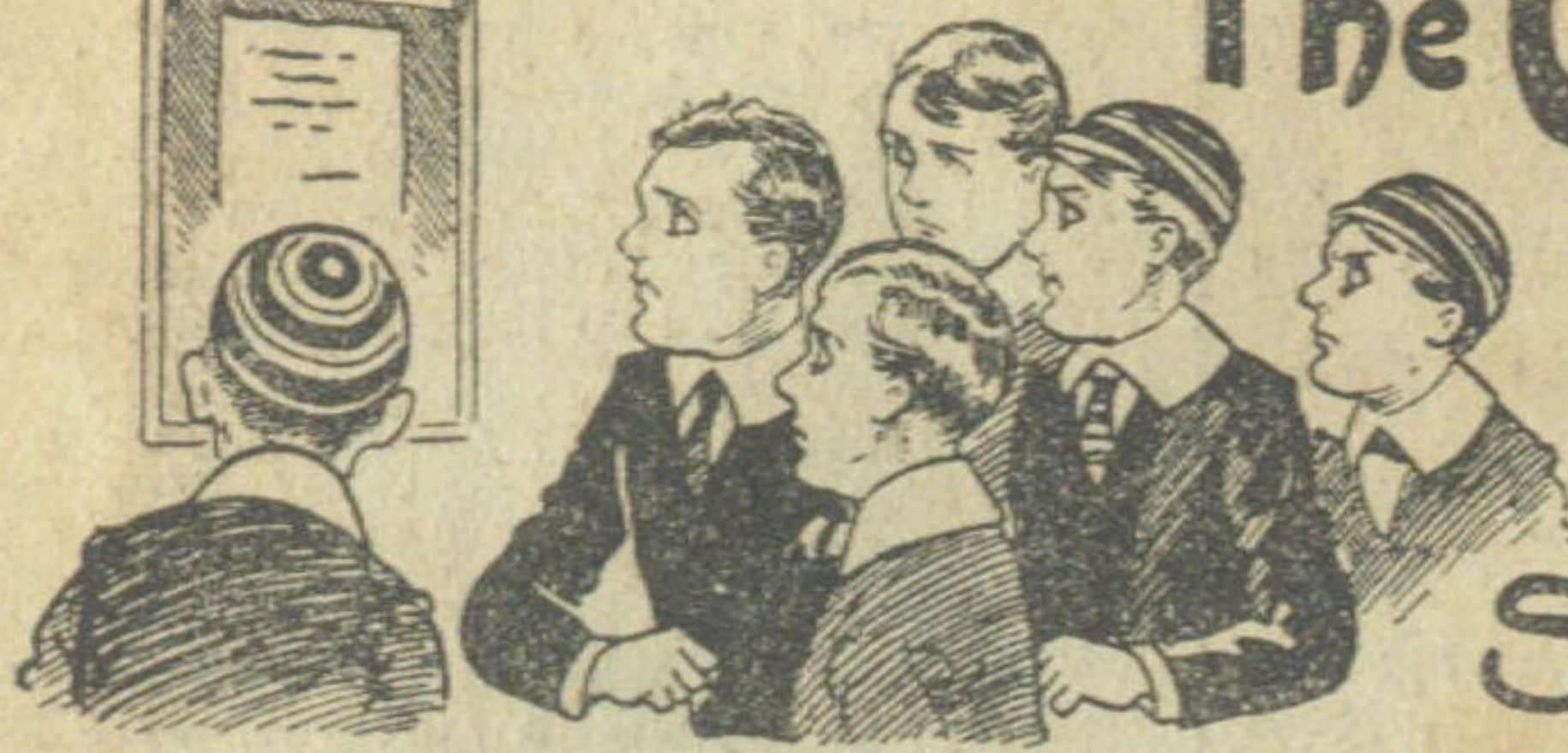


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The Captain of Rookwood | Special Cricket Article In Disgrace! Sensation at the School!

By H. Strudwick

The Famous
International and Surrey Wicket-Keeper.

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending May 10th, 1919.

The Fall of Bulkeley! By Owen Conquest.



BULKELEY LOSES HIS TEMPER! The captain of Rookwood grasped Raby by the collar, and brought the cane into vigorous play. Lash! Lash! Lash! Raby yelled and struggled furiously. Then the door opened. "Bulkeley!" It was the grim and surprised voice of Dr. Chisholm!

The 1st Chapter. Rough on Raby!

"Look out, Carthew!"
"Keep off the grass!"
"Clear out!"
Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth, shouted—and several other juniors shouted in wrathful tones. But Carthew of the Sixth did not heed. Jimmy Silver & Co. were at cricket practice on Little Side at Rookwood. Raby was at the wicket, and Arthur Edward Lovell was bowling to him. And Carthew, the bully of the Sixth, calmly walked across the pitch. Carthew was a Sixth-Former and a prefect, and a very important person—in his own estimation, at least. But he certainly had no right to walk into junior cricket in this way, and a dozen emphatic voices told him so. Carthew glanced at Jimmy Silver as he shouted, but that was all. He walked on. He was taking a short cut. Apparently the bully of the Sixth supposed that junior cricket would stop while he took his short cut. It was very like Carthew! The junior cricketers thought differently. George Raby, at the wicket, looked at him, and his eyes gleamed. Lovell was delivering the ball. Raby played the ball exactly as he would have done if

Carthew had not dawned upon the horizon at all. He did not want the leather to hit Carthew, but he did not care twopence whether it hit him or not. That was Carthew's look-out. In point of fact, it did hit him. The ball, hot from the bat, whizzed right at the Sixth-Former as he strolled carelessly across the pitch. Even then a quick movement would have saved him. But it did not even occur to Carthew that a junior batsman would venture to take the risk of hitting a ball in his direction. He strolled on unregarding. Crack! Then Carthew took notice! He really had no choice about the matter then, for the ball smote him upon the shoulder with a terrific smite, and Carthew staggered. "Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Newcome. "He's got it!" "Well stopped, Carthew!" shouted Mornington. "Ha, ha, ha!" Carthew gave a gasp of pain—he was hurt. The ball rolled at his feet, and he clasped his shoulder and glared round at the juniors. "Who threw that ball?" he shouted. "Nobody threw it," answered Jimmy Silver. "You got in the way, Carthew. I warned you." "Your own look-out," said Raby. Carthew compressed his lips, irritated

