Frank when she took the class that morn.

Richards' word against his and Reller's.

had not heard his version of the story

that were east upon him from all sides.

Miss Meadows had plenty of food for

word of Frank Richards alone.

was impossible.

thought that morning.

class as usual that morning.

enough to see him doing it.

it came from him.

hood of the cunning Swiss.

"It is a lie, ma'am!" said Gunten calmly.

Frank clenched his hands. Meadows. said Miss 'Someone," "opened my letter, took out the enclosure, and inserted another, and closed the envelope again, before it reached the newspaper office at Thompson. If you took the letter from Richards, Gunten, it was for this purpose."

I did not, ma'am!" "Did you meet Richards at all on his way to Thompson that afternoon?"

No, ma'am!" "Did you, Keller?" No, ma'am!"

"What have you to say now, Richards?" Frank set his teeth.

I have to say that I am innocent, Miss Meadows; that Gunten lassoed me and tied me to a tree, and Keller helped him, and that Gunten took your letter and kept it for an hour or more!" And opened it?"

"Certainly!"

"Yet you did not observe that it had been opened when you received it back?"

Gunten grinned. "I-I never thought of looking!" stam-mered Frank. "It never occurred to me that he was after the letter all the time. I thought he only took it away to make me believe he was going to strand me in the timber all night, as he said. Mr. Slimmey broke in.

"May I speak, Miss Meadows?"

"Pray do, Mr. Slimmey."
"It is certain," said the young man quietly, "that the letter was opened on the way to Thompson, and closed again, without leaving a trace, because Mr. Perrose, at Thompson, did not observe that it had been opened before it reached his hands. It would be no more difficult For Gunten te do this than for Frank Richards to do it. As Mr. Penrose did not detect that the letter had been opened, it is natural enough that Richards should not have detected it, if the matter is us he states.'

Frank Richards gave the young master a grateful look.

Miss Meadows nodded.

"Quite so, Mr. Slimmey; quite so."
"The letter," continued Mr. Slimmey, "must have been opened by steam, in order to leave no trace. Someone must have heated water over a fire or a lantern for the purpose. It was difficult for Gunten to do so, but no less difficult for Richards to do so, in the timber. All the circumstances in connection with the letter itself prove no more against one than against the other.

You are quite right, Mr. Slimmey. "There's another thing, too!" ex-claimed Frank Richards. "Ask any fel-low in the school whether I've ever told him a falsehood. Then ask him whether Gunten has. There isn't a chap at Cedar Creek who doesn't know that Gunten is

a born liar!"

Miss Meadows started. It was, at least, a kind of evidence. She had observed Frank Richards' character, and she had observed Gun-

A dozen times, at least, she had known

the Swiss to lie Gunten gritted his teeth.

"You are lying now, Richards!" he said. "Every fellow in the school knows

what you have done!"
"And how do they know?" exclaimed Frank. "How do the fellows know anything about it? Miss Meadows can't have told them. It's been let out by

somebody. You spread the yarn round before I came in this morning!" "What is this!" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "Do the other fellows know what are you accused of, Richards?" "They started on me about it the minute I came!" said Frank bitterly.

Gunten took care to get his yarn in first."
"It is very extraordinary that they should know. Neither Mr. Slimmey nor I have said a word in the hearing of the

school. Gunten, if you spread the story, how did you know that I was about to accuse Richards of this?" exclaimed Miss Meadows, with a sharp look of suspicion at the Swiss.

"I did not spread the story, Miss Meadows," said Gunten calmly. "I think it got out through Richards bragging yesterday of the trick he had played on

"Why, you hound—" shouted Frank.
"Silence, Richards!"
"But—but I—"
"Silence! I cannot decide between

you!" said Miss Meadows. "There are two witnesses against you, Richards; but cannot forget that both Gunten and Keller have been reprimanded more than once for speaking falsely, while I have certainly not known you to be untruthful. There is no other evidence, and I cannot decide yet. The matter must remain in abeyance for the present." The schoolmistress bit her lip. "I can risk committing an act of injustice. "I cannot shall reflect upon the matter. For the present, you may go."

He was trying to think of a way out of the impasse, but he could not. It seemed that there was nothing to be done, and that he must endure allowing that

odious suspicion to cling to him.

