

The BOYS' FRIEND

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending May 11th, 1918.

THE SHADOW OF SUSPICION!

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

By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter.

The Testimonial.

"Whereas—"
"That's a good word!" said Lovell approvingly.
"Jolly good!" said Raby.
And Newcome nodded approval.
"Whereas—" recommenced Jimmy Silver.
"Sounds well," said Lovell. "Makes it a bit like a legal document. Still, it's impressive."
"Don't interrupt, old scout!" said Jimmy Silver. "Let a chap finish. Whereas—"
The door of the end study opened as Jimmy Silver reached that point once more.
Tubby Muffin looked in.
"You chaps having tea?" he asked.
"No!" hooted Jimmy Silver. "Scoot!"
"I was going to offer you a whack in my sardines," said Tubby, in an injured tone. "I've got a whole tin."
"Oh, bless your sardines! 'Whereas—'"
"Hold on, though!" said Raby. "Tea's pretty skinny to-day, and if Tubby wants to stand some sardines, no reason why he shouldn't. He's generally scoffing a fellow's grub instead of whacking it out."
"Look here, am I going to read out this testimonial, or am I not going to read out this testimonial?" roared Jimmy Silver.
"I suppose you're going to, as you've made it up," answered Arthur Edward Lovell calmly. "In fact, I don't believe that all the King's horses and all the King's men could prevent you doing it. We may as well have the sardines, all the same."
"Whereas—"
"Got the tin with you, Tubby?" asked Newcome, showing more interest in Tubby Muffin's sardines than in Jimmy Silver's testimonial.
"Here they are, old chap."
"Then come in and have tea with us," said Lovell. "We've got a cake—no currants in it, but it's a cake of sorts."
"Oh, good!" said Tubby Muffin. And the fat Classical rolled in. Jimmy Silver gave a snort.
He had been busy with pen and paper while his three chums were getting tea, and now he was going to read out his composition, the Co. politely letting tea wait while he did it.
Still, they were hungry.
"Go on, Jimmy!" said Lovell encouragingly. "You can read it out while I open the sardines, I suppose?"
"I suppose so," grunted the captain of the Fourth. "Listen to this, then. 'Whereas—'"
"Seen the tin-opener, anybody?" Jimmy Silver shrieked. He really seemed fated to get no farther than "Whereas."
"Will you shut up?"
"I want the tin-opener."
"Blow the tin-opener! Dry up! 'Whereas—'"

"I can't open a tin of sardines with my fingers, Jimmy. If you can, you're welcome to try."
"Br-r-r-r!"
"Here it is," said Newcome, laughing.
"Thanks! Go on, Jimmy."
"Whereas—"
"Yaroooh!"
"You shrieking ass, what are you yelling for?" shouted Jimmy Silver.
"I've jabbed this dashed tin-opener into my dashed thumb all through listening to your dashed testimonial instead of seeing what I was doing with this dashed tin!" howled Lovell.
"Serve you right! Shut up! 'Whereas—'"
"Yow-ow!"
"I won't read it out!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "You silly chumps can sign it without reading it at all!"
"Oh, go ahead!" said Raby, with a chuckle. "You needn't say 'Whereas' any more. We know that bit by heart. Get a move on!"
"Whereas," said Jimmy Silver, with a ferocious glare at his chums—"whereas, the Rookwood Fourth, Classical and Modern, feel shocked and indignant at the accusation brought against Bulkeley's pater, and whereas they feel sure that it is all a silly mistake, and Bulkeley's pater is as innocent as a baby, and that his accusers are a set of silly idiots, they hereby—"
"Who? The silly idiots?" asked Raby.
"No, ass! The Fourth Form. 'They hereby testify that their confidence in George Bulkeley of the Sixth Form, captain of Rookwood School, is boundless and unshaken, and they are prepared to back him up to the last shot in the locker.'"
"Bravo!"
"That all?"
"No, it isn't all. Listen! 'They beg Bulkeley of the Sixth, their respected captain, not to think of leaving Rookwood, as some cads have suggested he should, but to stick it out, and see that Rookwood scores at cricket this season. They are further assured that his pater's innocence will be proved in the long run, and all will be serene. In witness whereof—'"
"Oh, good!"
"In witness whereof, they hereby append their hands and seals."
"Topping!"
"Ripping!"
"Bravo!"
Jimmy Silver smiled, a little complacently, quite mollified by that praise from his study-mates.
Jimmy flattered himself that he had drawn up that testimonial rather well.
Certainly, it left no doubt as to the opinion of Jimmy Silver & Co., and all the Fistical Four agreed that it ought to please Bulkeley no end.
The Rookwood captain, being under a cloud—and such a cloud—could not fail to be bucked by learning that the Fourth Form—Classical and Modern—still reposed the most unbounded faith in him.



THE SEARCH FOR THE MISSING BONDS!

At least, the chums of the Fourth were sure of it.
Tubby Muffin blinked up from his sardines. He was busy with them already.
"Chaps going to sign that, Jimmy?" he asked.
"Every chap in the Fourth," answered Jimmy. "It will let all Rookwood know what the Fourth Form thinks of old Bulkeley. Knowles and Catesby and Carthew and other rotters will see that they're in a minority."
"But they're in the Sixth," said Tubby. "They won't take much notice of the Fourth, will they?"
"Fathead! Get on with your sardines, and don't talk rot!"
"Besides, how do you know Bulkeley's father is innocent?" persisted Tubby. "He's been arrested for stealing a lot of bonds from the bank."
"He didn't do it."
"How do you know?"
"Oh, you're a silly ass! We know Bulkeley, don't we? Well, it stands to reason that old Bulkeley's pater wouldn't do a dirty trick like that."
"The police think he did!"
"Who cares what the police think?" answered Jimmy Silver disdainfully. "Aren't they always arresting the wrong people for the wrong things?"
"Not that I know of. Are they?"
"Well, perhaps not always," said Jimmy, modifying his somewhat sweeping statement. "But sometimes. It happens occasionally, and this is one of the occasions. Here's a pen. Sign here, you fellows."
The Fistical Four signed in turn.
They had no hesitation whatever in testifying to their faith in the honour of Mr. Bulkeley, mainly because, Bulkeley of the Sixth was a fine

fellow, a good-natured prefect, and a tremendous man at games.
Fourth-Form reasoning was not, perhaps, very logical, but the Fourth-Formers were satisfied with it.
"But, I say," began Tubby, who seemed to be in an argumentative mood, "Peel and Gower were saying—"
"Sign here, Muffin!"
"But I don't think—"
"That's no news; you never do. Sign here."
"You jolly well sha'n't have any cake if you don't sign!" exclaimed Lovell warmly.
"Oh, gimme that pen, Jimmy, old chap!" said Tubby Muffin. "Of course, I believe that old Bulkeley's pater is innocent, come to think of it. There you are! I'll sign it twice if you like."
"You fat duffer! Now, after tea we'll take this round the Fourth," said Jimmy Silver. "Every chap will sign it, I know. He'll jolly well get his nose punched if he doesn't. I say, these are good sardines. A good idea of yours to whack them out in this study, Tubby."
The door opened again, and Flynn of the Classical Fourth put a somewhat excited face into the end study.
"Seen that thafe of the worruld, Muffin?" he exclaimed. "Oh, there you are! You thaving young sweep—"
"Here, hold on!" exclaimed Lovell. "Let Tubby alone. He's the founder of the merry feast."
"Sure, he's pinched me sardines!" roared Flynn.
"What?"
"Me illigant sardines; and by the same token I've got nothing for me tea but the war-bread. I'll scalp him!"
"Oh, my hat!" gasped Lovell.

