

THE KAISER v. THE BOYS OF THE BOMBAY CASTLE! SEE BELOW.

The BOYS' FRIEND 1^{1d} 1^{1d} 2

WITH WHICH IS INCORPORATED THE "PENNY POPULAR." WAR TIME PRICE

No. 900. Vol. XVIII. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending September 7th, 1918.

.. THE ..
MOST AMAZING
STORY FOR BOYS
EVER WRITTEN!



THE BOYS



WHO BEAT THE KAISER.

DUNCAN STORM'S
LATEST STORY
OF THE BOYS OF THE
BOMBAY CASTLE!



ONE IN THE STOMACH FOR BARON VON SLYDEN!

SEE OUR MAGNIFICENT NEW SERIAL, "THE BOYS WHO BEAT THE KAISER!"

FOR NEW READERS.

THE KAISER is determined to obtain possession of the Mahdi's huge treasure which is hidden in the heart of the continent of Africa, and, to do so, he employs three desperate Germans named BARON VON SLYDEN, CAPTAIN STOOM, and VON SNEEK.

The papers, however, containing the secret of the whereabouts of the treasure are in the possession of

CAPTAIN HANDYMAN and CY SPRAGUE, who decide to go in quest of the treasure, and to take with them the boys of the Bombay Castle, chief among whom are DICK DORRINGTON, CHIP, ARTY DOVE, SKELETON, PORKIS, and PONGO WALKER.

LAL TATA, a cheery Hindu, TOOKUM EL KOOS, a native wrestler, FLINT PASHA, a member of the Sudan Police, are also amongst the party, as well as the boys' pets, CECIL, the orang-outang, HORACE, the goat, and GUS, the crocodile.

In last week's instalment Captain Handyman and the boys were staying at the Zulekia Palace Hotel, at Khar-toum, previous to starting on the quest for the Mahdi's treasure. The boys decided to work a jape on Lal Tata. Late one night they made their way to his bed-room, and placed Gus, the crocodile, in the bolster of his bed, and tied Horace, the goat, to the veranda outside.

Lal, however, had overheard their scheme, and had hidden himself in a mummy-case in the corner of his bed-room. The boys took their departure as they heard somebody moving about in the garden. Lal Tata, in the darkness of the mummy-case, immediately took

a firm grip on his revolver, for he realised that the intruders in the garden were none other than Baron von Slyden & Co., the Kaiser's agents!

(Read on from here.)

The Germans' Defeat.

The mummy which had originally occupied the wall of Lal Tata's bed-room, was no more quiet and motionless than Lal was, as he stood, with his revolver ready in his hand, waiting for his German visitors.

Lal felt confident that they would come.

It was about twenty-five minutes after the boys had invaded the bed-room and had stuffed Gus, the crocodile, into the bolster of his bed, that Lal heard soft footsteps outside.

In the darkness outside he heard a key searching for the keyhole of the bungalow room.

All was deathly still.

The boys had gone back to their bungalow, and were doubtless waiting to see what was going to happen when Lal laid his fat head on the bolster which imprisoned the crocodile.

Somewhere in the darkness Lal knew that Horace, the goat, was lurking.

The boys had fixed things up so that Lal, on rushing out to give the alarm about Gus, would run into Horace.

Then Horace would butt him.

And it was no joke to be butted by Horace, who had a drive behind his ugly head like the punch of a shunting engine.

And the worst of it was, there were no buffers on Horace.

But Lal was not thinking about the boys now as he waited for the enemy.

He was perfectly certain that Von Slyden would search his rooms that night in an attempt to discover the maps and plans of the hidden treasure which he supposed were in Lal's keeping.

Lal was delighted to hear the searching of the key for the keyhole.

The twenty-five minutes in which he had waited in the mummy-case had passed very slowly.

A mummy-case is not a pleasant kind of waiting-room.

This one, presented to Lal by his grateful fellow-countryman, was close and stuffy, and full of the dust of the centuries.

Lal felt as if he were breathing mummy, finely-ground mummy—as fine as snuff.

He wanted to sneeze badly. So he kept counting three, which is a good way of preventing yourself from sneezing.

Gus, stuffed in the bolster, was more comfortable than Lal was.

Gus did not want to sneeze, anyway.

There was a dim oil-lamp burning in the room, giving just enough light

for Lal, peering through the holes which he had bored in the eyes of the mummy-case, to see what was going on at the door.

The wards of the key grated in the lock.

Lal was an expert in keys.

As an old member of the Indian Secret Service, there was very little that he did not know about keys and locks.

And his practised ear told him in a second that the key which was being used was the master-key of every bed-room lock in the Zulekia Palace Hotel.

The door opened slowly and cautiously.

The first thing that appeared was a man's arm, cautiously holding a pistol, which was directed at Lal's bed.

If the man had fired at that moment he would have hit Gus in the bolster.

The crocodile was lying very quiet in the bolster now.

Since the boys had fished Gus out of the Nile, Gus had got used to all sorts of queer cribs.

He had first been shut up in an egg-box, and then in an empty cabin. The boys mostly carried him about in a cricket-bag, but once they had rolled him up in a hold-all.

So Gus had learned to shake down quietly in any sort of old bed, and he was not long in getting reconciled to the bolster-case.

Slowly the man entered, tiptoeing, as though he were posing for a picture of the bad man in the cinema film.

He was well-dressed in European clothes, and masked with a handkerchief.

He slid into the room, looking round cautiously.

Lal's luggage was scattered about. The bed was empty and unused.

Lal's pink-striped pyjamas were lying on the bolster on the top of Gus, the crocodile, and there was nothing in the great, bare room to hide anything except the mummy-case.

The baron was followed by two other men, similarly dressed in good and fashionable European clothes, and similarly masked.

There were no Arab disguises here. The baron knew his game.

Natives do not use European hotels, and neither do they play billiards.

It was quite an easy matter for the three Germans to drop into the billiard-room of the Zulekia Palace Hotel, and, having played a game or two, to stroll out into the shadow of the palms in the great hotel garden.

"The Indian pig is not here!" growled the baron. "That is good! We must search, and search quickly. Then we will have a look at the room occupied by this Captain Handyman."

(Continued on the next page.)



ROOKWOOD UNDER CANVAS!

(Continued from the previous page.)

The fat gentleman quivered with wrath, but he did not take any further measures to displace Jimmy Silver. He realised that the merry juniors were quite capable of carrying out Morny's playful suggestion. He sat and scowled portentously. Van Ryn, resting against the carriage door, received two or three jabs from the fat knees, as a hint to give more room. Conroy whispered in the South African's ear. "Give him some of your giddy ventriloquism, Dutchy." Van Ryn grinned, and nodded. His ventriloquial gift was pretty well known among the Rookwood juniors, and so among them his tricks were discounted in advance, as it were; but the pompous fat gentleman was a stranger, and, naturally, quite unaware of his peculiar gift. "Where's my dog, you chaps?" asked Van Ryn suddenly. "Your dog?" repeated Jimmy Silver in surprise. "You haven't brought a dog with you to school, surely." "Must be under the seat," said Conroy. "My hat! I hope he's in a good temper, then," said Van Ryn, with an anxious look. "He bites!" Stick your foot under the seat, and see if he's there, Jimmy!" Jimmy Silver understood by that time, and he smilingly shoved his boot under the seat. He jumped, as from below there came a sudden, savage growl.

**The 3rd Chapter.
Cave Canem!**

GR-R-R-R!
Jimmy Silver snatched his foot away hurriedly. So realistic was that ferocious growl that he supposed, for the moment, that he had disturbed a real dog hidden under the seat. The fat gentleman snatched his feet up still more suddenly. "Here, don't kick me!" shouted Van Ryn. "My trousers ain't a doormat!" "How dare you bring a dog into the carriage!" exclaimed the fat gentleman. "How dare you! Take him out from under the seat at once!" "Towser! Towser!" called out Van Ryn. GURRRRR!
"He seems ratty," said Van Ryn. "He won't come out for me. Put your feet down, sir; they're in my way!" "I refuse to put them down! I will not be bitten by your dog, boy!" GURRRRR!
"I say, he sounds jolly savage!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Get on the seats before he snaps at your legs, you chaps!" The Rookwooders, entering at once into the joke, scrambled up on the seats, holding on by the racks and by one another. The fat gentleman followed their example. He dared not put his feet down within reach of the savagely-growling dog, and it was too great an exertion to keep them suspended, like Mohamet's coffin, between heaven and earth. GURRR! came from under the seat. "Boy, take that dog out! Do you hear me? Take him out and control him at once!" "He won't come out for me, sir," said Van Ryn. "Take him out yourself." "Fool! He may bite me!" "Well, if he does, it will serve him right," said Van Ryn. "It won't be nice for him, but it's his own fault. You needn't mind!" "I—I—I— Boy, you are a fool—an idiot!" spluttered the fat gentleman. "Do you think I want to be bitten by a dog? I command you to control that dog at once, and remove him to the other end of the carriage." GURRRRR!
"Bless my soul! Will you do as I tell you, boy?" "Can't be done, sir," said Van Ryn. "I'm keeping here, where I'm safe! You can risk it if you like." "I shall complain at the next station! It is against the law to introduce dogs into the carriage." "I'm sure you won't mention it, sir." "I shall do so as soon as the train stops, and order the guard to take the animal out!" thundered the fat gentleman. "Oh, sir, be kind!" urged Van Ryn. "Be a good boy! Don't be malicious! You look very graceful, sir, standing on the seat, if it wasn't for your circumference." The fat gentleman spluttered. As the train rushed on, the juniors continued to stand on the seats, in great good humour, and the fat gentleman did the same, evidently not daring, for his life, to get within reach of the savage brute growling underneath. But as the train slowed down in a station the juniors dropped back into their seats, and those who had to stand stood on the floor. But the fat gentleman remained on his seat. As the train stopped, he stooped over and hurled open the door, and made a spring to the platform. "Guard!" he roared. "Guard! Where are you, guard? Come here, guard!" The Rookwooders grinned at one another. The guard came up somewhat surlily.

