

A Visitor For Lovell!
A Shock For Rookwood!

See the
Long Complete School Story Inside.



Splendid Cricket Article
By **Leonard C. Braund** —
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THREE HALFPENCE.

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Lovell's Great-Aunt!

By
Owen Conquest.

inquired cheer-
you three—that's
ound number."

"Are you ready?" snapped Jimmy. Lattery gave a wild glance round. The door of the woodshed was locked, and the key was in Jimmy Silver's pocket. The window was shut, and he noticed that Raby and Newcome and Teddy Grace were slowly approaching him. One glance at the faces of Peele and Gower showed him that he could expect no help nobly.

MISS GEORGINA MUFFLEBURY ARRIVES!

There was a roar from all sides of the crowded quad as the swaying, bumping bath-chair swept on at a terrific pace. Jimmy Silver & Co. at the window raved in impotent fury. "The cowards—the cads!" choked Lovell. "Oh, wait till I get at them!"

The 1st Chapter. Rough on Lovell!

"Oh, crumbs!" Lovell of the Fourth Form at Rookwood uttered that exclamation in a dismal tone. He was sitting in the end study, the famous apartment which he shared with Jimmy Silver, Newcome, and Raby—the leaders of the Fourth Form at Rookwood. Lovell had an open letter in his hand which he was perusing with a decidedly doleful face. "My only hat! She's coming!" Jimmy Silver looked up from the Latin grammar which he was conning over hastily, before going over to morning classes. "What's up, Lovell?" "Phew! My only aunt!" Lovell's face was long as he gave a lugubrious whistle—and his chums looked at him with some concern. Arthur Edward Lovell was a sunny-natured fellow, and it was not like him to be down in the dumps. "What's up, fathead?" repeated Jimmy Silver. "Nothing wrong, I hope?" "My only Great-aunt Georgina!" "No bad news from home?" inquired Newcome. "Oh, crumbs! She's coming!"

Jimmy Silver exchanged exasperated glances with Newcome and Raby. "What on earth are you talking about, idiot!" he exclaimed warmly. "My—my only aunt—" "What do you mean, ass?" "My only Great-aunt Georgina!" The chums of the Fourth laid down their grammars wrathfully, and gathered threateningly round the muttering Lovell. "You—you dummy! Will you tell us what's the matter?" roared Jimmy Silver, shaking his chum by the arm. "Out with it!" "Go ahead, old son!" "On the ball!" Lovell looked round somewhat absently at the expectant faces of his three chums, almost as if he had only just noticed them. "I—I— She's coming!" "Who's coming?" roared Jimmy Silver, shaking his chum's arm more violently. "Tell us who's coming, and what's the matter, any way, you frabjous cuckoo, or—or we'll jolly well bump you!" "Hear, hear!" chorused Newcome and Raby, in a breath. "Mum-m-m my only Great-aunt Georgina!" "You silly chump!" shrieked Jimmy Silver. "If you can't talk sense, we'll

jolly well teach you! Gather round, chaps!" "What-ho!" Newcome and Raby gathered round and laid violent hands on Arthur Edward Lovell, and there was a heavy bump on the floor of the end study. "Bump!" "Oooooh! Ow! Wharrer you up to?" yelled Lovell. "What's the matter with you, you silly duffers!" "Why don't you talk some sense, then, dummy?" demanded Jimmy Silver heatedly. "What are you grousing at—tell us, can't you?" "My only Great-aunt—" "There was a yell from Silver & Co. "Ass!" "Idiot!" "There you go again!" "My Great-aunt Georgina! She—she's coming— Ow-yow!" "Bump!" Another heavy bump resounded through the study, and Lovell rolled over on the floor, gasping, in the grasp of his now thoroughly exasperated chums. "Oh! Ow! Yaroo!" "Give him another one!" said Jimmy Silver relentlessly. "If you won't talk sense, my boy—" "Ow! Help! Leggo!" roared Lovell, struggling in the grasp of his chums.

"Leggo, you asses! I am talking sense! Can't you see, you cuckoos!" "What!" "My aunt—I mean, my great-aunt—" "What on earth—" "She's coming, you see! Ow!" "My hat! He's potty!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "Give-him another!" "Rather!" And the three tightened their grasp on the unfortunate Lovell in a manner that indicated business. Lovell squirmed and struggled desperately. "Ow! Hold on! Leggo, you asses!" he howled. "Can't you understand?" Jimmy Silver paused a moment. "Understand what?" he demanded. "What I say, you—you dummies!" gasped Lovell. "My great-aunt—" "Well, ass?" "I say my Great-aunt Georgina—" Jimmy Silver & Co. gave an exasperated yell, and tightened their grasp on their chum again. "Bump!" "Ow! Yow! Oh!" "Bump!" "Yowp! Yeroooooh!" "Blessed if I understand you to-day, Lovell!" gasped Silver. "You must be potty, I think! Never knew you like this before!"

"You—you silly asses! Don't you see—" "Blessed if we see what you're driving at!" said Newcome. "You—you cuckoos! I keep saying—" "You keep saying." "My only Great-aunt Georgina!" remarked Raby. "Blessed if I see any sense in that!" "Ow! Oh, crumbs!" "Like a gramophone with only one record!" grinned Newcome. "Now, what is it all about? What's the matter with you?" "Out with it!" "Go ahead, old man!" Arthur Edward Lovell gave a groan. "I keep telling you, you frabjous chumps!" he gasped. "She's coming—" "Who's coming?" roared Jimmy Silver & Co. with one voice. "My great-aunt is!" howled Lovell. "Wha-at!" Jimmy Silver & Co. fell back and gazed at their chum blankly. Lovell sat up on the floor, dusty and ruffled, his face crimson with indignation and exertion. "My Great-aunt Georgina's coming!" he hooted. "She's coming here to-day! Haven't I been telling you chumps so all along?" "M-my hat!"

(Continued on next page.)

LOVELL'S GREAT-AUNT!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"You—you imbeciles! I kept telling you—"
"Well, I'm blessed!"
"You—you utter dummies—"
"Jumping Jupiter!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. gazed at their indignant chum with a blank stare that was almost idiotic in its dismay.

Lovell rose to his feet slowly, dusting his nether garments, and attempting to readjust his collar and tie.

"Nice mess I'm in!" he growled wrathfully. "Booties will boot me out of the class-room if I go in in this state! And it's all the fault of you silly asses!"

There was a sudden yell from Jimmy Silver & Co. as the comic side of the episode struck them with full force.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You—you dummies!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You cackling idiots!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Lovell glared wrathfully at his cackling chums.

"Blessed if I see anything to laugh at!" he growled. "I'm in a beastly mess, and my Great-aunt Georgina's coming—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
Jimmy Silver, Newcome, and Raby clung to one another and shrieked, heedless of the glowering of their ill-used chum.

"Why on earth didn't you say your great-aunt was coming, from the first, old man!" gasped Jimmy Silver at last, wiping his eyes.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You—you utter ass! Didn't I keep saying so?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"You grinning chumps—"
"But—"
"You cackling dummies—"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Arthur Edward Lovell surveyed his roaring chums for a time in silent wrath. He was feeling outraged and not a little sore from the bumping. But he was a youth with a lively sense of humour, and did not possess a spark of malice in his make-up, and after a few moments his chums' uproarious merriment began to have its effects on him.

His face lost its unwonted serious expression—he could not help grinning. And then, as the full humour of the situation struck him, he could no longer forbear. His merry laugh joined in the chorus as heartily as any of the others.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
The study literally rang with mirth.
"You—you villains!" gasped Lovell, at last. "I'm sore, and I'm fearfully dusty, and it's only five minutes to classes! Come along and help me to clean myself up in the bath-room!"

Jimmy Silver, wiping his eyes, clapped him on the shoulder.

"Right-ho, old scout! And you can tell us all about your Great-aunt Georgina in the Form-room."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
And the Fistical Four, still chuckling, scudded down the passage to the bath-room for a quick clean-up.

The 2nd Chapter.

Caught Out!

Mr. Bootles was a little late to the Fourth Form-room.

"Right-ho, old scout! And you can tell us all about your Great-aunt Georgina in the Form-room."

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"Right-ho, old scout! And you can tell us all about your Great-aunt Georgina in the Form-room."

"All the way from London in a bath-chair!" said Raby. "My hat!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"No, ass!" said Lovell warmly. "She's bringing it with her on the train to this station. She's a bit lame, you see, chaps."

"Oh!"
"Then it's up to us to pull her up to Rookwood," said Jimmy Silver cheerfully. "We'll do it in style, too!"

"What-ho!"
"He, he, he!"

It was a snigger from behind Jimmy Silver, and Jimmy swung round sharply, to find Peele, Lattrey, and Gower—the three black sheep of the Fourth Form—with ill-natured grins on their faces.

They had evidently been listening to the tale of Lovell's great-aunt with all their ears, and it seemed to amuse them.

Jimmy Silver frowned.

"What are you sniggering at?" he exclaimed sharply.

Peele sniggered again.

"He, he! It's funny!" he grinned. "If you three little Erics are going to bring in an old geyser—and in a bath-chair, too—Yaroo!"