Flynn rushed after Tubby Muffin, who dodged him wildly round the table.
"Keep him off, Jimmy!" he yelled. "You young villain!" shouted Lovell. "They're Flynn's sardines you've brought here, are they?"
"Yaroooh! Keep him off!"
Tubby Muffin roared as Patrick O'Donovan Flynn collared him. The Fistical Four glared at him in wrath.
They understood now that unexpected generosity on Tubby's part. He had "whacked out" the sardines in order to get protection when their owner came after them.
"You young Hun!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.
"Yaroooh! Help! Stand by a chap when he's stood you a feed!" howled Tubby. "Yah! Draggim-off!"
The Fistical Four were not proof against that appeal.
They seized the infuriated Flynn, and dragged him off.
"Arrah! Leggo!" shouted Flynn. "Sure, I'm going to slaughter him intirely! Me illigant sardines—"
"Kick him out!" said Lovell.
"Yes," panted Tubby, "kick him out, the beast! Oh—ah—yah—yaup! Wharrer you kicking me for?"
It was Tubby that Lovell was alluding to, not Flynn, and he promptly suited the action to the word.
The fat Classical departed with a series of fiendish yells, and his place at the tea-table was taken by Patrick O'Donovan Flynn, who was grinning now.
Tubby Muffin's masterly scheme had not been very successful, after all.

(Continued on the next page.)



The 2nd Chapter. Knowles' Chance.

Knowles of the Sixth glanced at his study door, to make sure that it was shut, and lighted a cigarette. "Help yourselves!" he remarked. Catesby and Frampton followed his example. The three Sixth-Formers of the Modern side were met in Cecil Knowles' study for a consultation. There was an unusually satisfied expression on Knowles' hard face. Matters were going well for the Modern captain. "Of course," said Knowles, with a slight smile, "nobody wants to hit a fellow when he's down."

The Modern prefect had said that he did not want to hit Bulkeley when he was down; but that remark was perhaps intended humorously. There was no doubt that Knowles intended to make the fullest use of the misfortune that had fallen upon the captain of Rookwood. He had his own personal dislike of Bulkeley to consider, as well as the keen rivalry between the two sides of Rookwood—Modern and Classical. He showed his note to his two companions when he had written it, and they nodded approval. The epistle ran: "Dear Bulkeley,—I feel bound to draw your attention to opinion in the school on a certain matter, and I feel sure that you will receive this hint in the spirit in which it is meant. Under the present painful circumstances the general opinion seems to be that, for a time at least, you should resign your position in Rookwood. Nothing at all personal is meant by this; it is simply the fitness of things. You have my fullest sympathy, and I sincerely hope that your father will succeed in clearing himself from the cloud that rests upon his name. Until that is done, however, you must feel yourself that it would be more judicious for you to take up an attitude less in the public eye. I should be glad to hear your views. Yours sincerely, "CECIL KNOWLES."

"The—the fact is—" "Arrah, and why don't ye come to the point!" exclaimed a voice from the passage. "Sure, it's a testimonial, Bulkeley darling." "Hurray!" squeaked Tubby Muffin. George Bulkeley glanced at the doorway in astonishment. A dozen or more juniors had gathered there. "What on earth—" began the Rookwood captain. "It's a testimonial, Bulkeley," explained Jimmy Silver. "Oh, gad! What does it mean?" "May I read it out?" "Yes, if you like, but buck up!" Jimmy Silver proceeded to read out the testimonial. Bulkeley listened in amazement. Neville and Lonsdale and Jones major grinned. Apparently they saw something amusing in that exposition of the firm faith and loyalty of the Fourth Form of Rookwood. From "whereas" to the last of the signatures, Jimmy Silver read it out, at every pause a cheer coming in from the crowd of juniors in the passage. Bulkeley did not interrupt him. He smiled slightly. Perhaps he was not quite displeased by that display of fervent faith and loyalty on the part of the juniors, though doubtless it was a "cheek" on their part to take the captain of the school under their wing in this way. "Is that all?" asked Bulkeley patiently, when Jimmy Silver had finished at last. "That's all, Bulkeley." "I suppose all that's meant as a compliment," said Bulkeley. "I'm much obliged to you. Now run away." "Oh!" "Speech!" howled Flynn from the passage. And there was a roar. "Speech, Bulkeley!" "You young asses!" exclaimed Neville. "Cut off!" "Speech!" "Come, clear off, you kids!" said Bulkeley. "Enough's as good as a feast, you know. Run away!" "Ahem!" "Oh, come on," said Lovell. "We'll stick it up on the board, anyway." Bulkeley jumped. "That nonsense—ahem, I mean that testimonial!" he exclaimed. "Yes, rather!" "Don't do anything of the sort!" exclaimed Bulkeley sharply. "You young donkeys, I suppose you mean well." "Oh, really, you know, Bulkeley—" "Leave it here," said Bulkeley. "Oh, all right." "And clear!" Jimmy Silver & Co. cleared, not feeling wholly satisfied. The testimonial had not evoked nearly so much enthusiasm in Bulkeley's study as among the Fourth. Tommy Dodd lingered behind, and Bulkeley pointed to the door. "Note for you, Bulkeley," said Tommy, with a grin. "Oh, run away, kid!" "It's from Knowles." "Oh, Knowles? Give it to me, then." "I'm to wait for an answer," said Tommy Dodd, handing over the Modern prefect's note. Bulkeley nodded, and opened the envelope. His brows came together darkly as he read, and he tossed the note to his friends. "Read that!" he said. "The cheeky cad!" exclaimed Neville wrathfully. "Confound his nerve!" said Jones major. "There's no opinion of the sort in the school—I know that. There may be on the Modern side." "They're cads enough for anything!" growled Lonsdale. "Oh, draw it mild!" interjected Tommy Dodd warmly. "Shut up, you cheeky fag." "Well, don't you slang the Moderns, then," said Tommy Dodd independently. "Lots of cads on this side, I can tell you. I'll give you the names, if you like." "Dry up, kid," said Bulkeley. "I'd better send an answer to this, you fellows." "Put it plain," growled Neville. "Tell him what you think of him." "Well, I must be civil. Besides, I dare say Knowles is only acting from what he thinks is a sense of duty." "I don't think!" "Well, I'm bound to take that for granted," said Bulkeley. "I'll let him have his answer." He scribbled a hasty note, folded it in an envelope, and handed it to the waiting fag. Tommy Dodd left the study. Bulkeley's face darkened as the door closed behind him, and his lips trembled a little. "I—I wonder—" he began. "Don't take any notice of what that Modern cad's said!" exclaimed Neville. "We all know what Knowles is after—the captaincy, if he can get it." "There's a lot in what he says." "Rats! Bosh!" "But I can't resign the captaincy," said Bulkeley quietly. "To do so would be like admitting there was possibly something in the charge against my father. I can't do that. Unless a

majority of the Sixth ask me to resign, I shall go on." "And that's not likely to happen," said Jones major. "You're jolly well not going to resign, anyway. Hang Knowles!" "Knowles don't count, anyway!" said Neville. But Bulkeley's friends were mistaken there. Cecil Knowles did count, and he was not finished yet.

