

THE BOYS WHO BEAT THE KAISER

(Continued from the previous page.)

The Glory Hole gang and Lal were berthed in pavilions, or bungalows, in the beautiful garden, which were generally used as bachelor quarters for the guests of the hotel.

Lal ate his supper alone and quietly in the dining-room of the hotel.

He learned that a mummy case had arrived, which had been placed in his bedroom.

Then he departed to rest through the quiet, palm-shaded gardens.

All was quiet in the bungalow inhabited by the Glory Hole gang.

The boys were apparently all asleep. But Lal only grinned to himself.

He knew that when the Glory Hole gang seemed most asleep they were generally most awake.

And he had not forgotten their intention of making an apple-pie bed for him, with Gus, the crocodile, for the pie.

He entered his room, slamming the

door loudly to let the boys know that he had gone in.

Then artfully, after a pause, he slammed the door again to convey to the listening Glory Hole gang the idea that he had gone out again.

But instead of going out, the cunning Lal had climbed into the mummy case, which stood up against the wall, a crude image of the Ancient Egyptian who had once been buried in it.

Lal closed the face of the case upon him.

He had bored holes where the staring eyes of the mummy portrait were painted on the lid of this ancient coffin.

In his pocket lay handy a heavy revolver.

This weapon was not for the boys.

Lal expected other visitors than his pupils that night.

But the boys would come first.

It was not long before they came.

He heard Skeleton's voice whispering and the sound of stubborn hoofs.

Outside the boys were shoving Horace, the goat, along the tiled paving of the veranda.

Then the door was gently opened, and, one by one, the Glory Hole gang crept into the room.

In his arms Skeleton held Gus, the crocodile.

"Hurry up, Dick!" he said. "This beast is scratching like anything, and he'll soon break the string that's tied round his neck! Open Lal's bolster quick, and shove him in! Crumbs, won't it give old Lal the jumps when he feels his bolster walking about under his head!"

The end of the bolster was opened, and the unhappy and unwilling Gus was dropped into it head-foremost and tied up.

From the darkness under the whispering palms outside came a thump and a muttered exclamation from Porkis, which showed that Horace had got one in on Porky—for luck.

Lal watched the boys through the holes in the mummy case.

In all mummy cases there is an im-

palpable dust of the centuries, and Lal wanted badly to sneeze as the boys, attracted by the mummy case, gathered round it.

"Look what that silly old ass Lal has been buying!" exclaimed Porkis. "I should think the old duffer is off his chump. Fancy buying a mummy coffin when we are all going up the Nile!"

Skeleton looked at the mummy face painted on the lid of the case reflectively.

"Rum thing, isn't it?" he said. "But that face reminds me of Lal's fat head, somehow. I don't know whether you chaps have ever noticed old Lal's nut, but it's like a bladder of lard done over with stove polish!"

Little did Skeleton dream that Lal himself was standing in the mummy case within two feet of him, listening to the frank comments of the boys.

Lal would have heard a great deal more about himself, but just at this moment from the door of the room came a whispered "Cave!"

"Hop it, you chaps!" said Chip. "There's someone moving about in the garden. I believe it's old Parky foxing us. If he comes up and catches Gus in

the bolster, there will be no end of a row!"

One by one the pyjama-clad figures crept out, their bare feet making no sounds on the tiled floor and veranda.

Lal chuckled in his mummy case.

He knew that it was not Mr. Parkins moving about in the garden.

Mr. Parkins, the querulous first master, had gone to bed long ago in his room in the main building of the Zulekia Palace Hotel.

Mr. Parkins was fed up with the boys of the Bombay Castle, and tired out by a long day of sight-seeing.

This was another business altogether.

It was the spies of the German Empire who were moving stealthily in the garden, waiting until the boys should have settled down and gone to bed.

And, in the darkness of the mummy case Lal felt the well-oiled chamber of the heavy revolver, to see that all the cartridges were well home.

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

RIVALRY OF THE ROAD!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Tale of the Rookwood Caravanners.



BY OWEN CONQUEST.



The 1st Chapter. Late Hours.

"Oh, dear!"

"Oh, crumbs!"

"Oh, Jerusalem!"

From those remarks it might have been judged that the Rookwood caravanners were not in high spirits.

As a matter of fact, they weren't.

Jimmy Silver was manfully keeping silent, while Lovell and Raby and Newcome indulged themselves freely in the ancient British privilege of grouching.

As for Tubby Muffin, he was fast asleep.

Inside the caravan, dreaming of the end of the war and huge joints of beef.

The Fistical Four were tramping with the horse, and they were tired; and Robinson Crusoe, the horse, was tired, too, and ill-tempered.

The caravan was progressing slowly up a steep lane.

Every now and then Robinson Crusoe stopped, and blood-curdling threats and oburgations failed to make him move on again till he considered it proper to do so.

Probably Robinson Crusoe considered it high time that all respectable caravanners and caravan horses were in bed, for it was past ten o'clock, and the Rookwooders were travelling by moonlight.

But Jimmy Silver & Co. were not to blame.

They were heading for Little Scratcham, and they had been assured by a wayfarer that Little Scratcham was only a few miles ahead, and that at Little Scratcham they would find a beautiful meadow for camping, with village shops just handy.

Since then they had covered six miles at least, but Little Scratcham still remained conspicuous by its absence.

High hedges and fields and heavy woods they passed in abundance, but no village came in sight.

The road was steep, and they were tired, and Robinson Crusoe was fractious; and even Tubby Muffin's snore from the caravan was irritating, in the circumstances.

The Rookwood juniors were beginning to think that the kind wayfarer who had directed them to Little Scratcham was a person with a misplaced sense of humour.

Such persons are sometimes met with on a caravan tour.

The dreadful possibility occurred to them that there was no such place as Little Scratcham at all, and that they were committed to following a long lane that had no turning.

But it was manifestly useless to turn back; so they kept on, and hoped for the best.

"Rotten!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "Oh, blow that horse! I've a jolly good mind to lather him!"

"He won't go at all when he's lathered!" said Raby hopelessly.

"Gee-up, you beast! Come on, old horse! Yah! You bundle of bones! Get on!"

"Puzzle, find Little Scratcham!" groaned Newcome, glaring round into the dim, uncertain moonlight. "I'm beginning to think that Little Scratcham is like old Dickens' Mrs. Harris—there ain't no such person! Oh, dear!"

"Keep smiling!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Rats!"

"Shurrup!"

"We're bound to come out somewhere," said Jimmy comfortingly.

But his comrades, like Rachel of old, refused to be comforted.

"Did you work that out in your head?" asked Lovell, with crushing sarcasm. "What a thing it is to have a really brainy chap in the party! Oh, dear!"

"That merchant was pulling our leg," said Raby. "I remember now he had a

sort of grin when he directed us. I wish I had him here!"

"This blessed lane don't lead anywhere, unless it's into the clouds!" said Lovell, with conviction. "The place is a desert, without a single native to ask questions of. Blessed if I knew there were uninhabited deserts in England before! Why don't they colonise England, instead of sending chaps to the ends of the earth? Gee-up, you brute!"

Robinson Crusoe had halted again.

A chorus of oburgations fell upon his ears, but his ears were closed to the voice of the charmer.

Apparently Robinson was fed up.

Lovell, out of patience, brought the whip into play.

Robinson Crusoe looked round reproachfully, and set his forehead more firmly into the chaly dust.

Judging by appearances, he had decided to remain there the rest of the night.

Lovell pulled at his head, and Jimmy Silver and Raby pushed at his haunches, and Newcome tapped him with the whip.

And Robinson Crusoe stood like a British Grenadier, with a firmness that was entirely out of place at such a moment.

"Well, I'm blowed!" gasped Lovell. "I believe this blessed boss would let me pull his silly head off, rather than move! Kim up, you bony old scoundrel!"

"Gee-up!" roared Raby. "You rofter! You Hun! You Boche! You Tirpitz! Gee-up!"

But the caravan horse firmly declined to "gee."

"Well, this puts the lid on!" said Newcome. "Let him rest for a bit. I'm going to sit down."

The snore in the caravan ceased, and Tubby Muffin's fat face looked out.

"Stopped?" asked Tubby. "Camping—what? I say, I'm ready for supper!"

"Go and eat coke!"

"Ain't you camping yet?"

"Can we camp here, in a narrow lane?" roared Lovell.

"Why don't you find a camping-place?"

That question was too much for Lovell. He caught up a chunk of chalky earth from the road, and projected it at Tubby with deadly aim.

The fat youth of Rookwood disappeared into the caravan again, with a loud yell.

"Now put your fat head out, and ask some more questions!" roared Lovell.

But Tubby didn't. Lovell's answers to his questions were too emphatic.

"If we only had just a faint notion where we were!" murmured Newcome. "If only some blessed native would crop up!"

"Hallo!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver.

"What are you halloing about, fat-head?"

"Somebody's coming."

"No such luck!" growled Lovell.

"Listen, duffer!"

There was a sound of footsteps on the hard road. It came from behind the caravan.

Evidently somebody was coming.

The caravanners' hopes rose.

A native of that benighted region would at least be able to direct them somewhere, to Little Scratcham or somewhere else.

They waited eagerly for the stranger to come up.

A boyish figure loomed up at last in the moonlight on the road.

The caravanners dimly made out a slim and elegant youth, in a straw hat, with a light cane in his hand.

They gathered to intercept him, and question him.

But as the stranger came up he was the first to speak.

He raised his straw hat politely to the caravanners, and addressed them:

The 2nd Chapter. A Friend in Need.

"Oh, my hat!" groaned Lovell.

There was no help to be had from the new-comer. He also was in quest of that mysterious spot, Little Scratcham.

But there was something familiar to Jimmy Silver in the rather striking accent of the stranger, and also in the elegant lines of the slim figure.