Peele broke off with a howl, as Jimmy Silver's grasp fell on his shoulder and yanked him away from his two friends.

Jimmy Silver was frowning, and Raby and Newcome gathered round the wriggling Peele with dark faces.

"Here—Ow! Leggo, you rotter!" shouted Peele. "What the—"

"You can't help being a cad, Peele!" said Jimmy Silver. "But we can teach you to speak respectfully of Lovell's aunt—"

"Great-aunt!" breathed Lovell.

"Leggo!" howled Peele, struggling in Jimmy Silver's grasp. "I didn't—I wasn't—"

"Bump him!" said Raby.

Bump!

Violent hands were laid on Peele by the angry chums, and he went to the floor with a bump.

"Ow! Oh! You rotters—"
"Cave!"

It was a sudden warning call from Putty Grace, and there was a general scramble of the Fourth Form to their seats.

Jimmy Silver & Co. released Peele as if he had suddenly become red-hot.

But it was too late.

"Boys!"
As the stern voice fell upon their ears, Jimmy Silver & Co. bethought them, somewhat belatedly, of the fact that they were in their class-room, and they almost shivered.

For the voice was that of Dr. Chisholm himself—the headmaster of Rookwood, who stood at the door with Mr. Bootles, the master of the Fourth Form.

"Boys!"

The Head's tone was almost awful as his stern gaze took in the disorderly scene. Mr. Bootles blinked at his Form through his spectacles, in horrified amazement.

"Silver! Peele! What is the meaning of this disgraceful scene?" thundered the Head.

Jimmy Silver hesitated. It did not seem possible to explain matters satisfactorily to the angry Head. Judging by the look in Dr. Chisholm's eye, it seemed almost better not to make the attempt.

But Peele, sitting on the floor, dazed, dazed, and rumped, did not stop to think that.

"Right-ho, old scout! And you can tell us all about your Great-aunt Georgina in the Form-room."

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"Right-ho, old scout! And you can tell us all about your Great-aunt Georgina in the Form-room."

"Certainly, sir! By all means, Dr. Chisholm!"

"Thank you!"

And with a stern glance at the Fourth-Formers, who were now sitting very quiet indeed, Dr. Chisholm rustled out.

Jimmy Silver & Co. looked at each other blankly.

Their feelings were too deep for words. Their luck was out—with a vengeance! Dr. Chisholm had spoken, and it was only too evident that he was not to be argued with. The imposition he had so generously handed out to them would have to be done, and Jimmy Silver & Co.'s kindly plan of meeting Lovell's Great-aunt Georgina at the station and conveying that lady up to the school in her bath-chair was evidently "off"—very much so.

Lovell gave Jimmy Silver an appealing glance.

Jimmy leaned towards him.

"You'll have to get someone else to go, old man," he said, in a cautious whisper. "Perhaps Putty—ahem!"

He broke off short as Mr. Bootles fixed his eye upon him.

"Silver!"

The little Form-master was somewhat on edge that morning, not unnaturally, and he was evidently keeping a sharper eye than usual upon his Form. He rapped out Jimmy Silver's name with quite unwonted sharpness.

"Sir!"

Jimmy Silver's expression was quite lamblike in its innocence.

"You were talking to Lovell, Silver?"

"Oh, sir!" murmured Jimmy.

Mr. Bootles eyed the innocent-looking junior severely.

"If I have to speak to you again this morning, Silver, I shall have recourse to the cane! You have already caused trouble enough—and more than enough!"

And Jimmy Silver subsided—wherein he was undoubtedly wise.

But Lovell had taken his hint.

Under cover of his exercise-book, and keeping a wary eye on Mr. Bootles the while, he hastily scribbled a note and managed to toss it unobserved into the hands of Putty—otherwise Teddy Grace.

Grace was a comparatively new junior in the Fourth Form at Rookwood, but he had already made his mark, as it were—principally in the direction of practical jokes, at which he was an adept. But his recent action in pulling Bulkeley of the Sixth out of the mill-stream at the risk of his life had proved that Putty was one of the right sort. He was always cheery and good-natured, too; and Lovell felt little doubt that Putty would do his best to help him, in view of the unfortunate circumstance of the imposition, by going to meet Great-aunt Georgina at the station.

Putty read the note carefully, and then gave Lovell a grin and a cheery nod. He evidently accepted the commission, and Arthur Edward Lovell felt a little comforted. If he and his chums worked hard at their imposition they would get it done by dinner-time, he reflected; and Putty, with Great-aunt Georgina's bath-chair to propel, would not be likely to arrive at Rookwood much before then. So all might yet be well.

If Lovell had not been quite so occupied with his own worries and with avoiding the eye of Mr. Bootles, he might have noticed that Peele, too, was busy writing a note, which he passed over first to Lattrey and then to Gower, his two cronies in Study No. 1. And by the way the precious trio nodded and grinned over that note, it was pretty safe to assume that there was some ill-natured mischief afoot between them.

But Lovell did not observe these signs. Had he done so he would probably not have felt quite so easy in his mind as to the reception of his Great-aunt Georgina when she arrived on her visit to Rookwood!

The 3rd Chapter.

Putty Grace Gets the Sack!

"Got the sack, Lattrey?"

"Yes."
"Got the string, Gower?"

"What-ho!"

"Good!" grinned Peele. "I've got the key of the wood-shed, so now we sha'n't be long!"

Morning lessons had been over five minutes, and Peele, Lattrey, and Gower, having bolted at once from the Fourth Form class-room, were now gathered together behind the wood-shed, evidently waiting for someone.

A footpath led along the back of the school buildings at Rookwood and ran past the wood-shed, and on across the fields in the direction of Coombe Station. In dry weather it was often used as a short cut to the station by the Rookwood boys.

Peele & Co. were evidently expecting it to be so used on this occasion.

They had not long to wait.

A cheery whistle sounded along the path from the direction of the school, and the sound of footsteps approaching at a steady trot.

"Look out, here he comes!" breathed Peele. "Have that sack ready, Lattrey!"

"What-ho!"

Nearer and nearer came the whistle and the footsteps to the place where the precious trio were lying in wait behind the wood-shed.

Peele and Gower stood crouched, ready to spring; and Lattrey stood by with a large and dirty sack. Lattrey had a grin on his face.

There was another moment of tense waiting, and then the owner of the cheery whistle and of the footsteps suddenly appeared round the corner of the wood-shed.

It was Teddy Grace—his hands in his pockets, and proceeding at a steady trot down the path.

"Now!" hissed Peele.

"On to him!"

like a ninepin, the whistle frozen on his lips.

Struggling violently, he rolled on the ground, his two assailants on top of him.

"Sit on him!" panted Peele. "Hurry up with that sack, Lattrey!"

"Here it is!"
"Jam it over his head!"

There was a muffled howl from Teddy Grace as the dirty sack was dragged over his head, while his arms were pinned closely to his sides.

"Ow! Yaroo! Gerooooh! Wharrer you at?"

"Pull it over him!"
"Yowp! Takeitoff! Ooooh!"

"Now the string!" panted Peele.

"Here you are!"
"Gerooh!"

"Tie the beggar up!"

Peele & Co. had jammed the sack well over the unfortunate Teddy Grace's head, and pulled it right down to his feet. And they now proceeded to wind the whole—junior, sack, and all—round and round with stout twine until they had produced a passable imitation of an Egyptian mummy.

"Into the wood-shed with him—quick!" panted Peele.

The three rascals lifted the mummy—which was kicking and wriggling and gurgling in a very un-mummylike fashion—and rushed it into the wood-shed, where they deposited it with a bump on a pile of faggots.

"You stay there a bit, young feller-melad!" grinned Lattrey.

"Ooooh! Lemme gerrout!"

"Some other time, old son! Ta-ta!"
"Gug-gug-gug!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peele & Co. ran out of the woodshed and slammed the door, and took the path towards Coombe Station.

"All serene so far, I think!" grinned Lattrey, glancing hurriedly round. "No one about to notice anything."

"All very well for you to grin!" grumbled Peele. "The young rotter caught me a fearful whack in the eye!"

"And me on the nose!" mumbled Gower. "Ow!"

"Never mind, we've dished him, and those asses, Silver & Co., too, I think," said Lattrey, suppressing his grins. "We must buck up, though, and get down to the station. We don't want to be late meeting our dear Great-aunt Georgina!"

"He, he, he!"
And the three young reprobates broke into a trot.

The 4th Chapter.

Miss Georgina Muffebury Arrives!

"Porter!"

"Yes, ma'am?"

"Is this Coombe Station, porter?"

"Yes, ma'am!"

"Then I will alight! Pray assist me, porter!"

"Yes, ma'am; certainly, ma'am!"

"And, oh, porter!"

"Yes, ma'am?"

"There is my bath-chair in the guard's van; please get it out at once!"

"Certainly, ma'am!"

"Please make haste, porter!"

"Yes, ma'am!"

"And be very careful of my bath-chair, porter!"

"Oh, yes, ma'am!"

