

The BOYS' FRIEND Id.

"FRANK RICHARDS' SCHOOLDAYS!" "THE BOYS OF THE 'BOMBAY CASTLE'!" "TALES OF THE DORMITORY!"

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ONE PENNY.

[Week Ending March 9th, 1918.]

FROM OUT THE PAST!

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

By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter. No Surrender!

"Rain!"
"Oh, crumbs!"
"Oh, dear!"
Even Jimmy Silver said "Blow it!"

It began with a slight shower, and continued with a steady downpour. Clouds had drifted over the moon, and darkness lay on the lane and the fields, and the distant pile of Rookwood School.

Late as the hour was, there was a crowd of Rookwood juniors in the lane.

They drew to the side of the road for shelter under the trees; but the leafless branches did not afford much shelter.

The Fourth Form of Rookwood were out of bounds, and they were not enjoying it.

The barring-out at Rookwood, which had lasted for whole days, was over, and the Head had the upper hand.

And Jimmy Silver & Co., not to be beaten, had marched out of Rookwood in a body, determined to keep up the contest, but with very vague ideas as to their future intentions.

Most of the rebels of Rookwood were still in a determined mood.

Townsend & Co., the nuts of the Fourth, would gladly have returned to the school, and taken their chance with the Head.

But they had no chance of that. The Fourth were standing together in the struggle with their headmaster, and slackers had to line up with the rest.

But for the rain, it would not have been so bad.

But rain, without shelter, had a depressing effect upon the highest spirits.

Even Jimmy Silver found it difficult to live up to his own maxim, and "keep smiling."

"I say, this is rotten!" groaned Tommy Dodd, turning up his coat-collar.

"Beastly!" murmured Cook.

"Don't you blessed Moderns begin grumbling!" said Arthur Edward Lovell tartly. "Bad enough without that!"

"Who's grumbling?" demanded Tommy Dodd, with equal tartness.

"You are, fathhead!"

"You Classical ass!"

"You Modern grouser!"

"Oh, dry up!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Don't begin ragging now, for goodness' sake!"

"Look here, I'm goin' back!" exclaimed Peele. "I've had enough of this!"

"Same here!" mumbled Gower.

"Shut up!" roared Jimmy.

"Look here, Silver—"

"Do you want to be rolled in the puddles?" demanded Jimmy ferociously. "You've only got to say another word!"

Cyril Peele sniffed, but he did not say another word.

Jimmy Silver was not to be trifled with just then.

"I'm getting wet!" mumbled Townsend.

"Did you expect the rain to make you dry?" grunted Lovell.

"It's rotten!"

"Oh, rats!"

"Well, ain't we going to get some shelter?" exclaimed Higgs. "You're leader, Jimmy Silver—you call yourself leader, anyway. What's to be done?"

"Looks as if we're going to be done, bedad!" said Tommy Doyle.

"Blow the rain!"

"Bless it!"

"Br-r-r-r!"

It came down steadily.

It dripped quickly through the leafless branches, and dropped on the disconsolate Fourth-Formers of Rookwood.

Jimmy Silver wrinkled his brows in deep thought.

Something had to be done; that was certain.

"It's no good thinking of giving in," said Kit Erroll, breaking the dismal silence. "Going back to Rookwood means the sack for some of us, and a flogging all round for the rest. That's not good enough!"

"Better than this!" mumbled Peele.

"It means worse than that," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "If we were going to give in, we ought never to have started. We've been downed at Rookwood; there's no getting out of that. The Head couldn't down us, but Mr. Lattrey did—bless him! We're going to keep it up, outside the school."

"How long?" snapped Townsend.

"Until we win!" said Jimmy.

"The situation hasn't changed. Lattrey of our Form is still at Rookwood, and we're not giving in till he's kicked out of the school! The Head ought to kick him out, for blinding Mornington, and he knows it, and we know it! That's our peace terms, and we can't take less!"

"Ow-wow! It's wet! I'm getting the rain down my neck!"

"Bother your neck!"

"By gad, it's jolly wet, though!" remarked Valentine Mornington.

"It's about time we got out of this." The blind junior spoke cheerfully enough.

It was a standing surprise to his Form-fellows that Mornington retained his cool, somewhat sardonic good-humour, in spite of the terrible misfortune that had fallen upon him.

Blind as he was, no one ever heard a word of complaint from Mornington of the Fourth.

"What about going to the village?" asked Raby.

"No accommodation for the lot of us," said Newcome. "Besides, who'd take in a gang of fellows run away from school?"

"I suppose they wouldn't."

"Of course they wouldn't! They'd tell us to go back."

"That's so," said Jimmy Silver.

"They know all about the barring-



HANDLING THE HUN!

out by this time in Coombe, and taking us in would be taking a hand in it. And we couldn't expect anybody to do that."

"Are we goin' to stand here till we drown?" sniffed Peele.

"I'm c-c-catchin' a cold!" mumbled Topham.

"Catch it quietly, then, you funk!"

"May I make a suggestion?" drawled Mornington.

"Go ahead, Morny!"

"What about goin' on the heath?"

"Coombe Heath?" yelled Townsend.

"That's worse than this!"

"There's shelter there, dear boy."

"What shelter is there on the heath, Morny?" asked Erroll.

"The old quarries."

"My hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, brightening up. "Good for you, Morny! I ought to have thought of that!"

"Even Uncle James doesn't think of everything!" grinned Lovell.

"Granted!" said Jimmy cheerfully.

"It's a ripping idea! March!"

"It's frightfully muddy there!" said Townsend.

"Go hon!"

"March!" repeated Jimmy Silver. The rebels of Rookwood marched.

There was evidently nothing else to be done, and even the slackers realised that the quarries were a better shelter than the leafless trees.

They marched on down the rainy lane.

"The blessed moon's gone!" said Oswald. "It's not easy to find the way in the dark, Jimmy."

"We'll try."

"We're more likely to fall into the quarries and break our necks!" growled Higgs.

"Well, your neck won't be much loss!"

"Why, your cheeky ass—"

"This way!" rapped out Jimmy Silver.

The juniors turned into the dark fields from the lane, and tramped on

towards the lonely heath through the falling rain.

The clouds were thick over the moon now, and there was hardly a glimmer of light.

Wide and lonely before them the heath stretched, trackless, in the night.

They tramped on, squelching mud. But Jimmy Silver halted at last.

Higgs' remark was well founded. The heath was dangerous in the dark, split in all directions by the openings of the disused quarries.

"My hat! It is a bit of a puzzle!" said Jimmy Silver, staring about him in the dense gloom. "I know the quarries pretty well, but I'm blessed if I can find the way to them now!"

"Same here!" said Erroll.

"We want a guide," sneered Townsend. "Are you goin' to find a guide somewhere, Jimmy Silver?"

"Here's a guide, dear boy," chimed in Mornington coolly.

"What?"

"Follow me!"

"You!" yelled Townsend. "You're blind!"

"Quite so," assented Mornington coolly. "And because I'm blind, old scout, I'm not so lost in the dark as you fellows are. Follow me!"

"Do you mean that, Morny?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver in amazement. Mornington laughed.

"My dear man, follow me, and see."

"Right-ho!"

"Take my arm, Morny!" exclaimed Erroll.

"You take mine, you mean, my boy," answered Mornington, laughing. "In the dark I'm a better man than you are, Kit."

The dandy of the Fourth led the way without hesitation, and the juniors, wondering, followed him.

Morny had not boasted.

Accustomed to profound darkness, the blackness of the night made no difference to him.

The loss of his sight, as is usually

the case, had quickened all the other senses.

With scarcely a halt, Mornington led the way across the dark heath by paths he had known well in other days.

The rebels of Rookwood trod carefully in his track.

Suddenly from the black darkness ahead came a glimmer of light, and a sharp voice called:

"Halt!"

The 2nd Chapter. Mysterious!

"Halt!"

It was a sharp military challenge, and the Rookwooders halted in sheer astonishment.

It was an electric pocket-lamp that gleamed out in the darkness, and behind it, for some moments, they could discern nothing.

But after some moments they made out the figure of a man in khaki.

"A soldier!" exclaimed Lovell.

"Hallo! Who's that?" demanded Mornington. "Who are you?"

The soldier came nearer.

He was a stalwart fellow, with a youthful-looking face, though at the second glance it could be seen that he was not under thirty-seven or eight.

Jimmy Silver started as he saw the man's face in the light.

For he had seen that face before.

Back into his mind came the memory of an incident he had almost forgotten, when he had seen a soldier speaking to the Head of Rookwood in Coombe Lane.

By chance Jimmy and his chums had heard what was said—had heard the soldier tell Dr. Chisholm that he had news of his brother, Oliver Chisholm, of whose existence no one at Rookwood had even heard.