"Hallo!" said Jimmy. "I think I know you!"

"Bai Jove! Have I met an acquaintance heah?"

"You're D'Arcy, of St. Jim's?"

"Yaas, wathah! Bai Jove, and you are Jimmy Silver, of Wookwood!" exclaimed the new-comer, in tones of great pleasure and satisfaction. "Vewy glad to meet you, deah boy! Fancy meetin' you heah!"

"D'Arcy, by gum!" said Lovell.

The meeting was an agreeable one to the Rookwood caravanners, though it did not improve the position so far as information went.

Well they remembered Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of the Fourth Form at St. Jim's, whom they had last met at a junior cricket-match between the two schools.

Arthur Augustus shook hands with the Rookwooders with great pleasure.

"Awfully jolly to meet you chaps in this fearful desert!" he said. "Pew-waps you know where you are. I don't! Cavavannin'—what?"

"That's it!" said Raby.

"Wippin'! I went cavavannin' once with some chaps from St. Jim's, and it was no end jollay. You're keepin' on the woad wathah late."

"We're trying to find Little Scratcham, and the horse has gone on strike!" groaned Lovell.

"Oh, gweat Scott! I'm twyin' to find Little Scratcham, too!" ejaculated D'Arcy. "A chap a few miles back told me it was on this woad, and only a couple of miles! He seems to have made wathah a mistake."

"Chap with a red nose and beery eye?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Yaas; that describes him wathah accuwately."

"Then that's the chap who directed us. A practical joker, I believe. I don't think Little Scratcham exists at all!"

"Oh, cwumbs!"

Arthur Augustus took out his eyeglass, polished it very thoughtfully, and jammed it into his eye again.

"What are you doing on this road?" asked Jimmy. "If you're lost, you'd better stick to us for a bit."

"Thank you vewy much, Silvah! I shall be vewy glad to. I am quite a swangah in this remarkable locality. I am awvived by twain at Oak End, and started to walk to Oakshot Manor. That chap with the wed nose told me that there was a short cut by goin' through Little Scratcham, when I asked him the way. I have been walkin' a fearful long time. Do you chaps know where Oakshot Manor is?"

"Never heard of it!"

"My bwothah Conway is stayin' there, on leave from the Fwont," explained D'Arcy. "It belongs to a chap he knows in Flandahs—a Colonel Thompson. Evah heard of him?"

"Never!"

"Bai Jove, then I don't look like findin' the place to-night! How vewy fortunate that I left my bag at the station to be sent on! I might have been cawvynin' it all this time! Wathah a stwoke of luck—what?"

"Terrific!" said Jimmy Silver gravely.

"Yaas, I am wathah a lucky chap in some things," said Arthur Augustus. "I suppose you chaps will be campin' out somewhah soonah or latah?"

"I suppose so."

"If you weadly don't mind my inflictin' myself on you, I'd like to camp out with you. I am wathah fatigued with walkin'."

"Welcome as the flowers in May!" said Jimmy Silver. "I wish we had a camp to offer you. What the thump's to be done? We sha'n't get to Little Scratcham to-night, that's a cert!"

"If we could find Oakshot you could camp in the park," remarked Arthur Augustus thoughtfully. "Old Thompson is a decent old boy, and I'm sure he would willin'ly give you permish. But as you can't find it, that wathah knocks the idea on the head, doesn't it?"

"It does—a triffe," agreed Jimmy Silver.

"I wonder where those Modern bounders are camping!" growled Lovell. "We sighted them yesterday, and they can't be far off."

"Modern boundahs!" repeated D'Arcy in surprise. "Who are they, deah boy?"

Jimmy Silver laughed.

"Some chaps of Rookwood School—Modern side," he explained. "We're Classicals, of course. You know them—Tommy Dodd and Tommy Cook and Tommy Doyle. They're cavavannin', too, and they can't be many miles away."

"Bai Jove! If we could spot their camp-fiah we could dig them out!" said Arthur Augustus hopefully.

Jimmy Silver shook his head.

"Too near the coast for campfiah to be allowed at this time of night," he said. "Lighting regulations, you know. The bounders may be camped in some comfy spot a quarter of a mile off, but we can't spot them."

"Gee-up!" roared Lovell.

"Anythin' the mattah with the horse?" asked D'Arcy.

"Only he won't stir."

"May I make a suggestion, deah boys?"

"Go it!"

"If the horse will not go up-hill, pew-waps he will go down-hill," suggested Arthur Augustus sagely. "It is imposso to camp in this nawwow lane, but lowah down—"

"Well, we can't stop here, for certain," agreed Jimmy Silver. "I believe that red-nosed chap was gammoning with his Little Scratcham; and this lane leads out on the Downs, I think. Shall we go down again, you fellows?"

"May as well," said Lovell. "Can't go further up, and can't stick here, so there doesn't seem much choice."

"Come round, you brute!" said Raby, tugging at Robinson Crusoe's head.

Robinson Crusoe shook his head, to shake off Raby's hand, though it looked as if he were answering in the negative.

"Pewwaps I could lead him," suggested D'Arcy.

"Try if you like. I believe the brute's taken root here."

Arthur Augustus took the bit, and, somewhat to the surprise of the caravanners, the horse obeyed his hand without demur.

The swell of St. Jim's had a way with horses, and Robinson Crusoe apparently recognised the fact.

It was rather difficult to turn the caravan in the narrow lane, and it had to be backed into a hedge before Robinson Crusoe could be brought round.

There was a bump as the back of the van smote the high, thick hedge.

It was followed by another bump inside the caravan, and a fiendish yell from Tubby Muffin.

"Yaroooh!"

"Bai Jove! Is there somebody inside the van?" exclaimed Arthur Augustus in surprise.

"Ha, ha! Yes. Tubby Muffin was in the bunk. I fancy he's on the floor now."

"Yaroooh! Wharrer you up to?" came a roar from the van. "You silly asses, I've broken my neck! Ow, ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Come wound, old horse! That's wight!"

Robinson Crusoe came round, and quite contentedly started down-hill. He seemed to like that better than going up.

Tubby Muffin put a furious face out of the van.

"What silly idiot is that leading the horse, and bumping a chap out of bed?" he roared.

"Bai Jove! I'm leadin' the horse, Muffin."

"Oh! Ah! You! Is that D'Arcy? How do you do, old chap? Sorry!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Tubby disappeared again.

The van rumbled away down the steep lane, the caravanners heading for the spot where they had met the red-nosed gentleman, and where the road was at least wide enough for a halt to be made for the night.

Before they reached it, however, a pedestrian came in sight in the moonlight.

"Bai Jove! That's the chap!" exclaimed Arthur Augustus.

"Collar him before he can get away!" whispered Lovell. "We'll teach the silly idiot to play tricks on caravanners!"

The red-nosed man stared at them and came up, heedless of the glares the caravanners turned on him.

"Didn't you find Little Scratcham after all?" he inquired.

"No!" said Lovell sulphurously.

"Given it up—eh?" asked the stranger.

"You didn't keep on far enough. I'm going there myself, if you'd like a guide."

Jimmy Silver & Co. blinked at him, restraining their desire to seize him and bump him on the road.

It was possible, after all, that the man had given them directions in good faith, and if that was the case they did not want to reward his good-nature with a bumping.

But they did not feel inclined to accept his offer of guidance.

If he was, as they suspected, a practical joker, he was quite likely to strand them high up the hill and vanish.

Moreover, it was improbable that Robinson Crusoe could have been induced to negotiate the steep lane again.

"Thanks!" said Jimmy rather uncertainly. "But we're sticking to the lower road. We'll take our chance."

"Pewwaps you can direct us to Oakshot Manor," remarked Arthur Augustus. "I know it is somewhah about."

"Quickest way is through Little Scratcham," answered the red-nosed gentleman, so gravely that it was impossible to tell whether he was "pulling their leg" or not. "I told you so, sir."

"Yaas; but isn't there some othah way?"

"Well, there's the way by the high-road, of course, if you prefer that."

"That'll suit us," said Jimmy Silver. "You think Colonel Thompson would let us camp in his park, D'Arcy?"

"I am quite suah of it, deah boy. He is a friend of my patah, you know, and I know him vewy well. Wely on that."

"Good! How do we get there by the high-road?" asked Jimmy, eyeing the red-nosed gentleman keenly.

The man reflected.

"Keep down this road for a mile or so," he said. "Turn to the left at the cross-roads, and keep on another mile. Then you'll see a white gate in the park wall. You could go in there if you liked, but if you want the grand entrance, you'll have to keep on to the pond, and turn to the right again, which will bring you to the front gates of Oakshot."

"Thank you!"

"Not at all, sir; always glad to help a stranger find his way," said the man civilly, and he touched his hat and went on.

"Bai Jove! That seems cleah enough," said Arthur Augustus. "Come on!"

"Well, we shall see whether he was gammoning," remarked Lovell. "I don't trust that chap much."

The caravanners moved on.

Robinson Crusoe seemed to be understudying a snail in his rate of progression, but they reached the cross-roads at last.

There they turned to the left, as the red-nosed gentleman had directed, and kept on for another mile and a half.

By that time they were tired almost to sinking, and they were murmuring remarks about the red-nosed man that could only have been applied with justice to the Kaiser or the Crown Prince.

But the sight of a great white gate in a park wall cheered them up.

"Bai Jove! It's all wight!" exclaimed D'Arcy. "There's the gate!"

Jimmy Silver looked at his watch.

"Midnight, I suppose?" asked Raby.

"Half-past!" said Jimmy.

"Oh, my hat!"

The caravanners stopped abreast of the big, wooden gates that gave admittance to the shadowy park.

The gates were on the latch.

Jimmy Silver looked at Arthur Augustus inquiringly.

"You feel sure the colonel would let us camp here?" he asked.

"Yaas, wathah!"