"Wot's this 'ere?" he demanded. "There is a dog in the carriage! I have nearly been bitten. I have had to stand on the seat! That boy brought the dog into the carriage!" He pointed to Van Ryn. "Tain't allowed, sir," said the guard civilly to the Rookwood junior. "You must take the dog out." "But I haven't a dog here, guard," answered Van Ryn. "Oh! One of you other young gents—" "Nobody has a dog here, guard," answered Jimmy Silver; and there was a general shaking of heads. "Ho!" said the guard, with a stare at the fat gentleman, who certainly did look very red and excited. "Ho! The young gentlemen say there ain't a dog there, sir!" "It is false! He belongs to that boy! He was growling savagely under the seat! Take it out, guard, or I will report you!" The guard snorted. He seemed inclined, for the moment, to tell the fat gentleman what he thought of him, and his language would probably have been startling; but he restrained himself, and stepped into the carriage. The juniors made room for him to look under the seats; and it did not take him many seconds to ascertain that there was no dog there. He came out of the carriage with an angry grunt. "You have not removed the dog, guard?" "There ain't any dog!" "Man! I tell you he is under the seat!" "And I tell you he ain't!" roared the guard, exasperated. "And I ain't no more time to waste on a man what has been drinking, and which you ought to be ashamed of yourself, sir, at your time of life." And the guard stalked away. "By gad!" gasped the fat gentleman. "Insolence! Impertinence! Why is not that man in the Army? Huh!" The guard swung round, red and wrathful. "I've been through it, I have," he said; "and you ain't, by the look of you! Why ain't you in the Army, if you come to that?" The guard, like Brutus, paused for a reply. But no reply was forthcoming. The fat gentleman seemed to be smitten dumb. With a grunt of contempt, the guard marched off, and the fat gentleman did not call him back. He fixed his eyes on the grinning juniors. "Will you turn that dog out?" he gasped. "Bow-wow!" "I order you to do so!" "Go it!" "Stand clear there!" The fat gentleman made a step towards the carriage. GURRRRRRR!
It was a growl of terrific ferocity, and it was too much for the fat man. He jumped back hastily. The next moment the guard slammed the door.

The train moved out of the station, leaving the fat gentleman standing on the platform, red and spluttering, and Jimmy Silver & Co. crowded the window and kissed their hands to him; which, for some reason, did not seem to have the slightest pacifying effect upon him. At all events, he was shaking a fat fist as he disappeared from sight.

**The 4th Chapter.
Bagged!**

Jimmy Silver & Co. sat down, quite pleased to have got rid of their irascible fellow-passenger. They were in cheery spirits as the train rushed on towards Coombe. The first day of term was not always a joyous occasion, and as a rule there was regret for holidays that had come to an end. But, as it happened, there was a good deal of anticipation now among the Rookwood fellows who were returning to the old school. Rookwood had broken up earlier than usual for the vacation, owing to the damage sustained by the school in an air-raid. The fellows had supposed that the work of repair would be done during the vac, and that they would return to find the school looking its old self. But they had not counted on war-time conditions. Labour and materials were not to be had for the asking, and even the important work of repairing Rookwood had to take second place to works of more national importance. Hence it came about that the rebuilding was far from finished and that the school was by no means ready to receive the Rookwooders. Probably most of the fellows would have welcomed an extension of the vacation—indeinitely. Paters and maters, however, did not see eye to eye with their hopeful sons on that subject. A way had been found out of the difficulty. Fortunately, the weather was splendid, and when it was announced that Rookwood would gather under canvas till the rebuilding was completed, there were few who grumbled. Rookwood under canvas was a novelty, and most of the fellows, especially the juniors, looked forward to it with keen anticipation. Lovell remarked that it was worth while going back to school for the sake of a new experience like that. "It will be ripping!" Jimmy Silver observed, as the train rattled on. "Think of the larks we can play on the Moderns! Old Manders, too! Suppose we fix it up to bring his tent down on his napper some windy night—what?" "Hear, hear!" chorused the Classics. "Think of our chances of raiding the Moderns!" continued Jimmy. "We can rag them no end. I think this is really very thoughtful of the Head!" "Ha, ha! I don't think the Head arranged it so that we could rag the Moderns," grinned Lovell. "Well, no," admitted Jimmy. "But we'll give Tommy Dodd & Co. the time of their lives!" "We will, rather!" agreed the Classics. "I hear that we're going to have lessons in the open air," said Mornington; "and dine under the cheery old sky, too! Rippin' when it rains!" "There's a big marquee for dining in when it rains," said Jimmy. "I've heard all about it. Lessons will be alfresco,

and if it rains we may chuck lessons till it's dry. That won't be a disadvantage." "Ha, ha! No." "I say, that's ripping!" exclaimed Tubby Muffin. "I hope we shall have a lot of rain, you fellows." "Ha, ha, ha!" There was a buzz of discussion in the crowded carriage till the train ran into the little station of Coombe. There Jimmy Silver & Co. swarmed out. "Hallo! You got in, then?" exclaimed Jimmy, catching sight of his cousin Algy of the Third. Algy grinned. "What do you think?" he answered. "We found a lot of Modern fags in a carriage, and bundled 'em out. Didn't we, young Wegg?" "We did!" grinned Wegg. "You should have heard 'em howl! Knowles yelled to us, and we told him to go and eat coke!" "You told a prefect to go and eat coke!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver aghast. "Yes, we did!" said Wegg defiantly. "Well, you young ass!" "He didn't hear us, though," explained Grant of the Third. "We didn't say it loud enough for him to hear, you know." Jimmy Silver laughed. "I say, have you seen anything of Pumpkin, Jimmy?" asked Algy Silver. "Eh! Who's Pumpkin? New kid?" asked Jimmy. "Ha, ha! No; the giddy war-lecturer!" said Algy, with a chuckle. "I heard Mr. Bootles say he was on the train. He's coming to Rookwood to give a lecture, so Bootles was saying to Bulkeley. He's on the train. Tremendous big gun, I hear; spouts no end!" "Haven't seen him," said Jimmy. "Come on, Jimmy!" said Lovell. Jimmy Silver rejoined his chums, and they marched out of the station. War time was once more in evidence by the absence of the customary brakes to take them to the school. Adolphus Smythe of the Shell could be heard complaining loudly. "We've got to walk!" said Smythe, in tones of mingled incredulity and disgust. "Walk to Rookwood! Oh, gad! Jever hear of such a thing?" "Rotten!" said Tracy. "What about our bags?" said Adolphus indignantly. "Does the Head suppose that we can carry our bags? By gad, he'll be askin' us to carry our boxes next!" "I suppose the luggage will be sent on!" growled Tracy. "It's rotten! Marchin' to school with a dashed bag—pah! This war has gone on long enough, if you ask me!" "Long enough?" said Adolphus, with a sniff. "Too long, I think! Weren't able to get any peaches durin' the vac! Believe me!" "Wait a minute for me, you fellows!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "I'm going to kill Smythe!" "How am I goin' to get this bag to Rookwood?" continued Smythe, in despair. "It weighs four or five pounds, at least! Oh, gad! I wonder if I could find a person in the village to carry it?" "One of those dashed fags ought to carry it!" grunted Howard. "They ought to fag for the Shell! I've always said so!" "Can't you carry your bag, Smythe?" asked Lovell, coming up, with a gleam in his eyes. "Hand it to me, then!" "Good!" said Adolphus, in great relief. "Here you are, Lovell! I'll stand you some buns for carryin' it!" Lovell took the bag. It was a very handsome and expensive leather bag, with Adolphus' initials on it, and looked very natty, like all Adolphus' possessions.

"You fagging for that Shell-worm, Lovell?" roared Raby, in great wrath. "I'm taking his bag," answered Lovell. "Chuck it, then, you ass, or we'll scrag you!" "I'm going to chuck it!" said Lovell cheerfully. "Here goes!" He dropped the bag, and punted it with his boot as it fell. That handsome bag flew through the air, and landed in the road, and Lovell chased after it. Adolphus Smythe stood petrified for a moment. The egregious Adolphus had really believed that Lovell was going to fag at carrying his bag for him to Rookwood. He was painfully undeceived now. Lovell's intention was to use the bag as a footer. "You—you villain!" gasped Adolphus. "Let that bag alone!" "Pass!" yelled Lovell. The bag whirled by Jimmy Silver, who cheerfully took the pass, sending it to Van Ryn. The South African passed it to Conroy, who sent it on; and then there was a rush of the merry Fourth-Formers after it. Smythe's bag was rather heavy for use as a footer, and it was necessary to kick very hard; but Jimmy Silver & Co. did not mind that. The bag showed signs of wear and tear in a very short time. Adolphus Smythe, in a towering rage, chased after the juniors, but he was shouldered "off the ball" without ceremony. The merry juniors rushed the bag along the road, kicking it in turn, and it bounced and it flew. A rolling stone is said to gather no moss, but Smythe's rolling bag gathered a great deal of mud and dust, as well as severe contusions. Adolphus, yelling and protesting and gasping, followed the footballers—or, rather, foot-baggers—in a state of frenzy. Finally a terrific kick from Conroy burst the unfortunate bag open, the lock giving way. It came down with a bump, wide open, and Adolphus' dandified property poured out in the dust. Beautiful silk pyjamas sprawled in the road, with incomparable purple socks and neckties of the latest design, amid yells of laughter from the Fourth-Formers. Adolphus pounced on his bag at last. "Keep off, you rotters!" he howled. "Ha, ha, ha!" "Can you carry the bag now?" gasped Lovell. "Yaas, you rotter! Leave it alone!" "Ha, ha, ha!" The nut of the Shell was only too glad to carry his bag, to save it from further footballing adventures. Jimmy Silver & Co. walked on merrily, leaving Adolphus cramming his property into the bag again, and a good deal of the dust from the road along with it. In great spirits the heroes of the Fourth arrived at Rookwood.