as much by the grinning of the juniors as by the pain in his shoulder. "Send that ball back, Carthew, will you?" called out Lovell. "Ha, ha, ha!" Carthew did not trouble about returning the ball. He ran along to Raby's wicket, his eyes glittering. "You cheeky young rascal!" he panted. "Here, hands off!" exclaimed Raby warmly. "It was your own fault. Don't you know better than to walk across a pitch like that? Oh, my hat!" Carthew grasped the batsman by the collar. "Yaroooh! Let go!" roared Raby. "I'll jolly well give you my bat!" The prefect grasped the bat and twisted it away. Then he jerked up a stump from the wicket. Whack, whack! "Yoop! Help! Yaroooh! Rescue!" howled Raby. With the Sixth-Former's grasp on his collar and the stump attacking him in the rear, George Raby wriggled and danced and yelled. Carthew laid on the stump with great energy. "Rescue!" shouted Jimmy Silver. There was a rush of the Fourth-Formers to intervene. Prefect or not, Mark Carthew had to be stopped. Fortunately, before the juniors could lay hands on the angry prefect, Bulkeley's commanding voice was heard. The captain of Rookwood came striding over

from Big Side, whence he had witnessed the incident. "Stop that, Carthew!" "Hold on, you fellows!" murmured Jimmy Silver, as Bulkeley strode upon the scene with a knitted brow. The juniors paused. But Carthew, too enraged to care even for the head prefect, laid on the stump, and Raby roared again. Bulkeley caught the prefect by the shoulder and swung him back. Carthew's next swipe with the stump missed Raby. He turned a passionate face on Bulkeley. "Let go, you fool!" he shouted. "Let go that kid!" was Bulkeley's answer. "I won't! I—" "I think you're forgetting yourself, Carthew," said Bulkeley quietly. "Let go Raby at once!" "Let go, you cad!" shouted Lovell. "Silence, Lovell!" rapped out the captain of Rookwood. "Take fifty lines for calling a prefect names." "Oh, my hat!" ejaculated Lovell. "I—I say—" "Silence! Carthew, release Raby's collar at once!" said Bulkeley, in tones that were quiet, but so full of determination that the bully of the Sixth obeyed him. Raby jumped away as soon as he was released, gasping for breath. Bulkeley let go Carthew's shoulder

then. It had very nearly come to a collision between the captain of Rookwood and the Sixth Form bully, and it was fortunate for Carthew that he had yielded in time. "You—you—you saw what that young scoundrel did!" panted Carthew. "It was your own fault." "What?" "You'd no right to interrupt the cricket. Get off the junior ground at once," answered Bulkeley. Carthew gritted his teeth. "So you're backing up those cheeky young rascals, Bulkeley!" he shouted. "Well, I can tell you—" "That will do," said the Rookwood captain curtly. "Clear off, Carthew; you've said quite enough." Carthew gave him a bitter look and tramped off the field. Bulkeley followed him. "Good old Bulkeley!" said Jimmy Silver. "Bravo!" "What has the silly ass given me lines for, I'd like to know?" grunted Arthur Edward Lovell. "I only called Carthew a cad! Bulkeley knows he's a cad." "He is—he are!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "But these painful truths mustn't be told to prefects by juniors, old top. Raby, old fellow—" "Yow-ow-ow!" came from Raby. "Hurt?" asked Jimmy.

(Continued on next page.)

THE FALL OF BULKELEY

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Yow-ow! Do you think a chap can be lathered with a cricket-stump without being hurt?" howled Raby. "Wow-wow-wow! I'll make that bully squirm for this! Wow-wow!"

"Batting again?" asked Conroy.

"Wow! No! Wow!"

"Go and sit down for a bit, old son," said Jimmy Silver.

"Oh, dear! I'm not going to sit down for a bit—not for a good bit!" groaned Raby. "Wow-wow!"

The unfortunate batsman limped away, still yowling and wowing, and vowing vengeance on Carthew. And the cricket practice went on, minus George Raby—and uninterrupted by Carthew of the Sixth.

The 2nd Chapter.

A Roland for an Oliver!

"Yow-wow-wow!"

Putty of the Fourth looked into the end study in the Fourth Form passage on the Classical side. Putty of the Fourth—otherwise Teddy Grace—looked sympathetic, though he was smiling a little.

"Yow! Ow! Woop!"

Raby was moving restlessly about in his study.

He had come in from the cricket-field, but he was not feeling inclined to sit down—far from it.

Carthew had laid on the stump not wisely but too well.

The junior glanced round as Putty of the Fourth appeared in the doorway glumly.

"Feeling bad?" asked Putty.

"Ow! Yes!"

"Sorry, old chap!"

"Thanks!" grunted Raby. "Much obliged, though your sorrow won't help me much. Yow-ow-ow! Why aren't you at cricket?"

"I've done some bowling," answered Teddy Grace. "I came in to speak to you."

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"You see—"

"Wow! I'm not good company at present, thanks!" grunted Raby. "Yow! You'd better get back to the cricket. M-m-m-m—yow!"

"I was thinking of Carthew—"

"Hang Carthew!"

"Can't be done—there's a law against hanging prefects—"

"Oh, don't be an ass!"

"But there are other ways of treating him," pursued Putty. "More ways of killing a cat than choking it with cream. Carthew's out at present—"

"Wow!"

"But he will be coming in to tea before very long—"

"Bother Carthew!" roared Raby. "You ass, what are you burling about Carthew for? Wow-wow!"

Putty smiled.

"I thought you might like to know," he replied. "You see, Carthew has been asking for trouble, and there's no reason why he shouldn't get it. There's a picture-nail over the door in his study—"

"Bother his study! Wow!"

"Suppose you tied a string to it—"

"Wow!"

"And the other end of the string to a pail—"

"Oh!"

"It would balance the pail nicely on the top of his door, which you could leave ajar!" exclaimed Putty.

Raby stared.

"And a mixture of soot and ink in the pail would make a pleasant surprise for Carthew, wouldn't it?" continued Putty.

Raby grinned.

"That's what I dropped in to remark," said the new junior. "A word to the wise, you know. There's an old tin pail in the box-room, and I believe there's soot in the chimney, and ink can be collected up from the studies—the fellows won't mind, if it's in a good cause—"

Raby laughed.

"There, you're better already!" said Putty encouragingly. "I'll help you, if you like. Always pleased to do anything to oblige a prefect, like a good fag, you know. What do you say, my pippin?"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Yes, but besides that?" grinned Putty.

"Yow! It's a jolly good idea. But you'd better not help," said Raby. "You're a bit too well known as a practical joker. Carthew is sure to think of you, when he gets it on his napper. You'd better keep in the public eye and be able to prove an alibi."

"Oh, I'll chance it!" said Putty carelessly. "Besides, you can't do it alone; the pail has got to be fixed up. Let's get a move on, and have it ready for Carthew when he comes in."

"All right."

Raby almost forgot the pain of the stumping, as he set to work to help Putty of the Fourth in preparing that agreeable little surprise for Carthew.

Putty hurried to the box-room for the old pail, and Raby scraped down soot from the chimney.

In a very short time the pail was nearly full of a horrid mixture, soot predominating, mixed with plenty of ink of different hues, and some gum to give it consistency.

"We shall have to be lolly wary getting this to Carthew's quarters," said Raby, grinning.