And the obliging porter of Coombe Station—the only one the little station possessed—hurried off to obey as many as possible of these instructions, with his head in a whirl.

The twelve-twenty train from London had arrived at Coombe Station, and almost the only passenger to alight was an old lady—a little old lady, with a pleasant face surrounded by old-fashioned side-curls, who walked with the aid of a stick.

Peele & Co., who walked on to the platform just as the train came in, spotted her at once.

"Aunt Georgina Muffebury, for a quid!" muttered Lattrey.

The little old lady's beady eyes rested upon Peele & Co., and the three juniors came forward, lifting their caps.

"Are you Great-aunt—I mean, are you Miss Muffebury?" inquired Peele politely.

The little old lady blinked at him.

"I am Miss Muffebury. But where is little Arty?" she said anxiously. "You are from Rookwood School?"

"Yes, ma'am, but—"

"Then where is little Arty? He has not been run over? Or fallen into the river? Or succumbed to this dreadful influenza?" cried the little old lady, in a flutter.

"Something dreadful has happened to little Arty, I am sure of it!"

"Not at all, ma'am!" said Lattrey solemnly. "Little-ahem!—little Arty is quite well, but—"

"Yes, yes?"

"But he has been a naughty little boy, I am sorry to say!" said Lattrey gravely, shaking his head.

"Very naughty indeed!" said Gower.

"Dear, dear me!" said the little old lady, in distress. "That is terrible!"

"He has been kept in by his kind teacher, so he had to ask his friends to come and meet you instead, and—explain matters," said Peele, with the utmost gravity. "He—he hopes you won't be angry with him, Miss Muffebury."

"The poor little boy!" said Miss Muffebury, shaking her curls. "I am so sorry he has been kept in! I remember he was once naughty before, when he was a tiny little lad!"

"Go hon!" murmured Lattrey.

"Yes, indeed! He refused to take his cod-liver oil, after he had had the measles!" rattled on the old lady.

"Fancy that now!"

"Ah, ah! Ahem—gug-good gracious!" gasped Peele.

"Yes; no wonder you are surprised, my dear little fellow!"

Peele turned crimson, while Lattrey and Gower tried to hide their grins. But Miss Georgina Muffebury did not appear to notice anything.

"On that occasion, you know, I actually had to punish the dear little mannie," she continued confidentially; "I had to stand him in the corner!"

"Dud-dud-did you, ma'am?" stammered Peele.

"Oh, help!" murmured Lattrey faintly.

"Yes. I hope your teacher never has to stand you in the corner, my little man!"

"Nunno!" gasped Peele.

"I am glad to hear it!" said the little old lady, smiling. "Now here is the porter with my bath-chair. Are you kind little lads going to take me up to the school in it?"

Peele & Co. exchanged glances and covert grins.

"Yes, ma'am; that's what we came down for!" said Lattrey, with great politeness.

"That is very sweet of you, dears!" said Lovell's great-aunt, hobbling into her bath-chair. "What are your names? You seem to be such kind-hearted little boys!"

Peele & Co. almost choked, but Lattrey recovered himself with a great effort.

"I am Snooks," he said gravely. "This is Hookey, and this is Walker," indicating the almost paralysed Peele and Gower with a wave of his hand. "We are pleased to meet you, Great-aunt—I mean, Miss Muffebury!"

Miss Muffebury beamed.

"That is kind of you! And you are great friends of little Arty's, Snooks?"

"Absolute bosom friends!" said Lattrey solemnly. "I am sure he would like us to be near him now!"

Lattrey felt pretty sure that he was speaking the strict truth in the last sentence, anyhow!

"Peele & Co.!" The—the cads! The rotten cads!" shouted Lovell passionately. The four juniors were almost petrified by the sight that met their gaze as they looked down into the old quad at Rookwood.

Across the quad, from the direction of the gates, was speeding the strangest equipage! It was an ancient bath-chair occupied by an ancient lady with old-fashioned side-curly, who could be none other than Lovell's Great-aunt Georgina!

But it was the pace at which the ancient vehicle was proceeding that was attracting so much attention—it could only be described as terrific!

The motive-power was being supplied by three grinning juniors—none other than our friends Peele, Lattrey, and Gower, of course.

Gower was pulling the chair by its steering-lever, like a runaway horse; while Peele and Lattrey were shoving behind for all they were worth!

All three juniors were tearing along as if on the cinder-path, and the ancient vehicle rocked and bounded as it flew over the ground, leaving a cloud of dust in its wake.

There was a roar from all sides of the crowded quad as the bath-chair tore on, followed by a racing crowd of excited and amazed juniors.

"What is it?"

"It's a bath-chair Marathon!"

"The finish of a chariot race!"

"Hurrah!"

The swaying, bumping bath-chair swept on past the window of the Fourth Form classroom. The little old lady sat quite quiet in the rocking vehicle, her face pale and her hands clutching the arms of the chair.

Jimmy Silver & Co. at the window caught a glimpse of her pale face amid the shrieking crowd of thoughtless juniors, and they raved in impotent fury.

"The—the cowards! The cads!" choked Lovell. "Oh, wait till I get at them!"

"Come on—this way!" breathed Jimmy Silver sulphurously. "We'll teach 'em!"

"What-ho!"

The four juniors jumped down from the window and made a rush for the door.

"Bless my soul! What's the meaning of this?"

Mr. Bootles was coming in at the door, and the rush of the four juniors almost carried the little gentleman off his feet. He blinked dazedly at the chums through his spectacles.

"Sorry, sir!" gasped Lovell. "My—my aunt, sir! My Great-aunt Georgina!"

"B-bless my soul!"

"Those cads are ragging her! I'm going to smash them!" panted Lovell. "I'm—"

"But your impositions—"

"We've finished them, sir!" explained Jimmy Silver hurriedly. "We're just going to rescue—"

"What—what! Boys!"

"Sorry, sir—"

And, almost pushing the little Form-master aside, the four juniors rushed on.

Mr. Bootles gasped in flustered amazement.

"Bless my soul! Boys, come back at once!"

But the little Form-master's command fell for once upon deaf ears.

Jimmy Silver & Co. rushed on, breathing vengeance, and Mr. Bootles was left alone, to waste his sweetness on the desert air, so to speak.

face. His chums, Van Ryn and Pons, were close behind him.

"I guess I don't quite understand you, Lattrey!" he said, in a hard voice.

"Do you mean to say—"

"Here they are, the cads!"

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The 6th Chapter.
Reparation—and Retribution.

The flying bath-chair slowed down at last.

After circumnavigating the quad at such terrific speed, Peele & Co. began to get blown. The pace had been too hot to last, and the bath-chair finally drew up in front of the gym, and was immediately surrounded by a crowd of laughing, cheering juniors.

A dozen voices hailed the grinning Peele & Co.

"What's the game, Peeley?"

"Is it a bet, or what?"

"Are you the winners?"

"Who's your lady friend?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peele & Co. mopped their streaming brows, while the little old lady gazed faintly round in great bewilderment.

"Where am I?" she exclaimed faintly, scanning the innumerable strange faces.

"Dear me! Am I dreaming? Is little Arty here?"

There was a hush as some of the crowding juniors caught the old lady's words, and stopped laughing. It began to dawn on some of them that the little old lady had been made the victim of a rag by Peele & Co., and that thought made them feel not a little uncomfortable.

For the idea of making deliberate sport of an old lady did not appeal to Rookwood boys, with the exception of a few black sheep of the kidney of Peele, Lattrey, and Gower.

But Peele & Co. did not seem to notice the changing sentiment of the crowd.

Peele grinned round triumphantly. He felt distinctly elated at the success of what he regarded as a distinct hit at Jimmy Silver & Co.

"We went to meet the old lady at the station," he grinned. "She said she was in a hurry—"

"He! he, he!" giggled Gower.

"So we did our best for her!" finished Lattrey. "Allow me to introduce you, gentlemen, to Lovell's Great-aunt Georgina!"

And Lattrey stepped back, with a mock bow to the bewildered old lady.

There was an angry murmur from the crowd, and a burly Fourth-Former pushed his way forward. It was Conroy, the usually good-natured Colonial junior, and there was a stern look on his handsome

Conroy glanced round.

"I, for one, beg to offer Miss Muffebury my very humble apologies," he continued, raising his cap to the little old lady. "I feel real mean about it, and I hope you will forgive me, ma'am!"

"And we say the same!" said Van Ryn and Pons together. "Please forgive us, ma'am!"

"And I!"

"And I!"

"We all apologise!"

"Hear, hear!"

There was a perfect chorus of apologies. The thoughtless juniors were quick to recognise the discourtesy they had been guilty of, as soon as they understood how the matter stood. They were in as great a hurry to apologise as they had been to cheer the racing bath-chair.

Lovell's face cleared somewhat as he turned to his great-aunt and kissed her affectionately—a thing he would have shrunk from doing in public at ordinary times.

"Are you hurt, aunts dear?"

Miss Muffebury gazed at him fondly, and some of the colour came back into her old cheeks.

She smiled and shook her head.

"Oh, my hat—I mean, th-thank you, ma'am!"