**The 5th Chapter.
Under Canvas.**

"Look!" "Topping!" "Hurrah!" It was a strange sight that burst upon Jimmy Silver & Co. as they arrived. Rookwood School was still under repair. There was scaffolding galore, and piles of bricks, and seas of mortar—workmen were at work, with a grinding of tackle and creaking of pulleys. But it was not at the school buildings that the juniors looked. Their eyes turned at once on the rows of white tents, all ready, prepared for their reception. The playing-fields were covered, and the school meadow was marked out in one huge camp. "It's a corker!" pronounced Jimmy Silver. "We're going to enjoy this! Let's hope the johnnies over yonder will go on strike, and keep us under canvas." "Hear, hear!" There was great enthusiasm on the part of the Rookwood juniors, which was shared by the rest as they arrived. Smythe & Co. were somewhat annoyed and disdainful, but nobody minded Adolphus and his nutty friends. Peele and Gower of the Fourth grumbled, too, for, as Peele remarked to Gower, how the merry dickens was a fellow to get a quiet game of nap or banker under these conditions? Evidently the Head was unaware that the tastes of some of his boys ran in the direction of nap and banker. But the great majority were greatly pleased. Even if they had to rough it a little the Rookwooders were prepared to take that good-humouredly. Roughing it, indeed, rather appeals to the average healthy boy, and the Rookwooders were no exception to the rule. Jimmy Silver & Co. enjoyed a ramble round the school camp, finding out the lie of the land, so to speak. The cricket-ground was occupied with the tents belonging to the Modern side, a smaller encampment than that in the school meadow, which appertained to the Classics, the more numerous body. Masters and prefects were very busy explaining, pointing out, and perhaps snapping a little. "Six of us in here, it seems," said Jimmy Silver, when he learned from Bulkeley which was his tent. "That's us four, and—who? My hat! Here's the names written up! Somebody's been very thoughtful. Fancy a headmaster thinking of that!" "Ha, ha!" "Silver, Lovell, Raby, Newcome, Van Ryn, Muffin!" said Jimmy Silver, reading out the names. "Too bad! Dutchy's as welcome as the flowers in May; but that fat boulder Muffin—" "Look here, Jimmy—" "If you snore in this tent, Tubby, you'll get slaughtered! Keep it till we get back

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN

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."

FOR NEXT MONDAY!

"THE BOYS WHO BEAT THE KAISER!"
By Duncan Storm.

Many readers have written to me just recently, saying how much they enjoy reading about the animals in our splendid new serial story. I am really not surprised at this, for there is no doubt that Horace, Gus, and Cecil are the cause of any amount of fun. You will find Horace more amusing than ever in next Monday's magnificent instalment. Horace is in an obstinate mood, and refuses to go on board the ship. But the boys are determined that he shall go, and they take strong measures with their obstinate pet, which make for some very humorous reading.

Baron von Slyden, and the other agents of the Kaiser, are also very much to the fore in this instalment. So far the baron has not profited by his encounters with Dick Dorrington & Co., but the rascally Hun is not done with yet. In fact, he is more resolved than ever to score off the boys, and he is prepared to go to desperate lengths in order to achieve this object.

"DONE IN THE DARK!"
By Owen Conquest.

You will have a hearty laugh over next Monday's magnificent tale of Jimmy Silver & Co. Lessons under canvas do not make a strong appeal to the Rookwood chums, especially on a fine day. They long for rain, which will have the effect of abandoning lessons. But rain does not come

Lovell hits upon an idea of securing the postponement of lessons, and proceeds to carry out his scheme. But, alas for Lovell's hopes, the scheme does not work out to his satisfaction! This is largely due to the intervention of Carthew, the bullying prefect. Needless to say, the Fistical Four do not love Carthew in consequence, and they decide to get their own back on the senior. Whether they are successful or not you will learn when you read this splendid story.

"ROUNDED UP!"
By Martin Clifford.

During his experiences at the school in the backwoods, Frank Richards has met many villains, but none have compared with their latest enemy, Handsome Alf. But in spite of the man's desperate, villainous nature, the chums of Cedar Creek decline to knuckle under to him. In fact, they make up their minds to capture the rogue and bring him to justice.

The manner in which they do this makes most interesting reading, and I am confident that you will thoroughly revel in the story due to appear in our next issue.

"THWARTED BY THREE!"
By Herbert Britton.

In our next story of Bob Travers & Co. you will read how the chums were severely caned for their recent misdemeanours, how Bunny was more determined than ever to track down the missing bank thief, how he was made a prisoner by the latter, and how Bob Travers & Co. searched for the missing junior, and went through one of the most exciting adventures of their lives.

A NOVEL COMPETITION.

Schoolboys able to visit the famous War Models Exhibition now running at 315-317, Oxford Street, London, are invited to write a competitive essay, describing the exhibition and the wonderful models it contains. The judges include Mr. Eden Philipotts and Mr. Archibald Hurd. The competition is divided into three classes:

- 1.—Limited to boys of 15 to 18 years years of age. Prize: Model of monoplane in which Lieut. Warneford, V.C., brought down the first Zeppelin, on June 7th, 1915, and £10 10s.
- 2.—Limited to boys of 12 to 15 years of age. Prize: Model of Submarine B11, which sank the Turkish battleship *Messoudieh*, and £5 5s.
- 3.—Limited to boys under 12 years of age. Prize: Model of French Tank La France, and £2 2s.

The essays should not exceed 1,200 words, and must be sent, addressed to Mr. C. Ledwidge, Exhibition of Famous War Models, 315-317, Oxford Street, W.1., not later than October 1st, 1918. Name, age, and address of competitor should be clearly written on front page.

The exhibition is open from 10 a.m. until 8 p.m. Admission 1s. All money paid for admission is handed to the War Seal Foundation (registered under the War Charities Act, 1916) for providing homes for totally disabled soldiers and sailors.

Your Editor

to the dormitory!" said Jimmy Silver warningly. "You nearly burst the caravan with your snoring in the vac."

"Pons and Conroy, and Erroll and Morny are in the next tent," said Lovell. "The Fourth Form's all together. Hallo! What does Neville want?"

Neville of the Sixth was rounding up the juniors. The Head was about to speak, and all Rookwood was wanted.

The Forms gathered in order in the meadow, where the reverend figure of Dr. Chisholm was seen standing under a big oak.

Big Hall was a mass of scaffolding, so far, and uninhabitable, like most of the rest of Rookwood.

The Head's own house was intact, and Dr. Chisholm was not under the necessity of camping out, which the fags thought was rather hard cheese for the old sport, as Lovell expressed it.

Probably, however, the reverend Head was not so keen on life under canvas as the fags were.

Respectful attention was given to the Head as he addressed the school.

His address was brief.

He mentioned that Rookwood was meeting for the new term under unprecedented conditions, owing to enemy action, and he hoped that his boys would make the best of it, and endure any possible hardships or discomforts in a right British spirit.

The cheer that followed assured him that they would.

The Head added that Mr. Pumpkin, the celebrated war-lecturer, was giving an address to the school the next day, and expressed the hope that all Rookwood would attend on that occasion, his "hope" being tantamount to a command.

"Oh, we'll turn up!" remarked Mornington, as the assembly dispersed.

"Blest if I know what he's goin' to lecture us about, but we'll give the man a hearing! Anybody know who he is?"

"Never heard of him before," said Jimmy Silver. "One of those johnnies who go about gassing at public meetings, I suppose. We can stand it if the Head wants us to. It's no worse than grinding Latin, anyway."

"Somebody said he was on our train coming down," remarked Erroll.

"More likely left at Latcham!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "Let's see if there's anything going in the tuckshop."

The juniors found Sergeant Kettle in his old place in the school shop.

The sergeant looked at them rather grimly.

He had had his rubs with the cheery juniors during the caravanning episode in the vacation.

"Glad to see you again, sergeant!" said Jimmy Silver affably. "We've forgiven you for deserting us in the vac."

"Hub!" said Mr. Kettle.

"Any jam-tarts going?" asked Van Ryn.

"No!"

"Oh, dear!" said Tubby Muffin.

"I see you've got a pot of jam there," remarked Jimmy Silver. "This way!"

Mr. Kettle shook his head.

"Only one pot of jam in the place, Master Silver," he said, "and that's for Master Knowles. He came in first and ordered it."

"Knowles is only a Modern, sergeant!" urged Jimmy Silver. "You can't give a Modern the only pot of jam and let Classical go without! Think of it!"

"Hub!"

"Knowles ought to have taken it if he wanted it!" said Van Ryn. "Hand it over, sergeant!"

"Hub!"

"Let's raid it!" suggested Lovell. "We can't let the last pot of jam go to the Modern side! We've got our prestige to consider!"

"Hear, hear!"

Van Ryn grinned.

"I'll ask Knowles!" he said. He turned towards the doorway, as if he saw the Modern prefect there. The sergeant, being behind his counter, could not see out of the doorway.

"I say, Knowles!" called out Van Ryn. The juniors stared at him. Knowles was not there. But the Rookwood ventriloquist was aware of that.

A reply came from the doorway in Knowles' voice, and the juniors understood, though Sergeant Kettle did not.

"Well, Van Ryn?"

"Can I have that pot of jam?"

"Certainly!" came back Knowles' voice. "Give Van Ryn that pot of jam, sergeant!"

"Very well, Master Knowles," said the sergeant, answering the voice from the doorway.

And the pot of jam was handed over to Van Ryn, who promptly paid for it and beat a retreat, amid chuckles from his comrades.

Ten minutes later a Modern fag came in for the pot of jam for Knowles, and went away with empty hands.

Then came Knowles himself, in great wrath.

"What does this mean, Kettle?" he demanded. "You put that pot of jam aside for me?"

"You told me to give it to Master Van Ryn!" grunted the sergeant.

"I didn't!"

"You did, sir."

"You're dreaming!" howled Knowles. "I haven't seen you since I ordered it. When did I tell you?"

"A quarter of an hour ago."

"I didn't!" roared Knowles. "I haven't been near the place!"

"Which I suppose I know your voice, Master Knowles," snapped Mr. Kettle. "You called in at the door."

"I did nothing of the kind!"

The sergeant snorted, and turned to another customer.

Cecil Knowles left the tuck-shop in great wrath, and looked for Van Ryn.

He found Van Ryn; but he did not find the jam. That had long disappeared among the Classical juniors.

Van Ryn politely offered him the jar, an offer that was not accepted.

"You young rascal, you diddle old Kettle somehow into giving you my pot of

jam!" snarled Knowles. "You cheeky little beast!"

"Kindly moderate your language, Knowles!" came Mr. Bootles' voice from inside the next tent.