The 4th Chapter. The Classicals are Wrathful!

Tommy Dodd presented himself in Knowles' study, on the Modern side, and found Knowles & Co. waiting there. There was an atmosphere of smoke in the study, which Tommy judiciously affected not to notice. "Well?" said Knowles. "Here's Bulkeley's answer," said Tommy Dodd. "Did he say anything?" asked Frampton. "Bulkeley didn't say much," answered Tommy. "The others did." "Oh, Bulkeley wasn't alone?" asked Knowles, with interest. "No; three Classical Sixth chaps with him." "What did they say, then?" "Neville said 'Cheeky cad!'" "What?" "Jones major said 'Confound his nerve!'" "You cheeky young rascal!" shouted Knowles. "Do you want me to give you a hiding?" "You asked me what they said!" replied Tommy Dodd, in an injured tone. "I'm only telling you what you asked me." "Hold your tongue!" "Oh, all right. Can I clear out?" asked Tommy. "Wait!" snapped Knowles. Tommy Dodd waited, with an exaggerated expression of resignation on his face. Knowles opened Bulkeley's note, and the three Modern seniors read it together. It was brief, but to the point. "Dear Knowles,—I had already considered the question of resigning the captaincy, but decided not, as to do so might imply that I had some, even the faintest, doubt of my father's innocence. Thank you, all the same, for your suggestion, which, of course, I take in the spirit in which it is meant.—Yours. "GEORGE BULKEYE."

convinced that at the trial he will be completely cleared. How dare you suggest that he is guilty before he has been tried!" Knowles shrugged his shoulders. "I did not say he was guilty. I said he had been arrested for theft," he answered. "You ought to resign. You ought to get out of Rookwood, as a matter of fact, if you want it in plain English. That's my opinion." "Well, now you've told me your opinion, you can leave me alone," said Bulkeley. "You still refuse to resign?" "I see no reason to alter my decision." "Not even the fact that someone else is waiting to step into his shoes, Knowles," said Neville bitterly. "I despise insinuations of that kind," said Knowles loftily. "I'm thinking of the good name of Rookwood. What are people to think of the school when they hear that the captain is a thief's son?" Bulkeley made a stride forward, his fists clenched hard, his eyes blazing. Knowles involuntarily stepped back. "Knock the cad down!" shouted Lonsdale. "Get out, Knowles," said Bulkeley hoarsely. "I can't answer for myself if you stay here. You've said what you came to say—now go!" "And said it for all Rookwood to hear," said Jones major, with a glance at the open door. "The fags out there have heard every word." "All Rookwood can hear me," said Knowles. "I've nothing to conceal. As you refuse to do the right thing, Bulkeley, I shall see that steps are taken to make you do it. The Sixth Form will make representations to the Head on the subject. That's all." With that, Knowles strode from the study, followed by Catesby and Frampton. Neville slammed the door after them; he would gladly have kicked Knowles down the passage, too. There was a roar in the passage. The loud words in Bulkeley's study had been heard. Jimmy Silver & Co., and a dozen more fellows, knew what Knowles had come for. As the three Modern seniors went down the passage a crowd of angry and indignant Classical juniors surged round them. "Cads! Modern rotters!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell furiously. "Cads! Sneaks!" yelled Conroy. "Yah! Modern cads!" "Kick 'em out!" "Bump the Modern rotters!" "Stand back!" shouted Knowles furiously, as the angry juniors closed round. "Collar them!" shouted Jimmy Silver. "Down with the Moderns!" All respect for the high and mighty Sixth, and the rank of prefect, was forgotten now. The insult to Bulkeley, their popular captain, was more than Jimmy Silver & Co. could stand. They fairly swarmed on Knowles and Catesby and Frampton. In a minute more the three prefects would have been down, and bumped on the floor by the excited juniors. But Bulkeley's study door was hastily opened, and the captain of Rookwood strode out. "Stop!" he shouted. "Oh!" "You young rascals!" shouted Bulkeley angrily. "How dare you! By Jove, I'll lick you all round for this! Let Knowles alone at once!" The juniors reluctantly fell back. Bulkeley remained watching, with a frowning brow, while Knowles & Co. walked out of the School House, unmolested now. George Bulkeley's intervention had saved them from a severe ragging, but they were not feeling grateful—Knowles least of all. Bulkeley went back into his study when the Modern seniors were gone. The juniors dispersed, angry and dissatisfied. "Bulkeley's a silly ass!" said Jimmy Silver, as the Fistical Four went into the end study for prep. "Why couldn't he let us mop up those cads? Fancy letting Knowles come and ride the high horse on our side! Br-r-r-r!" "Bulkeley won't resign, though," said Lovell. "No fear! That's Knowles' game, but it won't wash," grinned Jimmy Silver. "I dare say our testimonial bucked Bulkeley a good bit, and made him firm." "Ahem!" "He knows that the Fourth back him up, anyway." "He don't seem to care much whether the Fourth back him up or not," Newcome remarked candidly. "Oh, rot!" said Jimmy Silver unasily. "Of course he does!" "But—" "When you've done butting, we'll get on with prep." And the Fistical Four got on with prep.

The 3rd Chapter. Backed Up by the Fourth.

"Just in time!" said Jimmy Silver. The Fistical Four were in the Sixth Form passage when Tommy Dodd arrived in the School House, note in hand. Jimmy Silver had the testimonial to Bulkeley in his hand. It was quite a long document, and was made by pinning together a number of sheets of impot paper. In size, at least, it was imposing. Every name in the Fourth Form, Classical and Modern, was appended, so there was a tremendous list of signatures. The Fistical Four were about to present the testimonial, when Tommy Dodd came over with his note from Knowles. Tommy glanced at the testimonial admiringly. "Finished?" he asked. "Yes; every blessed name's down," answered Jimmy Silver. "We're going to post it up on the notice-board after presenting it to Bulkeley. That will show all Rookwood what we think of our captain." "Good!" said Tommy Dodd. Jimmy Silver tapped at the study door. "Come in!" The juniors entered. Bulkeley of the Sixth was not alone. Neville, Jones major, and Lonsdale of the Classical Sixth were in the study. The four seniors had been talking, Bulkeley wearing a troubled and harassed look. The captain of Rookwood had never looked his old self since that terrible scene in the quadrangle, when his father, while on a visit to Rookwood, had been arrested in the view of all the school. That blow had hit Bulkeley hard, and his anxiety for his father added to the bitterness of it. Not that his loyal faith in his father faltered for one moment. He felt that the truth must come out when Mr. Bulkeley stood his trial; and the truth, he was sure, was that his father was innocent. But the misery and shame of the accusation and the arrest cut him to the very heart. He gave the juniors a good-humoured glance, however, as they came in. His troubles had not embittered his kind temper. "Hallo! What do you kids want?" he asked. "Ahem!" In the presence of four prefects of the Sixth Jimmy Silver felt a little abashed. "What on earth have you got there?" asked Neville, glancing at the roll in Jimmy Silver's hand. "Ahem! You see—" "Buck up, kid!" said Bulkeley.