And the sturdy Colonial junior gingerly picked up one of Dr. Coddle's valuable pamphlets, and politely lifting his cap again, walked away as if in a dream.

The crowd of juniors, looking thoroughly sheepish now, formed up in a regular queue and shuffled past the bath-chair, each taking one of the precious pamphlets and politely lifting his cap to the beaming old lady.

One or two showed a disposition to melt away unostentatiously, without joining the queue, but finding the grim eye of Jimmy Silver upon them, gave up the attempt, and took their pamphlets like lambs.

As Jimmy Silver remarked to his chums afterwards, it was a sort of penance, and they had to go through with it.

Lattrey, Peele, and Gower, with Jimmy Silver, Raby, and Newcome marching very close behind them, were the last to receive their pamphlets.

"I'll take my great-aunt along to the Head's house for lunch now," said Lovell, now quite cheery again. "See you in the study after, Jimmy!"

"Right-ho, old man! We have a little

"Ooooh! You—you ass, Silver! Why didn't you come before?"

"My dear kid—"

"Geroooooh! I'm suffocated! My hat!"

Putty broke off with a yell of fury.

"There's that cad Lattrey—and Peele—and Gower—"

"Hold on, Putty!"

"Lemme gerrat them!" howled Putty.

"The beasts! They tied me up—"

"Wait half a mo—"

"They laid for me, and half choked me—the—the beasts!"

Putty made a furious rush at his foes, but Jimmy Silver caught him by the arm.

"Hold on, I tell you, Putty!"

"Lemme go, Silver!"

"Chuck it, old son, and listen to your uncle! Peele & Co. are going through it!"

Putty growled wrathfully, but he ceased to struggle. He only glared at Peele & Co.

"Honest Injun?" he growled.

"Honest Injun!" said Jimmy Silver quietly. "You see, Putty, they've played a caddish trick on Miss Muffebury—Lovell's great-aunt, you know. They

Lattrey surrendered ignobly.

"Ye-es, I—I'm ready!"

"Then bend over!"

And the avenging juniors proceeded to deal faithfully with the three black sheep in turn.

Jimmy Silver & Co. spent quite a pleasant afternoon, on the whole, in showing Lovell's Great-aunt Georgina round Rookwood. They squirmed somewhat, it is true, when Miss Muffebury persisted in referring to them as "dear little boys" in front of a crowd of solemn Rookwooders. And they had to accept a good many pamphlets, mostly written by the worthy Dr. Cuthbert Coddle, for whose works Miss Muffebury apparently had the greatest admiration. But they were very attentive and polite to the little old lady, who indeed quite won their hearts by her simplicity and gentleness.

The Rookwooders turned out to give Miss Muffebury a hearty cheer when the chums wheeled her bath-chair down to the station, after tea in the study, thereby somewhat making up by their hearty farewell for the unintentional inhospitality of their welcome.

The Fistical Four were in quite a contented mood as they walked back across the fields from the station, after seeing the little old lady off.

"All's well that ends well!" remarked Arthur Edward Lovell, as they came in sight of Rookwood again. "I think I shall remember to-day for the rest of my natural life, though!"

"So will Messrs. Lattrey, Peele, and Gower, I think!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Ha, ha! Yes!"

And after hearing the report of Tubby Muffin—the Peeping Tom of Rookwood—that Peele & Co. had had their tea in Study No. 1 that afternoon off the mantelpiece instead of the table, the whole of the Fourth Form seemed to be of the same opinion.

Indeed, all Rookwood would be likely to remember for some time to come—the visit of Lovell's great-aunt!

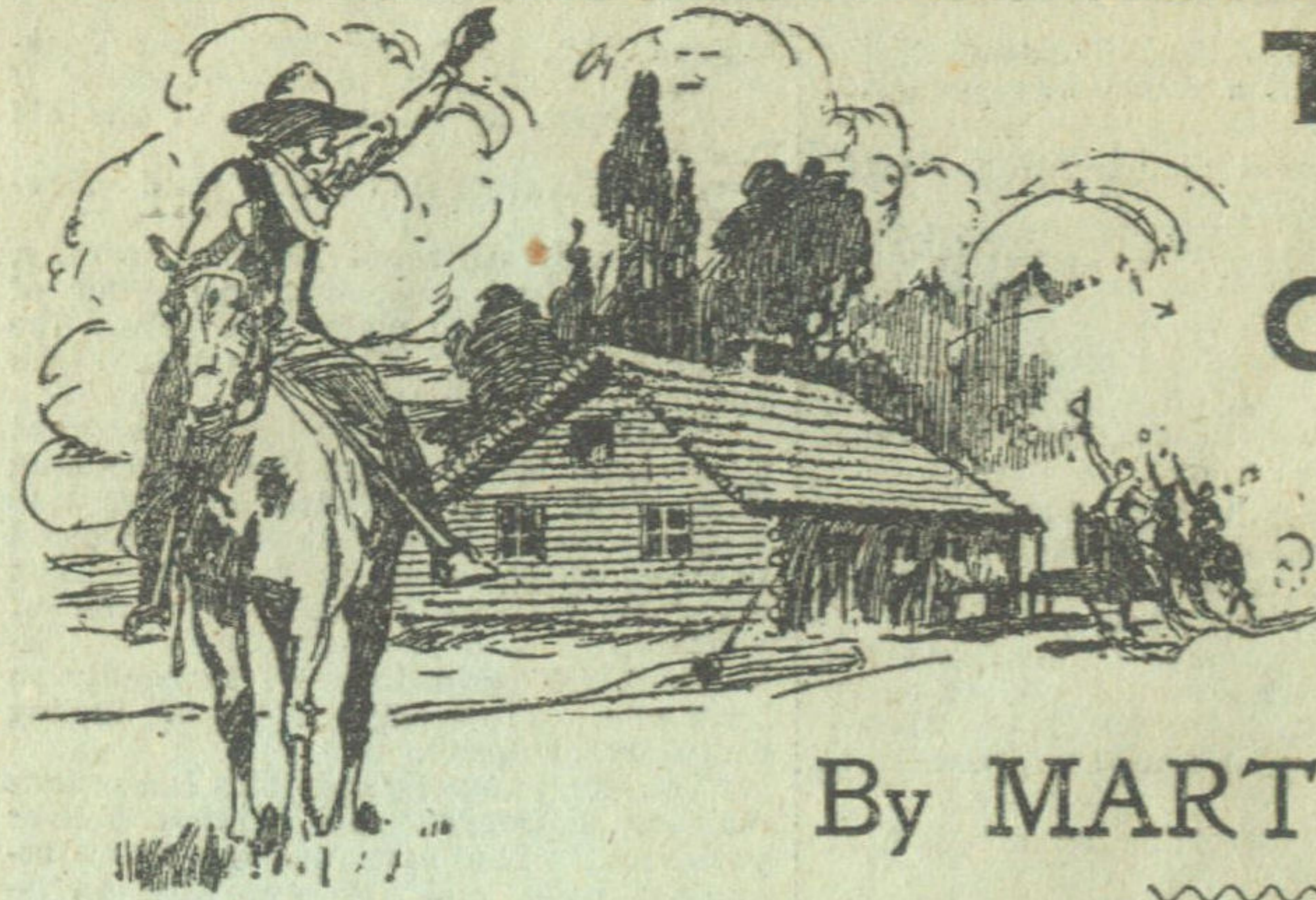
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THE NEW BOY AT CEDAR CREEK!

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

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter.

The Warrior's Return.

"Where's Chunky?" murmured Frank Richards.
"Lost, stolen, or strayed!" answered Bob Lawless, with a grin. "He's not in class."

Frank Richards glanced round over the class as Miss Meadows entered the school-room at Cedar Creek.

Chunky Todgers, who should have been there with the rest, was conspicuous by his absence.

"Ill, perhaps," remarked Vere Beauclerc.

"I guess he's been getting outside too much maple sugar!" grinned Eben Hacke. "Poor old Chunky!"

Miss Meadows looked over the class, and the murmurs died away.

The Canadian schoolmistress eyed noted the absence of Chunky Todgers at once.

"Todgers is not here. Do you know where he is, Richards?"

"No, ma'am!" answered Frank.

"I believe Todgers usually rides to school with you, Lawrence. Did he leave Thompson with you this morning?"

"Yes, ma'am!" answered Tom Lawrence. "He left the trail to have a look at the Greasers' shack on the creek—"

"The what?" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"I—I mean the Mexicans," said Lawrence. "There's a Mexican crowd settled on the creek, and Chunky wanted to see their shebang. I—I mean, their cabin. I thought he was coming on behind, but he didn't."

"Very well."

Miss Meadows frowned, but she said no more, and lessons began.

A good many glances were cast towards the door at intervals by the members of Miss Meadows' class.

The Canadian schoolmistress was a stickler for punctuality, and Chunky Todgers was likely to meet with a warm reception when he did arrive.

But for some time there was no sign of Chunky.

The first lesson ended, and the second was nearing its end, when footsteps were heard in the porch.

"Here comes Todgers!" murmured Bob Lawless.

"Something's happened to his pony, then," said Frank.