The Pistical Four had never said a word of that incident.

It was no business of theirs, and they had been sorry to surprise such a secret.

(Continued on the next page.)



That it was a painful secret to the Head, they knew, for they had heard him answer that he desired no news of his brother, who was dead to him.

And this was the soldier they had seen then.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome recognised him at once, as well as Jimmy Silver.

What he was doing on the lonely heath at nearly midnight was a mystery to them.

There was no military camp nearer than Latcham, miles away.

"Hallo, it's you!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, in surprise.

The soldier gave him a quick look.

"What! Do you know me?" he exclaimed.

"I've seen you before," said Jimmy. "You don't remember—one evening on the road near Rookwood."

"Oh! I remember!"

"What on earth are you doing here?" asked Lovell.

The man smiled slightly.

"I want to know what you are doing here," he answered.

"Well, that depends," said Jimmy coolly. "If you're on duty here, you have a right to ask—otherwise, not."

"I am on duty here."

"There isn't a camp nearer than Latcham," said Lovell.

"I am on duty, I tell you!"

"Oh, all serene," said Jimmy Silver.

"Then we'll explain. There's a barraging-out in our school—"

"What?"

"We've got the worst of the first round, and we've cleared out till the Head comes to terms."

"Oh!"

"Surprises you a bit—what?" chuckled Lovell. "Well, we're not going to sheathe the sword, as the political duffers say, till old Chisholm's giddy militarism is given the merry bygone."

There was a chortle from some of the rebels.

The man in khaki frowned.

"Are you speaking of your headmaster?" he exclaimed.

"You bet!"

"You should speak of Dr. Chisholm more respectfully," said the soldier sternly.

"The old sport is in the wrong," explained Lovell.

"Nonsense! You had better go back to school."

"No fear!"

"You are surely not thinking of camping out of doors on a night like this?" exclaimed the man in khaki.

"That's what we mean," answered Jimmy Silver. "We can rough it. This isn't so bad as the trenches, I suppose?"

"No, hardly," said the soldier, with a smile. "But you must be reckless young rascals to think of it."

"Perhaps we are," admitted Jimmy. "If you've done asking questions, Tommy, we'll get along. The rain's rather wet."

The soldier shut off the light, and darkness fell again, blotting them out from one another's sight.

"I cannot prevent you," he said. "It is no business of mine. But you may meet with some accidents—it is more likely than not."

"We've got a guide," answered Jimmy cheerfully. "Go it, Morn!"

The juniors marched on, Mornington in the lead.

Darkness swallowed up the man in khaki.

"You've seen that man before, Jimmy?" asked Erroll.

"Yes; once. I don't know his name."

"He was hanging round Rookwood," remarked Lovell. "I fancy, from what he said then, that's he's an old Rookwooder."

"What on earth can he be doing here, at this time of night?" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.

"Deserting, perhaps," suggested Peele.

"Oh, rats!"

"He doesn't look that kind," said Jimmy Silver. "Anyway, it isn't our bizny. Come on!"

"Careful now!" said Morn.

"You bet!"

The juniors trod very warily.

Luckily, a glimmer of moon came through the clouds, dim and watery, but very welcome.

Before them stretched the opening of an old quarry, with a rough descent into it, difficult enough even in the daytime.

"There's a cave down there," said Mornington. "You remember it, Kit?"

"I remember," said Erroll quietly.

"It's as safe as houses, and a good shelter," continued Mornington. "It's not far down, and easy enough if you're careful."

With great care the juniors descended the rough slope.

They trod the lower level at last, and Mornington, almost without a stop, led the way into the great cave.

Glad enough were the drenched Rookwooders to get out of the falling rain.

Several matches were struck, and the juniors looked about them.

"Dry here, at any rate," said Higgs.

"That's a comfort."

"A bit unfurnished," grinned Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"It was camped in once," said Mornington. "This is where I was kept the time I was kidnapped, and Erroll fished me out."

He rubbed his hands and growled. "Had it this morning, Leggy?" grinned Tubby Muffin.

"Yes," growled Leggett. "Old Manders is taking it out of me for all the rest. I believe the beast will wear out his cane on me if the others don't give in!"

"He, he, he!" chuckled Tubby. "You should have stuck it out!"

"Oh, rats!" Leggett glared at the silent Lattrey. "So you're still sticking here, Lattrey?"

"Yes!" snapped Lattrey. "You ought to get out."

"Go and eat coke!"

"It beats me why the Head didn't pitch you out!" snarled Leggett. "We all knew he was going to, and then your pater came down and talked him over somehow. How did he do it?"

"Better ask him."

"It's a rotten shame!" growled Leggett. "Jimmy Silver won't give in till you're kicked out. And I'm going to get it from old Manders all the time!"

"Serve you right!" answered Lattrey. "You won't be able to stay here. The fellows will never stand it!"

"Oh, dry up!"

Leggett grunted angrily, and set to work in a dismal mood.

Mr. Manders, the Modern master, was a sharp-tempered gentleman, and Leggett had the happy prospect of enduring all Mr. Manders' bad temper "on his own" till the other fellows came back.

It did not please Leggett.

While the three juniors sat at their lonely tasks Mr. Bootles returned to his study, with a very thoughtful expression upon his face.

The master of the Fourth seemed to be trying to make up his mind, and to find it difficult to do so.

He paced the study for half an hour or more, thinking, with a deeply-wrinkled brow.

At last, apparently coming to a decision, he whisked out, and made his way to the Head's study.

The Head was not taking the Sixth that morning. He was feeling too disturbed for Form work.

Mr. Bootles tapped at the door.

"Come in!"

The Form-master coughed as he entered the study.

Dr. Chisholm was seated at his table. His face was somewhat pale, and deeply lined.

The trouble in the school had not been without its effect upon the headmaster. He gave the Form-master an inquiring look.

Mr. Bootles coughed again.

He seemed to find it difficult to begin.

"Well, Mr. Bootles?" said the Head at last.

"Ahem! I have come here to speak to you, sir, on the present disastrous situation in the school," stammered Mr. Bootles. "It may be taking a liberty, but I feel bound to speak."

"Please proceed. If you can give me any counsel I shall be glad."

"The Fourth Form have left the school, sir."

"I am aware of that."

"You do not know where they are?"

"Not at present."

"It is a most unprecedented state of affairs."

"Quite so."

Mr. Bootles coughed and blew his nose. The Head of Rookwood was rather an awful personage, to the masters as well as the boys.

But the little Form-master had made up his mind, and he was resolute.

"The fact is, sir, this is a most disastrous state of affairs. It cannot be long before it reaches the ears of the governors, and they will certainly interfere."

Dr. Chisholm nodded.

That was one of his greatest worries.

What was he to say and to do if the governing body called on him for an account of his stewardship?

"I am going to speak plainly, sir. The whole school—the staff as well as the pupils—regard your leniency to Lattrey with amazement. The boy's conduct has always been bad. It is known that he was once sentenced to expulsion, but after a visit from his father you rescinded the sentence. That was before his brutal attack upon Mornington."

Mr. Bootles paused, but the Head did not speak.

"And now, sir," pursued Mr. Bootles, warming up, as it were—"now, sir, he has added an act of brutal ruffianism to his record of rascality, and still he is allowed to remain in the school. You cannot fail to be aware, sir, that deplorable as the insubordination of the Fourth Form may be, the rebels have the sympathy of the whole school. No one can understand why Lattrey is allowed to remain. I believe that only Mornington's request to his guardian saved the wretched boy from actual prosecution."

"That is the case."

"Mornington, a bitterly-injured lad, was desirous of saving the good name of his school. But—in common fairness, sir—I might even say in common decency—Lattrey ought to be sent away from Rookwood!"

Mr. Bootles stopped, almost breathless. A flush was creeping into Dr. Chisholm's face.

No one had ever ventured to speak to the headmaster like this before.

But the old gentleman did not seem to be angry.

"Forgive me, sir," said Mr. Bootles. "I am speaking frankly. I feel that you ought to know the view taken by the whole school—masters, seniors, and juniors."

"I was already aware of it, Mr. Bootles."

"Now the matter has gone from bad to worse. A whole Form has left Rookwood. Why, sir, it will grow into a regular scandal if something is not done! I do not uphold the boys in their rebellion. But I cannot wonder at it. I must

suggest, sir, that this is not a time for punishments. I suggest that a free pardon be offered to the Fourth Form if they will return to their duty. And, first of all, Lattrey should leave Rookwood."

Mr. Bootles paused once more, fully expecting a thunderous outbreak of anger, to be followed by a request for his resignation.

But the Head did not speak.