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The 5th Chapter. Bulkeley is Wanted!

Morning lessons were over the following day, and the Fistical Four were in the sunny quadrangle, when Tubby Muffin rolled up in great excitement. Tubby's fat face was simply ablaze. "I say, Jimmy—" he gasped. "Oh, get out!" said Jimmy Silver. "Don't tell us you've got a tin of sardines you want to whack out, you fat fraud!" "Tain't that! There's a bobby—" "A what?" "A bobby!" gasped Tubby excitedly. "Do you mean a policeman, fathead?" "Yes—a bobby, and that detective chap who came here the other day and arrested Bulkeley's pater when he was visiting Bulkeley. I know him again. He's got a face like a saw." "What the thump do they want here?" growled Lovell.

"Leggett says he thinks they've come for Bulkeley!" gasped Tubby Muffin. "Let me hear Leggett say so!" said Jimmy Silver, with a gleam in his eyes. "I'll give him something else to talk about, the cad!"

"But, I say, you know, do you think they've come for Bulkeley, Jimmy? Leggett thinks perhaps he was hand in glove with his pater— Yarooooo!"

Tubby Muffin found himself suddenly sitting on the ground before he could state the rest of Albert Leggett's charitable surmises.

The Fistical Four left him sitting there, gasping, and hurried towards the School House.

A policeman was visible there, with a quietly-dressed man, whom they recognised as Mr. Screw, the detective.

They were going into the House as the Fistical Four spotted them.

Mornington came towards the chums of the Fourth, with a knitted brow.

"What the dickens does this mean, you fellows?" he exclaimed. "What does that rat-faced bouncer want here again?"

"Can't be anything to do with Bulkeley."

"He's come to see Bulkeley," said Kit Erroll, joining them. "He asked for Bulkeley. Mr. Bootles is taking him to the Head, and the bobby is waiting in the hall—looks as if he's on the watch."

"My only hat!" said Jimmy blankly.

The Fistical Four were astonished and dismayed.

What could a detective from Scotland Yard possibly want with George Bulkeley?

"The—the fools!" muttered Mornington. "They can't suppose that Bulkeley knows anythin' about it, even if his pater did it."

"His pater didn't do it!" snapped Lovell.

"No. But even if he did, Bulkeley couldn't know anythin' about it. They must be potty!"

The news that the detectives had returned, and had asked to see Bulkeley, was very quick in spreading.

A crowd of fellows gathered about the doorway, and glances were cast on all sides at the stolid policeman standing in the hall.

Smythe of the Shell even ventured to ask the officer what he had come for; but he received only a stare by way of reply.

Whatever the policeman's intentions were he did not think fit to confide them to Adolphus Smythe.

Bulkeley was on Big Side, with some of the Sixth and Fifth.

The news soon reached the fellows looking on at the practice; but no one ventured to mention to Bulkeley that a "bobby" had come for him.

There was a buzz among the crowd outside the door, when the detective was seen again.

The Head came into view with him. Dr. Chisholm's face was set, and indicated clearly enough the anger and annoyance he was keeping under strict control.

Mr. Screw was murmuring some apology, and the Head of Rookwood interrupted him.

"You have your duty to do, sir," he said stiffly. "I am astonished that it should be considered needful; but if it is your duty, you must do it. I will take you to Bulkeley's room, and send for him."

"Thank you, sir!"

"You will find nothing there, Mr. Screw, that should not be there," said the Head coldly. "But you shall satisfy yourself. Silver!"

"Yes, sir?" said Jimmy.

"Do you know where Bulkeley is at present?"

"On the cricket-ground, sir."

"Kindly tell him at once that a gentleman has called to see him, and that I request him to come to his study immediately."

"Certainly, sir!"

Jimmy Silver hurried down to Big Side.

"Bulkeley!" he called out breathlessly. "Don't bother now, kid!"

"The Head wants you, Bulkeley."

"Oh, all right!"

Jimmy delivered his message, and he saw Bulkeley's face brighten.

"News about my pater, I expect, Neville," he said. "They may have found out the facts by this time."

"I hope so, old chap," said Neville.

Bulkeley hurried away to the house, and Jimmy Silver followed, with a clouded brow.

He knew very well that if the Rookwood captain was anticipating good news he would be disappointed.

Whatever Mr. Screw had come for, it certainly was not to give Bulkeley good news of his father.

The Rookwood captain passed through a silent crowd, and entered the house.

He stared a little at the sight of the constable.

But his eyes were fixed upon the Head, calmly and inquiringly.

"You sent for me, sir?"

"Yes; step into your study with me, Bulkeley, please."

"Certainly."

Dr. Chisholm entered the Rookwood captain's study with Mr. Screw, and Bulkeley followed them in.

Leggett, feeling safe in the presence of a Modern prefect, sneered.

"He's after Bulkeley," he repeated. "He's gone into Bulkeley's study with the Head, Catesby. I can jolly well guess what it means, too. Mr. Bulkeley's accused of stealing bonds from the bank, and they can't be found."

"What's that got to do with Bulkeley?" said Lovell, clenching his hands.

"Plain enough, I think," sneered Leggett. "Mr. Bulkeley was visiting your cheery skipper when he was arrested. Of course, the detective thinks his son had a hand in it—very likely thinks that Mr. Bulkeley brought the stolen property down here to hide."

Catesby gave a violent start. "What—what's that?" he exclaimed.

"Well, wouldn't it be a clever dodge?" said Leggett, evidently pleased with his surmise. "Where would you find a safer place to hide stolen bonds, for instance, than in a schoolboy's locker? Nobody would think of looking there. But the detective happens to have thought of it."

"You young fool!" said Catesby harshly. His face was white and set. "How dare you suggest such a thing? Hold your tongue!"

The Modern prefect stalked away towards Mr. Manders' house, several glances resting on him as he went.

Leggett's suggestion seemed to have had a very startling effect upon Stephen Catesby; why, it was impossible to guess.

Leggett would have followed the Modern prefect, but he was not allowed to do so.

Lovell's grasp was upon him. "Catesby!" yelled Leggett desperately. "Catesby did not even turn his head. And during the next few minutes Albert Leggett had reason to repent his sage surmises, as the Fistical Four rubbed his nose on the cold, hard quadrangle."

The 6th Chapter. Under Suspicion.

"Bulkeley!"

The Head's tone was very kind. Ever since the misfortune that had

"No."

The detective coughed. "Ahem! Well, the bonds cannot be found, Master Bulkeley, though the search for them has been rigid."