"All serene, I think—everybody's out of doors!" answered Putty. "But I'll go ahead and scout. You follow with the pail, and if I whistle, get it out of sight."

"Right-ho!"

Putty of the Fourth sauntered cheerily downstairs, with his hands in his pockets and a genial smile on his face.

George Raby followed more cautiously with the pail.

But there was no alarm.

In the bright spring afternoon nearly everyone was out of doors, and the pail was conveyed safely and unseen to Carthew's study in the Sixth Form quarters.

The study was unoccupied at present. Putty, glancing from the window, spotted Carthew at a distance, in conversation with Knowles, of the Modern side.

"All serene!" he said. "There's Carthew, and he's walking towards Mr. Manders' house. He's going in with Knowles. I expect. Lots of time."

"Good!" said Raby.

The fixing up of the booby-trap was done in a leisurely and careful manner. Putty seemed to have had a good deal of experience in this line, as Raby noticed. It was, in fact, as much Putty's irrepressible propensity to practical joking as anything else that had led him to espouse Raby's cause in this way.

Putty was too good-natured to play such a trick upon an undeserving victim; but probably he had not been displeased to find a victim who deserved it. And there was no doubt that Carthew of the Sixth deserved it.

The door was placed a little ajar, with Raby holding it from the outside—keeping a wary eye open on the passage.

Putty mounted on a chair inside.

"How are you going to get out afterwards, though?" asked Raby.

"That's all right; I can drop out of the window."

"You might be spotted—"

"It's all right, I tell you. Hold the door still," answered Putty. "Dodge if anybody comes along; I can look after myself. The window's open."

"It seems to me you're taking all the risk!" growled Raby.

"That's all serene!"

Putty was working quickly as he talked. A cord was fastened to the bottom of the tin pail securely. The other end of the cord was secured to the nail over the door.

The pail rested on top of the door, against the wall above, safely enough—so long as the door was not moved. When the door moved, the pail would pitch over, and hang upside-down on the cord. And whoever happened to be underneath it was certain to meet with the surprise of his life.

Putty jumped down, and put the chair back in its place.

"All right—cut off, Raby!" he said.

The door was ajar, but the space was too narrow for Putty to pass. He crossed to the window, and, after a cautious glance, dropped lightly out from the sill, and sauntered away with an air of careless unconcern—as if he had done anything but drop from a prefect's study window!

George Raby, in the corridor, chuckled as he turned away. His chuckle ceased suddenly, however, as Neville of the Sixth came round the corner.

Neville glanced at him as he came along to his study, and Raby passed him with all the unconcern he could assume. The prefect took no special notice of him—but Raby wondered whether Neville would remember having seen him there—later!

But it was no use thinking of that now. The booby-trap was fixed—and waiting for Mark Carthew, and Raby hoped for the best.

The 3rd Chapter.

Waiting for Carthew!

Jimmy Silver came off Little Side with his bat under his arm, with Lovell and Newcome and Mornington, and two or three other fellows. Raby met them in the quad, as they were heading for the School House.

"Feeling better, old infant?" asked Jimmy.

Raby nodded, with a grin.

"Much better," he answered. "You see, Carthew's going to feel worse, and that's a comfort."

"What's up?" asked Lovell.

"A booby-trap!"

And Raby explained.

There was a chortle from the juniors. Mark Carthew was not popular.

"Good egg!" said Jimmy Silver. "I say, we ought to be on the scene when Carthew gets it in the neck. Isn't he in yet?"

"I think he's gone to see Knowles. Must be back soon, though," said Raby. "It's past tea-time!"

"By gad, though, there'll be a fearful row if Carthew does get it!" remarked Valentine Mornington.

Raby grinned.

"I don't care! He couldn't prove I put it there. Anyhow, he larruped me with a stump—and prefects aren't allowed to larrup chaps with stumps. If it comes before the Head, Carthew will get a show-up."

"And serve him right," said Erroll, as the juniors entered the School House. "You've a right to appeal to the Head, Raby."

"Shush!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, was standing in the hall, in conversation with Mr. Greely, the master of the Fifth. Erroll's words had certainly reached his ears, for his glance turned upon the juniors sharply, though not unkindly, for a moment.

Jimmy Silver & Co. passed on quickly. Much as they resented Carthew's bullying, they were not in the least disposed to make complaints; partly from a natural repugnance to "sneaking," and partly because they were quite confident of their ability to take care of themselves in the long run.

Somewhat to their relief, therefore, the Head did not call to them, but continued his remarks to Mr. Greely as if he had heard nothing.

From one of the landings on the big staircase it was possible to get a view of

part of the Sixth Form passage, and on that landing Jimmy Silver & Co. stopped. They lounged cheerfully against the banisters there, keeping an eye below to see Carthew pass when he came in.

"The beast may be staying to tea with Knowles," growled Arthur Edward Lovell, after ten minutes of waiting and watching.

"Just like him!" said Newcome.

"Well, he'll come in sooner or later," remarked Mornington. "It's worth waitin' for. We shall hear him from here when he gets the pail."

"I fancy he'll be heard all over Rookwood!" chuckled Raby.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I say, you chaps," Tubby Muffin came along the staircase. "You fellows waitin' for something? I say, Bulkeley's awfully waxy."

"How do you know, fatty?" said Jimmy Silver.

Tubby Muffin gave the captain of the Fourth a fat wink. Tubby generally knew everything, whether it was his business or not, and he prided himself on that fact.

"I happened to hear him speaking to Neville," he said. "He's going to give Carthew a jawing. I fancy. He said to Neville that the fellow oughtn't to be a prefect at all."

"Right on the wicket, there!" said Jimmy Silver. "He oughtn't."

"Hear, hear!"

"Of course, as head prefect, he's got a right to call Carthew over the coals," continued Tubby. "There's going to be a row. Fancy that! They make out that they don't have rows in the Sixth, like fags, you know—but they do. Bulkeley is awfully ratty. He actually cuffed me—"

"What did he do that for?" grinned Lovell.

"I suppose he thought I was listening—and I wasn't, you know," said Tubby Muffin. "I simply happened to stop near him when he was jawing to Neville. Of course, I wouldn't listen—but he landed out. I called him a beast."

"Wha-a-at!"

"You called Bulkeley a beast!" howled Conroy.

"Yes, rather! So he was a beast!" said Tubby indignantly. "What did he want to cuff me for?"

"And what did Bulkeley do?"

"Nothing."

"You called the captain of the school a beast, and he did nothing?" said Jimmy Silver.

"Well, you see, he didn't hear me, you know," confessed Tubby. "I—I didn't call him a beast while he could hear me."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Hallo! There's old Bulkeley," murmured Lovell.

From somewhere below, the voice of Bulkeley of the Sixth came to the ears of the juniors on the landing.

"Is Carthew in yet, Neville, do you know?"