There had been no sound of hoofs outside, and it was evident that the hapless Chunky had arrived on foot. All eyes were turned to the doorway to see him enter.

The door swung open, and a fat figure appeared in view. And there was a general exclamation from all the class: "Great Scott!"

Miss Meadows seemed petrified as she fixed her eyes upon Chunky Todgers.

Chunky generally presented a fat and comfortable appearance, and his plump face was always sunny. But now there was a change. He was smothered with mud from head to foot, his hat was gone, his fat little nose was swollen to nearly twice its usual size, and there was a dark ring round one of his eyes, which blinked painfully. He was gasping in a spasmodic way as he limped into the school-room.

"My hat!" murmured Frank Richards. "Poor old Chunky has been looking for trouble!"

"And finding it, I guess!" grinned Bob Lawless.

Chunky's gasps could be heard all over the school-room as he limped in.

"Todgers!" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "Yow-ow!" was Chunky's reply.

"What is the matter with you?" "Oh, dear!"

"You are late, Todgers—"

"Yow!"

"And what do you mean by presenting yourself at school in that state?" exclaimed Miss Meadows angrily.

Chunky gave a groan.

"I—I couldn't help it, Miss Meadows. I—I didn't get like this on purpose. I didn't really!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Silence! Todgers, where have you been?"

"I—I—"

"You have been fighting!" exclaimed Miss Meadows.

"I—I guess—"

"Who have you been fighting with?" asked Miss Meadows severely. "One of the Hillcrest boys, I suppose?"

"Nope. It—it was a pesky Greaser!" groaned Chunky Todgers. "I—I thought I could lick him, as he was a Greaser. But I—I couldn't."

"I guess he looks as if he couldn't!" murmured Bob Lawless.

Chunky Todgers' statement was really superfluous. His appearance was a pretty plain proof that he had not had the best of the combat.

"Am I to understand, Todgers, that you began the quarrel?" asked Miss Meadows very severely.

"Nope!" gasped Chunky. "I—I guess

I didn't exactly begin it, ma'am. I—I hit him on the nose."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"The next boy who laughs will be caned!" exclaimed Miss Meadows. "Todgers, you are a bad boy!"

"I—I feel bad," mumbled Chunky.

There was no doubt that Chunky felt bad, though not in the sense which Miss Meadows used the word.

"You are not in a fit state for lessons, Todgers. You may go to the kitchen and bathe your face. And do not return until you have made yourself a little more respectable."

"Yep!" groaned Chunky.

And he limped out, followed by grinning glances from his schoolfellows.

"I guess poor old Chunky has woke up the wrong passenger," murmured Bob Lawless. "Fancy old Chunky starting as a warrior, and getting left like this!"

"Silence!"

The lesson was resumed, and it was nearly time for morning classes to be dismissed when Chunky Todgers put in an appearance again and sat down at his desk.

He was looking cleaner and more tidy, but his fat face was quite a picture, with the swollen nose, and the damaged eye quite black by this time.

And he was evidently suffering severely. He groaned as he sat down, and he groaned several times afterwards, and mumbled painfully to himself. Chunky's first essay in the role of a fighting-man had ended disastrously.

There was a great deal of curiosity in the class to learn the particulars of Chunky's heroic combat, but questions could not be asked at present. The Cedar Creek fellows had to restrain their curiosity until the school was dismissed.

But as soon as Miss Meadows gave the word, and the schoolboys marched out, Chunky was surrounded by an inquiring crowd in the playground.

The 2nd Chapter. A Tough Customer.

Frank Richards tapped the dolorous Chunky on the shoulder, and the fat schoolboy blinked at him glumly.

"Tell us all about it, Chunky," said Frank encouragingly.

"Yow-ow!"

"We've had that!" remarked Bob. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"I guess it's all very well for you fellows to cackle," said Chunky, with sorrowful indignation. "I've been through it, I guess. Who'd have thought that a pesky Greaser could have put up a fight like that? Why, he simply waded in and lambasted me!"

"You let a Greaser lick you!" snorted Eben Hacke contemptuously.

"How could I help it?"

"Poof!"

"But what did you fight about?" asked Beauclerc.

"Well, I went round to look at their shack," said Chunky. "There's two of them, you know—Old Man Diaz and his son. Young Diaz was moseying about, and I spoke to him. I just asked him if he was going to school."

"No harm in that," said Frank.

"And—and he said he was, so I told him he'd better go to Hillcrest, as we didn't want pesky Greasers at Cedar Creek. No harm in that, was there?"

Frank Richards frowned.

"Like your cheek!" he exclaimed. "You had no right to insult him!"

"Well, he's only a Greaser, you know and—"

"Fathead!"

"Then he called me names," said Chunky. "I wasn't going to be called names by a Greaser from Mexico, you can bet!"

"What did he call you—a fat gopher?" asked Bob Lawless.

"Blessed if I know—it was in Spanish—but it sounded awful!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"So I hit him on the nose," continued Chunky. "Anybody would. Who'd have thought a Mexican Greaser could put up his hands?"

"Why, you fat rascal!" exclaimed Frank. "You hit him on the nose because you thought he wouldn't fight!"

"Well, I—I—not exactly that, you know, but—but— Well, I hit him on the nose, anyway," said Chunky. "Why shouldn't I hit a Greaser on the nose, I'd like to know? And then— Ow! Yow! Wow!"

"Well, what happened then, you doughty warrior?"

"Why, he just sailed into me!" groaned Chunky. "Knocked me right and left, and rolled me in the mud! And Old Man Diaz stood there grinning like a lynx all the time. And—and when I got up—"

"You thrashed him?"

"Nunno—I lit out!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, what could I do?" roared Chunky. "And the beast had my pony, and held him, too, and he's got my pony now! He called after me that I could

come back for it, but—but I didn't go back—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I—I want a fellow to go and fetch that pony for me," said Chunky Todgers. "I had to hoof it to school. I—I say, Richards, you're rather hefty with your fists—you might mosey along and give him a hiding, and you can ride my pony back."

"Why should I give him a hiding, you fat rascal? You seem to have been to blame all through."

"It's up against Cedar Creek, me being licked by a Greaser!" pleaded Chunky.

"Serve you jolly well right!"

"Ow! Wow!"

"We might ride over and get the pony," said Bob Lawless. "Young Diaz has no right to keep that."

"I guess you can leave it to me," said Eben Hacke. "I'll go over for you, Chunky. I'll get the pony, and I'll lambaste young Diaz till he can't walk!"

"What the thunder for?" exclaimed Bob Lawless.

"He's thrashed a Cedar Creek fellow, hasn't he?"

"Chunky asked for it."

"I don't care a continental red cent! He's only a Greaser, anyhow!" retorted Hacke, in his most bullying tone. "I've licked Greasers enough when I was at home in Dakota. I can tell you. I'll make a picture of him!"

And with that the bully of the lumber school strode away towards the corral for his horse.

Frank Richards & Co. looked at one another dubiously.

"He oughtn't to go and pick a quarrel with the Mexican," said Beauclerc.

"I guess it's not our business," remarked Bob Lawless. "It looks as if the Greaser can stand up for himself, too."

"Yes, that's so."

"He ought to be lambasted," mumbled Chunky Todgers. "Look at me! Look at my eye! Look at my nose!"

"Br-r-r!" growled Frank.

Eben Hacke rode out of the gates, with a grin on his face. The bully of the lumber school was quite pleased with this opportunity of distinguishing himself; and it was certain that the unfortunate Greaser was booked for a very severe handling, if the burly Hacke was able to give it to him.

Towards dinner-time a crowd of the Cedar Creek fellows were gathered round the school gates, looking for the champion's return. There was plenty of time for Eben to ride to the Mexican's shack on the creek, and return for dinner; and the thrashing of the Greaser was not expected to take him long.

"Hallo! Here he comes!" exclaimed

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Bob Lawless, as there was a clatter of hoof-beats on the trail.

"What's the matter with him?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Eben Hacke rode up to the gates, and his aspect brought a roar of laughter from the Cedar Creek fellows.

His look was much changed since his ride.

He fell, rather than dismounted, from his horse, and held on to the saddle for support with one hand while he dabbed his nose with the other.

And he blinked dolorously at the grinning crowd.

"Well," roared Bob Lawless, "have you licked him?"

"Oh, Jerusalem!" groaned Hacke.

"Did you slaughter him?" chuckled Frank Richards.

"Yow-ow-wow!"

Hacke stumbled in at the gate, leading his horse, without any further reply. But it was pretty clear that he had not bestowed the promised "lambasting" on the Mexican. The lambasting had happened, but it was Eben Hacke who had been the recipient thereof.

Bob Lawless chuckled explosively.

"Oh, dear! And he hasn't brought my pony!" groaned Chunky Todgers. "I shall have to walk home! Oh, dear!"

"Serve you right, old chap!"

"And serve Hacke right!" said Frank Richards. "What did he want to pitch into the Mexican for? But Chunky must have his pony. We'll ride over and see Diaz after dinner."

"And lick him!" asked Chunky Todgers eagerly.