"You had better find the thief, and then you may find the stolen bonds," said Bulkeley disdainfully.

The detective smiled slightly. "To come to the point, Master Bulkeley, it occurs to me as possible that your father's hurried visit to you on that occasion was for the purpose of placing the bonds in hiding here in a safe place."

Bulkeley's eyes glittered. "I suppose you are doing your duty, Mr. Screw," he said, repressing his anger. "I can only say that my father handed me nothing."

"He might have placed something in your charge without stating its nature," suggested Mr. Screw. "He might have called it by some other name—family documents, literary manuscripts, anything."

"He gave me nothing."

"If you have any such thing in your charge, Master Bulkeley, I am willing to believe that you were ignorant of its nature, and if you hand it to me at once a very lenient view may be taken of your conduct. I am here to find the bonds, if they are hidden here. I have a warrant to search for them."

"Search as long as you like!" said the captain of Rookwood scornfully. "You will find nothing here that does not belong to me!"

"Very well. I wished to give you a chance."

"I dare say you meant kindly," said Bulkeley wearily. "But as I know nothing of the bonds, and have never even seen them, I cannot help you. My father did not take the bonds."

"Very well. I have my duty to do. Please remain."

"I will remain also," said Dr. Chisholm. "I am perfectly convinced that nothing will be found here that does not belong to Bulkeley."

"We shall see," said Mr. Screw calmly.

here now, sir?" asked the Head, whose impatience was visibly growing.

"Are these the only quarters that Mr. Bulkeley occupies in the school?" asked Mr. Screw.

"Certainly!"

"He does not share a dormitory—"

"The Sixth Form do not sleep in a dormitory. You can see that this room is a bed-room as well as a study."

"Quite so. Has Master Bulkeley a locker, or anything of the kind, in any other room—a class-room, for instance?"

"There is my locker in the Form-room," said Bulkeley. "If you want to look in it, the key is on the bunch I have given you."

"I should certainly like to look in it."

"Follow me, sir," said the Head.

"Kindly accompany us, Master Bulkeley."

"Very well."

Bulkeley followed the Head and the detective, the constable bringing up the rear. But a fresh disappointment awaited Mr. Screw.

Bulkeley's locker in the Sixth-Form room was drawn blank.

"And now, Mr. Screw?" asked the Head, as politely as he could.

"For the present, sir, I have finished," said the detective quietly.

"You are satisfied, I presume, that Bulkeley knows nothing whatever of the stolen bonds?" exclaimed the Head sharply.

"I am satisfied that they are not to be found, at all events," answered the detective drily.

"Really, sir, as you have searched—"

"I have not searched every nook and cranny of this extensive building, and I am not able to do so," said Mr. Screw. "There are, I imagine, many hidden recesses in this old place where a small article could be hidden. Master Bulkeley, I will make one more appeal to you. If your father has placed any article in your keeping, it will be for your own interest to hand it over to me."

"I have answered you already," said Bulkeley coldly.

almost all the Rookwood fellows felt concerned about him.

It was known now what the detective had come for.

And there were not wanting ill-natured tongues to hint that perhaps Mr. Screw had been on the right track, though he had not found what he sought.

Bulkeley was popular with nine-tenths of Rookwood, but the other tenth did not like him.

Juniors like Peele and Gower and Tracy, seniors like Catesby and Frampton, Knowles and Carthew, disliked him and feared him.

He had too strict a sense of duty to be liked by mean-spirited fellows.

And now was the chance of his enemies, the few he had.

His quarters had been searched by the police for stolen property; he was innocent—he might be innocent—but the suspicion, the stain, remained.

It was simply impossible for a fellow in such a position to remain captain of the school.

Even Jimmy Silver felt that it would not do.

And Jimmy knew that Bulkeley had been packing—it looked as if he was leaving Rookwood.

Jimmy felt that as a personal blow.

"I believe he's going, you fellows," Jimmy said dismally, in the end study that evening. "I—I suppose it's a bit rotten for him now. Some fellows are cads enough to think evil of him. Poor old Bulkeley!"

"Poor old chap!" said Raby.

"It's sensible of him to get out for a bit, till this is settled one way or the other," said Erroll, who was in the study. "The position is too rotten altogether. If his father is acquitted, Bulkeley can come back with flying colours."

"But if he isn't—" muttered Newcome.

"Then poor old Bulkeley couldn't stay, anyway. But—but I think the old man's innocent, and if he's innocent, I suppose he will be acquitted."

"Mistakes are made sometimes," said Lovell.

Erroll smiled faintly, but did not reply. Lovell's meaning was pretty clear; he did not intend to believe anything against Bulkeley or his father, whatever a judge and jury might decide.

Tubby Muffin looked into the study. "He's going!" he announced.

"Who's going, you fat chump?" growled Lovell.

"Bulkeley."

"Oh!"

There was a rush from the study at once.

Jimmy Silver & Co. dashed down the staircase.

The big door was open. Outside, in the dusk, gleamed the lights of the station cab.

Old Mack and the cabman were carrying out a trunk.

Bulkeley, in coat and cap, was saying good-bye to some of the Sixth.

His face was a little pale, but very calm.

Neville was looking furious, and the other seniors troubled and dismayed.

"Bulkeley!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "You—you're going?"

Bulkeley gave the juniors a kind smile. "Yes, kid—for a time."

"You're coming back?" exclaimed Lovell.

"I hope so."

"Bulkeley, old chap, there's no need—" muttered Neville miserably.

"It's better, old fellow," said Bulkeley quietly. "The Head thinks so. Good-bye, old man—good-bye!"

Neville went out with him to the cab.

Through the dusk the figure of Cecil Knowles of the Modern Sixth loomed up.

"You're going, Bulkeley?" he exclaimed. "Yes."

Knowles drew a deep breath. He composed his features to an expression of sympathetic concern, but he could not disguise the glitter in his eyes.

"I'm sorry you're going, Bulkeley," he said.

"Thank you!" said Bulkeley drily. "I hope we part friends," said Knowles.

"I'm sorry there have ever been any disagreements between us, Bulkeley; and I'd like to say that I believe your father is innocent, and believe that the truth will come out in time. And there's my hand on it!"

Bulkeley took his hand cheerfully enough.

"I'm glad to hear you speak like that, Knowles," he said simply. "It's kind of you. Certainly we part friends, old fellow! Good-bye!"

Knowles stood looking after the cab as it rolled away in the dusk.

There was a twinge of remorse even in Cecil Knowles' hard heart.

But as he walked away to his own House his eyes were shining.

"Captain of Rookwood!" he murmured. "The path's clear now—Captain of Rookwood!"

Jimmy Silver was thinking of that, too, when Bulkeley was gone.

"There'll be an election for captain," he said. "That cad Knowles will think it's a sure thing for him; and we've got to stop him. Do you hear?"

"And we jolly well will!" said Lovell, with emphasis. "Every vote counts, and we'll rally all the fellows to keep him out."

Bulkeley was gone, with a shadow on his name, but it did not seem so certain as Knowles supposed, that the Modern prefect would realise his old ambition.