"Not yet—or we should have heard from him," murmured Lovell.

"Shush!"

Neville's voice was heard in reply.

"I haven't seen him, Bulkeley—in his study, I dare say."

"Right!"

Then there were footsteps.

Jimmy Silver gave a horrified jump.

"He—he's going to Carthew's study!" gasped Jimmy faintly.

"Oh, gad!"

"Mum-mum—my hat!"

For a moment Bulkeley came into view as he strode along the Sixth Form passage, towards Mark Carthew's study, and vanished.

The juniors gazed at one another in horror.

That Carthew was not in his study they knew, or the booby-trap would have fallen. And Bulkeley was going there!

"He—he's got to be stopped!" gasped Jimmy.

"Too late—"

It was too late, and Jimmy Silver knew it; but he bounded down the stairs. Before he was half-way down there was a sudden roar from the direction of Carthew's study.

"Yurrrrrggghh!"

Jimmy Silver stopped as if frozen.

"He—he—he's got it!" babbled Raby.

"Bulkeley's got it!"

"Oh, crikey!"

"Bunk!" rapped out Mornington. "By gad, there'll be a row now! Bunk, for goodness' sake! Get a move on!"

The juniors fled. It was too late to save Bulkeley, and the only thing to be done was to put as much distance as possible between themselves and the scene of the disaster.

And that they did—promptly.

The 4th Chapter.

The Wrong Man!

"Yurrrggghh! Gurrghh!"

Wild and weird and woeeful sounds rang along the Sixth Form passage.

"Yow-ow! Ooooch! Griiich! Mmm-mmm!"

"What the dickens—"

"Bulkeley—"

"Great Scott!"

Doors opened on all sides, and there was a chorus of startled voices. Most of the Classical Sixth were at tea, or coming in to tea. In a minute or less the corridor was crowded with astonished seniors.

In the doorway of Carthew's study was a shocking spectacle.

A figure, staggered there—the lower part recognisable as belonging to Bulkeley of the Sixth—the upper part utterly unrecognisable.

Soot and ink drenched the unfortunate captain of Rookwood.

Over the doorway an up-ended pail swung to a cord—dripping. The last drops of the mixture dropped out on the floor.

But the bulk of it had found a resting-place, at one fell swoop, upon the head and shoulders of the captain of Rookwood.

Bulkeley had tapped on the door, and pushed it open quite unsuspectingly. And then the catastrophe had occurred with lightning swiftness.

Putty had laid that booby-trap well, and it worked like a charm—though not exactly according to programme. There was nothing wrong with the booby-trap; it was the victim that happened to be the wrong one. That was a small detail that the most careful of practical jokers could not possibly have foreseen. But it was rather serious.

Bulkeley staggered, spluttering, gasping, and sputtering wildly, hardly knowing what had happened to him.

There was soot in his hair, down his neck, on his face, in his eyes and his nose; and not only soot, but a thick mixture of gum and ink—a horrid mixture that clung and stuek and smelt.

Extraordinary sounds came from Bulkeley as he staggered in the doorway and clawed at the mixture.

Neville was the first to reach the spot. He gazed in horror at the captain of Rookwood.

"Bulkeley!" he gasped. "Is—is—is it you, old chap?"

"Gooch! Ooooooooch!"

"What—wha-a-at—oh, crumbs!"

"Yurrrrrggghh!"

"It's a booby-trap!" gasped Jones major. "Oh, my hat! A—a—a booby-trap over Carthew's door—"

"Yoooooooch!"

"Meant for Carthew!" murmured Lonsdale. "Bulkeley—"

"Gurrerrrrghh!"

Bulkeley gazed at his eyes and nose, spluttering, and almost weeping with rage. Bulkeley's good temper was generally to be relied upon; but the best of tempers would have failed at such a moment.

The Sixth-Formers stared at him, backing away a little. They could not help him; and they were rather unwilling to come in contact with him just then. The mixture did not look inviting.

"Hallo! What the thunder—!" Carthew of the Sixth came striding along the passage, and he fairly blinked at the weird figure in his doorway. "What on earth—Bulkeley— Oh, my hat!"

Carthew had returned five minutes too late for the booby-trap.

"Gurrerrrrghh!"

"It's a b-b-booby-trap!" said Jones major helplessly.

Carthew grinned.

"In my study, and Bulkeley's got it!" he said. "My hat! I say, I'm awfully sorry, Bulkeley! His voice did not sound very sorrowful. "This is hard lines—very hard lines indeed!"

"Gooch! Gooch! Ow! Yow! Oh!" gasped Bulkeley. "Who—who did this? I'll skin him! I—I—I— Ooooch! Pah! Ow!"

"I fancy I can guess who did it," said Carthew. "That young rascal Raby, of course, because I licked him for his cheek. It's clear enough that it was intended for me—"

"Oooch!" Bulkeley got his vision clear at last, and blinked at Carthew. "I came to your study, Carthew, to speak to you about that— Gooch! I—I— Gurrerrrrghh!"

"And you got the booby-trap!" grinned Carthew. "Much obliged! I suppose I should have got it if you hadn't."

"Ooooooch!"

"Better get along to a bath-room, old chap," murmured Neville.

"It was Raby of the Fourth right enough," said Carthew maliciously. "Shall I look for him and give him a licking, Bulkeley?"

It was quite an enjoyable situation to the bully of the Sixth. He thought this might be a lesson to Bulkeley about backing up cheeky juniors against the Sixth. He charitably hoped so, at all events.

Bulkeley dabbed at his mouth with his handkerchief breathlessly.

"You'll let him alone!" he snapped.

"What? After what he's done?" smiled Carthew. "You look an awful sight, Bulkeley! It will take you hours to get the muck out of your hair! This really isn't the way the captain of the school ought to be treated. Raby—"

"You've no proof that it was Raby!" growled Bulkeley. "If it was I'll skin him! But—"

"By gad! I remember seeing Raby hanging about here some time back!" exclaimed Neville. "Now I think of it—"

"I'll see him later, then, if you saw him!" gasped Bulkeley, evidently attaching more importance to Neville's words than to Carthew's. "You're not to touch the kid till I've inquired, Carthew. I can deal with him."

Carthew shrugged his shoulders.

"Oh, just as you like!" he answered. "If I'd got that little lot I'd have nearly

slaughtered him; I know that! You've got it, and you're welcome to it!"

And Carthew walked away smiling, in great good-humour. He returned at once to Mr. Manders' House to relate this happy happening to his pal Knowles, amid many chortles.

It was not a happy happening from the Rookwood captain's point of view, however. George Bulkeley staggered away to a bath-room, still gasping and spluttering. Neville went with him to help him scrub. There was quite a lot of scrubbing required.