Even if Miss Meadows kept an open mind on the subject, she could never trust him again; and that was bitter and humiliating to the frank schoolboy, who liked and respected the headwho liked and respected the head-mistress of Cedar Creek.

His face was clouded when he came out with his chums after the school dinner.

"This is rotten, you chaps," he said dismally. "It looks as if the truth can

never come out now."
"I gues I've been thinking a think," said Bob Lawless.

"How do you mean?"

"You remember Sergeant Lasalle, who came down here to round up the rustler?" "What about him?"

"He's still at Thompson," said Bob.
The North-West Mounted Police are awfully keen chaps, you know—they have to be. Suppose we saw Mr. Lasalle, and asked him his opinion about it. He's a sort of a kind of a detective, in a way, and he might hit on something to

"If he believed me," said Frank. "Well, he knows you; we helped him round up the rustler," said Bob. "Anyhow, let's try him."

'It's a good idea," said Beauclerc "It won't do any harm, at any rate." Frank had brightened up a little. He remembered Sergeant Lasalle, and he had

great faith in the sergeant's capacity. There was a chance, at all events, that the keen-witted French-Canadian sergeant

might be able to help. Frank and Bob brought out their ponies, and started for Thompson. Beauclere had no mount, and it was necessary to lose no time.

They were likely to be late for afternoon lessons, in any case.

But luck was their way, for, a mile from the lumber school, they caught sight of a scarlet coat on the trail ahead. "The sergeant!" excaimed Bob.

Sergeant Lasalle returned their salute cordially. He remembered the two boys. They wheeled their horses to join him. "Sergeant, we're in trouble, and we want you to help?" exclaimed Bob Law-less. "You'll do it?"

The big, bronzed sergeant smiled. Anything I can, sonny. What's the trouble?

Tell him, Franky."

The schoolboys rode one on either side of the big Canadian, while Frank Richards told him the story. Sergeant Lasalle gave him several keen

glances during his narration. His browsknitted a little.

"I've heard about this thing in Thompson," he said quietly. "It was as mean a trick to play on a woman as I mean a trick to play on a wemit as I ever heard of. If you did it. Frank Richards, you ought to be covhiced with the skin came off.

"I should deserve it," said Frank "But I did not do it. Kern Gunten die it, only I can't prove it." The sergeant nodded.

He rode on for some time in thought. They came in sight of the lumber school at last.

"I was calling on Miss Meadows before leaving for Kamloops," said the sergeant. "I shall look into this while I'm at the school. I believe your yarn, Richards; I guess I know a straight kid when I see one. I shouldn't be much use in the Mounted Police if I couldn't. But it

can be put to the proof, I guess; and that's what I'm going to do."

Frank's heart bounded. "You've thought of a way?" he exclaimed.

'I guess so."

"Oh, good!"
They did not question the sergeant, but their faces were brighter when they rode up to the school. Frank's story made a good impression on the Cedar Creek fellows.

They knew Gunten. More than one

The sergeant went on towards the schoolhouse, and Vere Beauciere joined his chums.

"I guess it's all O.K.," said Pobjubilantly. "The sergeant's thought of a way, he says. And Lasalle is the real

And the chums of Cedar Creek waited, in keen anxiety, outside the lumber schoolhouse.

#### The 5th Chapter. The Sergeant's Way I

Miss Meadows greeted the sergeant, when Black Sally showed him in, with a somewhat troubled smile.

"I was coming to say good-bye. Miss Meadows, before I lit out for Kamloops," said Mr. Lasalle. "I met two of your boys on the way—Richards and Lawless."
Miss Meadows' brow clouded.

"They've spun me a yarn," continued the sergeant. "I guess that kid Richards is straight goods, and I believe him. Would you object, Miss Meadows, to my taking a hand in this inquiry, and getting out the facts?"

"I should be very much obliged if you could," said Miss Meadows. "I have thought over the matter very carefully, but I cannot decide what is to be done. I intended to ask you for your opinion concerning Richards and Gunten."

"I guess I've had some experience in sifting evidence," said the sergeant. "Whichever one is lying; I fancy I can spot him. With your permission, then,

"By all means."
"Call in the two foreign boys, then."
Gunten and Keller were called into

the room. The sergeant eyed them both with his

keen, quiet eyes. Gunten was cool and collected, but Keller showed some signs of uneasiness under the sergeant's steady scrutiny.

persecuted by Gunten's cruel trick, and although Frank was not adjudged guilty, suspicion rested very strongly upon him. I He had not his confederate's nerve,

and he was not nearly so thorough a rascal as Gunten.