"Well, sir, I have done my duty in speaking," said Mr. Bootles at last. "I can do no more. I am surprised—I must say shocked—by the leniency shown to a boy of Lattrey's character."

"Please sit down, Mr. Bootles."

Mr. Bootles sat down, in great surprise. "You have known me many years, Mr. Bootles," said the Head, speaking in a low voice. "To you I feel some explanation is due. Mr. Bootles, I cannot send Lattrey away from Rookwood!"

"You—you cannot, sir!" stammered Mr. Bootles.

"I cannot."

"B-but I do not understand!" said the bewildered Form-master. "You have the power to do so."

"I have not the power. You are aware that the boy's father, Lucas Lattrey, is the head of a firm of inquiry agents—in other words, a detective. In the course of his professional work Mr. Lattrey has discovered a secret concerning me, and he holds it over my head."

"Bless my soul! But—but that is blackmail, sir!"

"Mr. Lattrey is not a scrupulous man," said the Head bitterly.

"He is a scoundrel!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles indignantly.

"He is a scoundrel, if you like, but he holds me under his thumb."

"But—but you must be—be dreaming, sir!" stammered Mr. Bootles. "I am absolutely assured that you, sir, have never done anything to cause you to fear Mr. Lattrey, or anyone else!"

Dr. Chisholm smiled slightly.

"Thank you, Mr. Bootles. It is no deed of mine that is in question, but the disgrace of a near relation. You were a master at Rookwood, Mr. Bootles, when my brother was here. You remember him? Oliver, my young brother, was in the Sixth Form here when I became headmaster."

"I remember him, sir."

Mr. Bootles blinked at the Head. Never before, since Oliver Chisholm had left Rookwood, had he heard the name upon Dr. Chisholm's lips.

"You knew," resumed the Head in a low voice, "that he was a reckless, reckless, wilful, and given to bad associations. He was my brother, but I had to send him away from the school."

"I—I remember him, sir. But—but—"

"He went in an angry mood, and he went from bad to worse. When I next heard of him he was the associate of card-sharps and racecourse touts."

"Dr. Chisholm!"

"Then came the South African War," continued the Head. "He joined up as a private soldier. He wrote to me then. He told me that he had seen the error of his ways, and that he had resolved to atone for the past, and either earn a new record of honour or give his life for his country."

"I always knew there was good in the lad. I always thought so," said Mr. Bootles.

"I hoped so," said Dr. Chisholm, with a sigh. "I was disappointed. At first it seemed that he had kept his word. He received a commission for gallantry in the field, under the name of Smith, which he had taken when he enlisted. But—but miserable news followed. He was court-martialled for treacherous dealings with a German employed as a spy on the Boer side, and sentenced to death."

"Good heavens!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, greatly agitated. "I never heard of this!"

The Head smiled bitterly.

"I was not likely to tell anyone," he said. "I had the news from a friend in the regiment, who knew that Lieutenant Smith was a connection of mine, and that I was interested in him, though he did not know all. Oliver escaped the night before his execution, and has never been heard of since. He escaped death, but not the blackest shame, worse than a thousand deaths. One letter came to me in his handwriting. I threw it into the fire unopened. I had done with him. I shut the thought of him from my mind, and kept the wretched secret. He had sinned and suffered under another name, and I was thankful that my name was not to be dragged in the mire by his crime, a name that had always been honoured till he bore it."

"Bless my soul!" murmured Mr. Bootles.

The Head drew a deep breath.

"These facts, Mr. Bootles, have come to Lucas Lattrey's knowledge. In his work as a detective, he had to visit South Africa, he has told me, and was employed in tracing the same German scoundrel who had led Oliver astray—the wretch having remained in the country, continuing his evil work."

"He was one of the many German agents in South Africa at that time who led the Boers to expect German help in the war. But those brave and unfortunate men found themselves betrayed by the Kaiser, with his usual treachery. Mr. Lattrey appears to have exposed this rascal, and in doing so learned my brother's story. Now he threatens to make his knowledge public, unless—"

"Unless you allow Lattrey to remain at Rookwood!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, comprehending at last.

"Yes. He desires to save the disgrace of his son. As a price, he promises to keep concealed my disgrace," said the Head heavily. "I felt you were entitled to know this, Mr. Bootles; I should not like you to misjudge me. Can I face such an exposure—the public knowledge that my brother was condemned to death by court-martial as a traitor, and now lives as a fugitive in the earth under the

ban of the law, his life forfeit if he should be found?"

Mr. Bootles was silent.

"I could not remain headmaster of Rookwood," continued Dr. Chisholm, in an agitated voice. "I should be compelled to resign, to hide my shame in seclusion. I have a wife and a child to think of, Mr. Bootles; can I cover them with my own disgrace—my brother's disgrace? It was a bitter blow to me, but I decided to allow Lattrey to remain, at his father's order."

The Fourth Form master did not speak.

"You think that I should have done my duty, regardless of the consequences to my wife, my little daughter, and myself?" the Head asked at last.

"I—I cannot say so, sir," stammered Mr. Bootles. "I—I think so, certainly; but—but, in your place, doubtless I should have acted as you have done. But—but the boys have no knowledge of all this, and they are rightly indignant."

"I know it."

Mr. Bootles rose to his feet.

"After what you have told me, sir, I cannot urge you," he said. "Lattrey must remain. But—but I cannot tell what may come of this."

Mr. Bootles left the study.

The Head remained alone, his chin resting on his hand, his whole attitude one of dejection, almost of despair.

For matters had now come to such a pass that the Head was at the end of his resources, and still the detective's power over him was as strong as ever, and the blackmailer was merciless.

The future was dark and troubled to the Head of Rookwood.

The 4th Chapter.

The Unknown!

"Yaw-aw-aw! Groogh!"

Thus Arthur Edward Lovell.

Dawn was shining over the wide, lonely heath, and a dim light penetrated into the cave in the old quarry.

Lovell woke up the rebels, who turned out, shivering.

Fortunately, the rain had ceased before dawn, and the sun was bright in the quarry, though there were deep puddles and pools of water, left by the rain.

"What about brekker?" asked Higgs dismally.

"There's air!" said Raby, laughing.

"I'm hungry."

"What's the good of getting hungry in war-time? Leave it till peace breaks out."

"Fathead!" grunted Higgs.

"There's some grub here," remarked Tommy Dodd, with a nod towards the big bag at the back of the cave. "If the owner turns up, we'll pay him for it. Let's check it out."

"That's a good idea."

Who the unknown camper in the cave might have been the juniors had not the remotest knowledge.

It seemed pretty clear that he would come back some time, as he had left his lantern, his bag of food, and his rugs there.

Apparently the man, whoever he was, did not use the cave every night.

But as his return was pretty certain, there was no harm in borrowing his stock of food, for cash payment when the unknown turned up.

And, indeed, it was no time to stand on ceremony.

The bag contained a good quantity of food of various kinds, in tins and jars, as well as a couple of war loaves and a large hunk of cheese.

The unknown camper seemed to have laid in supplies for several weeks for himself.

The whole supply made a very frugal breakfast for the Rookwood crowd; but, frugal as it was, it was very welcome.

They felt better when they had cleared it off.

"Rather a surprise for that johnny when he turns up," said Mornington, with a laugh. "He can't grumble, though, if we pay."

"Well, he can grumble, if he likes," said Lovell considerably. "I don't mind, for one. Let him grouse."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But what's the programme, Jimmy?"

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy cheerily.

"What else, fathead?"

Jimmy Silver waved his hand round the cave.

"Here we are," he said, "in good quarters. We lost one round at Rookwood—here we hold the fort. We've only got to get some grub—"

"Only!" grunted Peele.

"And we can hold out as long as we like," continued Jimmy Silver calmly.

"And we're going to hold out till the Head gives in, and kicks Lattrey out of Rookwood."

"Hear, hear!"

"It's all right here," remarked Van Ryn. "Better if it were summer; but we shall manage. I've camped out in worse weather than this, on the veldt."

"But we've got to get some grub," said Jimmy. "We'll club together, and some of us can clear off to Latcham and Coombe, and other places, foraging."

"Without grub tickets?"

"Everything isn't ticketed yet. We'll manage with the things that aren't ticketed."

"What about butter, and tea, and sugar, and—?" began Townsend.

"There's lots of people going without butter, and tea, and sugar," answered Jimmy Silver. "I don't see why we shouldn't join the crowd. We can keep on the war so long as there's bread and water enough to go round—and the same applies to the barraging-out."

"Hear, hear!"

The grumblers grumbled, but that did not matter.

But even the grumblers were rather pleased at the idea of a fine day on the heath, instead of grinding lessons in the Form-room at Rookwood.