Steaming hot water, plenty of soap, and an untiring scrubbing-brush occupied Bulkeley's attention for quite a long time. Neville helped him in sympathetic silence. Bulkeley's temper was at boiling-point, and it was not a time for conversation. Indeed, Bulkeley snapped even at Neville once or twice, so sore and savage was he—which Neville took as a good pal should at such a time, in diplomatic silence.

Soot and ink were not easily removed; and by the time the captain of Rookwood was clean he was tired and he was sore; his face and head felt as if they had been freshly boiled. His complexion was crimson and his eyes had a dangerous glitter in them.

That look in Bulkeley's eyes boded ill to the offender. Neville brought him a change of clothes, which were very much needed. His attire was drenched with ink.

When Bulkeley emerged, newly swept and garnished, so to speak, the look on his face was so menacing that Neville ventured upon a remark at last.

"It's not certain that it was Raby, old chap—"

"You say you saw him there!"

"Yes; but—"

"I'm going to be just, I hope," said Bulkeley. "If it wasn't Raby, Raby won't be punished. I don't suppose you think I'm a bully, Neville, ready to land out at the nearest fag?"

"Of course not, old chap. But—"

"Well, tell Raby to come to my study."

"I mean it wasn't intended for you, Bulkeley—"

"I got it!"

"It was meant for Carthew—"

"For a Sixth Form prefect?" said Bulkeley.

"Ye-es! But—"

"I'm bound to support Carthew, even if I don't like him, Neville. I'm bound to act just the same as if this trick was played on any other prefect—and, as it happened, it was played on me instead of Carthew. But you needn't be afraid I'm going to adopt Carthew's methods. I shan't touch Raby unless it's clearly proved that he did it."

Neville said no more. Bulkeley certainly was not likely to punish any junior without proof, however enraged he might be. But his look showed that if proof was forthcoming the punishment in this instance would be severely drastic.

The captain of Rookwood strode away to his study with knitted brows, and his chum went in search of Raby of the Fourth.

The 5th Chapter.

Bulkeley Loses His Temper!

Jimmy Silver & Co. were at tea in the end study.

It was rather a desultory tea. For once the healthy appetites of the Fistical Four were impaired.

The disaster that had happened was utterly disconcerting. It could not possibly have been foreseen; but that did not make the matter any better. Raby was quite unhappy. The punishment intended for Carthew had fallen upon George Bulkeley, whom the juniors liked and respected, and at a time when, as appeared from Tubby Muffin's chatter, Bulkeley had been going to "slang" the bully on Raby's account.

That was the unkindest cut of all—that Bulkeley had received the flood of mixture—Raby's mixture—when it was on Raby's own account that he was paying that visit to Carthew's study.

Raby hardly touched his tea. He was feeling quite miserable, and not by any means solely because of his apprehensions of what was to follow.

But he had his apprehensions, too. The captain of the school was far too important a personage to be treated like this without a terrific "row" following. If Carthew had got it the matter might have been serious. But Bulkeley had got it, and it was almost time for the skies to fall.

"It's rotten!" said Raby for the tenth time at least. "Rotten! Who could have guessed Bulkeley would get it? It's rotten!"

"Beastly!" said Jimmy Silver. "I wish you hadn't thought of the thing at all, by Jove! It was rather a rotten idea, anyway!"

"Well, I didn't think of it! It was that ass Putty suggested it," said Raby. "But he meant well, the silly idiot!"

"I've a jolly good mind to punch his head, whether he meant well or not!" growled Lovell. "He's always playing monkey tricks!"

"No, that's not quite fair," said Raby loyally. "Putty was backing me up, and he meant well. Goodness knows I wish he hadn't! But I was glad of the suggestion, and he helped me—in fact, did nearly the whole biznez, and I helped him. Of course, I've got to stand the racket. No need for Putty to be dragged into it."

Raby's chums assented to that. But they were anxious for Raby.

"I wonder we don't hear from Bulkeley," said Raby uneasily. "Of course, they must know I did it. Neville saw me there, and Tubby's said that he heard Neville tell Bulkeley so. So they must know."

"Bulkeley's cleaning himself, I suppose!" groaned Jimmy Silver. "Scoff your egg, Raby; you've hardly touched it."

"I don't feel hungry."

"Better stoke up; it'll help you to stand what's to come," advised Newcome.

In Next Monday's Issue—

"SKULL ISLAND!"

A Thrilling New Story of Adventure in the South Seas.

By DUNCAN STORM.

Don't Miss It!

Raby grinned faintly, and put his spoon into his egg. Newcome's advice was good, after all.

"Hallo, here comes somebody!" murmured Jimmy Silver.

Neville of the Sixth looked into the end study with a grim brow. The Fistical Four rose to their feet in silence.

"Come with me, Raby!" said the prefect.

"Yes, Neville," answered the junior meekly.

"What's Raby wanted for?" asked Arthur Edward Lovell.

"On suspicion of fixing up a booby-trap in Carthew's study," answered Neville grimly. "Nothing to be afraid of if you didn't do it, Raby."

"Can we come, too?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"If you had a hand in it, you'd better come."

"They hadn't," said Raby. "They didn't even know what I was doing—they were at cricket, Neville."

Neville gave him a rather curious glance. There certainly was no sign of prevarication about Raby, serious as the matter was.

"You're admitting it, Raby," he said quietly.

"I'm not going to deny it," answered Raby. "But these chaps knew nothing at all about it till I told them afterwards."

"Then they're not wanted."

Raby followed the prefect from the study, leaving his chums with glum faces. Willingly enough would Jimmy Silver & Co. have accompanied him and shared his punishment, if that had been possible. But it was not possible.

Neville did not speak on the way to the Sixth Form quarters. Neither did the hapless junior. But near Bulkeley's door the prefect stopped, and, after a moment's hesitation, spoke kindly enough to the junior.

"Bulkeley's very much exasperated, Raby," he said. "Be careful how you speak to him. For your own sake, no cheek!"

"I'm not going to cheek him, Neville. Goodness knows I'm sorry enough that he got it! I'd rather have got it myself!"

Neville nodded.

"Go in!" he said.

Raby went into the captain's study, and Neville returned to his own room with a thoughtful brow.

Bulkeley was standing by his table, with a look on his face that startled the junior a little. He had never seen the captain of Rookwood look quite like that before.

The Sixth-Former's eyes glittered as they were fixed on Raby. The latter came in rather timidly.

"I—I— You wanted me to come here, Bulkeley?" he stammered.

"Yes, you know what's happened, Raby?"

"I—I know."

"Did you fix up that booby-trap in Carthew's study?" rapped out the captain of Rookwood.

"Yes."

The answer came fearlessly and unhesitatingly.

"Oh! You admit it?" exclaimed Bulkeley, rather taken aback.

"Well, you know I did it, and I shouldn't tell lies about it, anyway," answered Raby. "You know I never meant it for you, Bulkeley—"

"That's not the point! You meant it for a prefect of the Sixth Form!"