Knowles started, and bit his lip.

"Oh! Ah, yes, certainly, sir!" he stammered, and he hastily retired.

"My hat!" murmured Conroy. "Lucky Bootles was there! I believe Knowles would have gone for you, Dutchy!"

"So do I!" smiled Van Ryn. "But Bootles isn't there, dear boy!"

"Oh, you spoofer! Ha, ha, ha!"

Knowles looked round as he heard the laughter, but, fortunately, he did not guess its cause, or matters might have been painful for the Rookwood ventriloquist.

The 6th Chapter. Hard Cheese!

Rookwood turned in that night under canvas.

It was a new experience for the school, but the fellows found that they slept soundly enough.

In the sunny morning the rising-bell awakened them from balmy slumber.

They walked down to the river for "tubber."

Breakfast was taken in the open air, which, by general agreement, was an improvement on the dining-hall.

Classes were to begin at the usual hour, under the blue sky, and Tubby Muffin's eyes sought the firmament anxiously for signs of rain; but to Tubby's disappointment there was not a hint of rain.

"My only hat!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver suddenly, as the Fourth Form were gathering for lessons.

He stared towards a figure that was approaching.

"Mr. Gargoyle!" exclaimed Mornington. "Phew! What's that merchant doing here?"

It was the fat gentleman of the train the day before.

He looked as important and lofty as ever as he came towards the spot, and the juniors wondered what he wanted there.

Jimmy Silver & Co. felt a little uneasy.

"Bless my soul!"

"I was incommoded by ruffianly crowding in my carriage, sir, and upon my remonstrating in the mildest possible manner I was subjected, sir, to a stream of insults and abuse!" boomed Mr. Pumpkin.

"You—you astonish me, sir!"

"Had I known that the—the young rascals belonged to this school, I should certainly have called on the Head last evening to lay a complaint. I am surprised, Mr. Bootles, that Rookwood boys should be guilty of such outrageous hooliganism in public. I must remark, sir, that it reflects no credit on this school."

Mr. Bootles coloured.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked furious.

"Please point out the boys who insulted you, Mr. Pumpkin," said the Form-master a little tartly. "They shall certainly be adequately punished."

Mr. Pumpkin, with manifest satisfaction, pointed out the boys, all whose faces he could remember of the carriage-full.

The Fistical Four, and the Colonial Co., and Mornington, were pointed out in turn.

Mr. Bootles sharply told them to stand out.

The eight juniors stood out, with flushed cheeks and resentful looks.

"There were others, but I cannot undertake to identify them," said Mr. Pumpkin. "The others, however, were only spectators of the outrage. The worst of all was this boy."

"Van Ryn!" said Mr. Bootles.

"And this, and this—"

"Mornington! Silver!"

"The others were almost as bad," said Mr. Pumpkin. "But these three acted in a way worthy only of the lowest hooligans."

"That isn't true, Mr. Bootles," said Jimmy Silver quietly.

"What? What?"

"In fact, it's a dashed lie!" said Valentine Mornington, with reckless coolness.

"Wha-a-at?"

Mr. Pumpkin turned purple.

"You hear him, Mr. Bootles!" he

Even Jimmy Silver did not think of "bumping" Mr. Pumpkin after lessons.

"The utter cad!" muttered Mornington, as the fat gentleman walked away. "Did you ever see such a crawling worm? Ow, ow! I'm goin' for him somehow, if I get a flogging for it!"

"Rats!" grunted Lovell. "Can't be done!"

"Leave it to me!" muttered Dick Van Ryn.

Lovell snorted.

"What can you do, fathead? Punch his nose?"

"No, ass! Wait till he gives his giddy lecture to the school!" murmured the Rookwood ventriloquist. "I'll put a spoke in his wheel then."

Jimmy Silver brightened up.

"Good man!" he murmured.

"Silence in class!" snapped Mr. Bootles.

And the Fourth Form settled down to work.

The 7th Chapter. Punishing Pumpkin.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked forward to the lecturer's address, which was to take place after lessons in the school meadow.

They had been prepared to listen to Mr. Pumpkin's "war-jaw" politely, and cheer him, with the much-enduring fortitude that schoolboys show on such occasions, but the caning had quite changed their polite intentions.

What they were looking forward to now was the "ragging" of the lecturer by the Rookwood ventriloquist, and they anticipated fun.

It was the only possible way in which they could "get their own back" on the pompous gentleman, and Van Ryn's ventriloquism was, as Lovell remarked, a windfall, under the circumstances.

After lessons the prefects shepherded the juniors to the place of assembly, the Head having intimated that the great man was to have a good audience.

The lecture had been arranged by the governors of the school, who perhaps thought that Rookwood required en-

Dr. Chisholm sat petrified.

Mr. Bootles' eyes opened so wide that his spectacles almost fell off.

"My only hat!" stammered Bulkeley. "Is—the man mad?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" came in a roar.

That remark of the lecturer, after his inspired oratory, came as an anti-climax, and it struck Rookwood as funny.

Mr. Pumpkin, glass in hand, looked about him, puzzled.

He had heard the voice, but did not recognise it as his own; few men recognise their own voices when reproduced, whether by a talking-machine or an imitator.

Dr. Chisholm rose, his face flushed and shocked.

"Mr. Pumpkin!" he stammered.

"Sir!"

"I—I—I—" The Head really did not know what to say. "Really, sir—surely—ahem—"

"Please, sir, shall I fetch Mr. Pumpkin some gin?" came a voice from somewhere—whose, could not be told. "Mack has a bottle of gin in his lodge."

"Silence!" exclaimed the Head.

"I—I really fail to understand—" stammered Mr. Pumpkin. "You surely, sir, are not under the impression that I asked for gin! I heard a voice—"

"A—a moment's aberration, I—I suppose," stammered the Head. "Pray—pray proceed with your address, sir. Silence! The next boy who laughs will be caned."

Mr. Pumpkin drank his water, and set down the glass.

"Pah! Beastly stuff! Dr. Chisholm, let's get out of this!"

"Sir!" spluttered the Head.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The whole assembly yelled.

"What—what!" ejaculated Mr. Pumpkin. "I did not speak. Do you imagine, sir, that I made such a remark? Some boy—"

"Calm yourself, Mr. Pumpkin. I am surprised, shocked. Pray retire for a few moments. It would be better for you to lie down for a short time," whispered the Head, in great agitation, fully convinced by this time that Mr. Pumpkin was in a state of intoxication. How else were his astounding words to be accounted for? "My dear sir, pray take my arm—"

"Sir!"

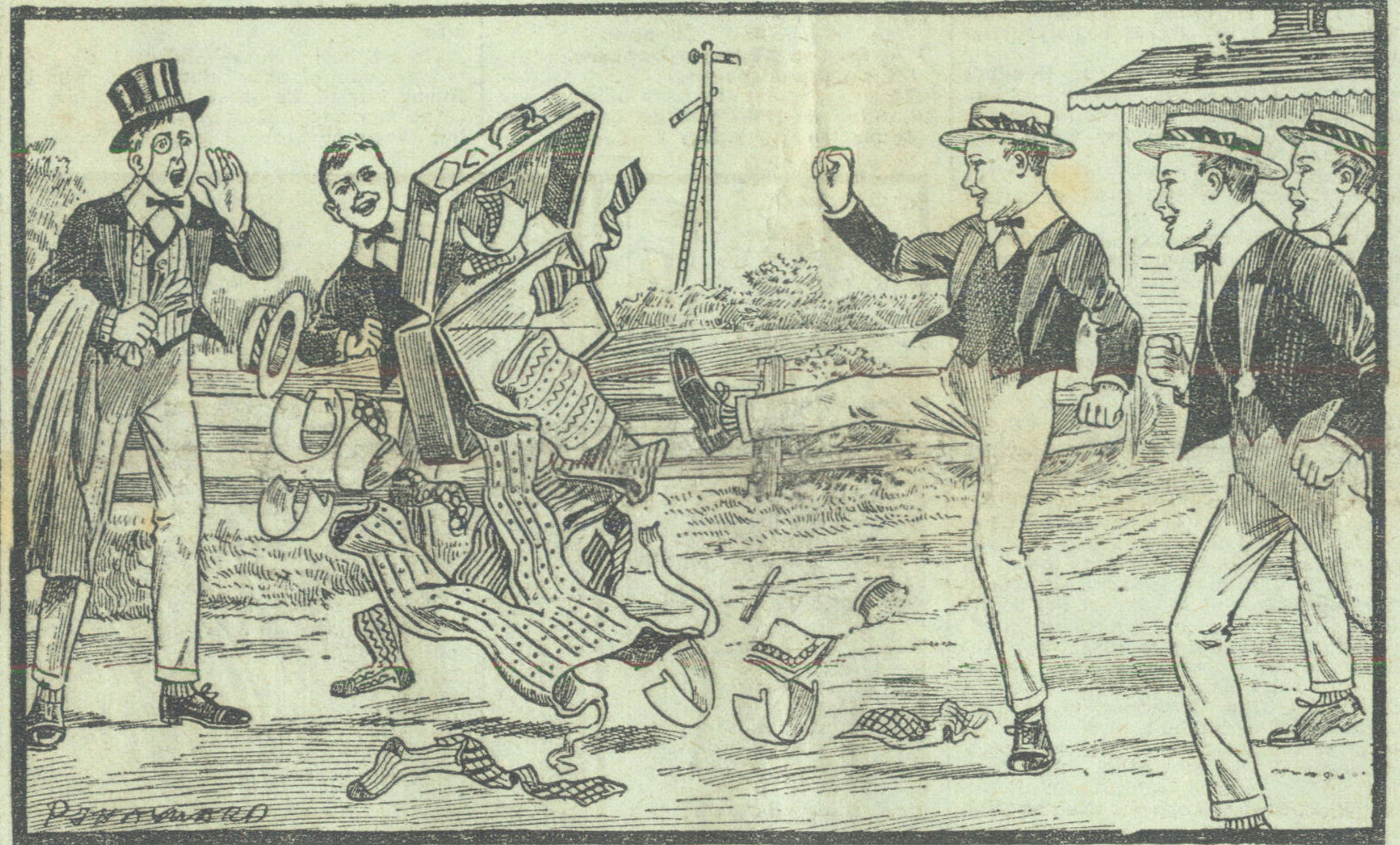
"The lecture will be postponed," stammered the Head. "Mr. Pumpkin, I beg you—"

"Sir! I fail to understand! I—I—" "Squiffy, by Jove!" came a voice.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence!"