Later in the morning half a dozen

juniors, well provided with cash, went "foraging" in various directions.

They came back soon after mid-day with a rather mixed collection of purchases; but the provender was good enough for hungry schoolboys, and there was enough for a couple of days.

"Seen anything of the camper chap?" asked Jimmy Silver, as he came in.

"Nobody's been here," answered Erroll. "What about Rookwood? Have you seen anybody from the school?"

"No. I fancy the Head doesn't know yet that we're on Coombe Heath at all."

"When he finds out—"

"I suppose he'll pay us a visit," said Jimmy. "Let him! He won't get us back to Rookwood till Lattrey's gone."

After dinner there was leapfrog in the old quarry to pass the time.

Some of the fellows went further afield, but they returned by dusk.

After dark the lantern was lighted in the cave.

"Much obliged to the merry johnnie who put this here," remarked Jimmy Silver. "I've managed to bag a can of oil in Coombe, so it will last."

"It's cold," mumbled Townsend.

"Get through some exercises, then, and keep warm."

"Oh, rats!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Lovell suddenly. "Here comes somebody!"

There was a step in the quarry outside, and a man came striding in, evidently unaware that the juniors were there.

Jimmy had just lighted the lamp, and the light fell full upon the new-comer.

He started back.

The juniors were all looking at him.

He was a man of about fifty, with a hard face and crafty eyes, and foreign-looking, fat features.

He stood dumbfounded at the light and the crowd round it, evidently at a complete loss.

The Rookwooders did not need telling that this was the unknown camper in the cave, whose provisions they had borrowed.

"Mein Gott!" the man ejaculated involuntarily.

Lovell gave a yell.

"Hallo! A blessed German!"

"Who are you?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, making a movement towards the man.

There was no answer.

With a sudden backward spring, the man bounded out of the cave, and disappeared into the dark quarry.

"Collar him!" shouted Conroy.

There was a rush after the stranger.

His sudden ejaculation in German had surprised and startled the Rookwood fellows.

They intended to make the man give an account of himself.

But he had already vanished in the darkness.

The clink of a falling stone was heard in the distance, but that was all.

The juniors returned disappointed into the cave.

"A beastly Hun!" said Higgs. "What on earth is a Hun doing here?"

"Beats me!" remarked Lovell.

Jimmy Silver knitted his brows.

"It's jolly queer," he said quietly.

"He's the man who's been camping in this cave, that's clear enough. There's been talk of lights being seen on the heath at night—moonlight nights."

"There'll be a moon to-night," observed Erroll.

Jimmy nodded.

"The man wasn't here last night, and there was no moon," he said. "I mean the moon was out of sight. There's going to be a good moon to-night, and he turns up. It looks to me as if he's made this place his headquarters for something that wouldn't bear investigation."

"A spy!" exclaimed Lovell breathlessly.

"Well, we know there's been talk of lights on the heath; and when the air-attack was made on Latcham Camp a few weeks ago they got very near," said Jimmy.

"That man's a German; he spoke pig language! Looks to me—"

"Draw it mild!" murmured Raby.

"I'm not going to sleep to-night," said Jimmy Silver quietly. "I'm going to keep an eye open. I fancy others are doing it, too."

"That soldier chap!" exclaimed Lovell.

"Yes. We wondered what he was doing on the heath at night. I dare say there are a lot of them, watching at various places. And there's going to be one more to-night—Uncle James," said Jimmy Silver.

"Me, too!" said Lovell.

"Same here!"

"What rot!" yawned Townsend. "I'm going to sleep."

"We ought to let the police know about that fellow," said Erroll thoughtfully.

"So we will, in the morning," said Jimmy Silver.

And when, at a rather late hour, the Rookwood rebels settled down to sleep, Jimmy Silver and some of his comrades remained wide awake—not in the cave, but at the top of the quarry, where they could watch the heath.

The 5th Chapter.

The Tragedy of the Night.

"Hark!"

Jimmy Silver breathed the word.

It was nearly midnight, and the moon was directly overhead, flooding the heath with silvery light.

Silence, deep and still, lay on the heath.

But low and faint, afar, there came a deep, murmuring sound to Jimmy Silver's intent ears.

"Hark!"

It was like the faint, distant droning of a bee.

It swelled in volume, and grew, in the listening ears of the half-dozen juniors lying in the grass on the verge of the quarry.

Jimmy Silver sprang up.

"Gothas!" breathed Erroll.

"Huns, by gad!" muttered Tommy Dodd.

"Might be some of our own machines," said Raby.

Jimmy shook his head.

"Our machines don't sound like that. That's a Gotha engine. Listen!"

Newcome caught his arm.

"Look!" he whispered.

Far away, on a rising point on the heath, a sudden flash of light stabbed the night.

It blazed out from the dimness, and was gone in an instant.

But in a second more it was repeated, and then it went on incessantly—long and short flashes alternating.

The juniors watched it, spellbound.

They had half expected it, and yet it amazed them.

From a point a good half mile from where they stood those brilliant electric flashes succeeded one another, plainly signalling in some secret code of dot and dash.

The drone of the air-engines was very close now.

"It's the German!" panted Tommy Dodd, at last.

"Signalling!" muttered Erroll.

Jimmy Silver set his teeth.

"That's to show the hounds the way to Latcham Camp!" he muttered. "You chaps, there's five thousand men there, and those demons are going to bomb them, and a sneaking spy is guiding them to their beastly work! I'm going to stop him at any price!"

Jimmy started running towards the flashes.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome, Tommy Dodd and Kit Erroll, were only a moment behind him.

The juniors did not even stop to think of the risk.

They knew now—knew only too well—that terrible death was lurking over the thousands of brave men at a few miles distance.

Without the treacherous signals of the spy, the air-raiders were unlikely to find

knew it was the man who had intruded into the cave in the quarry.

The soldier was almost upon the spy when the latter heard him.

The flash-signals suddenly ceased as the spy leapt to his feet with a cry of alarm.

The moonlight fell full upon his face as he spun round and faced the man in khaki.

The soldier halted, with a cry.

"You! You! Hermann Schulz!"

The spy stared at him.

His face was white, but a bitter, sardonic grin came over it as he scanned the soldier's face.

"Mein Gott! My old acquaintance, Lieutenant Smith—my old friend of the veldt. Mein friend, you will hold your tongue about this, I think—yes, I think so!" His eyes gleamed. "A private soldier now, isn't it—yes, a Tommy! But Lieutenant Smith is not forgotten—my fate will be his, if I am caught, my friend. I think you will hold your tongue!"

The soldier stood panting, his eyes fixed upon the German's mocking face.

He seemed too stunned by surprise to act.

"You!" he repeated. "You traitor, spy, liar—you, my enemy of sixteen years ago, the man who ruined me!"

"And will ruin you again if you speak one word," said the German coolly. "Stand back, my old friend—I have work to do."

The soldier did not answer, but he sprang at the German like a tiger.

The rascal grappled with him, with a furious curse.

The juniors came up, panting.

They had heard the spy's words, which amazed them.

The two men were rolling on the ground, locked in a desperate clutch, and fighting like tigers.

Whatever the threat of the German spy may have meant, it had had no effect on the man in khaki.

The German was under—still struggling.

"You're hurt!" groaned Jimmy.

The wounded man struggled to speak.

Jimmy Silver had to bend low to catch his words.

Faint and low the voice came.

"The bullet's in my chest—I think I'm done. Tell my brother—tell him—"

The voice trailed away.

"Your brother?" said Jimmy. "His name?"

"Dr. Chisholm, the headmaster of your school." The voice was clearer now. "Tell him that I was innocent—he will understand—tell him that I swore, with my last breath, that I was innocent in South Africa, and that I have fallen, doing my duty!"

His eyes closed.

The 6th Chapter.

In the Shadow of Death!

Jimmy Silver rose to his feet.

His eyes were blinded with tears.

In the grass, the soldier lay motionless still.

His face was like the face of the dead, strangely calm.

He was living yet, but Jimmy knew that he was very near to death.

With aid he might be saved yet!

Jimmy looked round almost wildly.

"What did he say?" muttered Lovell.

"He's given me a message for the Head—he's Dr. Chisholm's brother!"

"The brother we heard them speak of that evening," muttered Raby. "The Head never knew him then."

"Poor chap!" Jimmy's voice trembled. "It was himself he was speaking of, when he told the Head he could give him news of his brother. He's Oliver Chisholm. He seems to have been accused of something—poor chap! We—we've got to get help—he may live yet!"

Jimmy Silver pulled himself together.

"Look here, you chaps!" He gave his orders quickly. "Erroll, you stay with that German bound, and see that he doesn't get away. Stun him if he makes

Unheeding him, they marched in as soon as the gate was opened, and hurried to the School House with the stretcher and its grim burden.