THE END.



"Bulkeley!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, as he shook hands with the captain of Rookwood. "You—you're going?" "Yes, kid—for a time," replied Bulkeley.

fallen upon Bulkeley's father the Head had been very kind and considerate towards Bulkeley, and the Rookwood fellows had noted it, and liked their headmaster all the better for it.

What the Head's opinion might be on the subject of Mr. Bulkeley himself nobody could guess; but, at any rate, he evidently did not believe that he had a right to visit the sins of the fathers upon the children.

"Yes, sir," said Bulkeley, looking at the Head, and taking no notice of the presence of the detective.

"Bulkeley, this is—is a very unpleasant matter. You understand, of course, that what is about to take place is not by my wish—that my faith in you is quite unshaken."

"You are very kind, sir," said Bulkeley, in wonder.

"You are aware that a number of bonds are missing from the bank of which your father was manager," said the Head. "These bonds have not been found, I am told, and cannot be traced. They represent a large sum of money. I hardly like to—tell you what is now considered possible by the detective in charge of the case, Bulkeley; but—but—" The Head paused. "Kindly explain to the lad, Mr. Screw!"

"Certainly. Master Bulkeley, your father visited you a few days ago, when I had the painful duty of taking him into custody."

Bulkeley nodded.

"Did he on that occasion place anything in your keeping?"

"No."

"Had he on any occasion within the last month placed any article in your keeping?"

"No."

"Have you at the present time any property of any kind, of which you are taking care for your father?"

He opened the door and called in the constable.

Bulkeley handed over his keys, and stood pale and silent while the search proceeded.

It was a thorough one.

Under Mr. Screw's unflinching eye the constable ransacked every corner of the study, and every receptacle and recess.

Even the books in the bookcase were taken out, and opened and shaken separately.

It was more than half an hour before the search of the study finished.

The Rookwood fellows had gone into the dining-hall to dinner.

Bulkeley was not thinking of dinner, and the Head forgot that his lunch was waiting.

The search was over at last, and nothing had been discovered.

"Well, sir?" said Dr. Chisholm, as the detective stood with a somewhat baffled expression on his face.

"Master Bulkeley will not object to his person being searched?" asked Mr. Screw.

Bulkeley flushed crimson.

"Surely this is an absurdity!" exclaimed the Head. "A number of bonds would be too bulky to be concealed about the person, sir."

"They might be separated, and even severed in pieces," answered Mr. Screw. "However, if Master Bulkeley objects—"

"Will you allow this gentleman to do as he pleases, Bulkeley?"

"I will do whatever you suggest, sir," answered the Rookwood captain.

"Very well. Proceed, Mr. Screw," said the Head.

It occupied but a few minutes to search Bulkeley from head to foot.

But again the search was unrewarded. "May I conclude that you are finished

The 7th Chapter. Good-bye to Bulkeley.

Jimmy Silver was worried.

It was just like Jimmy to forget his own concerns, and trouble his head about the troubles of somebody else.

But George Bulkeley was so great a man in junior eyes—he filled so large a space in the little world of school—that

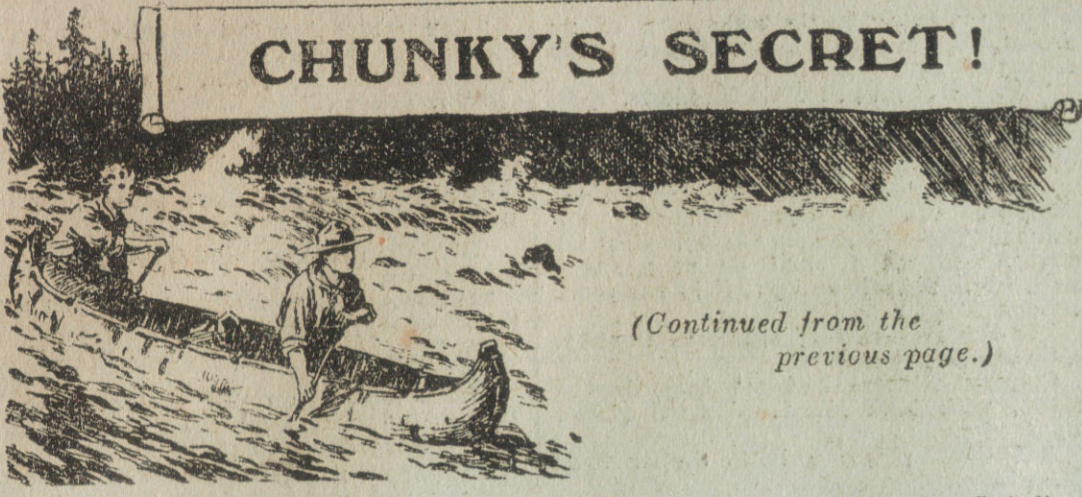
NEXT MONDAY.

"RIVALS FOR THE CAPTAINCY!"

By OWEN CONQUEST.

DON'T MISS IT!

CHUNKY'S SECRET!



(Continued from the previous page.)

Molly Lawrence was waiting by the canoe, to go home. Her brother had stopped to speak with Frank Richards & Co. as they fetched their horses from the corral, and Chunky Todgers joined her on the bank of the creek while she waited. Molly regarded him with a smile. Chunky was evidently "mashed" on somebody—probably one of the Cedar Creek girls—but Molly did not yet guess that she was the object of the fat youth's devotion. "M-M-M-M-Molly— Oh, I say—" "Yes?" "W-wow-would you like me to paddle you home?" asked Chunky bashfully. "Tom's going to," answered Molly. "Besides, you've got your pony at the school." "Tom could ride my pony home," said Chunky. "In—in fact, he's going to, Molly. I—I'm going to paddle you home, you know."