"It would be a bit thick knocking up the place after midnight, to ask permission," said Jimmy. "They must all have been in bed long ago. And—it means a thumping long walk to get round to the front of the park. This park seems to run along a good half-mile."

"Let's go in here," said Lovell.

Arthur Augustus nodded.

"Yaas, I think that's a good ideah. I weadly do not feel inclined to wake them up at this hour, if it can be helped," he said. "You see, they won't be expectin' me to-night, as I did not awvive in time for bed. I was supposed to get there earlay. I would much

RIVALRY OF THE ROAD!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

(Continued from the previous page.)



Wathah dwop in in the mornin', if you fellows could put me up."

Arthur Augustus smiled. "I know he wouldn't like to be knocked up at this time of night," he said.

Arthur Augustus opened the wooden gate as he spoke, and the caravanners gladly led Robinson Crusoe through.

Knocking up the house at one in the morning was not agreeable to them, and it would certainly have put a big strain on the colonel's civility.

More serious still than that was the fact that going to the house meant another long tramp, when their legs were aching already with fatigue.

The 3rd Chapter. The Wrong Box!

"Good gad!" That exclamation, uttered in thunderous tones, awakened Jimmy Silver & Co. in the morning.

A stranger had arrived on the scene. He was a man of middle age, in shooting clothes, with a gun under his arm.

An eyeglass was screwed into his right eye, and his eye gleamed behind it like an electric spark.

His white moustache, which contrasted with the brown of his face, was trembling with wrath.

In fact, the shooting gentleman seemed to be bristling all over, like an angry porcupine.

"My hat!" murmured Jimmy. "I wonder who that merchant is? If it's the colonel he doesn't seem pleased."

The gentleman with the gun was staring at the caravan camp, walking round it and ejaculating, peering at the van, the tent, the tethered horse, and the other appurtenances.

He really looked as if he could scarcely believe his eyes, or his eyeglass. "Good gad!" he repeated. "Amazin'! Good gad!"

"Better get your clobber on, you fellows," murmured Jimmy Silver. "I've a faint idea that there's going to be trouble. I—I'm afraid D'Arcy was mistaken about the colonel giving us a welcome."

"Imposs, deah boy! I am quite suah of it." "He doesn't look pleased, anyway."

Arthur Augustus peered out of the tent. "Bai Jove! That old corkah isn't Colonel Thompson!" he said.

"Oh! He looks as if he owns the place." "Must be a guest of the colonel's, deah boy. I dare say he is surprised to see a cawanan heah, but as he is only a guest in the place, he weally has no wight to cut up wushty."

"Oh, bai Jove! All sewene, deah boys. I can wuff it, I assuah you."

The tent-flap was shaken from without. "Come out, you vagabonds!" roared the white-whiskered gentleman.

"Coming!" answered Jimmy Silver. "Wha-at!" "Keep your wool on!" "Good gad!"

It did not take the caravanners long to dress. Lovell and Tubby Muffin turned out of the caravan as Jimmy Silver, Raby, Newcome, and D'Arcy came out of the tent.

The man with the gun glared at them, his eyes glittering, and his face almost purple.

"Who are you? What are you doin' here?" he spluttered. "Pway leave it to me, deah boys, as I am a guest of the colonel's," said Arthur Augustus.

"I will deal with this person." "Who are you?" roared the irate gentleman.

"What do you mean by camping here, you dang of vagabonds?" "These chaps camped here on my suggestion," answered Arthur Augustus calmly.

"You! Who are you?" "I refuse to weply to a question couched in such wude terms."

"What? What?" "I wegard you as actin' in an unbecomin' mannah, sir!" said Arthur Augustus reprovingly.

The Rookwood juniors grinned. Certainly, the stranger was acting in an unbecoming manner in displaying so much fury; but the expression on his face when D'Arcy told him so was really entertaining.

He spluttered for some moments, as if the swell of St. Jim's had quite taken his breath away.

"You impertinent young scoundrel!" he gasped at last. "Sir!"

"How dare you trespass here?" "I do not wegard our pwocedin' in campin' in this park as twospassin'."

"What? It is a private park?" "Yas; I an swah of that fact. But I have as much wight heah as you have!"

"What? What? Are you insane?" "Not at all. I weally beg of you, sir, to contwol your tempah! I are weally in danger of an attack of apoplexy if you wun on like this."

Again the white-whiskered gentleman spluttered. "You—you—inpertinent young vagabond! I'll have the lot of you arrested, by gad! As much right here—good gad!"

"Certainly, sir! I am a guest of the mastah of this place, as I pwesume you ar, fwon your pwesence heah!" said D'Arcy, with dignity.

"What? I am the mastah of this place, you young fool!" "Wubbish!"

"Wha-at?" "Wubbish!" said Arthur Augustus. "I am alludin' to Colonel Thompson."

"What—who?" "It is quite useless for you to pwetend that you are Colonel Thompson," said Arthur Augustus calmly.

"I am vevy well acquainted with that gentleman, and you cannot spoof me, sir." "Splutter!"

"Pway contwol your tempah, sir. It is weally dangewous, at your age, to give way to angwy passions like this. You might have a stwoke."

"Good gad!" Jimmy Silver & Co. grinned joyously. Arthur Augustus D'Arcy was a delight to the Rookwood fellows, though his interlocutor did not seem to be delighted.

"By gad," spluttered the angry man, "I'll have you arrested! I'll have you flogged! Here, James—Thomas!"

Two men dressed as keepers were coming along the drive, and they hurried their steps at the call.

They, too, seemed astonished to find a caravan camp in the park.

"Turn them out!" roared the white-whiskered gentleman. "Drive them off my land!"

"Pway don't be widiculous, sir," said Arthur Augustus. "We shall certainly wefuse to be dwiven off; and I shall mention this mattah to Colonel Thompson. I am suah he must disappweve of your we-markable pwocedin's. I wepeat, sir, that I am a guest heah, the same as yourself, and these fellows are my friends, and I am suah the colonel will make them welcome."

The two keepers stared at him blankly. A dreadful suspicion flashed into Jimmy Silver's mind.

Such conduct on the part of a guest in the place was impossible, unless the old gentleman was mad.

Certainly he was not Colonel Thompson; but it was pretty clear that he was master of the place.

Jimmy remembered his suspicions of the red-nosed man who had directed him, and those suspicions were confirmed now.

He realised what had happened. "Hold on!" he exclaimed. "Is this place Oakshott?"

D'Arcy glanced at him. "Of course it's Oakshott, Silva!" "You're making a mistake, sir," said one of the keepers, civilly enough.

"Oakshott Manor is six miles from here." "Gweat Scott!" Arthur Augustus almost fell down.

"What place is this, then?" ejaculated Lovell. "Oak End Chase, sir."

"Oh, crumbs!" "We—we—we've been taken in!" stammered Raby. "Oh, my hat! That beast was a practical joker, after all."

Arthur Augustus stood motionless on the ground. He realised the dreadful truth. It was not Oakshott at all, and the irate gentleman was monarch of all he surveyed on that especial corner of the earth.

The red-nosed man had evidently been humorous once more at the expense of the caravanners, and had deliberately sent them to Oak End Chase instead of to their destination.

And the landowner was evidently not a hospitable gentleman—not at all.

"Oh, crumbs!" murmured Arthur Augustus at last. "We appeal to have put our foot in it, deah boys! I weally apologise!"

"Turn them out!" the old gentleman was raving. "Kick them out at the gates!"

"Who is that person, my man?" asked D'Arcy, addressing one of the keepers.

"Squire Tipton, sir. You'd better go." Arthur Augustus stepped towards the furious man.

"Pway allow me to explain, sir!" "Don't address me, you tramp! Drive them out!"

"I insist upon explainin', Mr. Tipton. We came in heah undah the impwession that this was Oakshott Manor."

"Don't tell me silly falsehoods!" roared the squire. "By gad! Don't turn them out! I'll have the whole gang arrested! I've no doubt they've been stealing! I'll have that van searched! Keep them here till I come back!"

Mr. Tipton strode away up the drive. Arthur Augustus glanced at the dismayed Rookwood juniors.

"Undah the cires, deah boys, I think we had better not stop for bwekkah!" he said calmly. "Bettah get out, as our pwesence heah seems wathah unwelcome to the ownah of the place."

"I rather agree!" said Lovell, with a faint grin.

The two keepers exchanged glances. "You heard what the squire said, sir," said Thomas. "You're to stay here till he comes back."

"The squire can go and eat coke!" answered Jimmy Silver. "Get the horse in, you chaps!"

And the caravanners prepared to start, the two keepers watching them rather uncertainly.

Robinson Crusoe was put in, and the tent was struck, and the caravanners hastily packed up their impedimenta.

But as Jimmy Silver started to lead the horse back to the drive the two keepers barred the way.

"Clear!" said Jimmy tersely. "You heard what the squire said—"

"Bother the squire!" "Yas, wathah! I wefuse to take the slightest notice of that extwemely wude and ill-mannahed old person!"

"You can't go!" said the keeper. "We'll jolly soon see about that!" answered Jimmy Silver, his eyes gleaming.

"Will you let us pass?" "No!" "Play up, Rookwood!" shouted Jimmy.

The Fistical Four rushed on the two keepers, Arthur Augustus with them.

James and Thomas had set themselves to carry out their master's autocratic order; but, as a matter of fact, they had taken on a task that was rather too large for them.

The juniors collared them, whirled them over, and pitched them among the trees, in spite of their struggles.

Then the caravan rumbled on. The two keepers sat up in the grass, gasping, and blinked after the caravan as it rolled on towards the white gates.

They did not follow it. Jimmy Silver & Co. marched out of the gates unhindered, and the caravan took the road, and—rather anxious to put a good distance between themselves and Oak End Chase—the juniors pushed on without a pause, feeling rather relieved when two or three good miles lay behind them.