"I meant it for Carthew, because he's a bully—"

"That's enough! You dared to play such a trick on a Sixth Form prefect, and landed it on the captain of the school by mistake. That's the best defence you can make?"

"I—I'm sorry—"

"I dare say you're sorry now that you laid that trap!" said Bulkeley grimly.

"I'm sorry you got it, I mean."

"Oh, you're not sorry you played the trick, then?"

"No, I'm not!" answered Raby sturdily. "Carthew asked for it, and I jolly well wish he'd got it!"

Bulkeley compressed his lips.

"You know he's a bully," said Raby, as the captain of Rookwood picked up his cane. "You know yourself—"

"Did you think I should allow you to insult a Sixth Form prefect because you think I am not on the best of terms with him personally?" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily. "That was it, I suppose?"

"No, it wasn't. I never thought—"

"You had better learn to think—I'll help you!" said the captain of Rookwood grimly. "But before I lick you—"

"Oh, I know you're going to lick me," said Raby. "I don't think you ought to, as it wasn't meant for you. But—"

"That will do. Who helped you fix up the booby-trap?"

No answer.

"It doesn't look as if you could have done it alone," said Bulkeley. "One of your study-mates, or all of them—"

"No."

"But there was someone?"

Silence.

"Mind," said the captain of Rookwood, between his set teeth, "I'm going to get to the bottom of this, Raby. Someone helped you fix up the trap, and he's as guilty as you—perhaps more so. I order you to give me his name!"

Silence.

"That's admitting that there was another fag concerned in it. I want to know who it was. Will you tell me?"

"No, I won't!" said Raby desperately. "It's not like you to ask me to, either, Carthew might, but you—"

"You refuse to answer me?"

Raby drew a deep breath.

"Yes," he said.

Bulkeley's grasp closed more tightly on the cane.

"You understand that this is a serious matter, I suppose?" he said savagely. "You laid a trap for Carthew, and it fell on me. It might have fallen on a master—on the Head himself, if he'd gone to the study—"

"Oh!" gasped Raby, dismayed at the bare idea.

"Whoever was concerned in it is going to be punished—hard. I want the name of the fellow that helped you."

No reply.

"Hold out your hand, then!"

Raby obeyed in silence.

Swish!

"Now the other hand!"

Swish!

Raby uttered a cry of pain.

It was not at all like "old Bulkeley" to lay the cane on like this, and he would not have done so if he had been cooler. But he was not cool now.

"Will you answer me now, Raby?"

"No, I won't!" panted the junior. "I'm not a sneak, and I'll be cut into pieces first, so there!"

"Hold out your hand again, then!" exclaimed Bulkeley angrily.

Raby's hand came out, quivering, but as the cane lashed down, involuntarily the junior snatched his hand back. His palm was burning with the first hard cut, and flesh and blood would not stand another.

The cane, meeting with no resistance, lashed down, and struck Bulkeley's own leg with a sounding lash.

"Oh!" gasped Raby.

He had acted without thinking, but to Bulkeley's angry mind it looked like an intentional trick, and he quite lost his temper. He made an angry stride towards the junior, and grasped him by the collar with his left hand. Then the cane came into play across Raby's back.

Lash, lash, lash!

Raby yelled and struggled, surprised and furious by a licking of this kind.

Bulkeley's eyes flashed. In his present mood he was not much inclined to accept a rating even from the Head.

"If you are not satisfied, sir, with the way I perform my duties—" he began hotly.

Dr. Chisholm raised his hand.

"Calm yourself, Bulkeley, please! That is not the way to address your headmaster!"

The captain of Rookwood bit his lip hard. Raby, leaning on the table, suppressed his sounds of woe. He was hurt—severely hurt—but he tried hard to keep silent. For, strange as it might seem, the junior who had just been thrashed by Bulkeley, was concerned for Bulkeley himself now that the Head was "down" on him.

Bulkeley was too good-hearted a fellow in the main for one licking, however harsh, to change the junior's feelings towards him. Raby was sorry that the Head had come in, lucky as it had been for him personally.

Bulkeley suppressed the angry words that rose to his lips. As a matter of fact the Head's entrance had recalled him to himself, and he was already ashamed of the violence he had displayed.

"A prefect," continued the Head severely, "is empowered to administer a caning, if needed, but certainly not to thrash any boy in such a brutal manner, Bulkeley."

"You don't know what's happened, sir!" gasped Bulkeley.

"Whatever may have happened, Bulkeley, does not alter the fact that you have exceeded your authority, and acted in a brutal manner. If this boy's fault was so serious that a caning would not meet the case, you should have reported him to me, and I should have considered whether to administer a flogging. You are perfectly well aware of that."

Bulkeley was silent.

He was aware of it, and he knew that he was in the wrong. But this humiliation in the presence of the junior he had punished was too bitter.

"I—I—" Raby gasped. "It—it's all right, sir. I—"

"Now, kindly acquaint me with what has happened, Bulkeley," said the Head coldly. "This boy, Grace, appears to be concerned in it."

Bulkeley compressed his lips.

"I was caught in a booby-trap," he said. "Raby had fixed it up for another prefect. That is all."

"You admit this, Raby?"

"Yes, sir," said Raby at once.

"And you, Grace?"

"I was in it, too, sir," said Putty. "It was my idea, in fact. I—I'm ready to take my share of the blame. We did it together."

"That is very proper, Grace. Were you aware that Grace was concerned in the affair, Bulkeley?"

"No, sir," muttered Bulkeley.

"You were punishing Raby in an outrageous manner, without even ascertaining that he was not the only person concerned in the offence!" exclaimed the Head.

"I—I did not know—"

"You did not know? It was your duty to know! It was not even difficult to do your duty in this case, as the boy was ready to admit his share in the transaction, and has indeed come here of his own accord to confess."

Bulkeley was silent.

He had been hasty, and he had been violent—he had, in fact, for once allowed his temper to get the better of him. There was little to be said. It was the first time; but the Head, naturally, did not know that. So far as he knew, this was simply the first time that he had discovered Bulkeley acting harshly and unjustly, which was quite a different matter.

"Have you anything to say, Bulkeley?" asked the Head in an ominous tone.

The captain of Rookwood did not speak, and the two juniors exchanged a glance of dismay. "Old Bulkeley" was evidently in for it.

The Head turned to them.

"You boys may go!" he said.

"Well?" muttered Jimmy, looking directly at Raby.

"I—I say, it's rotten!" said Raby miserably.

"You've been licked?"

"Yes, yes; that doesn't matter. But—but Bulkeley! He's in an awful row with the Head, and I don't know what's happened."

"Phew! But what—"

Raby explained miserably, and his chums listened with grave faces. Raby seemed to have forgotten his own licking, painful as it still was, in his concern for the popular captain of Rookwood. And Jimmy Silver & Co. shared that concern to the full.