"No. What is there to lick him for?"

"Well, he's lambasted me, and he's lambasted Hacke—"

"And serve you both jolly well right! I dare say he's quite a decent chap. He's a pretty tough customer, anyway."

"No doubt about that, I guess," grinned Bob Lawless. "But don't worry about your pony, Chunky; we'll get that, at any rate."

And after dinner Frank Richards & Co. saddled their horses, and rode away up the Thompson trail to visit the Mexican shack.

The 3rd Chapter.

Ricardo Diaz at Home.

"That's the galoot, I guess."

Bob Lawless pointed with his riding-whip.

The chums of Cedar Creek had turned out of the Thompson trail, and were following a rough track that led towards the creek.

Near the creek was a roughly-built habitation of lumber and logs, in the middle of a small clearing. A lad of about their own age, with a swarthy face and hair in long, black ringlets, was chopping wood near the shack. Close by a fat pony was tethered to a sapling, and the chums recognised Chunky Todgers' well-known mount.

The Mexican youth glanced up at the sound of hoof-beats among the charred roots of the clearing.

He rose to his feet as he saw the three riders, and stood looking at them with sharp, black eyes that seemed to scintillate.

Frank Richards & Co. regarded him rather curiously as they rode up.

Chunky Todgers was not a very formidable opponent; but Eben Hacke was quite a fighting-man; and the fellow who had thrashed the bully of the lumber school was naturally an object of interest.

The young Mexican was well built, rather slim than sturdy, and as lithe as a panther. His swarthy face was handsome, in its dark Spanish way, but the expression on it was not exactly prepossessing.

"Hallo, young 'un!" was Bob Lawless' greeting, as he drew rein.

"Buenos dias!" answered the Mexican civilly.

"By gum! What does that mean, Franky?"

"Good-morning!" said Frank Richards, with a smile.

"Oh, good! Good-morning, young 'un!" said Bob. "Don't you speak English? Blessed if I know how Chunky got on with you in Spanish!"

"Si, si, senorito!" answered the Mexican. "I speak English certainly. We are from the States—los Estados Unidos."

"You're young Diaz?" asked Bob.

"I am Ricardo Diaz."

"Poppa at home?"

"He is at Thompson," answered Ricardo Diaz, watching the three chums curiously. "Do you want to see my father?"

"Nope! We've called for a horse—that pony!" said Bob, pointing towards the tethered fat pony.

Ricardo Diaz shook his head.

"He belongs to Chunky Todgers, of our school," said Frank Richards. "You seem to have had a row with Chunky this morning."

"The fat fool!" said Diaz.

"Ahem! Well, you've no right to keep his pony, you know."

"I am keeping it till he returns to ask for it," answered Diaz, with a grin.

"Then I shall give him another thrashing!"

Frank Richards frowned. He was prepared to be quite civil to the Mexican; but he found himself already feeling an antipathy towards Ricardo Diaz.

"You won't do anything of the sort," he said sharply. "You've had a scrap with Todgers, and you seem to have had the best of it. I dare say he was to blame; but that's the end of it."

"It is not the end of it," answered Diaz coolly. "I shall keep his pony till he comes back for it."

"We've come to fetch it."

"You may go again."

"Do you mean that you won't give it up?" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"That won't make much odds!" said Bob Lawless angrily. "It's Chunky's pony, and we're going to take it away with us. See?"

"I shall stop you!"

"I guess you'll get hurt if you try," answered the rancher's son disdainfully.

"I haven't come here to look for trouble with you, Diaz, but if you want it, you won't have to ask for it long."

Bob rode towards the sapling where the pony was tethered and cast off the trail-ropes.

Then he caught the pony's rein.

"Come on, you chaps," he said. "We're finished here."

Diaz ran forward.

"Let that pony alone!" he shouted.

"I guess not!"

"Then get down off your horse, and I will thrash you as I thrashed your school-fellow!" exclaimed Diaz.

"I reckon you won't have to ask me twice," answered Bob promptly.

Frank Richards stopped his chum as he was dismounting.

"Hold on, Bob—"

"Let go, Frank, you ass!"

"Hold on, I say! You haven't come here to fight with the fellow," said Frank.

"What's the good, anyway?"

"Hasn't he asked me, you say?" growled Bob. "Do you think I'm going to be bulldozed by a pesky Greaser?"

"Let him alone," answered Frank, pacifically. "Chunky was in the wrong, and so was Hacke, and the chap has lost his temper. There's nothing for us to quarrel with him about."

Bob hesitated.

There was something very irritating in the Mexican's sneering look, but Bob contrived to restrain his wrath.

"Frank's right, Bob," said Beauclerc. "Leave the kid alone. After all, he's a stranger in this section, and he hasn't had a very civil reception."

"Oh, all right!" grunted Bob. "I don't want to handle him, if you come to that. Let's vamoose the ranch, then."

"You shall not take the pony!" exclaimed Diaz.

"Stop me, if you can!" answered Bob disdainfully.

Diaz caught at the reins, and Bob, as he came closer, grasped him by the collar of his rough shirt and spun him round.

Bump!

The Mexican sat on the ground with a loud concussion, and a louder yell.

Bob Lawless chuckled, and set his horse in motion, leading Chunky's fat pony with him as he went. Frank Richards and Beauclerc rode after him.

Ricardo Diaz scrambled to his feet, shaking a dusky fist after the chums of Cedar Creek.

He shouted after them as they rode away; but as he shouted in Spanish, the meaning of his remarks was a deep mystery to them—which was perhaps fortunate.

His voice died away behind in a couple of minutes, as Frank Richards & Co. rode back to the Thompson trail.

"Pretty specimen, I must say!" growled Bob Lawless. "The galoot seems like a pesky wildcat!"

down on Greasers, as you call the Mexicans, Bob."

"Well, they're not liked much—the specimens that mosey along into the Thompson valley," answered Bob Lawless. "Too jolly ready to whip a knife out, as a rule."

"Well, I don't suppose young Diaz has a knife about him," said Frank, laughing.

"I guess not. But he looks sulky and savage enough."

"I've been thinking—"

"You've said that before, old scout. I know it's rather new for you."

"Ass! About that chap Diaz. He's a foreigner here, and he's bound to feel a bit strange and lonely."

"Shouldn't wonder."

"Well, what about being civil to him?" suggested Frank.

"I guess I'm not going to jump on him, and punch his nose!" answered Bob.

"I don't mean that. He's a new-comer here, and it would be only civil to speak a word or two to him."

"Blessed if I like chumming with Greasers!"

"That's only a prejudice, old chap. Greasers are just as good as anybody else. He's a new fellow in the school, and it's up to somebody to show him some civility."

"I don't like him!" grunted Bob.

"Ahem! That's no reason for not being civil. Suppose we make friends with the chap—"

"You can, if you like."

"And you, too, Bob. I dare say he's quite a nice chap, if he gets a chance of showing it."

"You're an ass, Frank!"

"Cousin to one, at all events," agreed Frank cheerfully.

Bob Lawless laughed.

"Look here, do you want to chum with that scowling Greaser?" he demanded.

"You'll only find it's no good."

"You never know that a thing's no good till you've tried. Let's give him a chance."

Bob Lawless grunted again; but he was a good-natured fellow, and he nodded assent at last.

"Oh, all right!" he said.

"If we're decent to him, the other chaps will follow our example, and he will feel at home," urged Frank.

"Right you are! Go ahead! I'll fold him to my manly chest and weep over him, if you like," said Bob sarcastically.

"Well, let's get along and speak to him, by way of a beginning."

"Go ahead!"

The three chums followed Diaz, who had gone to the school gates and was looking out at the timber with a moody brow.

It was very probable that the new boy felt lonely and out of place at Cedar Creek; and his sulky moodiness was not the way to get on friendly terms with his schoolfellows.

The frank, cheery young Canadians were not likely to understand the moody, irritable, haughty temper of the swarthy foreigner.

There was something repellent, too, in the reserved, dark face and the glitter of the hard, black eyes.

Diaz gave the trio a sulky look as they joined him at the gates, and moved farther away. They followed him.

"Hold on, Diaz, old scout!" said Frank Richards, in his cheeriest tone. "It was rather a surprise seeing you here this morning."

"Not a pleasant one, either," sneered Diaz.

"Ahem! You're welcome at Cedar Creek! How do you like the place?"

"I do not like it."

"Oh!"

"I do not like Gringos," went on the new boy sulkily.

"What the thump is a Gringo?" murmured Frank Richards.

"American!" said Bob, with a smile.

"But we are Canadians, Diaz, which is really a most superior article."

"It is all the same to me."

"Then I guess you've got a lot to learn! Have you brought your horse with you?"

"I have no horse."

"But you ride?" asked Frank.

"Si, si! I am a Mexican!"

"Then I'll tell you what—one of us will lend you a horse, and we'll have a ride before dinner," said Frank.

"I do not want you to lend me a horse."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Frank.

The task of getting on good terms with the sulky Mexican was turning out harder than Frank had anticipated. Bob Lawless grinned. He was quite interested in watching Frank's attempt to get through the reserve of the new boy.