The 4th Chapter. Mistaken Identity.

"Echo answers: 'Why?'" sighed Tommy Dadd.

"Topping!" said Tommy Cook. "Why can't the vacation last for ever?" "Echo answers 'Why?'" sighed Tommy Dadd.

"Sure, echo would answer 'Ever' to that remark, begorra!" observed Tommy Doyle. "Anyhow, we've had a good time. I wonder how those Classical spalpeens are getting on?"

The three Modern juniors of Rookwood had just broken camp, after a pleasant breakfast under the greenwood tree.

The Modern caravan was halted on a belt of grass beside a shady road, and the Modern caravanners had camped there in comfort.

They were within half a mile of the village of Oak End, where they had obtained supplies the previous evening, quite unaware that the Classical caravanners were in close proximity.

Tommy Dodd & Co. had enjoyed their holiday caravanning, and they were not rejoicing at the prospect of the new term beginning at Rookwood school.

They would have been quite content to keep on caravanning to the end of the autumn.

Still, they had another week to run, and they meant to make the most of it, and they were very cheerful.

After a good breakfast they had put the horse to the Modern caravan, and packed up their tent, and were prepared to start.

"Kim up, old hoss!" said Tommy Dodd. Just as the Modern caravan pulled off the grass into the road a fat man in uniform came from the direction of the village, which was out of sight behind a belt of woodland.

He held up his hand to the caravanners in the distance, as a sign to stop for him.

Tommy Dodd stopped the horse, wondering what the village policeman could want with them.

They had broken a good many things during their tour, but they were not aware of having broken the law.

The fat constable came panting up. "Alt!" he said, rather unnecessarily, as the Modern juniors were at a standstill.

"Halt it is!" answered Tommy Dodd good-humouredly. "Anything wanted?" "You're wanted!"

"Well, here I am!" said Tommy, cheerfully. "Are you going to give a receipt for delivery?"

The fat policeman blinked at him, not following that humorous remark. He did not appear to be in a humour for fun, anyway.

"You come alonger me!" he said, with dignity. "That depends on which way you're going," said Tommy. "We're taking the lower road."

"You're coming with me to Hoak Hend!" answered the constable. "You're wanted for trespass. The squire's complained."

The three Moderns looked rather dismayed.

During their caravan tour they had come across a good many remnants of feudalism, and they were aware that there were many little tin gods in remote parts of the country, who did not seem to know that the twentieth century had dawned upon the world.

Evidently to the village policeman the fact that "the squire" had complained was reason enough for anything short of hanging.

"Look here, bobby," said Tommy Dodd sharply, "we've not trespassed anywhere, and your squire, whoever he is, can go and eat coke! Savvy?"

"I suppose your blessed squire don't own this road, does he?" demanded Tommy Cook warmly.

"You've trespassed in Hoak Hend Chase," answered the officer stolidly. "The squire's very angry. He came down to the station, and sent me to run you in at once!"

"Never heard of the place!" said Tommy Dodd, in perplexity. "You're making a mistake, my man!"

"You come alonger me!" was the answer. "That there wan is going to be searched for stolen goods! Squire Tipton thinks you're a gang of thieves."

"Squire Tipton's going the right way to get his silly nose punched!" growled Tommy Dodd.

The Rookwood trio grinned at the expression that came over the village policeman's fat face at that remark.

Squire Tipton's nose was evidently sacred in the officer's eyes, and the bare idea of a common mortal punching it took his breath away.

"Look 'ere!" gasped the policeman. "You come alonger me, or I shall 'ave to use force!"

The three Moderns looked at one another. There seemed to be a mistake somewhere, unless the grass beside the road was included in the domain of Squire Tipton, which seemed improbable. But the village policeman was in deadly earnest.

DOES YOUR SOLDIER-PAL WRITE TO YOU?

Note-paper is "some" price these days, but none of us would grudge Tommy all the paper he needs on which to write those cheery letters of his if paper were treble the price it is to-day.

It costs the Y.M.C.A., who supply Tommy with free stationery, no less than £80,000 a year. Sixpence will supply your own or somebody else's pal with enough note-paper to write one letter each week for a year.

Going to let him have it? Of course you are! So send sixpence along to-day to Y.M.C.A. (Stationery Fund), Tottenham Court Road, London, W.C., mentioning that it comes from a reader of this paper.

FOR NEXT MONDAY!

"THE BOYS WHO BEAT THE KAISER!"

By Duncan Storm.

Once again I am going to dwell first on our amazing new serial. I feel that that honour is due to Mr. Duncan Storm's masterpiece. I am confident that you have all thoroughly revelled in the second instalment; but next Monday's instalment, my chums, is going even one better than the first two.

Space will not permit of my describing all that happens in the third instalment. Too much occurs for that. I may tell you, however, that in this magnificent instalment the Kaiser's agents show their hands with a vengeance; but they reckon without Horace, the goat, and Gus, the crocodile. The latter are all right—at a distance. But the Germans do not keep at a distance. They approach too close to the boys' pets, with very disastrous results. The Huns are well paid for conspiring to beat the boys of the Bombay Castle. But Baron von Slyden has no intention of throwing up the sponge. He is prepared to go to more desperate lengths yet ere he admits defeat.

"ROOKWOOD UNDER CANVAS!"

By Owen Conquest.

"The finest series that has ever appeared in the BOYS' FRIEND." Such is the opinion of hundreds of readers who have written to me just lately. They referred, of course, to the series of caravanning yarns which come to an end in

this issue. I am inclined to agree with these readers, for there is no doubt that Mr. Owen Conquest has put his very best work into these tales.

But there is another treat in store for you. In next Monday's issue we commence another fine series dealing with the Rookwood juniors under canvas. Returning to the school, Jimmy Silver & Co. have the misfortune to meet with a very crusty old gentleman; but the juniors are quite capable of dealing with a person of this sort, as you will see when you read this splendid story. The methods adopted by the Rookwood chums will amuse you immensely.

"DANGER AHEAD!"

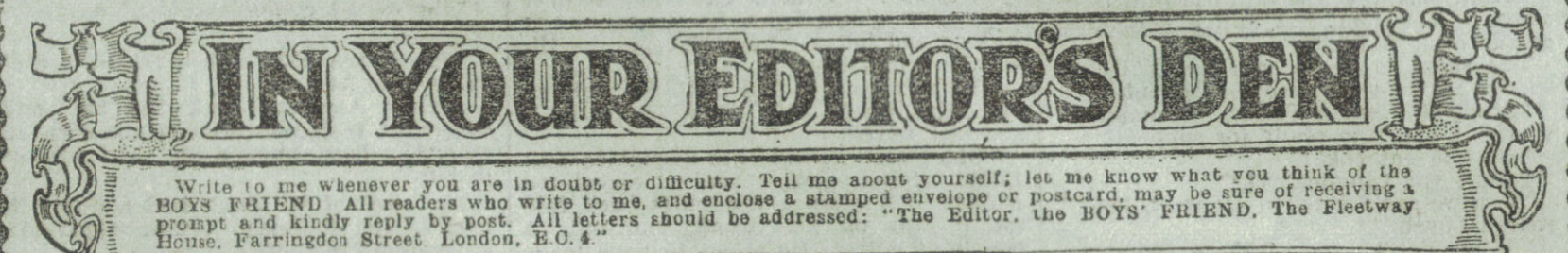
By Martin Clifford.

Our next story of Frank Richards & Co. deals, of course, with their further adventures in the Great North-West. Once again the chums fall foul of Handsome Alf. This time the villain is more desperate than ever to get the better of Frank Richards & Co. But the latter, in spite of the man's villainy, refuse to buckle under to him, and therefore thrilling and exciting incidents are the order of the day. Chunky Todgers appears in a new light in this yarn. In spite of being somewhat simple, and of possessing an enormous appetite, there is a good deal of pluck in Chunky, as you will see next Monday.

"BUNNY'S BLUNDER!"

By Herbert Britton.

Bunny, the duffer of Redclyffe, has already made several blunders, but he



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

Your Editor

The 5th Chapter. The Fall of the Mighty!

Tommy Dodd & Co. were in a state of suppressed fury by this time. It was humiliating to be marched through the street under charge of a policeman, and it was irritating to be taken for vagabonds, burglars, and German spies.

How the affair was going to end was a mystery to them, too. If they had unwittingly trespassed on the land of some local panjandrum, the consequences might be quite serious.

At least they might be detained for inquiries, and the van impounded until the affair had been gone into by the rural authorities. It was not a happy prospect.

That was certainly not the way they wanted to spend the last week of the vacation. "Alt!" The caravan halted.

The constable raised a podgy hand, and pointed to the doorway of the little building, which was the headquarters of law and order in Oak End.

It was also, apparently, the private residence of the constable, for a stout lady and several children were to be seen looking out of windows above.

The Rookwooders entered the station, and the constable followed them in with a heavy, tramping tread. Tommy Dodd & Co. expected to see an inspector, or an official of some sort, but apparently the fat constable was the total police force of Oak End.

No one else was to be seen, at all events. "Well, now we're here, what's the game?" demanded Tommy Dodd restively, with an angry glance at the curious faces peering in at the open doorway.

"They've got the young thieves!" said a voice without. "I dessay they stole that van!" "That's the gang whot 'ad my old rooster last week, I'll be bound!"

"It's shocking, Garge, that's what it is! Young fellers like that; well-dressed, too!" "Look at 'em, Henry! You can see it in their eyes—born thieves!"

The three Tommies restrained a desire to charge at the crowd in the doorway. "How long are we to stay here, you fat owl?" roared Tommy, addressing the majesty of the law in that disrespectful way.

"You'll wait 'ere till the squire comes back." "Blow the squire! Don't you know you've no right to detain us?" bellowed Tommy Cook.

of this neighbourhood. Vagabonds and tramps are not wanted here." "You confounded, cheeky old chump!" shouted Tommy Dodd, quite losing his temper.