Rookwood School was in darkness. Only a faint glimmer of light escaped from the dark blinds of the Head's study.

Late as the hour was, the troubled headmaster had not yet retired.

Jimmy Silver rang loudly at the bell.

It was the Head himself who opened the door, in surprise.

He started as he saw the captain of the Fourth.

"Silver! You have returned then! At this hour—"

He broke off as he saw the stretcher.

His first impression had been that the rebel juniors had returned, and that the revolt was over.

But the Rookwood rebellion was not in Jimmy Silver's mind then—in the shadow of the tragic happening on the heath he had almost forgotten it.

"What—what is that?" exclaimed Dr. Chisholm. "A soldier—"

"He's wounded, sir. He was shot on the heath by a German who was signalling to air-raiders!"

"Good heavens!"

"We've brought him here, sir—the doctor will be here soon—Lovell's gone to fetch him."

"You did quite right, Silver. Bring the poor fellow in."

The juniors tramped into the hall.

Dr. Chisholm scanned the white unconscious face of the soldier.

"I have seen this man before," he said. "He is a man who spoke to me once—"

He broke off. "Bring him into my study—place him on the couch. I think I hear the doctor."

There was a rattle of wheels from the road, and a light gleamed at the gate.

The medical man came in breathlessly.

On the couch in the Head's study, the soldier lay insensible.

Lovell joined his chums in the passage; he had come in the trap with the doctor from Coombe.

Leaving the doctor with the wounded man, the Head came softly from the study, and his expression was strange as he looked at the juniors.

"Will he live, sir?" asked Jimmy Silver, his voice faltering.

"Dr. Bolton thinks there is a chance, Silver," said the Head, in a low voice.

"Are you—are you aware of this man's name, Silver? I—I seem to see something familiar in his features—it appears to me that I have known him, and not only on the occasion when he spoke to me once near Rookwood."

Jimmy hesitated.

He had his message to deliver, but it was hard to give it.

"I—I—I have something to tell you, sir," he faltered. "Before he became unconscious he gave me a message for you."

"For me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Who is he?" The question came sharply. "Silver, who is this man?"

"His name is Oliver Chisholm, sir."

The Head staggered back.

His eyes were fixed almost wildly upon the junior.

Jimmy made a movement forward, but the Head recovered himself, and waved him back.

"He told you he was my brother?" he asked, in a low, husky tone.

"Yes, sir, and he gave me a message."

"And the message?" whispered the Head.

"He said 'Tell my brother that I was innocent in South Africa, that I swore it with my last breath, and that I have fallen doing my duty,'"

said Jimmy Silver steadily.

Dr. Chisholm groaned.

"I don't know what he meant, sir, but that's what he told me to tell you," said Jimmy Silver.

Dr. Chisholm's hands were hard clenched. His face was like chalk.

"Tell me what has happened this night," he said.

Jimmy told.

The Head listened without a word.

Still without a word, he turned and went into the study, and the door closed upon him.

The juniors looked at one another uncertainly.

The Head did not come out again, and the juniors moved away at last, hardly knowing what to do.

Dr. Chisholm had not given them another thought.

Under the old roof of Rookwood, a man lay in the shadow of death, and that man was the Head's brother—the brother who had been condemned—and, as the Head now believed—wronged.

He had been placed in bed—the school nurse was in attendance, and the doctor had remained.

By the bedside, watching the white face with silent anguish, sat the Head of Rookwood—watching, watching through the long, bitter night, with the chill of icy fear in his heart, and a faint, faint hope that the closed eyes would open with recognition—and forgiveness.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY.

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There were exclamations of surprise on all sides as Jimmy Silver flashed the lantern-light about the cave. It was evident that somebody had used the cave for camping.

their goal easily, otherwise the signals would not be made.

If they could stop the signaller in time—

That was all they thought of.

They raced through the grass, falling and stumbling, rising again and running on.

There was a sudden crash as Jimmy Silver, bursting through a thicket, ran into a running form.

He gripped it, and shouted to his comrades.

"This way! I've got the sneaking hound!"

"Let go!" came a sharp, fierce voice. "You young fool, how dare you stop me!"

"By gad! It's the Tommy!"

Jimmy released his hold.

He recognised the khaki now in the moonlight, and the face of the soldier the juniors had met on the heath the previous night.

The man stood panting for breath.

"I'm sorry!" gasped Jimmy. "I—I thought you were the German! Look! Can you see—"

The soldier did not answer.

He dashed away towards the lights, which were flashing to and fro incessantly.

He had evidently been running towards the distant signaller when Jimmy Silver collided with him.

"You ass, Jimmy!" gasped Lovell.

"Come on, fathead!"

The juniors ran on again, following the track of the man in khaki.

But the latter was well ahead.

The footsteps made little sound in the thick grass.

They drew nearer and nearer to the flashing lights.

Suddenly, in the moonlight, they discerned a crouching form.

The back was towards them, but they

His eyes blazed up at the soldier like a reptile's.

"Ach, ach!" he panted. "But—"

His hand was under his coat.

It came out suddenly, and there was a sudden flash, and a stunning report.

A sharp, terrible cry rang on the heath, and the soldier pitched sideways and fell in the grass.

The German, panting, struggled up.

But before the villain could rise, Jimmy Silver had reached him.

He struck with all his strength, and the blow caught the German in the mouth, and stretched him in the grass.

The rascal, who had not seen the juniors yet, was taken completely by surprise.

Before he could even think of using his weapon, Kit Erroll had wrenched it from his hand, and the juniors had hurled themselves upon him.

The German, panting and cursing, struggled furiously.

But the six sturdy Rookwood juniors were too much for



A REGULAR TERROR!

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

The 1st Chapter.

Bob Lawless Keeps His Promise.

"Hallo! That sounds like the Chink!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. Frank Richards and his chums had come down to the frozen creek, skates in hand, after morning lessons at the lumber-school.

As they reached the bank, a loud wail came to their ears, proceeding from the frost-blackened thickets along the stream. It was a howl full of anguish, and they recognised the mournful tones of Yen Chin, the Chinese of Cedar Creek.

Frank Richards stopped. "It's Yen Chin right enough!" he exclaimed. "Somebody's been going for him again."

"Gunter, I suppose," said Vere Beauclerc, with a frown. "Yow-ow-ow!" came the howl again. "Let's go and see him, anyway," said Bob Lawless.

The Canadian schoolboy plunged into the thicket, and Frank and Beauclerc followed him.

They came upon Yen Chin in a few moments.

The little Chinese was seated upon a log, his face buried in his hands, howling in an almost ear-splitting manner.

Yen Chin's howl was pathetic, but it was not musical, and the chums of Cedar Creek were rather inclined to stop their ears.

But they were sympathetic. Frank Richards clapped the Chinese on the shoulder.

"Yow-ow-ow! Ko-ko-kee-keeeeee!" wailed Yen Chin.

"What's the matter, John?" demanded Bob Lawless. "For goodness' sake, draw it mild with that yelling! It sounds like a coyote with its leg in a trap."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Tell us what's the matter, kid," said Frank Richards soothingly.

Yen Chin looked up at last, with a tear-stained, yellow face.

The "Chow" of Cedar Creek was not exactly a model character.

He was a terrible liar, and he had never been able to understand the British view on that subject.

But the fellows made allowances for the Oriental.

Yen Chin was, in fact, a cunning little rascal in many respects, but he had his good qualities.

And Frank Richards & Co. did not see any reason why the burly Gunten should be allowed to bully him, as he was fond of doing.

Bob Lawless had solemnly promised Gunten a terrific hiding if he laid a finger on Yen Chin again, and Bob was the fellow to keep a promise of that kind to the very letter.

Gunter, the Swiss, was not of the stuff of which heroes are made, and of late he had kept clear of Yen Chin, who, however, had the long memory of an Oriental for either a favour or an injury, and who had by no means forgiven the bully.

The Chinese looked a pathetic little figure as he sat sobbing on the log, his howls a little subdued now.

"Is it Gunten again?" asked Beauclerc. "Bad boy Guntee beatee little Chinese!" wailed Yen Chin.

"The rotter!" exclaimed Frank wrathfully.

"Beatee velly muchee—me suffee great painee! Yow-ow-ow!"

"It's too bad!" exclaimed Beauclerc. "Why can't the brute let the kid alone?"

"He's going to be made to," said Bob Lawless grimly. "I guess I'll see to that."

"Bob lickee Guntee?" inquired the Chinese. "Givee great thlashing, oh, yes?"

"You bet!" said Bob. Yen Chin brightened up. "No suffee so muchee if Bob lickee beastelee Guntee," he announced.