thinks you are a little soft. I believe you are." Chunky sat speechless. "If you talk any more, I shall splash you," continued Miss Lawrence warningly. "Now sit quiet, and keep your foolish mouth shut." "Oh, crumbs!" gasped Chunky. He sat quite in consternation as Molly paddled on again. The course of true love was certainly not running smooth in Chunky's case. He felt a chill, and his "mashed" state was very nearly abolished on the spot. But he made another effort. "I—I—I say, Molly— Yaroop!" Molly kept her word, and sent a cruel splash over the love-lorn Chunky. The fat youth jumped, and the canoe rocked. "I warned you!" said Molly. Chunky Todgers did not speak again during the journey up the creek. He was rather relieved when they reached the Lawrence farmstead, in fact. As they landed, there was a clatter of hoofs on the trail, and Tom Lawrence dashed up on Chunky's pony. "Oh, here you are!" he shouted. "Yes, here we are!" said Molly. "What did you leave me behind for?" roared Lawrence wrathfully. "I had to ride home on this blessed fat pony." "Why, Todgers told me—" exclaimed Molly, in surprise. "I—I told you you could have the pony, Lawrence," gasped Chunky. "You young jay, you might have drowned Molly if you tried to paddle the canoe!" exclaimed Lawrence. "I told you I didn't want your silly pony. I came down to the creek, and found the canoe gone. What the thunder did you want to run off with my sister for, you fat idiot?" "I—I—I—" "What did you play such a trick for?" shouted Lawrence. "I—I—I—" "Can't you speak, you chump?" exclaimed the exasperated Lawrence, taking Todgers by the collar and shaking him. "I—I—leggo!—I wanted to," gasped Chunky. "I—I wanted Molly to recline, her gaze on mine—I mean, I wanted—I yaroooh!—that is to say— Yoooop!" Tom Lawrence gave a yell. "Oh! So it's Molly, is it? You write your fathead poems about Molly, do you? I'll give you poems, you clam!" He swung Chunky Todgers round, and a heavy boot was planted upon Chunky, and he gave a howl. "Yow-ow! Leave off!" But Tom Lawrence did not leave off. Apparently he thought that Todgers wanted a lesson, and he intended to give him one. Chunky made a rush for his pony, but he had no time to get into the saddle. Lawrence's heavy boot was still actively at work. He hopped along, holding the reins, running beside the pony, while Lawrence pursued him, still landing out with his boots, and yelling with laughter. Chunky was yelling, too, though not with laughter. Lawrence stopped at last, too overcome with merriment to run any further, and he stood roaring in the trail, while the unhappy Chunky clambered on his fat pony. "Yow-ow-ow-ow-wooop!" spluttered Chunky. "Ha, ha, ha!" Chunky cast a glance back at Molly Lawrence. To his surprise and horror, Molly was laughing as heartily as her brother. Apparently Molly saw something entertaining in that chase down the trail. It was really too bad; and at that moment Chunky, mashed as he was, felt strongly inclined to punch Molly's nose as well as her brother's. The last thing he heard, as he trotted down the trail, was a shout of laughter.

The 4th Chapter. Not According to Programme.

Frank Richards & Co. spotted Chunky Todgers as they rode up the trail the following morning to Cedar Creek. The fat youth was mounted on his fat pony, trotting along slowly, with a thoughtful shade on his chubby face. "Hallo, Patty!" shouted Bob. Todgers looked round, and met three grinning glances, and blushed. The three chums were greatly interested in Chunky, in his present "mashed" state. As Bob put it, they had never seen a mashed porpoise before. Chunky did not seem very comfortable in the saddle. He was shifting incessantly on the back of the pony. "Anything the matter with you, Chunky?" asked Vere Beauclerc. "Or anything wrong with the saddle?" "N-n-no! I—I've got some bumps," mumbled Chunky. "I—I took Molly home last night in the canoe, and Tom Law-

rence didn't like being left behind. The beast kicked me!" "Ha, ha!" "And Molly only laughed!" added Chunky plaintively. "Laughed, you know! At me! She—she thought it was funny!" Apparently Chunky expected sympathy, but he did not receive any. The three chums simply yelled. "Oh, don't cackle!" said Todgers thoughtfully. "I—I say, Cherub, it was just here that you stopped Molly's horse when it was running away, wasn't it, a week or two ago? I—I wonder if her horse is likely to bolt again?" Chunky looked back along the trail. The fat youth would have been glad to see Molly's horse bolting, so that he could perform an heroic deed, and shine in her eyes. Then she would not laugh next time Tom Lawrence kicked him, perhaps. Tom Lawrence and his sister came trotting up the trail just then. They were riding to school that morning. "I—I say, Cherub—" whispered Chunky excitedly. "Well," said Beauclerc, his eyes twinkling. "Couldn't you—e-c-couldn't you—" "Couldn't I what?" "Just ride along and give a yell, you know, and—start her horse, and—and I'll—" Beauclerc yelled. "Leave it to me!" gasped Bob Lawless. "Oh, crumbs! Leave it to me! You fellows get aside, and give Chunky plenty of room." "I say, you're a good chap, Bob!" gasped Todgers. "None better!" grinned Bob. "Leave it to me." He dashed away up the trail at top speed, and joined Molly Lawrence and her brother. "Hold on!" he exclaimed. "What's up?" asked Tom Lawrence, drawing rein. "The joke of the season!" gasped Bob. "Chunky wants to rescue Molly on a runaway horse, same as the Cherub did once. I'm to frighten Molly's horse, and send him along the trail. You don't mind, Molly?" "Don't I?" answered Molly warmly.

BUY WAR SAVINGS CERTIFICATES—



—AND HELP TO CARRY ON THE WAR!

"Just like a girl—you can't see a joke," said Bob. "I mean, get off at a gallop, and make Chunky think your gee's running away. He will be no end of a guy trying to stop you." Molly laughed. "Go it, Moll!" grinned Lawrence. The girl rode on, and Bob cracked his whip loudly, and Lawrence shouted. Molly's horse was urged into a rapid gallop. Chunky, blinking along the trail, could hardly believe in his good luck, when he saw Molly swooping down on him, with a thunder of hoofs. It looked a dangerous task to attempt to stop the supposed runaway, but Chunky had plenty of pluck, though perhaps not a full allowance of common-sense. "Help!" cried Molly, as she came dashing by Chunky Todgers. "Gee-up!" gasped Chunky, to his stead. Either the horse, or Molly's guiding hand on the rein, dodged Chunky in the wide trail. She rode round him, and kept on towards the school at a gallop. Chunky thundered after her, ready to attempt the impossible. He remembered how Beauclerc had stopped the runaway, and he was going to do the same. But it was not so easy to carry out the plan as to make it. Chunky's fat pony was not accustomed to violent exercise, neither was the fat youth a good rider. He cracked his whip, and gave the pony a cut, and the startled animal whinnied and reared. "Gee-up!" shrieked Chunky, as Molly

drew further and further away, ahead. "Gee-up, you brute! Gurrurr! Go! Gee-up!" He cut, and cut again, and the scared pony tore down the trail after Molly. But he had the bit between his teeth now, and Chunky was past all control of him. The speed at which he went took Todgers' breath away, the reins flew out of his fat hands, and he clutched at the saddle, and then at the tossing mane of the galloping pony. A yell of laughter followed him up the trail. Frank Richards & Co. came riding after him, with Lawrence, and all four were nearly in convulsions. Molly drew rein at the school gates, and dismounted. Chunky Todgers came thundering on, unable to stop. "Gee-whiz!" shouted Eben Hacke. "Get aside, you galoots!" "There was a rush to leave the trail free for the hapless rider. The fat pony thundered on into the school gateway, and into the playground, with Chunky clinging wildly to his mane and shrieking for help. The yelling and clucking on his back had finished it for Chunky's pony—the animal was scared and nearly frantic by now. He dashed on across the playground, swerved at the palisade, and then tore round the enclosure. The unhappy Chunky popped up and down in the saddle, clinging to his mane and yelling. Molly Lawrence ran in the way, and caught the streaming reins. With a strong and skilful hand, the Canadian girl forced the excited pony to a halt. The intended rescue had been reversed—it was Molly who was the rescuer. Chunky Todgers, finding the pony still at last, sat up dazedly, still holding on to the mane. "Ow, ow, ow!" gasped Chunky. "Oh, dear! I'm out of breath! Yow-ow-ow!" "Ha, ha, ha!" shrieked Molly. "Get down! Katie, come and help Chunky down." Kate Dawson ran up, laughing, and the gasping Chunky was helped to the ground. He stood palpitating and snorting for breath. "Oh, dear! Yow-ow-ow!" gasped Chunky. "Oh, dear! The beast! He—he ran away with me! Oh, crumbs! Ow!" "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Lawless. "Did you save Molly's life, Chunky?" "Yow-ow-ow! Oh!" Chunky Todgers, breathless and crimson, staggered away, leaving Bob to take his pony to the corral. It was Chunky's first and last attempt to shine in Molly's eyes in the role of heroic rescuer. Even Chunky realised that that wouldn't do.