"What? What?" "We shall please ourselves about that, and you can go and eat coke! Have you sense enough in your chaw-bacon chump to understand that?" "Good gad!"

"And if we had the time to waste on you, we'd bring an action, and get you shown up, for the silly, bullying old fool you are!" "Good gad!" spluttered Mr. Tipton.

"You impertinent young rascal!" "Come on, you fellows!" said Tommy Dodd. The three Modern juniors strode out of the station, leaving the great man rooted to the floor, petrified.

The Modern caravan was set in motion again. But the Rookwooders had not seen the last of Mr. Tipton. As they led the caravan out of the village into the open road beyond, there was a heavy tramp of feet behind them, and the squire strode up.

There was a riding-whip in his hand. He did not waste words, but strode right at Tommy Dodd, who wondered whether he was dreaming for a moment, but a cut of the whip convinced him that he wasn't.

"Collar him!" yelled Tommy. The three juniors fairly jumped at Mr. Tipton. Before that great man knew what was happening, he was on the hard road, rolling in the dust, and his whip was jerked away.

Tommy Dodd grasped it. As the squire rolled in the dust the whip rose and fell in Tommy's vigorous hand, lashing the great man's legs till he roared.

Then Tommy tossed it into a field. The caravan moved on, with the Modern caravanners feeling rather solaced, and the squire sat up in the dust, and blinked after them in an amazement that was almost comic.

He had been thrashed; it was incredible, but true. To his dazed mind it seemed time for the skies to fall. But the skies remained where they were, in spite of the indignity that had been put upon the squire of Oak End; the stars in their courses were quite undisturbed.

And the Modern caravanners went cheerily on their way, leaving Mr. Tipton to sort himself out at his leisure.

The 6th Chapter. Gussy Gets It!

"Bai Jove, I'm wathah glad we've got cleah away from that extremely unpleasant old gentleman!" "Hear, hear!" grinned Lovell.

"We must have covahed four miles at least," remarked Arthur Augustus D'Arcy. "I think we must be vevy neah Oakshott now."

"About a mile," said Jimmy Silver. At some distance from the Chase the caravanners had inquired their way again.

"Hallo!" exclaimed Lovell suddenly. He was looking across the fields to the right. In the distance there was a lane at right angles, and coming along that lane towards the corner where the roads met was a caravan.

The Classical juniors recognised it at once. "The merry Moderns!" ejaculated Raby.

"This is the third or fourth time we've dropped on them," said Jimmy Silver. "They must have been in Oak End this morning, to judge by the way they're coming."

"Your friends at Wookwood?" asked Arthur Augustus, turning his eyeglass towards the distant Modern caravan across the fields.

"That's it." "We shall meet them at the cornah," said Arthur Augustus. "Bai Jove! They're lookin' this way!"

"They've seen us," said Lovell, and he waved his hand. A minute or two later the caravans were hidden from each other as they moved on past an enclosed park.

The park wall ran right on to the corner, and the high wall and the trees behind it hid the two parties from one another's view.

The three Tommies had recognised the Classical van before it passed out of sight. Tommy Dodd knitted his brows.

"It's the Classical gossoons!" said Tommy Doyle. "Phwat are ye thinking of, Tommy darling?"

"I've got it!" "Phwat have you got?" "I know now why that fatheaded bobby ran us in by mistake!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd, in some excitement.

"Some caravanners had been trespassing in that old donkey Tipton's park. It was that gang, of course!" Tommy Cook nodded.

"Eh? Of course it's standing still!" "Sure, you said it was running along to the corner," said Doyle innocently.

Tommy Dodd gave his chum an almost sulphurous look. "You funny ass!" he roared. "I wasn't asking you for idiotic jokes. This wall reaches as far as the corner, where it turns off sharp. Well, leave the van here for a bit, and come on."

He started at a run for the corner, and his two chums followed him. They reached the corner, where the brick wall had a sharp angle, while the Classical van was still at a distance from the spot.

Doyle was about to look round the corner, when Tommy Dodd grasped his neck and dragged him back just in time. "Yow-ow!" gasped Doyle.

"Don't show yourself, fathead!" said Dodd in a fierce whisper. "Phwy not?"

"Isn't it an ambush?" said Tommy. "Oh, I see!" "Time you did!" snorted Tommy Dodd.

"We're going to give Jimmy Silver a lesson about trespassing and getting us run in for it. They don't know we're here; they think we're crawling on with the caravan, same as they are. Their van was nearer to the corner, and they'd have got here first, only we've run it. Hark! I can hear their wheels now."

There was a rumbling of wheels and a jingling of harness round the corner. The Classical caravan was close at hand.

"You see that pond in the middle of the cross-roads?" continued Tommy, his eyes gleaming with the light of battle and satisfaction at his own masterly strategy.

"Sure I'm not blind!" "Well, as soon as they come up we rush out—"

"Do we?" asked Cook doubtfully. "We do!" hissed his leader. "We seize"

he was whipped off his feet and rushed to the pond. Splash!

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared the Moderns as the unfortunate victim sat down in a foot of water.

"Yawwooh!" "Hallo! Why—?" "Gweat Scott! Yawwooh! Wescue!" shrieked the victim.

Tommy Dodd & Co. had intended to rush back—executing a masterly, strategic retreat—as soon as they had sat the Classical in the pond.

But they stopped. For it was not a Classical—it was not a Rookwood fellow at all—whom they had collared and ducked.

It was Arthur Augustus D'Arcy of St. Jim's. The St. Jim's junior sat dazedly in a foot of water, utterly amazed, and blinking helplessly at the practical jokers.

"Gwoogh! Oh, deah! Yawwooh! Oh! Ah! Yah!" he stammered. "D-D-D'Arcy!" stuttered Tommy Dodd blankly. "I—I— Oh, my hat!"

"A—a St. Jim's chap!" gasped Cook. "I—I thought that was the Classical caravan! Sorry, old chap!"

The hapless jokers supposed for a moment that it was a St. Jim's caravan party they had mistaken for the Classical.

But they were quickly undeceived. They stared round, to find Jimmy Silver & Co. rushing at them.

The Fistical Four had been as surprised as D'Arcy for a moment, but only for a moment. They understood that the unfortunate swell of St. Jim's had got what was intended for them, and they rushed to the attack.

Had the three Tommies executed their strategic retreat at once all would have been well with them. But the recognition of D'Arcy had held them to the spot. It was only a matter of moments, but moments were enough.



There were three heavy splashes in the pond. And the three Tommies did not sit in it; they went in headlong.

"Of course," he agreed. "The bobby was looking for them, and he came on us, and the caravan was enough for him."

"Old Tipton said there were six," said Tommy Dodd. "There's six with that lot. I couldn't recognise them, but I dare say they're picked up Cuffy again. It was that lot, and we got hauled over the coals for them, while they got clear off."

"My hat! Wouldn't they cackle if they knew!" Tommy Dodd looked wrathful. "We've been yanked about by a bobby, and all because those Classical kids don't know how to behave themselves," he said wrathfully. "I think it's time they had a lesson."

"No rags," said Cook. "We're three, and they seem to be six now—and it's not good enough, Tommy. We should get the ragging."

The first one that comes to hand—let's hope it's Jimmy Silver—and before they have time to say 'Bow-wow!' we rush him and sit him down in the pond!"

"Oh!" "Then we bunk," said Tommy Dodd. "They're too many for us, or we'd duck the whole gang! See?"

"Suppose we collar Tubby? No good ducking him." "It won't be Tubby. He never walks if he can help it. He'll be in the van."

"Sure, that's so. But if they're picked up Cuffy—" "He would be in the van, too. He's no walker."

"Yes, that's so, too. It's bound to be one of the Fistical Four!" said Cook. "We'll give 'em fistical fours, both 'em!"

"Hush! They're close!" The three Tommies lay very low. They were justly indignant with the Classical for trespassing and getting them "run in"; but, as a matter of fact, it was really the old rivalry of Modern and Classical at Rookwood which had led Tommy Dodd to lay that little ambush.

Sitting a Classical suddenly down in a shallow pond appeared a screaming joke to the Moderns, though the Classical point of view was likely to be quite different.

They charitably hoped that it would be Jimmy Silver upon whom their hands fell, but Lovell or Raby or Newcome would be almost equally welcome. They waited breathlessly. Rumble, rumble! The Classical van was almost at the corner.

NEXT MONDAY.

ROOKWOOD UNDER CANVAS!

By OWEN CONQUEST.

DON'T MISS IT!

I shall be compelled to make a report to headquarters, and I can assure you that I shall not shield you in any way. You have interfered with the execution of the law, and you must suffer the consequences."

"Oh!" groaned the juniors in chorus. "I say, Mr. Short," said Bob Travers, "surely it isn't as bad as that?"

"Oh, isn't it!" said the man, with a sneer. "You wait and see. I wouldn't be in your shoes for a thousand pounds—a thousand pounds, d'you hear?"

The juniors heard, but they remained dumb. They were overcome by the possible consequences of their fatal error. "I can't stay with you young fools any longer," said the detective. "You'll just oblige by giving me your names and addresses."

The juniors gave the required particulars, and Detective Short left them to continue his search for the elusive Jabez Brown.

"You burbling chump!" snorted Dicky Turner. "What ever did you want to come to Redclyffe for?"

"To continue my education, of course," replied the new boy. "Having attended Redclyffe himself in his younger days, my father naturally thought it right that I should obtain my education there."

"Wish he hadn't thought about it at all," muttered Dicky dismally. "Then you wouldn't have got us into this rotten scrape."

"Supposing that villain was trying to hide the stolen notes," went on the new boy insistently. "Where do you think is the most likely place he'd endeavour to secrete them in?"