Bob grinned. "All serene!" he said. "I'll go and look for Gunten now, kid. Don't make any more row, there's a good chap."

"Me great painee!" moaned Yen Chin. "Come on, you chaps!" said Bob. "No good keeping Gunten waiting. We can have our skate after dinner."

"Hold on, Gunten!" called out Bob Lawless.

The Swiss gave him a surly look. "What do you want?" he snapped.

"I guess I want you," answered Bob, planting himself in Gunten's path.

"What's the row?" asked Tom Lawrence.

"Gunter's been bullying Yen Chin again, and I guess I'm going to stop him," said Bob. "I promised you a hiding if you touched Yen Chin again, Gunten. Will you take your jacket off?"

Kern Gunten backed away, scowling. "Hands off!" he exclaimed savagely.

"I haven't touched the Chink, and it's no business of yours if I had!"

"That's right enough," chimed in Keller, Gunten's chum. "Mind your own business, Bob Lawless!"

Bob took no heed of him. He advanced upon Gunten, as the Swiss retreated, with his hands up.

The Cedar Creek fellows gathered round.

"Put up your hands, Gunten!" exclaimed Eben Hacke, the American. "I guess you can't back out."

"I haven't touched the Chink!" shouted Gunten.

"Oh, come off!" exclaimed Bob impatiently. "We've just found him howling as if he's nearly murdered. Put up your hands!"

"I won't! I—"

Rap! Bob's knuckles, landing on Gunten's prominent nose, cut short his words.

Gunter gave a howl of rage, and leaped at the Canadian schoolboy, his eyes blazing.

"Go it!" sang out Chunky Todgers. "Pile in, ye cripples!" grinned Dick Dawson.

Gunter was "going it." He had no choice in the matter, and he put up a good fight.

Bob Lawless was driven back a pace or two by the Swiss schoolboy's heavy weight.

But he soon recovered his ground, and pressed Gunten hard.

Bob was the most good-natured of fellows, but he could be hard and stern, and his sunburnt face was very grim now.

He fully intended to carry out his promise, by giving Kern Gunten the thrashing of his life.

Gunter should have been fully a match for the Canadian schoolboy, for he was bigger and heavier.

It was pluck that was wanting.

He gave ground, his blows growing uncertain, and his defence more uncertain still.

Crash! "Man down!" grinned Chunky Todgers. Gunten lay gasping on the ground.

Bob Lawless waited for him to rise. He was not finished yet.

"Get up, for goodness' sake!" exclaimed Frank Richards, at last, in disgust.

Gunter groaned.

"I'm done!" he muttered.

"You're not half licked yet!" exclaimed Eben Hacke encouragingly. "Stand up and take your medicine!"

Another groan.

Bob Lawless dropped his hands, his lip curling.

"You're plucky enough when you're tackling a kid half your size, Gunten," he said. "Can't you stand up and take your gruel?"

"Hang you!" panted Gunten. "I tell you, I've never touched Yen Chin—not since you spoke to me about him. Hang you!"

"Oh, rot!" said Bob tartly. "Well, if you're done, you're done, and you can go and chop chips, for a sneaking funk as you are!"

And Bob Lawless turned away contemptuously.

Keller helped the Swiss to his feet. Gunten did not need so much help as he pretended. His nose was streaming red, but he was not much hurt. The Canadian boys, grinning, went on towards the creek. "You were a jay to handle the Chink, after what Lawless said!" muttered Keller. "I didn't!" snarled Gunten. "I haven't touched him! It's a lie!" Keller whistled. Bob Lawless looked back. The words were not meant for his ears, but he had heard them. There was rather a curious expression on Bob's face as he followed his chums towards the creek.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Ways of the Chinese!

"Hold on, you chaps!" said Bob abruptly, as Frank and Beau were about to put their skates on.

The rancher's son was looking rather troubled.

"Oh, you're done with Gunten!" said Frank.

"Yes, yes. But—"

"But what?" Bob Lawless coloured.

"I—I guess I'm not quite satisfied. Of course, Gunten is a beastly bully, and a licking will do him good. But—but—I don't feel so dashed certain that he has been bullying Yen Chin, this time."

"Oh!" said Frank, with a whistle. "That Chink is such an awful little fibber," said Bob ruefully. "I wonder—"

"Rather late to begin wondering," said Vere Beauclerc, laughing.

"Well, yes, so far as Gunten's concerned. But—well, let's see the little beast, anyhow!" said Bob shortly.

"All right!" The three chums went to look for Yen Chin.

The little Chinese was still sitting on

the porch. "I saw him mending a skate in the porch."

"Oh! You hear that, Yen Chin?" "Me heehee."

"Gunter hadn't been licking you." "Lickee awful beadee."

"He hadn't been out of gates," exclaimed Bob angrily.

"Lickee in gates." "That's a lie," said Lawrence, who had come to the bank. "Gunter was mending a skate ever since school turned out, and I saw him."

"My hat!" murmured Frank Richards. "You've been telling lies again, Yen Chin!"

"No tellee lies, Flanky. No can!" "You said Gunten had licked you since lessons, and he hasn't!" roared Bob.

Yen Chin backed away round the log. "Me make mistake," he mumbled.

"Meancee sayee, Guntee lickee this morning in Thompson, before comee schoolee."

"Oh, by gum!" exclaimed Bob, staring at him blankly. "You awful little liar! Don't tell me any more untruths!"

"No can."

Bob Lawless made a stride towards the Chink, and Yen Chin dodged behind Frank Richards, in alarm.

Frank caught him by the pigtail. "You young rascal!" he exclaimed.

"You were lying, and you've made Bob thrash Gunten for nothing!"

"Gunter great beastee," pleaded Yen Chin. "Lickee Yen Chin lastee weekee—pool little Chinese!"

"I'll give you poor little Chinese!" exclaimed Bob, greatly exasperated.

"You've told me barfaced lies, and made me punch a fellow who hadn't done anything! I'll squash you!"

Yen Chin uttered a terrific howl.

"No squashee Yen Chin!" he yelled.

He dodged round Frank, to the length of his pigtail, howling.

Bob Lawless paused, unwilling to handle the little rascal, wrathful as he was.

"I guess you can manage Gunten in the future off your own bat," he said, at last.

"Come away, you chaps!"

"Blave Bob Lawless angly with pool little Chinese?" asked Yen Chin sadly.

"Oh, shut up! I've told me lies, you little rotter!"

"If Bob angly, Chinese cly."

"Cry, and be blowed, you little humbug!" growled Bob.

He turned away with his chums, leaving Yen Chin sobbing.

Bob was angry but the sound of those sobs touched him.

Bob turned back, to speak a more friendly word.

Then he stood transfixed.

Yen Chin, no longer sobbing, had his

"Nothing at all," agreed Frank Richards, laughing. "Of all the humbugs, that Chow takes the cake."

"Look at him now!" exclaimed Beauclerc, laughing heartily.

Bob Lawless spun round.

Yen Chin had his fingers to his nose again, grinning.

Bob made a stride towards him, and the Chinese promptly fled.

"Oh bother him!" exclaimed Bob. "I've got to speak to Gunten! I've thrashed the brute for nothing."

His chums chuckled, as Bob slid out on the ice.

He joined Gunten, who scowled at him savagely.

"I'm sorry, Gunten," said Bob, with an effort. "I find that Yen Chin was lying, and I've spanked him."

"Go and hang yourself!" was Gunten's polite reply.

Bob came very near giving Gunten "some more of the same," but he refrained, and left the scowling Swiss to himself.

His brow cleared as he joined his chums, and they skated along the frozen creek, and he was in his usual good humour by the time the fellows came in to dinner.

The 3rd Chapter. A Pressing Invitation.

"Flanky!"

After lessons that day, the three chums came out together, and to their surprise, Yen Chin joined them on their way to the gates.

The little Chinese was smiling in a way that was childlike and bland, and apparently in the most friendly mood.

"Cut off!" snapped Bob Lawless. "Blave Bob Lawless angly?"

"Yes, you treacherous little beast!"

"Pool little Chinese solly," said Yen Chin sorrowfully. "Little Chinese tinkee, tinkee, and Chinese velly solly. Chinese bad boy."

"Well, I'm glad you've found that out!" said Frank.

"Chinese wicked bad boy," said Yen Chin. "But solly, velly solly! Chinese wantee blave Bob forgivee, or go downee."

"Rats!" grunted Bob.

"Pool little Chinese go downee if hand-some Bob no forgivee."

Bob smiled, in spite of himself.

"Well, I guess I forgive you, fathead," he said, "if that's what you want. Now vamoose, and be banged to you!"