"Dr. Chisholm! I refuse to take your arm! I do not understand you!" roared Mr. Pumpkin. "Do you dare to imply



A terrific kick from Conroy burst the bag open. It came down with a bump, and Adolphus Smythe's dandified property poured out in the dust.

If the fat gentleman had tracked them to Rookwood, to lay a complaint before their headmaster, there might be painful consequences.

Certainly, they had not been to blame, but there never was any telling what view a headmaster or a Form-master might take.

Mr. Bootles glanced at the new-comer, and walked to meet him, and shook hands with him.

"Good-morning, good-morning!" said the Fourth Form master. "You visit our school under somewhat novel circumstances, Mr. Pumpkin—what, what?"

"Mr. Pumpkin!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

The heroes of the Fourth exchanged dismayed glances.

The fat gentleman, whom Morny had named Mr. Gargoyle, was in reality Mr. Pumpkin, the important war-lecturer, who was coming there to address Rookwood School!

He had, after all, travelled in that train, though Jimmy Silver & Co. had not known it.

That was how he came to be there, and Jimmy Silver & Co. made themselves as small as possible, trusting to escape recognition.

But that was a very slight hope.

After greeting Mr. Bootles, the great man glanced over the Form, and his eyes glittered behind his gold-rimmed glasses as he saw the dismayed Co.

"Hah!" he exclaimed.

"My Form, Mr. Pumpkin," said Mr. Bootles. "We are about—ah—to begin the labours of the new—ah—term, under somewhat novel—"

He broke off in surprise as Mr. Pumpkin raised a podgy forefinger, and pointed at Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Those are the boys!" he exclaimed.

"I—I beg your pardon!" ejaculated Mr. Bootles.

"Yesterday, sir," said Mr. Pumpkin, in a booming voice, "I travelled to Coombe by the same train as those boys. I recognise them—some of them, at all events. I was treated, sir, with unexampled insolence and effrontery."

gasped. "You hear him! That is a sample of the unheard-of insolence to which I was subjected."

Mr. Bootles was frowning thunderously. Mornington's remark was well-founded, in point of fact.

The fat gentleman was exaggerating, if not actually lying; but, naturally, such a remark from a junior did not please his Form-master.

Mr. Pumpkin was a great gun, and he could not be allowed to be insulted, and, in fact, his word had to be taken.

Mr. Bootles took up his cane.

"I am sorry, extremely sorry, that this has occurred, Mr. Pumpkin," he said. "The boys shall certainly be punished severely. Hold out your hand, Mornington."

Morny's brow darkened.

"If you please, sir, mayn't we defend ourselves?" he said with mock meekness.

"Mr. Gargoyle—I mean Mr. Pumpkin—hasn't told you the truth?"

"Silence!" thundered Mr. Bootles in great wrath. "How dare you say anything of the kind, Mornington! Another word, and I will report you for a public flogging. Hold out your hand!"

"But, sir—" began Dick Van Ryn.

"Silence!"

The South African junior shrugged his shoulders, and was silent.

Swish! Swish! Swish!

Mr. Pumpkin looked on with unconcealed satisfaction while Jimmy Silver & Co. went through their punishment.

It was severe enough, and, worst than that, it was unjust, though Mr. Bootles was not responsible for the injustice.

After Mr. Pumpkin's statement, he had hardly any choice in the matter.

The victims understood that, but their feelings towards the pompous war-lecturer were perfectly Hunnish.

Perhaps the juniors had been a little reckless in the train; but it was the fat gentleman who had been to blame for the trouble, and it was upon the juniors that the punishment fell.

They went back to their places with smarting hands and knitted brows, all the more exasperated because the fat man was beyond the reach of reprisals of any kind.

lightening as to its patriotic duty in war-time, and that Mr. Pumpkin was the man to enlighten the school.

The Head probably had his own opinion of the pompous, fat man, but he kept it to himself.

Nearly all Rookwood ranked in order on the selected spot, where a rostrum had been placed for Mr. Pumpkin under the big oak.

Most of the fellows were idly curious or frankly bored; only Jimmy Silver & Co. were at all keen. But they were very keen.

Dr. Chisholm, in a few brief words, presented Mr. Pumpkin to the school, and begged the general attention for the "very instructive address" which Mr. Pumpkin had so kindly consented to give.

Then Mr. Pumpkin's innings started.

He cleared his throat with a fat gurgle, and began to boom.

From the fat gentleman's remarks it appeared that he was, upon the whole, satisfied with the spirit the country had shown in this great crisis—which was doubtless very gratifying to the country.

But that spirit required guiding into the right channels by superior persons like Mr. Pumpkin. The fat gentleman did not exactly say that, but that was easily read into his remarks.

In fact, it seemed that the British Empire would have been in rather a bad case but for its fortunate possession of Mr. Pumpkin and some other important gentlemen like Mr. Pumpkin.

The Rookwooders politely suppressed their yawns, and listened.

Mr. Pumpkin, after an oratorical flourish, paused, and took up the glass of water placed in readiness for him.

As he took it up, his voice went on, however; or if it was not his voice, it was so exactly like his voice that nobody had any suspicion.

"Water! Why is there not gin in this glass? Do you think I can give a war lecture on cold water, Dr. Chisholm? Pah!"

The assembly was electrified.

There was a general gasp

"Calm yourself, I beg!"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I did not—" stammered Mr. Pumpkin, astonished to hear a voice tell the Head to shut up, and still more astonished to see that the Head supposed that it was he who had spoken. "I said nothing! I—I—"

"Pray be calm! I beg of you to be calm! Think of the impression you are making, sir. I beg you, calm yourself!" babbled the Head, almost at his wits' end. "Mr. Bootles, dismiss the boys—dismiss them at once! Bless my soul!"

"I repeat, sir—"

"For mercy's sake, sir, be calm! Calm yourself!"

"I am calm!" shrieked Mr. Pumpkin, who really was not very calm just then. "I am perfectly calm! I repeat, sir—"

"Pray come this way! Take my arm!"

"I will do nothing of the sort! Dare you imply, sir, that I am under the influence of liquor?" raved Mr. Pumpkin. "By gad! The governors shall hear of this! I hurl back the insinuation in your teeth!"

"Dismiss! Dismiss!" wailed Mr. Bootles. "Boys, disperse at once! Bulkeley—Neville—Knowles, disperse the boys immediately! Bless my soul!"

That order, given earlier, would have been willingly obeyed, but just now the juniors were enjoying themselves too much to want to depart.

The prefects rushed them away, however, yelling with laughter. Even the prefects were grinning as they drove the yelling juniors out of the field.

The masters gathered round Mr. Pumpkin to see him back to the Head's house, only desirous of getting him out of sight as quickly as possible.

But the fat gentleman was indignant and wrathful, and his voice could be heard protesting, and almost raving, at a great distance.

"Ha, ha, ha! Ha, ha, ha!"

Rookwood was ringing with laughter.

In the quadrangle Jimmy Silver & Co. thumped Van Ryn on the back, in ecstatic delight.

The African's "wheeze" had succeeded beyond their wildest expectations.

The pompous Pumpkin had paid for all his sins.

"Good old Dutchy! Ha, ha, ha!"

The juniors executed a war-dance of triumph round the grinning Van Ryn. Half an hour later Mr. Pumpkin left, in the Head's carriage, and in great wrath.

Later that day the Head held an inquiry into the strange happenings at the lecture, and a sound caning was doled out to Van Ryn. But the South African junior turned into bed that night with a cheery face, amply consoled by the success of his wheeze.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY.

"DONE IN THE DARK!"
By OWEN CONQUEST.
DON'T MISS IT!

DANGER AHEAD!

A Magnificent Long Complete Tale of
FRANK RICHARDS & CO.,
the Chums of the School in
the Backwoods.
By MARTIN CLIFFORD

The 1st Chapter. A Narrow Escape.

"Look out!"
Yen Chin, the Chinese of Cedar Creek School, yelled out the warning suddenly. Frank Richards started, and looked round.
He could see no danger. Frank and Yen Chin had left the schoolboy camp on the plateau in the foothills of the Cascade Mountains to look for game.
Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclere had gone in another direction, while Chunky Todgers remained in charge of the camp. Frank Richards and the Chinese were clambering up a steep track on the hillside, picking their way amid great boulders and stunted trees that cropped out here and there among the rocks.
Yen Chin was following the English schoolboy, and he was perhaps a little sharper on the look-out than Frank Richards.

Frank stopped on the rugged ascent, and looked back, half-suspecting that the Chinese was playing one of his many tricks upon him.
"What's the matter, Yen Chin?" he demanded.
"Look out!"
Yen Chin was staring past Frank Richards, at a spot higher up the steep ascent.
Suddenly he sprang at Frank, grasped him by the arm, and dragged him over to one side.

Taken quite by surprise, Frank Richards went reeling and stumbling on the rocks with a yell.
He landed in a thicket five or six yards from the spot where he had been standing, to the left, and a dozen yards lower down.
The thicket caught him and the Chinese, who was clinging to him, and they sprawled into it together.
Frank scrambled dazedly into a sitting posture.
He was considerably knocked about by that sudden plunge downhill, and almost out of breath—and quite out of temper.
"You young rascal!" he panted.
"Look out!"
Crash, crash, crash!
Frank Richards stared out of the thicket.

Down the hillside, on the very spot where he had been standing a few moments before, a huge boulder was rolling.
It crashed from rock to rock with a sound like thunder.
Frank turned pale.
But for Yen Chin's prompt action in dragging him away, he would have stood in the path of the rolling rock, and would have been dashed to instant death.
"Good heavens!" he muttered.
He was almost stunned for a moment, with the sight of the terrible peril he had so narrowly escaped.
Crash, crash!
A hundred yards lower down the steep slope, the crashing boulder came to a stop, splintering on hard rocks.