"I don't know, and I don't care!" said Dicky indifferently. "My opinion is that these quarries afford an excellent hiding-place," said the new boy. "That, to my way of thinking, is why the man came here, and I should not be at all surprised if he returned for the same purpose."

"Bosh!" snapped Dicky Turner. "But—my word! Look!"

The new boy uttered a startled exclamation, and pointed across to the other side of the quarry to where a man in a slouch hat was peering in the crevices in the cliff.

"What the dickens—" began Bob Travers. "Hush!" muttered Bunny, with a warning gesture. "That man is the thief. We have a chance to save ourselves, after all, and to assist in the administering of the law."

In their eagerness to avoid the consequences of their initial blunder, Bob Travers followed the new boy as the latter crept stealthily towards the man. Silently they moved on, and when they were within a dozen yards of the crouching figure, Bunny broke into a run, and hurled himself upon the man.

The Redclyffe juniors promptly followed suit, and in another moment the man was lying helpless on the ground. "We've got you, you rogue!" exclaimed the new boy, hanging on to the man's hair. "What have you done with those missing notes?"

"I—I— Oh, help! Help!" shrieked the man. In a moment a figure came tearing towards the scene of the struggle, a figure that the juniors recognised instantly as belonging to Mr. Chambers of the Fourth Form.

"What is the meaning of this?" he demanded. "Help, sir!" shouted the new boy. "We've got a desperate criminal here, and—"

"Bless my soul!" gasped Mr. Chambers, as his gaze fell on the juniors' captive. "Desist this instant, you disgraceful young hoodlums!"

"But, sir, this man—" "Nonsense!" said Mr. Chambers harshly. "That man is my friend, Mr. Baxter." "Your I-I-friend, sir?" stuttered the juniors.

"Yes; release him at once!" ground out the master, his eyes flashing with anger. "How dare you behave in such a disgraceful manner? Let me assist you, Baxter."

The master helped the man to rise to his feet, and the latter stood shaking with excitement. "Thank you, my dear Chambers," muttered Mr. Baxter. "I—I— Oh, dear, I feel sore in every limb. I was examining a really most rare flower, when—when I was hurled brutally to the ground. I presume there has been some slight—er—mistake."

"Yes, sir," put in Bob Travers at once. "We—we thought you were the man wanted for the bank robbery, and—"

"Ha, ha!" Mr. Baxter smiled faintly, in spite of his hurts. "I am nothing more harmful than a naturalist. I came down here specially to examine some specimens of wild flowers. You were not to know, of course, that—"

"No, sir," broke in Dicky Turner. "We're awfully sorry, sir, and we all apologise for having attacked you in such a manner."

"Apologise be hanged!" snapped Mr. Chambers sternly. "Return at once to the school, and go straight to my room. I shall be compelled to administer a severe thrashing to each of you for your dastardly behaviour." He turned to the new boy. "I presume you are Theodore Bunny?" he asked.

"Yes, sir, I—"

"You have made a bad start," broke in Mr. Chambers acidly.

With very dismal expressions on their faces, the four juniors took their departure.

But they were little troubled by Mr. Chambers' threat of punishment.

What concerned them most was the escape of the bank robber, and the possible consequences of their fatal mistake. There was little doubt that they had not heard the last of the matter.

FOES OF THE FOOT-HILLS!

A Magnificent New Long Complete Story, introducing FRANK RICHARDS & CO., the Chums of the School in the Backwoods.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD

The 1st Chapter. Shaken Off!

"That blessed Chinese!" exclaimed Bob Lawless.

Frank Richards & Co. drew rein. The four schoolboys of Cedar Creek were riding up a rocky path in the foot-hills of the Cascade Mountains.

On their right great bluffs rose almost like a wall, patched here and there with spruce and pine.

On the left the hillside fell away in an abrupt precipice.

The rocky ledge upon which the trail ran was not more than a dozen feet wide. Bob Lawless was riding ahead, and next to him came Frank Richards; then Vere Beauclerc, followed by Chunky Todgers.

The laden pack-mule brought up the rear. Three, at least, of the party kept their eyes ahead, not caring to look down into the gulf on their left, where huge rock on rock stretched away to a depth of a thousand yards.

Amid the rocks and pines below lay the winding trail they had been following upward. But Bob Lawless, accustomed to mountain riding ever since he could sit a horse, glanced unconcernedly over the precipice that yawned within a few feet of his left arm.

The keen eyes of the Canadian schoolboy spotted a diminutive figure on the winding trail below.

Following the trail, the rider was at least two miles behind the party; but from the upper ledge to the lower a his cut could have been tossed to touch him.

The Cedar Creek party stopped on the trail, and followed the direction of Bob's fingers with their eyes.

"Yen Chin!" exclaimed Frank Richards. "That pesky leather!" growled Chunky Todgers.

Vere Beauclerc smiled. "He is still sticking to us," he remarked. "We shall have Yen Chin on our trail all through the North-West."

Bob gave a grin. The Chinese had followed the holiday-party across the plains from the Thompson Valley, but Bob had expected to shake him off in the rocky hills.

Yen Chin, evidently, was not to be shaken off. He glanced up from the lower trail, catching sight of the party on the ledge above, and his almond eyes glistened.

He waved a hand to the chums of Cedar Creek, and called out. His voice floated up in the clear mountain air:

"Stoppee for me!" Frank Richards burst into a laugh. The pertinacity of the little Celestial was amusing, as well as rather exasperating.

Yen Chin had settled it for himself that he was to accompany the holiday-party into the North-West—but the chums felt, not without reason, that the little Chinese would be out of place there; neither did they enjoy the prospect of Yen Chin's impish tricks.

The Chinese had a rather misdirected sense of humour, which earned him more kicks than halfpence, so to speak, at Cedar Creek School.

But Yen Chin had declined to take their refusal seriously. For many a long mile he had followed them, and he had played more than one trick on the adventurers at their camps—that, apparently, being his way of trying to get himself included in the party.

It really was not a tactful way; and on the last encounter he had earned a rope's-end instead of an invitation to join up.

Yet here he was again, trotting along on the trail on his wiry little Indian pony, plainly determined not to be shaken off.

"Stoppee for me, nicey old Flanky!" called out Yen Chin, looking upward. "Me come along—oh, yes! You waitee!"

"We're not going to stop!" roared Bob Lawless.

"Me come allee samee."

"You're to go back!"

"No tinkee!"

Bob Lawless slid from his horse, with a determined expression upon his sunburnt face.

He groped on the trail, and picked up a couple of "rocks," each about the size of an egg.

Standing on the very verge of the ledge, where it fell away, he raised his right hand.

Yen Chin looked up at him calmly from his pony's back below.

"Look here, you heathen coyote!" shouted Bob. "You'll take the back trail at once, or I'll heave rocks at you—savvy?"



A second more, and the claws of the bear would have been tearing the Canadian schoolboy; but, in that second, Frank Richards rushed in, and brought the axe down on the animal's skull.

"No takee back trail!" "Then look out for your cabeza!" "No flingee locks at pool hill! Chinese!" "I'll poor little Chinese you!" growled Bob. "I tell you I'll heave rocks if you don't take the back trail; and I'll give you one minute!"

"Bob Lawless ugly old lascal!" Frank Richards & Co. sat in their saddles and watched, leaving Bob Lawless to do as he liked.

Whiz! The stone hurtled downwards from the high ledge to the lower trail, and crashed on the ground within two feet of Yen Chin's pony.

The chums of Cedar Creek grinned. Bob's aim was unerring, and they knew he could have landed the "rock" upon the Chinese if he had wanted to.

But Yen Chin was not aware of it, and the stone came so close that the Chinese gave a yell of alarm.

Crash! The second stone landed, knocking up splinters of basalt at the feet of the Indian pony.

"Stoppee!" yelled Yen Chin. "No chuckee! Bob ugly old lascal! No peltee pod hill! Chinese!"

"Go back, then!" "No goee back!" Bob caught up a couple more stones. Crash, crash!

The missiles landed close by the halted pony below, knocking up splinters, one of them almost grazing Yen Chin's hat.

The little Chinese howled. "Ow! No knockee pool hill! Chinese's blains out! Me goey!" He whirled round the pony, and started down the back-trail at a rapid trot.

Patter, patter, patter! The pony trotted on, while the chums of Cedar Creek grinned down from above. Yen Chin had been turned back at last. He vanished from sight round a great bluff of basalt, and was lost to the eyes of Frank Richards & Co.

Bob Lawless grinned as he went back to his horse. "I guess that lets him out!" he remarked.

"Two to one he's only hiding behind that bluff, and he'll come on again!" said Beauclerc, laughing.

"By gum, if he does, I'll let him have the rocks right on his cabeza next time I sight him!" growled Bob.

The Cedar Creek party rode on, keeping their eyes open on the back-trail for Yen Chin. But the pigtailed youth did not appear in sight again.

It really looked as if he had been shaken off at last.

The 2nd Chapter. Treed.

"Halt!" sang out Bob Lawless, about an hour later. The chums of Cedar Creek had reached the end of the perilous trail, and they rode out upon a wooded plateau in the heart of the foot-hills.

After the waste of wild rocks they had traversed, the sight of trees and herbage and water was welcome to their eyes.

They halted where a cool spring bubbled up under the trees glistening in the burning sunlight which streamed down with almost aching heat on the hills.

"I guess this will suit us to camp," said Bob, as he jumped from his horse. "Water, and fodder; and I reckon there's game in the timber—plenty."

Chunky Todgers looked round rather uneasily. "And b'ar, perhaps," he remarked.

"Very likely," answered Bob cheerfully. "We're in the home of the grizzly bear now, Chunky; and we may find him at home. But there's nothing to worry about, old scout. If Mr. Grizzly comes on us, he's sure to pick out the fattest of the party, so we shall be all right. He wouldn't look at us with you present."