"Bob velly flendly!" asked Yen Chin anxiously.

"Oh, yes, any old thing!" said Bob.

"Chinese velly happee," said Yen Chin,



"Would you mind telling us what that stew was made of, Yen Chin?" asked Bob Lawless. "I—I'm rather curious!" "Nice doggee!" answered the Chinese. "Lovelee cattee!"

the log, from whence he had had a view of the fight through the leafless thicket.

He was doubled up in an ecstasy of mirth, and chuckling gleefully to himself. But as he spotted the three, he suddenly became grave, and emitted a loud, mournful howl.

"Hallo! Still suffering?" exclaimed Bob gruffly.

"Me suffee fealful painee!" murmured Yen Chin pathetically. "Me cly!"

"Well, you can ring off crying for a bit; but you were giggling as we came up!" growled Bob. "Look here, Chow, did Gunten really lambaste you?"

"Oh, yes."

"When?" asked Bob.

Yen Chin hesitated, looking at him cunningly out of the corners of his almond eyes.

"After schoolee," he answered, at last. "It wasn't ten minutes after school that we found you howling," said Bob suspiciously.

"Lickee awful!" moaned Yen Chin. "Me suffee great painee."

"I say, Lawrence!" called out Bob. Tom Lawrence looked across from the ice.

"Hallo!" he replied.

"Gunter was coming out with you when I met him," said Bob, with a worried look. "Do you know whether he had been out of the gates before, since lessons?"

"I guess he hadn't," answered Law-

thumb to his nose and his fingers extended, and was grinning all over his yellow face.

As Bob's astonished eyes fell on him, making that disrespectful gesture, Yen Chin jumped.

In an instant he was mournful again, and sobbing piteously, but it was too late. Bob fairly rushed at him.

"You cheeky little scoundrel!" he roared.

"Me solly!" gasped Yen Chin.

"I'll make you sorrier, you rascally heathen!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" howled the Chink, as Bob Lawless' powerful hands grasped him. "Yow-oooooh! No killee pool little Chinese! Helpee! Murdee!"

But Bob Lawless paid no heed to his yells.

He sat on the log, threw the wriggling Chinese across his knee, and spanked him heartily upon his loose garments.

Spank, spank, spank!

Yen Chin howled dismayfully.

"There!" panted Bob, rising at last, and throwing him aside. "That's a lesson for you, you young rascal! Tell the truth next time, and don't try any more of your spoof!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

Bob strode away, with a heightened colour, and joined his grinning chums.

He stared at them rather grimly.

"Nothing to grin at, that I can see!" he said gruffly.

brightening up. "Chinese wantee his fiends to comee homee feastee."

"Eh?"

"If no angly with Chinese, comee homee and feastee! Oh, yes?" asked Yen Chin.

"We've got to get home," answered Bob.

Yen Chin's face became miserable at once.

"No likee pool little Chinese?" he asked sorrowfully. "Chinese bad boy. Blave Bob no comee because Yen Chin tellee big lie? Me go downee."

The three chums exchanged uncomfortable glances.

They certainly did not believe that the heathen would go and drown himself if their forgiveness was withheld, but really there was no telling what the queer little Oriental might or might not do.

"We could go," said Frank Richards hesitatingly.

Beauclerc nodded.

Yen Chin was evidently much hurt at his hospitality being refused, and the chums did not like hurting his feelings.

"Oh, I guess I don't mind!" said Bob. "The popper won't mind us being home late, Frank. It's going to be a bright moon. But—"

"You comee?" asked Yen Chin eagerly.

"At homee me givee great feastee to good, blave fiendee. Very lich feedee."

"All serene!" said Bob.

"Me lovee good Bob Lawless!" purred Yen Chin.

A REGULAR TERROR!



(Continued from the previous page.)

Yen Chin ate at a great rate, and with evident enjoyment.

As soon as they succeeded in conveying morsels to their mouths, the chums of Cedar Creek shared his enjoyment.

They had been, perhaps, a little doubtful about Chinese cookery, but the savoury mess before them had been treated in a manner worthy of a Parisian chef.

Exactly what it was they did not know. Bob Lawless thought it was mainly rabbit, Beauclerc deemed it chicken, and Frank Richards was inclined to believe that it was partly, at least, pigeon.

But whatever it was it was simply gorgeous eating, as they all agreed. There were a good many helpings all round, and as the schoolboys grew more used to handling the chop-sticks they did the feast full justice.

But the time came at last to cry halt. The keen schoolboy appetites, sharpened by the cold weather, were satisfied at last, and Bob Lawless pronounced it a feast of the gods.

Yen Chin clapped his hands, and the wizened old Chinaman entered and cleared the table.

Sweetmeats, such as the chums had never tasted before, but of a delicate flavour, were placed before them.

Yen Chin was doing the honours with great grace, and his little face was incessantly wreathed in smiles.

The sweetmeats being duly disposed of, coffee was brought in, and the guests sipped at it, with a feeling of great ease and contentment.

"Likee Chinese feaste?" asked Yen Chin at last.

"First chop!" said Bob Lawless heartily.

"Ripping!" said Frank.

"Topping, kid!" said Vere Beauclerc, with a smile.

"Chinese so pleasee likee feaste," murmured Yen Chin. "Extra special feaste for honourable fiends. You knowe meatee, oh, yes?"

Bob Lawless laughed.

"Can't say I do, unless it was rabbit," he answered.

"No rabbit?"

"Chicken?" asked Beauclerc.

"No chickee."

"Pigeon?" queried Frank.

Yen Chin shook his head.

"Partridge?"

"No partridge."

"Then I give it up!" said Frank Richards, laughing. "It was jolly good, whatever it was, kid."

"Yes, I guess there's no mistake on that point," agreed Bob. "We've got a Chinese cook at the ranch, but he never turns out anything like that."

"Perhaps Mr. Lawless no likee," suggested Yen Chin. "Chinese cookee different from Melican man. This feastee leal Chinese cookee."

Bob started.

It came into his mind that he had heard queer stories of Chinese cookery.

"You get the things here in Thompson, I suppose?" Bob remarked, in a careless sort of way.

"Oh, yes."

"From Gunten's store, I guess?"

"No buyee at shoppee."

"Oh! You grow the things?" asked Bob, with an inwardly increasing feeling of alarm. "I didn't know your popper went in for farming."

Yen Chin laughed.

"No can," he answered. "Buyee from people in Thompson and Cedar Campee, oh, yes. Not at shoppee; shoppee no sell."

Bob hesitated.

"Would you mind telling us what that stew was made of, Yen Chin?" he asked at last. "I—I'm rather curious."

"Bob likee knowee?"

"Yes, I tell you. What was it?"

"Lovelee doggee."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Nicee, nicee doggee," answered Yen Chin innocently. "In my countly nicee doggee goodee eatee. Melican man no likee."

"A—a—a dog!" stammered Frank Richards.

Beauclerc turned pale.

Yen Chin nodded affably.

"Nicee doggee," he replied. "Not all doggee."

"Wha-a-at else was there?"

"Cattee."

"Cat!" shrieked Bob Lawless.

"Lovelee cattee!"

"Oh, crumbs! Oh, dear! Grooh!"

"Oh!" muttered Beauclerc.

"You—you—you heathen!" stuttered Frank Richards. "You've killed a dog and a cat to make a stew for us?"

"No killee."

"What?"

"No killee," assured Yen Chin. "Doggee and cattee die."

The three schoolboys staggered to their feet.

Yen Chin, apparently, desired to reassure them, by the information that the cat and the dog had not been killed, but had died natural deaths.

The unfortunate chums did not find it reassuring, however.

Their faces were horribly pale, and the perspiration beaded their brows, as they gazed at the smiling Chinese in horror.

Yen Chin seemed surprised.

"Whatee mattee?" he asked.

"Ow!" groaned Bob Lawless. "Oh, you horrid little heathen beast! Ow!"

"Bob Lawless angly?" asked Yen Chin anxiously.

"Grooh!"

"Wow—wow—waugh!" mumbled Frank Richards. "Oh, dear! A—a dog and—a—a—a c-c-cat! Gerrooooh!"

The satisfaction of the great feast was gone.

Within them the hapless chums felt wild heavings and quakings.

The dog and the cat seemed decidedly uneasy in their new abode.

Yen Chin looked concerned.

"Indigestee?" he asked.

"Grooh!"

"No likee doggee and cattee?" queried Yen Chin. "Chinese lovee doggee and cattee fol feedee. Nicee, nicee. Oh, yes!"

"Yurrrrrgh!"

"And—and what were the sweet things made of?" gasped Frank Richards. "That stuff something like calves-foot jelly?"

"Cattee blains."