The sergeant's official uniform and his grim, bronzed face had a dismaying effect upon Keller.

"Your name?" asked the sergeant.

"Keller, sir. "Then the other is Gunten? Very well. You may go, Gunten, for the present.'

Gunten hesitated. He did not want his confederate to be questioned separately, if he could help it. He was beginning to have a vague sense of alarm.

"Well, what are you waiting for?" rapped out the sergeant.

"I-I'm going," muttered Gunten. He left the room, reluctantly closing the door.

Sergeant Lasalle rose quietly, stepped to the door, and threw it open again. Gunten started back in the passage with a crimson face.

'Listening?" said the sergeant grimly. "I-I was not! I---

Gunten went down the passage, biting

his lip. The sergeant closed the door again, and turned to Keller.

Now, Keller, my lad, I want you to answer some questions." said the sergeant. "Don't be uneasy; you've nothing to fear if you tell the truth."

"Yes, sir!" muttered Keller.
"You deny having waited with Gunten on the Thompson trail for Frank Richards?"

'Certainly." "Did you go home with Gunten that night?

We always go home together, sir, as

we both live in Thompson."
"Quite so. Then you were with Gunten after he left the school, and till he arrived at his father's store in Thomp-

"Certainly, sir," said Keller, recovering confidence. He had nothing to fear from questioning

like this, so far as he could see.
"Then you can bear witness that Gunten did not lay for Richards on the trail?"

Yes, sir! "Having been with him all the time, you know it for a fact?"

'Yes.' "Did you arrive home at the usual time?"

Keller paused. We-we were later home than usual," he said at last. Ha! Why?

"We—we had a ride round," said Keller. "We do sometimes, sir, when the weather's fine."

The sergeant nodded. You rode round a bit before going home?" he remarked.

Yes, sir. No harm in that.' "None whatever. At the time

Richards declares that you and Gunten were toping him up, you were simply taking a nide together!" Just that, se'

Where did you ride?'
Keller prused It davned upon him
now why the sergeant was questioning

hin separately from his associate. We-we rade through the timber," he stimmere d. In what direction?"

Keller breathed hard.

Try to remember, my lad!" said the sergeant grimly. "We-we-we-" stammered Keller.
"Well?"

"We-we rode up the creek!" muttered the unhappy Swiss.
"Up the creek?" said the sergeant.
"Back towards the school, then?"

I-I mean down the creek. 'Oh, you role down the creek? Towards Cedar Camp?"

Yees! "Did you reach the camp?"

"Nunno." "You must have ridden slowly, then. It is not a great distance to the camp,

following the creek. We-we rode slowly," said Keller,

licking his dry lips.
"You rode slowly down the creek, and turned back before you reached the camp, and then went home to Thompson?'

Yes, sir. "Very good," said the sergeant. "You will wait here. You are quite sure, Keller, that you and Gunten rode slowly?"

Quite sure!" muttered Keller.

"You did not gallop at all?" "No, sir."

The sergeant went to the door, and down the passage. He beckened to Kern Gunten, who was

biting his lips in the porch. "You are wanted, Gunten." The Swiss followed him back to Miss Meadows' room.

"Keller, you will not speak to Gunten," said Sergeant Lasalle. "You are for "You are forbidden to say a single word while I am questioning Gunten. Do you understand?

"Yes, sir!" gasped Keller.
"Gunten, I have a few questions to put to you, your schoolmistress having placed this matter in my hands. You were late home on the evening that Frank Richards

took the letter to Thompson."
Gunten hesitated a brief second. But he knew that Keller must have admitted what could easily be proved, and he answered:

"Yes, sergeant." "You went for a ride round with

"Yes, I went for a ride with Keller," said Gunten desperately, hoping that it was the same yarn that Keller had told.

"Very well," said the sergeant, unmoved. "You need not fear to speak the truth, Gunten. I want to know why you went for a gallop with Keller?"

Miss Meadows started a little.

This was not in accordance with Keller's

statements. But the sergeant knew what he was doing.