Frank was rather nonplussed.

"We were going to split some logs for Mr. Slimmey before dinner," remarked Bob Lawless.

"Blessed if I hadn't forgotten!" said Frank. "Will you come and lend us a hand splitting logs, Diaz?"

"No."

"Ahem! The fellows generally take turns in splitting logs for the school fires, you know."

"Is that a rule of the school?"

"Oh, no!"

"Then I shall not do it!"

"Come and talk to us while we do it, then," suggested Frank.

"I do not want to talk to you!"

"Oh, my hat!"

Frank Richards gave it up at that. The new boy was rather too much for him.

"Come on, you chaps!" he said.

And the three chums walked away to Mr. Slimmey's cabin, leaving the new boy to his own devices. Bob Lawless chuckled as they went.

"He does seem rather a hard case," answered Frank ruefully. "He's got his back up, I suppose."

"Blessed if I see that it matters!" yawned Bob.

"Well, it doesn't, I suppose; but he will have a pretty unpleasant time here if he keeps that up."

"Let him—and bother him!" answered Bob.

And the chums of Cedar Creek settled down to splitting logs until the bell rang for dinner.

The 5th Chapter.
A Fight to a Finish!

"Yaroooooh!"

That loud roar of anguish fell upon the ears of Frank Richards & Co. as they came towards the schoolhouse for dinner. It was the voice of Chunky Todgers. "The merry Mexican again!" said Bob Lawless.

Chunky Todgers was wriggling in the grasp of Ricardo Diaz, who had him by the collar, and was shaking him like a very fat rat.

The hapless Chunky seemed like an infant in Diaz's grasp, and he was yelling dismally as Diaz shook him with savage energy.

"Yaroooo! Yoop! Leggo! You pesky Greaser! Leggo! Yow-ow! Lend a hand, somebody!"

Frank Richards ran up quickly.

"Let Todgers alone at once!" he rapped out.

Diaz, with a sneering look, continued to shake the unhappy Chunky, whose teeth were rattling together as he shook.

Frank's brows knitted, and he strode at the Mexican and grasped him by the shoulder.

"Let go!" he snapped.

And as Diaz did not obey, Frank exerted his strength, and fairly wrenched him away from Chunky.

The Mexican spun away, panting, and tore himself loose from Frank's grasp. He looked like a wildcat about to spring, as he turned on Frank Richards.

Frank faced him coolly.

"Now, what's the row about?" he asked.

"Mind your own business!" growled Diaz.

"Well, this is somebody's business, you know! What have you been doing, Chunky, you fat boulder?"

"I haven't been doing anything!"

preferred bad terms and fisticuffs, that was his business.

"Better leave it to me, Franky," Bob Lawless remarked, when the chums came out after dismissal, and headed for the gates, instead of the corral as usual. "The Greaser is rather hefty, you know."

Frank Richards laughed.

"I think I can handle him," he answered. "And if I can't, I don't see how you could, Bob."

"Why, you ass!"

"The news seems to have spread," said Beaulere. "It looks as if we're going to have half Cedar Creek on the scene."

Quite a little army of fellows were following the chums, as they went out of the gates. Evidently they did not mean to miss the fun. Ricardo Diaz strode along by himself, after one glance at Frank Richards.

There was a grim and surly expression on the Mexican's face. He had chosen to disdain the olive-branch and to keep on fighting terms with the chums of Cedar Creek; and it was evident from his look that he anticipated another easy victory. But on that point it was very probable that he was making a miscalculation.

Diaz stopped under the timber near the creek, out of sight of the school. There was to be no risk of interruption.

Frank Richards & Co. stopped also. The red sunset gleamed down between the trees on an interested crowd. Chunky Todgers' fat face was beaming. He had faith in Frank Richards' fisticuffs powers, and he hoped that all his sufferings were going to be avenged at last.

"Give him a jolly good lambasting, Franky," he murmured in Frank's ear, as they stopped.

"I'll do my best, Chunky."

"That's right."

"And I've a jolly good mind to give you one, too, for starting the trouble," added Frank.

"Oh, gum!" ejaculated Chunky.

"Are you ready?" broke in the angry, sullen voice of the Mexican.

Frank Richards threw off his hat and jacket.

"Ready!" he answered.

crashed upon his handsome, flushed face. But the Mexican schoolboy was getting much more punishment than he gave. One of his eyes was closed now, and his dusky nose was streaming red. His strength was ebbing from his furious exertions, but with savage resolution he continued the fight.

Frank was showing a good many signs of damage, but he was cool and steady, and he knew that he was winning. The Mexican gave ground now again and again till he had been driven right round the ring, and now he was defending himself feebly.

Frank Richards dropped his hands at last.

"That's enough, Diaz," he said.

"You are beaten, then?" panted the Mexican.

Frank laughed breathlessly.

"No. You are beaten, and you know it. Chuck it."

The Mexican's reply was a sudden spring, and his dusky fists dashed into Frank's face before he could recover his guard. Frank Richards staggered back; but he recovered himself almost at once, and with a grim look on his bruised face, pressed his opponent hard. It was a fight to a finish now, and the finish was a hard one for Ricardo Diaz.

He stood up as long as he could, till a drive straight from the shoulder sent him crashing to the earth. He lay gasping for breath, and sank back again into the grass after an attempt to rise.

"I guess his goose is cooked," remarked Eben Hacke.

The Mexican made another fierce attempt to rise, but he sank back again from sheer exhaustion. It was clear that his "goose" was cooked, as Hacke expressed it.

Bob Lawless helped Frank on with his jacket. The fight was over. The Mexican's black, burning eyes watched him from the grass, a good deal like a snake's.

"You look a bit damaged, Franky, old scout," remarked Bob Lawless, surveying his cousin.

In the meantime, the boys were hunting high and low for Gus, the crocodile.

Gus by this time had nearly outgrown the old cricket-bag in which he was generally bestowed when he was not wanted on deck.

That morning he had been harnessed up with a bight of rope by the Kroo boys and dropped into the calm water of the little bay for a cooler and a paddle round.

He had managed to make a good meal off the sardines that were, as usual, swarming round the sides of the ship, feeding off the thin coating of weed on her underwater plates.

Then he had been hauled back and shoved in his cricket-bag, which was stowed in the butcher's shop.

Gus liked the butcher's shop better than any corner of the ship. The smell of meat was as good as eau-de-Cologne to him, and he would lie still there for hours without trying to eat his way out of his bag, just enjoying the fragrance of the mutton-chops as they were brought up from the ice-room to thaw out.

But this afternoon, when the boys had gone to get Gus out for a constitutional along the decks, they discovered that Gus was gone.

So was the end of the cricket-bag. Their pet, probably tickled up and made lively by the warm weather, had chewed out the end of the cricket-bag and had disappeared mysteriously.

He must be somewhere on the ship, for he could not have slipped overboard.

The rails of the South Star were laced with a fine mesh grating, as tight as any cage at the Zoo.

When Lal came out of his bath, attired in a gay suit of striped pyjamas, with his bath-towel hung round his neck like a scarf, he paused and listened with a smile to the boyish voices as they called to one another.

"They play some silly goat game of their own," said he, smiling benevolently. "I shall be left in peace. Now we shall see what Bunter did with this postal-order!"

He slipped into his cabin and hopped up on his bunk, shoving his legs down into the cool sheets.

"Bother these boys!" said he, as his feet encountered some obstruction. "They have made me apple-pie beds!"

Then all of a sudden the laughter and voices of the boys was still, for out of the porthole of Mr. Lal Tata's cabin there issued a stentorian yell for help.

"Quick, boys, to my help!" yelled Lal. Porkis and Pongo raced to the cabin. The others ran to the side of the ship, for Lal's voice sounded from the water. They thought he had fallen overboard.

But Lal had not fallen overboard. His head and shoulders were sticking out of his porthole.

And down in the cabin Porkis and Pongo had a view of the other half of Lal as they came to a standstill in the doorway.

There was the missing Gus, lively and angry, chewing at the seat of Lal's pyjamas.

Gus, wearied by promenading about between decks, must have slipped into Lal's cabin, and finding his way up on the bunk, that was under the porthole, had slipped in between the cool sheets for a snooze.

Gus loved snoozing, and he loved to be cool and dark whilst he snoozed. The hot weather had made him very lively. Therefore he had been very angry when Lal, slipping into his bunk, had shoved him in the ribs with his feet.

With a swift twist and a curl in the bottom of the bed, Gus had turned and had grabbed Lal by the pyjamas, which were roomy.

Now he was trying to eat up the seat of Lal's pyjamas so that he could get a mouthful of Lal.

Pongo and Porkis rushed forward to pull at the powerful tail of the hissing crocodile.

But, with a swipe of this powerful weapon, Gus, who was now growing a very powerful brute, sent them tumbling right and left across the cabin, nearly dislocating Porkis' jaw, and handing—or, rather, tailing—out a black eye to Pongo that would last him for a week.

For Gus, with his tail, was as good as any heavy-weight boxer with his fists. He could hit like a pile-driver.

Nothing daunted, the boys leaped to their feet and tried to take another hold on Gus' tail.