"Flanky killee, if no pullee way," gasped Yen Chin. "Gettee gun—quieck! Bad man lollee down 'nother look."
"What?"
For the moment Frank Richards had supposed that it was a loose rock that had rolled down the declivity, unlogged by wind or rain.
But as his eyes followed the direction of Yen Chin's pointing finger he saw that that was not the case.
The heavy boulder had been rolled down with murderous intent, by human hands. A dozen yards above a dark face looked down, and Frank caught the flash of black eyes and the glitter of gold earrings.
"Handsome Alf!" he gasped.
"Shoottee! Shoottee!" panted Yen Chin.

Frank scrambled to his knee, dragging up his rifle.
Handsome Alf, the "sport" of Last Chance, was staring down, watching the effect of the rock he had hurled downwards at the schoolboy of Cedar Creek.
His dusky face grew grim and savage as he looked.
Frank and Yen Chin had vanished from sight in the thicket, but the Californian could see that he had failed in his purpose.
He stared down the slope in search of the schoolboy, ready to roll another boulder at the sight of him.
Frank Richards' eyes gleamed over his rifle.
He thrust out the muzzle from the thicket, taking careful aim at the man with the earrings.

At that moment there was no mercy in Frank's heart; his narrow escape from a terrible death banished all thought of it.
Only a few days before he and his chums had saved the life of Alf Carson, when the Californian was "treed" by a grizzly bear, but that service had not



Handsome Alf went backwards into the torrent, and in a flash he was whirled away under the horrified eyes of the juniors.

wiped out the ruffian's old grudge against them.

Crack!
Frank's intention was to send the bullet through the ruffian's shoulder as he looked over the rocks.
His aim was good, but even as he pulled the trigger, Handsome Alf caught the glimmer of the rifle-barrel from the thicket, and sprang back into cover.
The bullet struck a rock, and glanced off into space.
Frank, standing up now, thrust in a fresh cartridge, and waited and watched for the rascal to appear again.

But the dusky face of the Californian did not emerge.
There was a sound of scrambling over rock and stone, as Carson retreated, keeping in cover among the great boulders and stunted trees that patched the rugged hillside.
In a few minutes the sound died away.
Handsome Alf was gone.
"No hittee?" asked Yen Chin.
"No."
"Baddee luckee! Bettee killee," Frank Richards smiled.
"If fettee me killee other day, no heavee lockee at Flanky," persisted the Chinese. "Flanke stoppee me killee. Velly silly—oh, yes!"
"Blessed if I don't think you're right, Yen Chin," answered Frank. "You've saved my life, anyhow, old chap. I'm jolly glad you joined our party, after all, kid."

"Me glad! Velly fond of silly ole Flanky," said Yen Chin.
Frank climbed on a rock and scanned the hillside that rose abruptly above.
The man with the earrings was gone, but how far he had gone Frank could not tell.
He might have been lurking in cover, waiting for an opportunity of making another attempt.
"I think we'll try another quarter, Yen Chin," said Frank. "The next time we mayn't be so lucky. We've got no chance, with that rascal above us."
"Vamoossee," agreed Yen Chin.

The two schoolboys descended the hill, keeping a good look-out over their shoulders for the Californian.
But Handsome Alf did not show up again.
There was a shout from the distance.
"This way, Frank!"
They joined Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclere, who were returning to camp with an antelope that had fallen to Bob's rifle.
"Any luck?" asked Beauclere.
"Well, yes, lots," answered Frank.
"You've brought nothing back," said Bob.
"Only my skin," answered Frank, laughing. "But I was lucky to be able to do that."

He explained what had happened as they walked back to camp.
Bob Lawless knitted his brows.
"So that bull-dozer is still hanging about, looking for a chance at us!" he exclaimed. "We were a set of jays not to let the grizzly chew him. Lucky we took away his rifle, or he'd have potted you, sure."
"He would have got me with the rock but for Yen Chin," said Frank.
"Good old Yen Chin!" said Bob. "I guess, Franky, that the popper would have put his foot down on this summer holiday in the North-West if he had known the snags we were going to run up against. But we're going to settle with Carson to a finish, I guess. After dinner we'll take the trail, and look for him. What he wants is a rope."

"My hat! You're not proposing to lynch him!" exclaimed Frank.
"Ha, ha! No. I'm proposing to rope him in, though, and take him down to Last Chance and hand him over to the sheriff," said Bob. "We're a good many miles outside law and order in this region, but there's enough law in the foothills to round up a rustler like Handsome Alf!"
"Good idea!" said Beauclere.
Frank Richards nodded.
His own narrow escape was a warning of what was to be expected from the malice of the Californian, if he was allowed to go free.

The chums arrived at the camp, where the antelope was handed over to Chunky Todgers, the chef of the party.
Chunky was soon hard at work.
And when dinner was prepared the chums of Cedar Creek school discussed, over the meal, their plans for the afternoon—plans which, if they succeeded, would have the result of putting Handsome Alf Carson where he could do no further mischief.

Having completed his handiwork, he surveyed it with great satisfaction.

From a little distance the figure looked exactly like that of a fellow seated on a log, leaning forward, wrapped in the coat, with the hat drawn down over his face to keep off the sun.
"I guess that fills the bill!" murmured Chunky.
Leaving the dummy on guard, as it were, Chunky retired into a thicket a dozen yards away, and vanished from view.

In the heart of the thicket, completely screened from sight, the fat schoolboy settled down to sleep, with the loaded shotgun by his side.
Feeling quite secure now, Chunky closed his eyes, and in a few seconds he was deep in the land of dreams.
Meanwhile Frank Richards & Co. were pursuing their way.
They reached the place where Frank and Yen Chin had encountered the Californian, keeping their eyes well about them and their rifles ready.
Higher up among the rocks Bob Lawless soon discovered traces of the ruffian.

Bob had a skill in scoutcraft that was a standing marvel to his comrades, though they had learned a good deal of the craft since they had lived in Western Canada.
There were faint traces where the Californian's boots had scraped on the rocky soil, and plainer traces, where he had broken through thickets, or pushed his way among stunted trees.
"I guess we'll run him down," said Bob Lawless confidently.
A little later they came on the bones of a bird, by the dead embers of a fire in a shadowy ravine. It was where the outcast had camped.

Bob Lawless felt over the ashes.
"Not quite cold yet," he said.
"Then we're not far behind him," said Frank.
"I guess he's not making tracks," said Bob. "He's hanging about the place, I reckon, looking for another chance at us. He reckons he will wipe out the crowd, the pesky coyote, and rope in our hosses and lumber. Hark!"
It was the clink of a falling stone among the rocks at a little distance.
"He's not far away," said Beauclere.
"I guess not."

The trackers pursued their way, keen and watchful.
From the ravine they gained the hillside, and Bob Lawless gave a sudden shout at the sight of a figure in deerkin and velveteens clambering up the steep bank of a torrent that leaped and foamed down into the ravine below.
His rifle fairly leaped to his shoulder.
"Alf Carson! Stop, or you're a dead man!"
The Californian was running for cover, and on the open hillside he was at the mercy of the trailers.

He did not stop, only casting back one savage look over his shoulder as he ran.
Crack!
The bullet splintered the stones at his feet as he ran, as a warning.
"The next ball goes into your back!" roared Bob Lawless.
Handsome Alf stopped.
He spun round, his face furious and his black eyes gleaming with rage.
Three rifles were bearing on him.
"Keepee covee," called out Yen Chin, drawing his hunting-knife—"keepee covee while me killee!"
"Stand back!" growled Bob.
"Me killee!" exclaimed Yen Chin.
Handsome Alf backed away, his dusky face growing paler.

Yen Chin was advancing upon him, knife in hand, and there was no doubt about the Oriental's intentions, if his comrades allowed him to carry them out.
Frank Richards caught Yen Chin by the arm, lowering his rifle to do so.
"Lettee go!" snapped the Chinese.
"Baddee man! Me killee!"
"Hold on, you young ass!"
"Surrender, Handsome Alf!" called out Bob Lawless. "You're a prisoner, my pippin, and if you don't put up your hands you'll get lead through your carcase!"
The Californian cast a wild glance round him.
He was standing close by the mountain torrent, that cut off his retreat further,