What had happened between Bulkeley and the Head? That was the question that troubled them, and to which for the present there was no answer.

But what had happened was known to all Rookwood School that evening.

There was a notice on the board in the Head's hand; it was brief, but to the point. All Rookwood gathered to read it; and fellows came over from the Modern side in crowds to read it, too.

"Rotten!"

That was the general verdict.

For the Head's note briefly stated that George Bulkeley had been removed from the position of captain and head prefect of Rookwood. Lawrence Neville of the Sixth was appointed head prefect in his place, and there was to be a new election for the captain of the school.

"Rotten!"

"Beastly!" groaned Raby. "And it's my fault as much as anybody's! Oh, that silly, howling ass Putty!"

"Old Bulkeley's sacked from the captaincy!" breathed Jimmy Silver. "It's too rotten!"

"Rather a come-down for the merry sport—what?" smiled Smythe of the Shell. "It will be rather interestin' to see his face when he shows it in public again, by gad!"

The Fistical Four turned on Smythe as one man and smote him, and Smythe fled, yelling. He did not make any more disrespectful remarks about Bulkeley in the hearing of Jimmy Silver & Co.

"Step up for you, Neville," remarked Carthew of the Sixth, looking at the notice, and then grinning at Neville, who was reading it with a gloomy face.

Neville gave him a grim look.

"Nothing of the kind!" he answered.

"But you're appointed—"

"I shall refuse!" answered Neville curtly.

And he walked away, leaving Carthew whistling. Carthew looked very cheery that evening. He was wondering whether he had a remote chance in the new election of squeezing in as captain of Rookwood. The same thought was in Knowies' mind over on the Modern side.

The news was a shock to all Rookwood. Bulkeley—old Bulkeley—had fallen from his high estate—the Head of the Sixth, whose nod had been a command, was now—nobody in particular. Like Lucifer, Son of the Morning, he had fallen from his high estate, and great was the fall thereof.



A CRACK FOR CARTHEW! The ball, hot from the bat, whizzed right at the Sixth-Former as he strolled carelessly across the pitch. Crash! The ball smote Carthew upon the shoulder with a terrific smite. "Well stopped, Carthew!" shouted Mornington.

"Let me go! Stop it! Yaroooooh! Oh, oh, oh! You bully— Oh!"

Lash, lash!

"Bulkeley!"

The door opened.

The 6th Chapter.
The Fall of the Mighty!

"Bulkeley!"

It was a grim, surprised, shocked voice in the doorway.

Dr. Chisholm, the Head of Rookwood, stood in the doorway, gazing in on the scene with stern disapproval.

Bulkeley's arm dropped to his side. His face flushed scarlet. Raby staggered away as the captain of Rookwood released him, and leaned heavily on the table, panting and groaning.

There was a moment of grim silence on the Head's part, and then he rustled into the study. Bulkeley stood rooted to the floor. His action, though unusually harsh, had not been unjustified; but it was pretty clear that the head had drawn the worst possible impression from what he had seen.

"Bulkeley," said Dr. Chisholm, very quietly, "place that cane on the table!"

Bulkeley obeyed without a word.

"I came here," said the Head, in the same quiet, severe tone, "to speak with you, Bulkeley, on certain matters connected with your duty as head prefect of Rookwood School. Until this moment, Bulkeley, I have had every confidence in you. I did not expect, as I came to your study, to hear the cries of a junior boy subjected to what I can only call brutal usage."

"Dr. Chisholm!" stammered Bulkeley.

"Is that the manner, Bulkeley, in which a boy of the Fourth Form should be punished?" exclaimed the Head angrily.

"I—I—"

"You appear to have lost control of your temper, Bulkeley. I should not have appointed you head prefect of Rookwood if I had not supposed that you had proper command of your temper."

Dr. Chisholm glanced at the junior.

"Did you speak, Raby?"

"Yes, sir," stammered Raby. "I—I don't mind, sir. It—it's all right. Bulkeley thought I was cheeking him, sir. I didn't mean to. I—I don't mind a licking, sir—"

Raby's voice died away in a tremulous murmur as a sense of his audacity in thus daring to address the Head rushed upon him.

"This boy, apparently, wishes to speak in your favour, Bulkeley, in spite of the way you have used him," said the Head.

"Yet you wish me to believe that he has committed so serious a fault as to justify such punishment as you were inflicting?" Bulkeley looked dogged.

"You don't know the circumstances, sir," he muttered.

"You are at liberty to explain the circumstances to me, and then I shall judge whether I can continue to repose confidence in you," said the Head sternly.

Raby was silent in dismay. His well-intentioned intervention had certainly done Bulkeley no good.

The silence that followed the Head's remark was broken by a tap on the half-open door, and Teddy Grace looked into the study.

"M-m-may I come in?" stammered Putty of the Fourth.

"Bulkeley is engaged at present, Grace."

"But—but it's about that, sir!" stammered Putty. "I—I want to own up. It—it wasn't Raby—not all Raby, anyhow."

The Head's expression grew grimmer.

"You may come in, Grace," he said.

Putty came in, looking from one face to another in surprise and dismay. He had been to the end study, and learned that Raby had gone to "face the music," and he had loyally come along to own up and take his share. Half the punishment, at least, was due to him, and he was prepared to take it. He had not expected to find Dr. Chisholm there.

Slowly and reluctantly Raby and Putty left the study. They were well aware that the "chopper" was to come down on Bulkeley as soon as they were gone. They wondered breathlessly what was going to happen as the door closed.

There was a moment or two of silence in the room after the juniors had gone. The Head's firm gaze was fixed upon Bulkeley's face, crimson and downcast before him.

"This is a very disconcerting discovery to me, Bulkeley," said Dr. Chisholm at length. "I had every confidence in you. You have destroyed it. You must yourself acknowledge that I cannot, consistently with my duty, allow you to exercise any longer the authority of head prefect of Rookwood."

Silence.

"I am sorry for this, Bulkeley," went on the Head in a gentler tone. "I have no choice in the matter, however. You have left me none. From this moment, Bulkeley, you are not a prefect of Rookwood. Whether I may be able to reinstate you at a later date I cannot now say, but for the present my decision is as I have stated—you are no longer a prefect, and no longer captain of the school."

And, as the hapless captain of Rookwood did not speak, the Head turned to the door.

He passed out of the study, leaving the fallen captain of the school still silent, and rustled away down the passage. He passed two scared-looking juniors there, who stared after him, and then at one another.

"Wha-at's happened, Putty?" muttered Raby.

Putty shook his head.

"I—I don't know."

Raby glanced towards Bulkeley's study, but he did not venture to take a step in that direction. Slowly, and with a troubled face, the junior mounted the staircase.

Jimmy Silver, Lovell, and Newcome met him on the landing.

THE END.

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THE OUTCAST!

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

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter.