The 5th Chapter. Curing Chunky.

"I'm going to lick him!" growled Tom Lawrence. "Don't!" said Frank Richards, laughing. "He's not going to be such a funny ass! It's rough on Molly!" growled the indignant Tom. "He's got to chuck it! The howling chump has actually written her a poem—full of eyes and dies and sighs." "Ha, ha, ha!" "Licking him won't do any good," said Bob Lawless. "Besides, poor old Chunky can't help being daft. Molly can give him a lesson, and I've thought of a way." "Well, go ahead," said Tom restively. Tom was very sensitive to the ridiculous side of Chunky's extraordinary attack. Bob Lawless proceeded to explain his "way," and there was a chorus of chortles. And when Molly was called into the council, she laughed and said: "Done!" After lessons that day Frank Richards & Co. joined Tom Lawrence and Molly outside the lumber-school. Chunky Todgers was on Molly's trail, as usual, probably hoping to be allowed to ride home with his charmer. "Is Chunky coming?" asked Molly demurely. Todgers came rolling up, delighted that the fair one remembered his existence. "I'm coming!" he announced, at once. "Sure you'd care for a walk?" asked Molly. "I guess so! Yes, rather! Why not ride, though?" asked Chunky, who greatly preferred to do his travelling sitting down. "Oh, we're going to have a walk through the woods," said Tom Lawrence. "You can come if you like." "You'll walk with me, Chunky," said Molly. Chunky almost purred with delight. The party started off walking. Chunky Todgers was in the Seventh heaven as he trotted on by Molly's side. Frank Richards & Co. were smiling. Tom Lawrence grinned. Molly's eyes were twinkling. They covered a mile of rough ground on the forest trail, and at the end of that mile Chunky Todgers was breathing very hard. "Like the walk, Chunky?" asked Bob Lawless blandly. "Ye-es," gasped Chunky. "Not getting out of breath?" "N-n-no." "I'm so glad," said Molly. "I'm thinking of walking to school now the weather's getting so fine, Chunky, and you can walk, too." "W-w-walking to school!" stammered Chunky. "Yes; it's only a few miles in the morning." "Oh!" "What did you say?" "N-n-nothing."

Another mile was covered, and Chunky deeply repented the last huge chunk of maple sugar he had disposed of that afternoon. It was taking its revenge upon him now. Chunky pushed back his hat from his streaming forehead, and tramped on doggedly. The other fellows sauntered carelessly; they were not so fat as Chunky and more accustomed to active service. But the fat youth was panting. "I—I say, are we walking home?" panted Chunky at last. "No fear!" answered Lawrence. "We're going back to the school for the hoeses." "Oh! How—how are we going to get back?" "Walk, I guess." "W-w-walk!" "You can crawl on your hands and knees, if you like, of course." "Oh! I—I say, hadn't we better turn back now?" "We're going to see Cascade Falls," said Molly. Chunky gasped. "Why, that's another four miles, on the Thompson River!" he ejaculated. "Yes, about that!" said the girl carelessly. "Oh, crumbs!" They walked on. Chunky Todgers' pace grew slower and slower. Molly walked with a free and springy step, impervious to fatigue, but her podgy admirer was in a cad way by this time. "I—I say, let's turn back!" said Todgers at last, with a groan. Tom Lawrence chuckled. "I'll tell you what," he said. "Some of us had better go back for the horses, and bring them to the falls, and we can ride home from there." "I'll go for them!" exclaimed Chunky brightly. "No; you go, Tom," said Molly calmly. "I want Chunky to keep with me. We might meet a rustler or a grizzly bear in the timber." "Right-ho! I'm off!" Tom Lawrence turned back, and Beauclerc and Bob Lawless went with him. Frank Richards sat down on a log, leaving Chunky to walk on with Molly. How Chunky Todgers got over the next mile he never knew. "I—I say, Molly, ain't you tired?" he groaned at last. "Not a bit." "I—I am, you know," confessed Chunky at last. "You can stay behind, if you like," said Molly coldly. "Then, if I meet a grizzly bear or a rustler—" "Ow! I—I'm coming." "Walk more quickly," said Molly encouragingly. "I'm leaving you." "I—I say—" "What?" "N-n-nothing!" groaned Chunky. The unfortunate Chunky was almost giddy now. The long, long trail stretched endlessly before him; the pine-trees seemed to whirl before his sight. He stole a beseeching glance at Molly. She was laughing. "Slowing down again!" exclaimed Molly. "Do come on! They'll overtake us with the horses before we get to the falls, at this rate." "I—I wish they would!" mumbled Chunky. "Why not wait for 'em, Molly?" "Come on!" Chunky Todgers stumbled on. He wondered why Molly did not get tired, and he wondered, too, why she was smiling all the time. A dreadful suspicion dawned upon his mind at last. He stopped. "Aren't you coming?" asked Molly sweetly. "Yow-ow-ow!" moaned Chunky. "It's a lark. I see it now! Yow-ow-ow! You've done this on purpose! Ow! You know I can't walk five miles! Wow! I shall die if I take another step— Ow!" "In your poem you said you would die for me," said Molly demurely. "Well, keep on, then." Chunky blinked at her. He wondered how he ever could have been "mashed" on Molly. "Aren't you coming?" demanded Molly. "No!" howled Chunky. "I'm not coming! I won't ever go for a walk with you again— Ow-wow! I don't like you— Yow-ow! You ain't a nice girl at all— Oh, dear!" And Chunky fairly sat down in the grass, and groaned. "Ha, ha, ha, ha!" Chunky Todgers was still sitting in the grass, moaning, and Molly was leaning against a tree, smiling, when there was a clatter of hoofs, and Frank Richards & Co. came up with the horses. "Enjoyed your walk, Chunky!" roared Bob Lawless. "Yow-ow-ow!" "I don't think Chunky cares for my society as much as he did," said Molly saddy. "He says I'm not a nice girl!" "Ha, ha, ha!" The unhappy Chunky was lifted on his horse. He uttered no word on his way home. He did not even say good-night to Molly, though she said good-night most sweetly. And the next day there was no fellow at Cedar Creek who was more utterly and stonily indifferent to pretty Molly's charms than Chunky Todgers! Chunky had been cured!

NEXT MONDAY. FRANK RICHARDS & CO.'S CRUISE! By MARTIN CLIFFORD. DON'T MISS IT!