"Where have you— Bless my soul! What are you doing with those pillows?"
"We—we're taking them back to the dormitory, sir," faltered Dicky Turner meekly.
"Turner!" snapped Mr. Chambers. "How dare you insult me! Of course you are taking the pillows back to the dormitory. But where have you been with them? I presume you have been indulging in a pillow-fight with the boys of the New House."
The juniors did not reply.
"Return to your dormitory at once!" exclaimed the master severely. "I will investigate this matter! Bless my soul! What—what—"
Mr. Chambers paused as an excited figure in pyjamas came tearing towards the group.
It was Bunny, the new boy, and he was in a breathless state.
"C-c-c-come at once!" he faltered. "I—I've captured the thief!"
"What—what are you talking about, you ridiculous boy?" demanded the master.
"Oh, is that you, sir?" said Bunny, peering through the darkness. "I've captured the thief, sir, and he's shut in a room upstairs. Do come at once, in case he escapes!"
"Are you mad, boy?" said the master sternly.
"No, no, sir," said the new boy. "I'm sure it's the burglar, sir. I c-c-c-caught him prowling in one of the passages, and I—I've locked him in a room."
"Hadn't we better hurry up, sir?" asked Bob Travers.
"Follow me!" said Mr. Chambers tersely, and he led the way into the House.
Bunny had very little acquaintance with the passages at Redclyffe, and therefore he did not know in which particular passage he had imprisoned the mysterious prowler.
No sooner had they entered the House, however, than they could hear somebody thumping upon a door of one of the Fourth Form studies.
A few moments later the crowd of juniors, accompanied by the master, were approaching the study in which Bunny's captive was imprisoned.
Thump! Bang! Thump!
"Keep behind me, boys!" said Mr. Chambers concernedly. "Be prepared to prevent the scoundrel from escaping! I will tackle him, but should he prove too strong for me I rely upon your assistance."
The master turned the key very slowly.
The juniors quite expected the daring scoundrel to come dashing out of the study, and were prepared to hurl themselves upon him.
But they were not required to exhibit their pluck, for when the door was pushed open it was to reveal a brilliantly-lighted room, in the centre of which stood a man in a violent rage.
At the same moment the juniors gave a startled gasp.
"Detective Short!"
"Yes; it is I!" muttered the detective between his teeth. "And I want to know the name of the young hooligan who had the audacity to lock me in this room. Who is he? Tell me quick!"
"What—what— Bless my soul!" faltered Mr. Chambers in bewilderment. "This is amazing!"
"It is more than amazing!" snapped the detective. "It is outrageous, sir! I tracked that villain Brown to this school. I was scouting up and down the passages in the hope of meeting him, when all of a sudden I was locked in this room. I want to know the name of the person who committed the act. Show me him, quick!"
Mr. Chambers gasped.
"Bunny," he muttered, "what have you to say for yourself, you disgraceful boy?"
"I—I—I—" faltered the new boy perplexedly.
"Oh, it's that young hooligan again, is it?" said the detective harshly. "I will have no mercy on him. I—"
"I say, Mr. Short," interposed Bob Travers diplomatically, "that bank thief will escape if you're not careful!"
"What—what—"
"He dashed into us in the quadrangle only five minutes ago," explained Bob Travers. "He said he was Detective Short, and we let him go. But—but I'm sure it was he, because—"
"Which way did he go?"
Bob Travers explained, and the detective tore off at once to continue the pursuit.
Mr. Chambers turned to the juniors.
"Return to your dormitory immediately," he said sternly. "I will investigate this matter thoroughly in the morning. It is astounding that boys at this school should behave in such a disgraceful manner. But you shall be punished, and punished severely, too! Go!"
The juniors went very-disconsolately.
It seemed that the hand of Fate was against them, and that they were doomed to meet with trouble, no matter what they did.
"I say, you fellows—" began Bunny, when they reached the dormitory.
"Shut up!" growled Dicky Turner irritably.
"But, I say; I've been thinking— Ow! Yow! Yarrow!"
A boot, deftly aimed by the angry Dicky, caught the new boy in the stomach, and he rolled over on to a bed.
"Now perhaps you'll be quiet!" said Dicky.
And the new boy was. Even he could not help seeing that the prospects were very dismal ones for the School House juniors, and that it was no time for argument.
But it was late ere Bob Travers and his chums fell asleep that night. Troubled thoughts of what was to happen to-morrow ran continuously through their minds, and they already saw themselves being severely punished on account of Bunny's latest blunder!

(Next Monday: "Thwarted by Three!" By Herbert Britton. Don't miss it!)

THE END.



DANGER AHEAD!

(Continued from the previous page.)

and he had backed to the very edge of the water. Before him were the Cedar Creek party, with a couple of rifles levelled; behind him the torrent. "I guess you pass, my pippin!" said Bob Lawless, advancing steadily towards him. "You're my antelope, Handsome Alf!" Carson panted. "Get a rope for him, Franky!" "Right-ho!" Frank Richards, with a noosed cord in his hands, strode towards the Californian, while Bob and Beauclerc kept him covered. Frank had nearly reached the ruffian when he stepped back a pace. "Look out!" shouted Bob. Whether by accident, or whether he was taking a desperate chance, the schoolboys did not know, but a moment before Frank Richards could reach him Handsome Alf went backwards into the torrent. In a flash he was whirled away under the horrified eyes of the trailers.

The 3rd Chapter. Handsome Alf's Luck!

"Jerusalem!" "Good heavens!" Frank Richards & Co. stood rooted to the rocky bank of the torrent, staring into the foaming waters with horrified gaze. Villain as the Californian was, that sudden and terrible happening struck horror to the chums of Cedar Creek. The waters raced through their rocky channel, foaming and splashing on the jagged rocks in their course, and it seemed impossible that the ruffian could escape being dashed to pieces as he was borne away. They caught a glimpse of his dark head above the waters as he went whirling over a cascade, where the stream plunged abruptly into the ravine below. Bob Lawless drew a quick breath. "He's a gone coon!" he said. No cry reached their ears, nothing but the boom of the falling waters. Frank Richards' face was pale. "Let's go down," he muttered. Bob Lawless nodded, and they scrambled hastily down the hillside into the ravine they had left. In a few minutes the chums were down in the ravine, and, standing beside the stream, they looked up at the masses of water falling from above. Then their eyes sought the lower stream for a trace of the Californian. He was not to be seen. Below the waterfall the stream followed the bottom of the ravine, broader and calmer, though still swift. Frank Richards & Co. hurried along the bank. They expected to find the body of Handsome Alf tossed, disfigured, ashore, or floating in the water. But when they had covered two or three hundred yards without seeing any trace of him, Bob Lawless halted. The ravine narrowed here, and the stream filled it from side to side, leaving only a precarious footing on abrupt rocks if they wished to follow it further. Standing on a high rock, Bob Lawless gazed along the further course of the stream, searching the water and the steep banks for a sign of the man who had gone to his doom. He uttered a sudden exclamation. "By gum! Look!" He pointed with his rifle. Far away down the stream a man was clinging to a floating log that drifted with the current. It was the Californian. Almost by a miracle he had escaped destruction in the wild plunge over the falls, and in the stream below he had caught the drifting trunk, and held on for his life. The first feeling of the schoolboys was relief that the rascal had not gone to his death, but the sight of the Californian reminded them of their task. "I guess we're after him!" said Bob grimly. "How?" asked Frank, with a glance along the channel, where only mountain goats could have found secure footing above the water's level. "I reckon there's plenty of drift," answered Bob. "Oh!" "Lend a hand!" Close by there were a good many drift-logs that had been dashed ashore among the rocks, some of them lying half in the water, and stirring to the motion of the stream. Bob Lawless slung his rifle and grasped the largest of the trunks, and with his comrades' help pushed it out into the stream. He scrambled astride of it as it floated, and his comrades followed his lead, Yen Chin bringing up the rear. The four sat astride of the trunk as it floated down-stream, Bob paddling with a loose branch to keep its head to the current. Handsome Alf had climbed on his log by this time, and he was still in sight, drenched and dripping, and pale as death. His hat was gone, and his long black

hair clustered dripping about his dusky face. The rascal was a good distance ahead, but the pursuers, all of them now paddling with branches, were gaining on him. Handsome Alf looked back as he suddenly became aware that he was still pursued. He released one hand to shake a clenched fist at the schoolboys. "I guess I could wing him from here," muttered Bob. The same thought had evidently come into the Californian's mind, for he steered the log to the edge of the stream. It crashed on the rocks, and the Californian plunged ashore. For a moment or two he was visible as he clambered away, and then he vanished into the thick pines above the bank. Bob Lawless steered the driftwood to the same spot, and the trailers landed a few yards from the abandoned log. They plunged to the bank, taking care to keep their rifles out of contact with the water. Handsome Alf's trampled trail lay before them, and Bob Lawless took up the pursuit without a moment's pause. Carson was not more than five minutes ahead of the pursuers. For some distance the wet trail was easy to follow, but after that Bob had to depend on "sign" among the thick trees, and progress was slower. Beyond the pine-forest the trailers emerged upon a rocky waste of basalt, and there even Bob Lawless had to confess himself beaten. It was possible that the fugitive was lurking within a hundred yards of them, crouching in some cranny of the rocks, but the hard surface of the basalt retained no trace of him. Bob knitted his brows. "I guess he's given us the slip after all," he said ruefully. "If we come on him now it'll be sheer luck. But we'll try." For an hour or more the chums of Cedar Creek hunted for a sign of the fugitive, but if Handsome Alf was near he was lying very low. They gave it up at last. The sun was sinking in the west, and shadows were lengthening in the rocky wastes of the foothills. "I reckon we may as well get back to camp," said Bob at last. "He's dodged us this time, sure. But we'll try again to-morrow." "What-ho!" answered Frank Richards. With this intention firmly fixed in their minds the chums started on the tramp homewards.

The 4th Chapter. Face to Face.

Crash! "Ah-h-h-h!" Chunky Todgers awoke suddenly. That sudden crash had awakened him, and the fat schoolboy sat up, blinking and rubbing his eyes. "What the thunder—" murmured Chunky. He rose on his knees, and peered out of the thicket in which he had been fast asleep. His fat face paled as he looked. A dozen yards from him, by the embers of the dead fire, a man was standing, whose dusky face and gold earrings Chunky well remembered. He had a full view of the profile of Handsome Alf. But even his dread at the sight of the rustler could not prevent a fat grin overspreading his face as he saw what had been the cause of his awakening. The dummy he had left seated on the log was lying on the ground, crumpled up. The hat, beaten in at the top by a jagged rock, lay close by. Chunky knew what had happened as he observed that. There was no sign of Frank Richards & Co. They were far away in the foothills hunting for the Californian, and while they were so engaged Handsome Alf had eluded them and made for the school-boy camp. He had seen the dummy on guard, and had crept up to the camp with the rock in his hand. At a safe distance he had hurled the missile at the figure by the camp fire. Had it been Chunky Todgers sitting there, his brains would have been dashed out by the murderous missile. As it was, the dummy had collapsed under the attack, and Handsome Alf, rushing on, had found a coat, a hat, and a bundle of sticks spread out before him. He was standing staring down at the scattered dummy, with astonishment and rage in his dusky face. Chunky Todgers could bear him muttering savage words, though he could not distinguish them at the distance. Todgers drew back into the cover of the thicket. The Californian had no knowledge of his presence there, and Chunky was glad of the caution which had led him to conceal himself before taking his nap. He grasped the shotgun, his fat heart throbbing. The charge of shot was heavy enough to stop a man, if planted in the right place at close quarters; but Chunky had a very cold feeling down his back at the idea of getting at close quarters with the ruffian, and without his comrades at hand. Gun in hand, he peered through the foliage again, anxiously intent upon what the Californian would do.