"C-c-c-cat's b-b-brains?"

"Oh, yes! Velly nicee. You no goee?"

exclaimed Yen Chin, as the three chums made a wild rush for the door.

There was no answer to the little Chinese's query.

Like the gentlemen in the play, the chums stood not upon the order of their going, but went at once.

They were very anxious to get outside Yen Chin's hospitable dwelling, for painful and pressing reasons.

They made a hurried scramble for the open air.

In the outer rooms they passed Hop How Chin, who spoke; but they did not pause to reply. There was not an instant to be lost.

In a few seconds they were out in the snow, and then—

But a veil must be drawn over the tragedy. It was heartrending.

The 5th Chapter.

The Last Straw!

"Come on!" said Bob Lawless weakly.

"Oh, dear!"

"Ow!"

Three pale-faced, weary-looking youths fastened on their snowshoes, and started away on the home trail in the early moonlight.

Yen Chin gazed after them from the doorway, apparently lost in astonishment.

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BUY

A WAR SAVINGS

CERTIFICATE!

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"I guess it was one on us," said Bob. "He spoofed us into going home with him, so that he could give us that beastly stuff to eat, and he meant to tell us what it was, if we hadn't asked him. I can see that now. It was in return for the spanking I gave him."

"Oh, dear!"

The chums had no doubt on that point now.

The "feast" for his "honourable friends" was the outcome of Yen Chin's peculiar sense of humour and was intended as a punishment.

It was a splendid feast from the Chinese point of view, but Yen Chin knew very well what it was from the white man's point of view. The chums had been fairly taken in.

"It was a plant!" growled Bob. "I'll jolly well give the little beast a taste of my boot to-morrow!"

The chums arrived home that evening in much less cheery spirits than usual.

It was not till the next morning that they felt their usual selves.

When they started for Cedar Creek School in the morning, their feelings towards their kind host of the previous evening were not amiable.

To add to their exasperation, when they arrived at school, they found Yen Chin in the school ground, surrounded by a crowd of fellows, who were roaring with laughter over something he was telling them.

Gunten was almost weeping with mirth. The little Chinese was chucking as he chattered and Frank Richards & Co. did not need telling what was the subject under discussion.

"Hallo! There they are!" yelled Gunten. "Did you get a good feed, you fellows?"

"Ha ha, ha!"

"How do you like cattee and doggee?" yelled Dawson.

"It's a cat and dog life, ain't it?" chuckled Chunky Todgers.

Bob Lawless strode wrathfully up to Yen Chin, who ceased chucking at once, and became very grave.

"Goodee mornee!" he said.

"So you've been telling the fellows?" grunted Bob. "You horrid little beast, I reckon you think it's funny to nearly poison a chap with your Chinese mucks!"

"Chinese solly!" murmured Yen Chin. "I'll make you sorer, you heathen!"

"Who's bullying now?" sneered Gunten. "Oh shut up, you foreign trash!"

growled Bob Lawless. "I believe you guessed what the young brute was going to do, and you never warned us!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Gunten.

Yen Chin dodged away from Bob Lawless, who strode after him in great wrath.

He felt that what the humorous Chinese wanted was a good licking, and he meant to let him have it.

Yen Chin wanted a good licking, and he meant to let him have it.

"No whackee pool little Chinese!" yelled the heathen. "Yen Chin go downee."

"You young rascal!"

"Me go downee!"

"Oh, rats! I— Stop him!"

Yen Chin darted away from the crowd, and dashed out of the gateway.

He fled at top-speed for the ice-covered creek.

Almost in a twinkling, he vanished through the frosty bushes.

"I'll lick him presently!" growled Bob. "Suppose he drowns himself?" grinned Gunten.

"Oh, don't be a jay!"

"Hark!" exclaimed Lawrence.

Crash!

"My hat!"

From the direction of the frozen creek came the loud crash, evidently the sound of breaking ice.

Bob gave his chums a quick look of alarm.

"It—it's not possible—" he ejaculated. Without waiting to finish, he dashed away towards the creek, with the crowd of fellows at his heels.

An exclamation of dismay broke from him, as he came out on the bank.

Six yards or so from the edge there was a jagged hole in the ice, through which the black water bubbled up, and close by the opening, the little Celestial's cap lay on the frozen surface.

Bob's face became suddenly pale.

His eyes were riveted in horror on the gap in the frozen creek.

"Good heavens!" he stammered.

"The mad young fool!" exclaimed Frank Richards, utterly aghast.

Not for a moment had the schoolboys believed that the little Chinese would carry out his desperate threat.

But the broken ice and the bubbling water told their own tale, and they stood transfixed with horror.

"Better call Miss Meadows," muttered Dick Dawson, through his chattering teeth.

Chunky Todgers ran back to the school-house.

Bob Lawless strode out desperately on the ice, but Frank caught him by the arm.

"Don't be an ass, Bob!" he said huskily. "You know how the current runs here—he must be half a mile away by this time."

Bob groaned.

"Frank, old man! I—I never thought"

"Of course you didn't! You're not to blame!" said Frank. "The mad little idiot, to do such a thing! Who could have thought it?"

"I guess he's as far as the island by this time," said Kern Gunten. "We'll find him in the spring, I reckon. You'll be called to account for this, Bob Lawless!"

Bob turned on him fiercely.

"Was it my fault, you rotter? Hold your tongue!"

Gunten shrank back, several of the fellows hustling him away.

It was no time for the Swiss' sneering tongue to be heard.

Miss Meadows came hurrying down to the bank, followed by the breathless Chunky.

"What has happened?" exclaimed the Canadian school-mistress. "Surely what Todgers has told me is impossible!"

She started, and her face went white, as she saw the gap in the ice.

"He—he said he would drown himself, ma'am," groaned Bob Lawless. "I reckoned he was only lying as usual, but—but—" His voice broke.

"But why—"

Miss Meadows was interrupted by a sudden yell from Eben Hacke.

"Yen Chin!"

"What?"

Hacke pointed upward, and all eyes followed the direction of his finger.

Yen Chin, perched on a branch, twenty feet above their heads, grinned down on them.

Bob Lawless stared up at him dazedly. Miss Meadows breathed with relief.

"Yen Chin, come down immediately!"

"Bob no whackee pool little Chinese?" asked Yen Chin cautiously.

"Come down at once!"

Yen Chin slid down the trunk, and stood before the school-mistress, with an ingratiating smile on his face.

"Oh!" muttered Bob. "Oh, the young rascal! It was only a trick!"

"Yen Chin," said Miss Meadows severely, "did you make that hole in the ice?"

"Oh, yes, me makee, thlowee lock," explained Yen Chin calmly.

"You threw a rock on the ice?"

explained Frank Richards.

"Me thlowee."

"And you placed your cap there, to give an impression that you had fallen in the river?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"Me puttee, oh, yes!"

"Oh, you rascal!" said Bob Lawless, in great relief, which was mingled with anger. "I might have guessed you were spoofing again!"

"No wantee whackee," said Yen Chin calmly.

"How dare you play such a trick, boy?" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "You have very much alarmed me, and all your schoolfellows."

"Chinese solly," murmured Yen Chin, with a penitent look.

Miss Meadows turned away impatiently, and Yen Chin trotted after her to the school-house, apparently thinking he was safer there.

He grinned back at Frank Richards & Co. as he went.

During morning lessons in the lumber school, the Chinese stole several glances at the chums, but they did not look at him.

After school was dismissed, he came up to them in the playground.

Bob Lawless gave him a grim look.

"What do you want, Yen Chin?" he asked, very quietly.

"No whackee Yen Chin?"

"No," answered Bob. "Leave me alone, that's all."

"Chinese solly."

"Get out, I tell you!"

"Me go downee—" threatened Yen Chin.

"What?" exclaimed Frank.

Yen Chin just dodged his boot, and fled. The heathen Chinese had tired out the patience of the Co. with his "ways that are dark, and tricks that are vain."

Gunten had observed that incident.

And after school that day, when the chums were starting homeward, they heard a loud howl from the timber.

Yen Chin was wriggling in the grasp of the bully, who was laying a rope about the Chinese as he hopped and dodged and wriggled.

Gunten felt that his opportunity had come, and he was taking advantage of it.

"Flanky!" yelled Yen Chin. "Helpee! Blave Bob! Helpee!"

But he called in vain.

The chums of Cedar Creek walked on.

Gunten grinned, and laid on the rope harder.

"Serve the little beast right!" muttered Bob Lawless.

But as a loud howl of anguish came from the unhappy little rascal, Bob Lawless paused.

He turned back, and strode on the scene.

Without waiting to speak, he hit out, and Kern Gunten sat down in the snow.

"Let him alone!" growled Bob.