"Why, you—you—" stuttered Chunky. "In fact, he would be grateful to us for bringing you here."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The laughter of the Cedar Creek fellows was suddenly interrupted.

From the thick timber there came a call, faint from the distance, but very clear:

"Help!" "Hullo!" ejaculated Bob. The wooded plateau had looked so silent and solitary that the Co. had not dreamed that anyone but themselves was there—unless it was elk or bear.

They started, and stared towards the timber, as that sudden call reached their ears.

"Help!" "A white man," said Beauclerc, "and in trouble! He's seen us, though we can't see him."

"Come on!" said Bob. "You stay with the horses, Chunky!" Bob caught his rifle from his saddle, and Beauclerc followed his example, Frank Richards seizing an axe, and they rushed towards the timber.

"Look out!" came the call from the trees. "B'ar!"

"Were grizzly!" murmured Bob. As they came among the trees they saw the man who had called.

He was clinging to a high branch, thirty feet from the ground, and his hat and rifle lay on the greensward below.

Close by the trunk was crouched a huge grey form—a grizzly bear in the act of climbing the tree.

The man on the branch looked down at the new-comers, whom he had evidently spotted from his high perch, though the foliage had hitherto hidden him from their sight.

He was a lithe and active fellow, clad in deerskin and velvet, with curly, black hair, and gold earrings glittering in his dusky ears.

Frank Richards uttered a surprised exclamation. He remembered the man with the earrings; he was no stranger to the chums of Cedar Creek School.

"Alf Carson!" exclaimed Frank. "Handsome Alf, by gum!" shouted Bob Lawless.

"Handsome Alf" stared down at them. A glitter shot into his black eyes as he looked more closely at the schoolboys, and recognised them.

"You!" he muttered. Then a look of despair came over his face.

The grizzly was climbing the thick trunk, and Handsome Alf's rifle lay in the grass, discharged, thirty feet under him.

He was gripping a hunting-knife in his hand, but that weapon was not likely to serve him at close-quarters with his terrible enemy.

It was as foes that Handsome Alf had met Frank Richards & Co.

On their previous brief excursion into the North-West they had prevented him from robbing a gold-miner of Last Chance Camp.

It was evident that the swarthy adventurer did not expect help from the chums of Cedar Creek, now that he recognised them as his old foes.

But in that he was mistaken.

The dusky rascal had been their enemy, and was doubtless still their enemy; but Frank Richards & Co. had no intention of leaving him to the mercy of the grizzly.

Without a second glance at the "treed" man Bob Lawless hastily examined his rifle, and threw it to his shoulder.

The bear, aware of the arrival of the new-comers now, ceased to climb, and his evil, red eyes looked over his shaggy shoulder at them from the trunk.

Crack!

Bob Lawless pulled trigger, and there came a patch of red on the shaggy fur as the bullet struck home.

There was a yelling howl from the bear as he dropped from the trunk to the ground.

"Go it, Cherub!" muttered Bob, as he rammed home a fresh cartridge.

The grizzly had turned his attention from the man in the tree; all his fury was directed against the new-comers now.

With a bullet deep in his huge body, leaving a crimson trail as he moved, the great brute lumbered towards the schoolboys.

Frank Richards gripped his axe, hard, while Bob was hurriedly reloading his rifle.

Vere Beauclerc had his rifle to his

shoulder, and it was as steady as a rock as he glanced along the barrel. The grizzly was a dozen feet away when he fired.

The bullet tore through the thick hide, and there was a spurt of red, and a wild howl from the bear.

But he came on, though more slowly. From the branch overhead Handsome Alf watched the contest, in surprise and anxiety.

His life depended on the result of it. The grizzly was close when Bob's rifle was raised again, and a bullet crashed fairly into the open, steaming jaws.

The grizzly staggered, and seemed about to fall; but he recovered, and came on, with a lumbering rush that was very swift for an animal of his size and weight.

Once within reach of those terrible claws, keen as a razor-edge, the school-boys would have been rent in pieces, and they were well aware of it.

They leaped back, and separated, and the bear, growling with rage and pain, paused for a moment or two, undecided which to pursue.

The pause gave the rifemen their chance, and two more bullets crashed into the shaggy body.

With a hideous howl, the grizzly leaped towards Bob Lawless, and the Canadian had leaped round a tree just in time.

But his foot caught in a root, and he stumbled forward, his empty rifle flying from his hand.

The grizzly was only a couple of feet behind him. A second more, and the claws would have been tearing the Canadian school-boy; but in that second Frank Richards rushed in, and the keen edge of the axe came fairly on the bear's skull, with all the strength of Frank's strong arm behind it.

The blow was a terrible one. It was only his chum's danger that had enabled Frank to strike with so much force.

The axe-edge was deep on the thick skull of the grizzly, and the handle was torn out of Frank's grasp as the animal reeled.

The huge brute rolled on the ground, and Bob Lawless scrambled out of reach of the lashing claws.

His face was white. "By gum!" he murmured breathlessly. "By gum!"

He caught up his rifle quickly, and rammed in a cartridge.

The bear was rolling on the ground, too hard hit at last to attack again.

Beauclerc fired twice, and Bob joined in, and the gigantic limbs stretched still at last upon the crimsoned ground.

Bob squeezed his English cousin's arm. "Frank, old chap!" he faltered.

That was all Bob said, but his look was eloquent.

He knew what would have happened to him had not the axe struck in time.

"All serene, old son!" said Frank breathlessly. "My hat! What a fearful brute! We've had luck!"

There was a scrambling on the rough tree-trunk, and Handsome Alf dropped to the ground, and the three chums turned towards him.

The 3rd Chapter. An Unmitigated Rascal.

Handsome Alf had his hand upon his knife, and there was a strange look on his dusky face.

The chums of Cedar Creek had saved his life, but one look at the swarthy adventurer was enough to tell that that made no difference to Alf Carson.

He had been their bitter enemy, and he was their bitter enemy still.

But the chums had nothing to fear from the ruffian; the odds against him were too heavy for that.

Bob Lawless slipped a fresh cartridge into his rifle.

"So you're here, my pippin!" he said.

"I guess I owe you something!" said Handsome Alf. "The b'ar had me fairly treed. I guess I was glad when I saw you riding up!"

Frank Richards detached the axe from the dead bear's skull, and, with a slight shudder, wiped it clean in the grass.

Carson stepped towards his rifle.



FOES OF THE FOOT-HILLS!

(Continued from the previous page.)

The 4th Chapter. In the Shadow of Death.

Bob interposed. "Hold on a bit!" he said. "Leave that shooter alone for the present, Carson!"

"You want my gun for what you've done for me?" sneered Handsome Alf.

Bob shook his head. "I guess I want to know what you're going to do with that gun!" he replied.

"We've saved your life, and we don't want to have to blow your brains out afterwards!"

Carson's eyes glittered. "I guess I let up on you," he said. "The bear would have had me, sure. You did me once, and I own I was mad with you. I let up."

"I wish I could believe you," answered Bob Lawless. "But I reckon I know your sort, and I'm not the kind of jay to be winged in the back, not if this court knows herself, my pippin, and she thinks she does."

"Right!" said Beauclerc, with a nod. His opinion of Handsome Alf's probable gratitude was the same as Bob's.

The Canadian schoolboy set his foot on the rifle as Handsome Alf made another movement towards it.

The Californian drew his hand back, his black eyes glittering.

His look left little doubt as to the use he would have made of the firearm if he had regained possession of it.

"I guess it can't be done," said Bob Lawless decidedly. "You'll have to hoof it 'way back home without a gun, Carson. You're too snaky to be trusted."

"I guess I can't take my skin safe home without a rifle," said the Californian sullenly.

"Bosh!" replied Bob. "You're not likely to meet another grizzly, and your gun wasn't much use to you when you did. You've got your knife; you can keep that. No good chewing the rag. I know you, my man, and you're not going to snipe us when our backs are turned, and steal our horses after you've laid us out. What's your game, and you're not going to play it!"

Carson gave a sneering laugh. "They bring up their boys to be cute in this country," he said. "Keep the rifle! I guess I'll make you sorry for yourselves another time. No man or boy ever got the better of Alf Carson for long!"

"Hoof it back to Last Chance," said Bob. "That's fifteen miles, and you can do it before dark, if you choose. We shall be along there later, and we'll leave your rifle for you at the store. It's safer in our hands for the present."

The Californian shrugged his shoulders. "I'll go," he said quietly. "But you'll see me again."

"Bad for you if we do, I reckon." For a moment Handsome Alf gripped the handle of his hunting-knife hard, and a glitter shone in his dark eyes.

He looked at that moment like a panther about to spring.

Bob Lawless, with a careless laugh, pushed his rifle forward.

"Try it on!" he said.

Handsome Alf did not answer, and he did not "try it on." He turned and strode away.

"That man's a bad egg," said Bob Lawless. "Bad through and through. The worst kind of critter I've ever struck, I reckon. But I guess we've drawn his teeth."

"We may be sorry some day that we saved him from the grizzly," said Vere Beauclerc quietly.

Bob picked up the Californian's rifle. It was a handsome weapon, mounted in silver. Handsome Alf had expensive and gorgeous tastes, as his velvetens and his gold earrings showed.

"Same calibre as our guns," said Bob. "This gun may come in useful before we hand it over at Last Chance. We should have been fools to let him have it."

Chunky Todgers did not lose time. He was engaged upon a congenial task, which the other fellows, as a matter of fact, did not envy him.

Big bear-steaks were soon grilling over the fire of pine-ships and cones, and a savoury odour pervaded the camp.

Chunky's fat face smiled and glowed over the fire.

The other three attended to the horses, and fetched water and stacked firewood for future use, the explorers intending to remain on the wooded plateau for a few days, hunting and exploring.

They were hungry after the long morning's ride, and they sat down with keen appetites to the dinner prepared by the worthy Chunky.