Carson was looking round him now, cautiously and keenly, evidently in doubt as to whether the camp was watched or not. He knew the number of the Cedar Creek party; and he was, of course, aware that Chunky Todgers had not been with his pursuers in the hills. Chunky shivered as the glittering black eyes turned upon the thicket that concealed him. But Handsome Alf's glance passed on. There was nothing to reveal the hidden schoolboy. He moved at last, across towards the stream, where the horses and the pack-animals were staked out, resting in the grass at the end of their trail-ropes. Chunky's jaw squared. The camp had been entrusted to him, and the Californian's intention was plain enough—to run off with the animals and leave the Cedar Creek party dismounted. But to step out of the thicket and face the ruffian was more than Chunky felt equal to. If the volley of shot did not stop the Californian, his knife would be at Chunky's throat in a moment after. Chunky was no coward, but he did not feel equal to setting his life upon a cast. But as he heard a movement among the animals he stirred. He could not let the ruffian steal the horses under his nose. "I've got it!" murmured Chunky suddenly. In the thicket he had slept under a big tree, and now he slung the shotgun over his shoulder, and started clambering up the gnarled trunk. Fat as he was, Chunky Todgers was active, and in a few seconds he had reached the lower branches. He heard a subdued exclamation, and knew that the sounds he made in climbing had reached the ears of the Californian. Higher he clambered, in almost haste. On a branch twenty feet from the ground he was above the height of the screening thicket, and could look over the underwoods to the stream, where the horses were staked within reach of the water. Handsome Alf was close by them, but he was looking intently towards the thicket, his hands clenched, and his black eyes glittering. Chunky Todgers sat astride of the thick bough, his fat back supported by a forking branch, and unslung the shotgun. The noise he made was a guide to the Californian, who looked up suddenly, and saw the fat schoolboy in the tree. Chunky Todgers grinned down at him. He knew that Carson had no firearms, and he felt quite secure now. Chunky Todgers was a fair shot, and from the height of twenty feet it was easy enough to pepper the horse-thief; and if the first charge did not "lay him out," the second or third would. Handsome Alf set his teeth as he looked up at Todgers. His hands were clenched almost convulsively. Chunky had put the gun to his shoulder, and was taking aim. On the open bank of the stream Carson was an easy target. "I guess this is a cinch!" grinned Chunky; as he took aim. Bang! Handsome Alf made a spring back as Chunky pulled the trigger—so desperate a spring that it took him five or six feet from the line of fire, and the small shot smashed into the ground where he had been standing. Then he dashed forward, with glittering eyes, and plunged through the thicket, and reached the tree, and clambered desperately up the trunk. The 5th Chapter. Chunky's Great Fight!

Chunky heard him moving again, with an activity which showed that he had not been hit. The fat schoolboy's heart almost died within him as the lithe form of the Californian swung down from the higher branch to the lower. There was no time to reload. Handsome Alf dropped on the branch only three feet from Chunky, catching it actively, and dragged himself into a posture astride of it, facing the school-boy. Chunky clubbed the shotgun. The Californian was panting with his exertions, and for a few minutes he made no movement, only staring at the boy with a deadly look. Chunky dared not attempt to reload the gun; he had to hold it clubbed, ready to beat off the rustler if he came on. His fat face was white now. From his white face his little round eyes stared, saucer-like, at the ferocious face before him. Watching him like a panther, Handsome Alf rested on the branch, to recover his strength before attacking, but ready to spring forward in a second if Chunky lowered the clubbed gun. "K-k-keep off, you villain!" stammered Chunky breathlessly. "I'll brain you if you come an inch nearer!" Carson grinned evilly. He had no doubt of his ability to deal with the fat schoolboy, though if Bob Lawless had been in poor Chunky's place the rascal's task would not have been an easy one. "My game, I guess," said Carson, with a grin that showed his white teeth, and he drew his hunting-knife. The gleam of the bare steel so close at hand sent a chill to Chunky Todgers' heart. But he dared not give way to the fear that was rising in his breast. His life was at stake. Like an animal fascinated by the eyes of a serpent, Chunky watched the ruffian in breathless silence. Handsome Alf made a movement at last. Keeping astride of the branch, he worked his way a few inches nearer to the fat schoolboy, who held the clubbed gun ready to strike as soon as he was near enough. Chunky Todgers knew well that if he missed the first blow, he would not have time for another, and all his nerves were at tension. The Californian threw his body forward along the branch, reaching out with the knife to thrust. Down swept the clubbed gun in a flash. But the cunning rascal was only tricking poor Chunky. His legs, astride the branch, and gripping it, had not moved, and his lithe body swung instantly back as the butt descended. The blow missed him, falling two or three inches short; but an inch was as good as a league. The butt crashed on the branch instead of upon the Californian's head, and slipped past it downward, and Chunky Todgers nearly fell with the swing of the blow. Then the ruffian flung himself forward in good earnest, before Chunky could draw up his weapon. Hardly knowing what he did, Chunky Todgers released one foot from the fork in the branch, and kicked frantically at the Californian as he came on. The thrust of the knife missed his knee by an inch, and his heavy boot crashed under Handsome Alf's chin, nearly knocking him from the branch. The ruffian swayed sideways, overbalancing, and in his frantic effort to regain his balance, the knife slipped from his hand, and dropped into the grass twenty feet below, the shotgun whizzing after it. Chunky was holding on with both hands and legs as the branch rocked, for the kick had overbalanced him, too, and had the Californian been able to attack him at that moment, the fat schoolboy's fate would have been sealed. But Carson had no chance of attacking him then; all his strength was being exerted to save himself. With all his efforts, he could not avoid swinging over the branch, and for a moment it looked as if he would follow his knife downward. But he managed to catch the branch with both hands, and hung underneath it, embracing it with both arms and legs, and frantically striving to climb on it again. Chunky Todgers panted breathlessly as he righted himself. For a second he thought that the ruffian had fallen, and then he discerned Carson's hands and legs gripping the branch a few feet from him, and, looking down, he saw the ruffian hanging. "By gum!" gasped Chunky. He was master of the situation now. In a few minutes the lithe Californian would have succeeded in dragging himself upon the branch, but Todgers did not give him a chance. The shotgun lay in the grass twenty feet below him; but his hunting-knife was in his belt, and he drew it quickly, scrambled forward, and slashed at the hands gripping the branch from below. There was a terrible cry from the Californian. Handsome Alf released the branch, and swung head downwards by his legs. For a moment he hung thus, but his hands, clutching at space, came in contact with a lower branch, and his legs released their hold, and he swung on the lower branch, out of Chunky Todgers' reach. Exhausted by the effort, he lay across the lower branch, panting and dizzy, Chunky glaring at him from above. Had the shotgun been still in his hands, Todgers would have made short work

of the ruffian, but the gun lay in the grass below. Chunky clambered along the branch towards the trunk, to get to the lower branch and deal with the ruffian before he could descend and recover his weapon. But Carson realised his danger, and he roused himself to effort. He swung himself to a branch lower down, and then to another, and from the lowest dropped lightly to the ground. He reeled there, and fell in the grass, panting; but the shotgun was in his grasp. As he lay in the grass he glared up at the schoolboy in the tree, not in a hurry to move now, for he knew he held the trump card. Chunky Todgers knew it, too, and he despaired. The gun was unloaded, but there was ammunition in the camp—plenty of it—and Carson had only to look for it. A savage grin was on the ruffian's dusky face now. As poor Chunky stared down at him from the tree, Handsome Alf rose to his feet at last, the shotgun in his hands. "I guess it's my game, after all," he grinned. Chunky did not answer. From the high branch he scanned his surroundings, in the faint hope of seeing Frank Richards & Co. on their homeward way. Handsome Alf ran into the camp, and was not long in finding a box of ammunition, taken from the mule-pack. He grinned as he loaded the shotgun, and returned to the big tree. Chunky Todgers clambered desperately higher into the tree, seeking safety in the topmost branches. Bang! A charge of shot came whistling up through the tree, scattering leaves on all sides. Chunky was not hit, but some of the shot passed very close to him. He clambered higher while the Californian was reloading, the more slender branches at the top of the tree rocking under his weight. But as his head emerged from the foliage he saw a sight that gladdened his very heart. Four figures were in view, running towards the camp, Bob Lawless in the lead. Frank Richards & Co. were returning at last, and they had heard the shot from the distance. They were running now as if for their lives—though it was Chunky's life they were running for. Bang! The Californian had reloaded, and he emptied the shotgun into the tree again, with a fresh scattering of leaves. The foliage hid Chunky from his sight, but some of the shot came very close. A few minutes more of the fusillade would of a certainty have brought Chunky Todgers to the ground like a very fat bird, but the chums of Cedar Creek were at hand now. The Californian was reloading again, when a rifle cracked at two hundred yards, and a bullet whistled past his head. With an oath, Handsome Alf spun round, the shotgun dropping from his hand. Crack, crack! Frank Richards and Vere Beauclerc fired together, and the Californian threw himself on the ground. For a moment it seemed that he had been shot down, but the next he leaped to his feet, and dashed for the timber. Bob Lawless pulled trigger again as he ran, but the Californian plunged into the trees just in time. "After him!" panted Bob. They dashed into the timber, reloading as they ran. But the thick trees had swallowed up the Californian, and they returned disappointed to the camp. Pursuit in the forest was impossible with darkness coming on. Chunky Todgers slithered down the tree, and joined his chums, shaking in every limb. "Oh, you fellows!" he gasped. "Not hurt?" asked Frank Richards. "N-no; I—I don't think so," stammered Chunky, hardly sure whether he was hurt or not. "Oh, dear! That villain! Ow!" "Is this the way you look after the camp?" demanded Bob Lawless severely. "What did you give him your shotgun for?" "I—I didn't!" roared Chunky indignantly. "He got it, the beast! I've had an awful narrow escape! Oh, dear!" "Catch me leaving you alone after this!" grunted Bob. "I guess I'll take jolly good care you don't!" gasped Chunky. And Chunky was as good as his word. Two of the party remained the next day at the camp, when the trail of the Californian was taken up. But Handsome Alf was not seen again. "I guess he's let up on us, and lit out," was Bob Lawless' conclusion. "The ruffian hangs out at Last Chance Camp, and most likely he's scooted for home. But I guess we're not letting up on him. We'll take the trail for Last Chance, and round up Mister Handsome Alf Carson there, I reckon." And Frank Richards & Co. took the trail for the mining-camp in the heart of the Cascade Mountains.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY.

"ROUNDED UP!"

By MARTIN CLIFFORD. DON'T MISS IT!