"It-it was fine weather, sir!" muttered Gunten. "We-we sometimes do, in fine weather, sir."

"Quite so; but did you have any special motive for going on a gallop that

"Oh, no, sir!" "You simply wanted to enjoy a gallop?"

"In what direction did you go?" Gunten's tongue clove to his teeth. Re could not even see Keller's face, with the

bulky sergeant interposing.
"I—I forget!" he stammered, at last.
"Gunten!" said Miss Meadows warn-

"Your memory is as bad as Keller's," smiled the sergeant. "That is a very curious coincidence. You galloped in a certain direction, but you do not remem-

ber in which direction? 'No, I don't!" muttered Gunten.

"You were not going to any special destination, then?"

"Then why did you gallop?"

"I-I enjoy a gallop!" muttered Gun-ten. "I'm a good rider, and I'm fond of good gallop. No harm in that, I suppose?' Not at all."

"I don't see what all this leads to," said Gunten sulkily. "I can go for a gallop if I like, I suppose? It has nothing to do with Miss Meadows'

The sergeant nodded. 'Your statements are quite clear," he "You cannot remember where you went; you can only remember that you and Keller galloped in some direction."

"Yes. That's enough, I suppose?"
"Quite enough!" said the sergeant tersely. He turned to Miss Meadows.
"These boys are the guilty parties. Miss Meadows, and Frank Richards is

I know it now, and I thank you for making the discovery," said the mistress of Cedar Creek gratefully.

Gunten gave a kind of yell.
"It's not so—you fool! How dare you tell Miss Meadows so? I've admitted nothing, and Keller hasn't, I know that!

The sergeant smiled. "Keller has stated that you rode slowly in the direction of Cedar Camp," he said quietly. "I purposely led you to suppose that he had stated that you had a gallop together, and you fell into the trap. Gunten. Both of you know perfectly well how you spent your time. If you went for a ride, it is impossible for Keller to believe that you rode slowly, and for you to believe that you galloped. You are both lying; and you are lying because you cannot account for the time you spent before you reached home that

night. You are lying because you are guilty." guilty,"

Gunten panted. He realised, too late, how the cute sergeant had "drawn" him. But he had been helpless. Not know-

ing what Keller had said, he could not trake his story agree, in any case.

Liven if the two rascals had foreseen this, and had prepared a story beforehand, the sergeant would have caught

them upon some point of detail, by taking them separately. The sergeant reached for his hat. 'I'm glad I've been of some se you, Mis Meadows," he said. "I leave

them in your hands."
Miss Meadows accompanied the sergeant

to the door. "Richards!" she called out. Frank ran forward. "Yes, Miss Meadows."

"Yes, Miss Meadows."
"I am sorry, Richards, that I doubted you. Sergeant Lasalle had proved that that miserable trick was played by Gunten and Keller."
"Oh!" gasped Frank.
"Bravo!" roared Bob Lawless. "What did I tell you? Put your dollars on the North-West M.P.'s every time!"
There was a cheer from the Cedar

There was a cheer from the Cedar Creek fellows, as the big sergeant strode

away to his horse.

Gunten and Keller came slinking out of the schoolhouse with pale faces.

Miss Meadows stopped them.

"Gunten-and Keller!"
"It was Gunten's fault!" groaned Keller wretchedly. "I was against it all the time, Miss Meadows. I swear it!" "You coward-you coyote!" hissed

Gunten. "You know it's true!" snarled Keller.
"I was sorry I helped you. I didn't want

to have a hand in it!" "Keller, you will go back to my room.
I shall cane you. I think you were led into this by Gunten. As for you, Gunten"—Miss Meadows' voice grew very stern-"you have not only played a dastardly trick upon your schoolmistress, but you have attempted to lay the blame upon an innocent boy! I shall call upon your father this evening, and tell him you cannot remain in this, school. You may

Gunten slunk away, with downcast face. "Kick him out!" shouted Bob Lawless. Gunten fled, panting, with half Cedar Creek whooping behind him.

Bob thumped his cousin on the back. "All serene now, Franky!"
And Frank Richards laughed merrily.

His face was very bright. His name was cleared, and stern justice was dealt out to the rogue of the lumber school. He had indeed been saved by the sergeant.

THE END.

### NEXT MONDAY.

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