But, with a dismal yell, Lal, struggling far out through the porthole, suddenly capsized and fell out of the brass-rimmed opening, partly by his own weight, and partly because Gus, in his desperate efforts to avoid the boys, shoved him out.

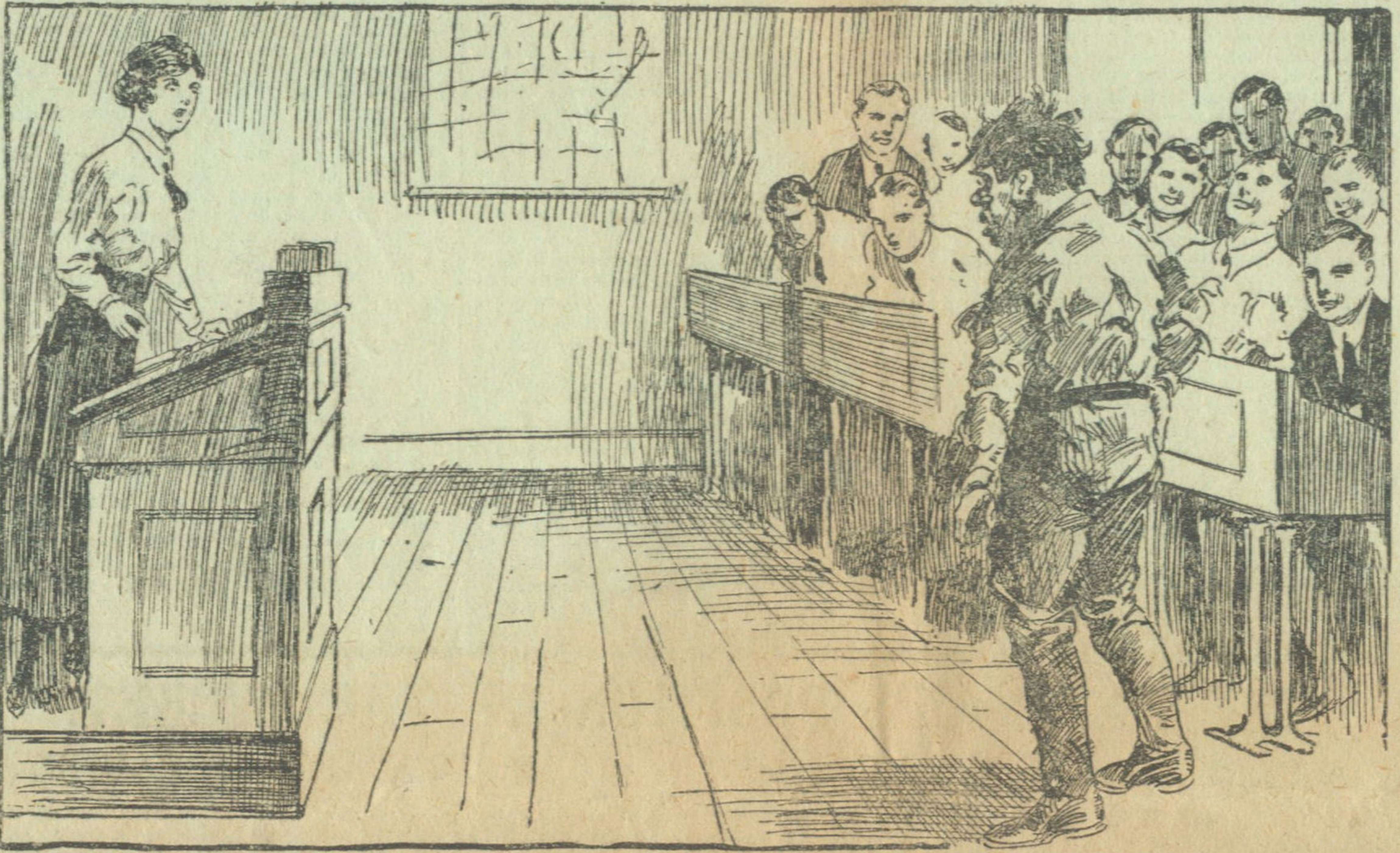
Pongo and Porkis yelled as they saw Lal tip forward out of the porthole, whilst Gus, still hanging tightly to the seat of his gay pyjamas, whisked his tail and slid out after him like a streak of greased lightning.

Then outside there sounded a deep and solemn plunge.

A yell went up from the boys on deck as Lal and Gus hit the water together and sank, struggling, into its blue depths.

(Next Monday's splendid long instalment of this grand story will conclude "The Boys who caught the Kaiser!" and the following week will appear the opening chapters of a wonderful new story, entitled "Skull Island. There will be an enormous demand for this issue, so order your copy at once.)

THE BOYS WHO CAUGHT THE KAISER!
(Continued from page 143.)



THE WORSE FOR WEAR! There was a general exclamation from the class as the fat figure of Chunky appeared. "Great Scott!" Miss Meadows seemed petrified. "What do you mean by presenting yourself at school in that state, Todgers?" she exclaimed.

wailed Chunky. "He said I looked at him!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Lawless. "Diaz, old scout, a cat may look at a king, you know."

"And I didn't look at the beast!" gasped Chunky. "Besides, I can look at anybody I like, can't I? A blessed Greaser—"

Diaz made a stride towards him, and Frank Richards interposed.

"Stand aside!"

"Rats!"

The Mexican clenched his hands hard.

"If you're looking for trouble, you can tackle me, not Chunky," said Frank Richards quietly. "But you'd better learn to keep your temper in hand, Diaz."

"You fellows coming in to dinner?" shouted Tom Lawrence, across the playground. "The bell's stopped."

"We're coming!"

Chunky Todgers had already started, and Frank Richards & Co. followed him. The Mexican schoolboy, with a black brow, followed more slowly.

After dinner, when the Cedar Creek fellows were coming out of the lumber schoolhouse, Diaz touched Frank Richards on the arm. Frank looked at him.

"You have interfered with me," said Diaz, in a low voice.

"Right on the wicket!" agreed Frank. "I'll interfere again, quick enough, if you bully Chunky!"

"You will meet me after lessons, in the timber?"

"Certainly, if you like."

"I shall wait for you."

"I won't keep you waiting," answered Frank disdainfully.

And he turned his back on the Mexican and joined his chums.

His appointment with the new boy did not worry Frank Richards much during afternoon lessons. He had quite a clear conscience on the subject, for he had certainly done his best to get on good terms with the new fellow. If Diaz

"Go it!" said Bob Lawless.

The Cedar Creek fellows stood round in a thick ring as Frank Richards and the Mexican faced one another.

There were no rounds and no time-keeping. Ceremonious usages were little known in the Thompson Valley. The two schoolboys toed the line, and the fight began.

The Mexican, with a sneering grin on his swarthy face, came on quickly and savagely, and Frank Richards gave ground. There was no doubt that Diaz was strong and active and had courage, and he had picked up some knowledge of boxing during his sojourn in "los Estados Unidos." And he was full of confidence and savage determination.

Frank Richards lost ground step by step, and his chums began to look rather serious. But Frank was taking the measure of his opponent, and as Diaz came recklessly on, all attack and no defence, Frank's retreat suddenly ceased, and he piled in with great energy. Diaz found himself suddenly stopped, and before he knew what was happening, Frank's right was planted full upon his dusky nose, followed up by the left on his chin.

The sudden shock sent the Mexican spinning, and he crashed into the grass. There was a shout from the eager ring of schoolboys.

"Bravo!"

"Well hit!"

Diaz lay in the grass, gasping. He raised himself on his elbow and glared dazedly round him.

Savage anger flashed in his black eyes as he looked at the circle of grinning faces. He scrambled to his feet, and without waiting to take breath, rushed at his adversary.

"Look out, Franky!"

"Go it!"

But Frank Richards was looking out. The fight was hard and fast, and more than once Frank had to give ground, and more than once the rapid dusky fists

"I feel more than a bit damaged," answered Frank. "Let's get down to the creek and bathe my face. It wants it."

The crowd broke up, and the Mexican was left alone, still lying in the grass. He was utterly spent by the efforts he had made and kept up beyond his strength.

When Frank Richards & Co. came back from the creek to fetch out their horses the Mexican schoolboy was still lying where they had left him. Frank Richards glanced at him as he passed, and paused.

He came towards the Mexican, who looked up at him with burning eyes.

"Let me give you a hand," said Frank. "It's all over now, Diaz; no need to bear malice. I'll help you home, if you like."

Diaz struck his hand aside. Without a word he staggered to his feet and limped away through the timber. There was no forgiveness in the breast of the defeated, savage Southerner.

Frank Richards shrugged his shoulders.

"Come on, Franky!" said Bob.

And the chums of Cedar Creek led out their horses and mounted, and rode away on the homeward trail. As the clattering hoofs rang down the trail a swarthy face looked after them from the timber, and a dusky fist was shaken. Frank Richards had made an enemy who was not likely to forget.

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY.
"THE OUTCAST."
By MARTIN CLIFFORD.
ORDER EARLY.