The fat youth of Cedar Creek beamed at the praises which were showered upon his skill as a chef.

Chunky admitted that he wouldn't have been "great shakes" at killing the bear, but at making use of the carcass he had no equal.

Todgers paid himself the compliment of making a tremendous meal on his own cookery, and when he rose at last his movements were slow and laboured, and his eyes had a glassy look, and he breathed very hard.

Bob Lawless looked at him with a grin. "Overdone it, Chunky?" he asked.

"Mmmm—no," mumbled Chunky. "Not at all! I'm a little sleepy, that's all. Long ride this morning, you know."

"You don't think you've eaten about fifteen pounds too much?" grinned Bob.

"Br-r-r!"

"Take a nap in the timber and sleep it off!" said Bob.

"I guess I will," said Chunky, starting for the trees.

"There may be another grizzly knocking about there," added Bob carelessly.

Chunky halted suddenly.

"I—I guess I'll take a nap here," he decided.

And he rolled in the grass, with his big Stetson hat over his fat face, and was soon snoring.

Chunky Todgers needed a sleep after his feat, but the other three were not in the same state; they were being quite scarce.

Bob Lawless sat down to mend some of the harness, being a good hand at that kind of repairs; and Vere Beauclerc mounted his horse for a trot round the plateau, to survey the lay of the land.

Frank Richards remained clatting to Bob for some time, and then he strolled away from the camp to look for wild-fruit in the wood.

High up as the plateau was, the heat of the Canadian summer was very great, and it was agreeable and refreshing in the cool, green shade of the wood.

Frank was careful to take the shotgun with him, in case he should meet with game, or any possible enemy.

In that outlying region of the North-West of British Columbia it was possible to meet with Redskins who were not so amenable to law and order as those of the settled districts.

But the timber was solitary and silent, save for the twittering of birds in the trees and the occasional scuttle of a gopher.

Frank followed the bank of the little stream, threading his way through trees and thickets, not caring to go out of sight and sound of the water, which was his guide back to camp.

The English schoolboy was not so skilled in woodcraft as his Canadian cousin, though he had learned a good deal from Bob.

Cedar Creek party, and, besides, the spot was a couple of miles from the camp, and Frank was the first who had wandered in this direction.

Frank looked at it keenly, wondering to whom it could belong, and whether it was the track of some Indian who used the white-man's footgear.

At a short distance he discovered the track of a horse or pony.

"By jove!" murmured Frank. "We haven't got the place to ourselves, after all! That chap, whoever he is, has got small feet—as small as Yen Chin's."

Then he uttered an exclamation.

That thought was enough to enlighten him.

"My only hat! That blessed little Chinese is hanging about again!" he murmured. "He followed us up the mountain, after all!"

A few steps farther on, he lost the track of the pony and the boots in a stony patch of soil.

He returned towards the stream, smiling a little; the obstinate pursuit of the little Celestial was as amusing as it was provoking.

He pushed his way through a thicket to reach the bank again, and, as he did so, there was a sudden rustle in the underwoods.

He spun round, and, thinking at that moment of Yen Chin, he did not think of taking the shotgun from under his arm.

But the figure that suddenly loomed before him from the underbrush was not that of the Chow of Cedar Creek.

Frank caught a glimpse of a swarthy face and flashing ear-rings, and, as he started back, Handsome Alf was upon him with the spring of a panther.

It was the Californian!

Frank made a desperate grasp at his gun, but he was borne backwards in the flash of an eye, and came down on his back heavily in the grass.

The next instant the knee of the Californian was planted on his chest, and a bare blade flashed before his eyes.

A sickening feeling came over him, and he closed his eyes involuntarily.

For a moment it seemed to him that the ruffian was about to drive the hunting-knife home; and death in all its horrors froze him at that fearful moment.

But the blow did not fall.

The low, mocking, not unmusical laugh of the half-Spanish adventurer sounded in his ears.

"My turn now!" said Handsome Alf. "You reckoned I had lit out, I guess!"

"Yes," gasped Frank.

"Keep still, my bucko."

Carson made a threatening motion with the knife. "One thrust—and you know the rest!"

Frank shuddered.

"I guess I didn't light out!" grinned Carson. "My horse bolted when that grizzly tackled me, and I didn't reckon on moseying on foot back to Last Chance. No, sir! And I reckoned I'd score to pay before I lost sight of you galoots!"

Handsome Alf's black eyes scintillated. "I told you you'd see me again!"

"We saved your life," said Frank Richards quietly.

Carson laughed.

The 5th Chapter. Saved by the Chow.

Yen Chin had stepped from the trees with the silent stealthiness of a cat.

He was directly behind the kneeling Californian, and, without turning his head, Handsome Alf could not see him, and, naturally, he did not dream of his presence.

He had known nothing of Yen Chin's pursuit of the Cedar Creek party.

The Chinese caught Frank's eye as the boy looked past his captor, and instantly put his fingers to his lips.

Frank understood.

It required presence of mind and a great effort to keep his face from betraying what he had seen.

But Frank made the effort, and he succeeded.

Life itself depended on the next minute or two, and, under the strain of that fearful peril, his brain worked with strange clearness and swiftness.

To keep the Californian from discovering the silent, creeping figure behind him, that was Frank's instant thought; and almost in the same moment that he discerned Yen Chin he began to speak, so quickly did his mind act at that terrible moment.

"Hold your hand!" he exclaimed hurriedly. "We saved your life, Carson. But for us—"

"Ha, ha!" roared Handsome Alf.

He laughed uproariously, evidently gratified at having, as he supposed, forced the English boy into asking him for mercy—which he did not intend to grant.

"And that isn't all!" panted Frank, cudgeling his brain desperately for some pretext to keep the ruffian in talk, if only for one minute. "If you kill me you will not find the placer—"

He had touched the right chord.

Handsome Alf's black eyes gleamed as he scanned the schoolboy's pale face scrutinisingly.

"The placer?" he repeated. "What placer?"

"You knew there was a placer here," said Frank. "I guessed that you were looking for it when we came upon you."

"That's true, I guess. You have found it!" exclaimed the Californian, his black eyes snapping. "You have found the placer?"

The knife still threatened the prostrate boy, but the ruffian was not thinking for the moment of using it.

He had been hunting for gold in the foot-hills when the grizzly attacked him, and the mention of a placer had awakened all his greed.

He had no scruple about extracting all the information he could from the helpless schoolboy before he silenced him for ever.

That Frank Richards knew nothing of a placer mine, and was striving only to gain time, he had no means of guessing.

It was only moments that were wanted.

Yen Chin, silent as a snake, was creeping up behind the Californian, and in his right hand was grasped a heavy billet of wood.

If he came within striking-distance before he was observed, Frank Richards was saved.

But if the ruffian discovered him, one thrust of the hunting-knife would be Frank's portion, and Yen Chin would share his fate.

It was his life that the little Chinese was risking for Frank Richards, for he had no chance in a struggle with the muscular ruffian, and he was unarmed, save for the billet of wood.

Yen Chin's yellow face was white with the strain of suppressed excitement, and his almond eyes scintillated like diamonds as he crept closer.

The blow would have been repeated yet again, but Frank caught the Chinese's arm and dragged it back.

Villain as the Californian was, Frank did not want his schoolfellow to beat out the ruffian's brains before his eyes.

"Hold on, Yen Chin!" he gasped.

"No hold! Kill! Kill!" exclaimed Yen Chin. "Velly baddee man! Wantee killee pool ole Flanky! Me killee!"

"Stop—stop!"

"Flanky great duffee!" exclaimed Yen Chin impatiently. "Me tinkee killee quick. Velly bad man!"

Frank Richards was almost inclined to let the little Oriental have his way, after the black treachery and ingratitude of the ear-ringed ruffian.

But even his own terribly narrow escape could not reconcile him to the taking of a human life when the danger was over.

His grasp tightened on the little Celestial's arm, and he pulled him back, much to Yen Chin's disappointment and exasperation.

"You must not kill him, Yen Chin," he said.

"Flanky ole duffee!" said Yen Chin discontentedly. "Suppose him see me—him killee plenty quick—oh, yes!"

"I'm afraid so. But—"

"Allee light!" grinned Yen Chin. "Me do what Flanky wantee. Me velly fond of silly ole Flanky! Come on holiday with nicey ole Flanky—oh, yes!"

Frank Richards did not answer.

He stood leaning against a tree, breathing deep and hard, almost giddy from the strain he had undergone.

He had been in peril before, but never had the grim King of Terrors been nearer to him.

Now that he was safe he could scarcely realise it, and he was feeling almost sick with the reaction.

Handsome Alf Carson lay unheeded in the grass, with a crimson stream oozing from under his thick dark hair, where Yen Chin's blows had fallen.

The ruffian was stunned, and it was likely to be a long time before he came to his senses again.

Yen Chin glanced anxiously at Frank.

"Teelee baddee?" he asked.

"Yes," muttered Frank. "Rotten, old chap! Never mind; it's all right! Thank you for what you've done, Yen Chin. You've saved my life!"

"Velly glad save ole Flanky!" said Yen Chin. "Flanky wantee me come on holiday now—oh, yes! Tell ugly Bob me come."

Frank Richards smiled faintly.

The little Chinese was still sticking to his desire to join the Cedar Creek party in the North-West; and, after what had happened, he could scarcely be refused.

Frank Richards, at all events, was not in a mood to refuse him anything he asked.

"Come back with me, kid," he said. "Let's get back to the camp! I'm feeling a bit sick."

"Me sorry! Leave me glad glance?" asked Yen Chin, with a regretful glance at the motionless figure of the Californian.

"Yes, yes!" said Frank hastily.

THE END. NEXT MONDAY. "DANGER AHEAD!" By MARTIN CLIFFORD. DON'T MISS IT!