Frank Richards' Foe!

"Carambo!"
Frank Richards jumped.
That expressive Spanish word fell suddenly upon his ears, in the shadow of the timber.
Frank was sauntering towards the creek, through the trees, after morning lessons at Cedar Creek school. His chums—Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc—were canoeing on the creek, and Frank expected to meet them on their way back to the lumber school.

A swarthy Spanish face looked out among the larches, and Ricardo Diaz, the new boy at Cedar Creek, stepped out into Frank's path.

"Carambo!"
The Mexican schoolboy's black eyes glittered at Frank Richards as he muttered the word between his teeth.

Frank halted.
The Mexican was standing directly in his path, evidently disposed to dispute his further passage.

Diaz's dark face still showed the signs of his combat with Frank Richards a few days before. There was still a dark circle round his eye, and his nose had not quite resumed its normal size.

"Hallo, Diaz!" said Frank cheerily.
Diaz cast a quick glance past Frank, plainly to ascertain whether his friends were near. Then he drew closer to the English schoolboy.

His hand rested on his belt under his velvet jacket, and Frank wondered whether it was grasping a weapon. The Mexican schoolboy was so wild and untamed that any of the Cedar Creek fellows would not have been surprised at anything he did.

"Well, what do you want, Diaz?" asked Frank Richards. "You're in the way, you know."

"You will stop, seniorito!"
"Well, I've stopped," answered Frank good-humouredly. "You're not looking for another fight, I suppose?"
Diaz shook his head.

"You have beaten me," he said.
"You asked for it, you know," said Frank. "I tried to make friends with you when you came, and you preferred to be enemies."

The Mexican made a gesture of contempt.
"Vaya! I do not want to be friends with a Gringo!" he said.

"But I am not a Gringo," said Frank, with a smile.
"Gringo or Ingleso, it is all the same to me. You have beaten me when I have fought with you," said Diaz, coming closer. "Every day since then I have watched you, seniorito, to find you away from your friends. They are not with you now, los amigos."

Frank Richards watched the Mexican keenly. The glitter in Diaz's black eyes was threatening; and Frank wished very sincerely that Bob and Vere Beauclerc had been with him just then. Ricardo Diaz was not an agreeable fellow to meet in the deep shades of the timber, alone—with his hand resting on his belt in the way it rested now.

"Well?" said Frank.
"Now I have found you alone," said Diaz. "Now it is not I who will be beaten, seniorito!"

The Mexican came closer, with a movement of a panther about to spring. Frank Richards started back a pace.
"What do you want?" he exclaimed.
"Let me pass, Diaz!"

"You are afraid!" grinned the Mexican. Frank flushed hotly.
"You'll see whether I am afraid!" he exclaimed, and he clenched his fists. "If you don't let me pass, I'll shift you soon enough!"

And he made a stride towards the Mexican. Diaz's hand swept up from his belt, and there was a sudden gleam of steel in the shadows of the trees.
A long Mexican cuchillo flashed in the hand of the half-Spanish, half-Indian schoolboy, and Frank Richards backed away.

Frank Richards stopped again.
"You utter fool, Diaz!" he exclaimed. "If Miss Meadows found you with that knife you would be kicked out of Cedar Creek!"

"But the seniorita will not find me, and you will not tell her!" said the Mexican mockingly. "You will never tell anyone what happens under these trees, seniorito!"

He advanced towards the English schoolboy, and Frank Richards backed away—his eyes fixed on Diaz's swarthy, threatening face.

There was no arguing with the cuchillo at close quarters.
He could not mistake the meaning of the Mexican's words, and his heart was beating fast, though he doubted whether Diaz was in earnest.

As Frank backed away the Mexican followed him up, grinning evilly over his weapon. Frank's foot caught in a root and he stumbled, and fell on his knees.

Before he could rise the Mexican was springing on him.

Whiz!
A canoe-paddle came whizzing through the air, and it struck Ricardo Diaz on the back of the head.

Diaz uttered a yell of pain and staggered.
The knife dropped from his hand and disappeared in the grass, as Diaz clasped his head with both hands.

Two figures came running through the wood—Bob Lawless, with Vere Beauclerc at his heels.

They had come on the scene at a fortunate moment for Frank Richards.
Before the Mexican could recover himself, Bob Lawless reached him, and, without stopping to speak, hit out straight from the shoulder. The drive from the sturdy Canadian schoolboy sent Diaz spinning.

He crashed down on his back among the roots and grass, yelling.
"I guess that lets you out!" panted Bob. "Has he hurt you, Franky?"

"Frank, old chap—" exclaimed Beauclerc.
Frank Richards scrambled to his feet.

"All serene!" he exclaimed breathlessly. "I'm not hurt. Goodness knows what that mad idiot would have done, though, if you hadn't come up!"

"Lucky we moseyed along, I guess!" remarked Bob Lawless. He picked up the cuchillo from the grass. "This is a pretty sticker for a schoolboy to carry around! I reckon we'll tote Diaz along by the scruff of the neck, and report this to Miss Meadows! We don't want bulldozers of his sort at Cedar Creek!"

"I hardly think—" began Frank.
"Get up, you Greaser skunk!" rapped out Bob.

Diaz groaned.
Bob Lawless' drive had fairly knocked him out, and he lay dazed in the grass, blinking at the chums of Cedar Creek.

The rancher's son strode towards him, and seized him by the collar, dragging him to his feet.

"Come along, you pesky polecat!" he said. "You're going to get the order of the boot from Cedar Creek, if you're not sent to the calaboose in Thompson as well. Get a move on!"

"Carambo!"
"I guess I'll give you carambo, whatever that means, if you don't mosey on!" growled Bob. "Bring that paddle along, Cherub, and lay it round him if he doesn't move fast enough. He's going to Miss Meadows!"

The Mexican panted.
"Seniorito—1-1—" he gasped.

Whatever the half-savage Southerner had intended, it was pretty evident that the ferocity was all knocked out of him now, and that he was scared.

"Mosey on!" snapped Bob, jerking at his collar.
"Hold on, Bob!" said Frank Richards.

"Rot! He's drawn a knife, and he's going to Miss Meadows to be turned out of the school!" exclaimed Bob angrily.

"Vaya! I did not mean—I did not intend—I was only seeking to scare

him!" exclaimed Diaz. "I would not have touched him. It was but to scare him!"

"I don't believe you!" growled Bob. "You looked a bit too much like a wild beast, I guess!"

"Let him go, Bob," said Frank. "He couldn't have meant to use that sticker—it was only a fool's trick he was playing. Let him go."

"You're a jay, Frank! I know Greasers better than you do."

"I'm right, old scout!" answered Frank, smiling. "I'm not going to speak to Miss Meadows about it. Let him go."

Bob Lawless gave a grunt, but he released the Mexican at last. Diaz drew away from the three chums, breathing hard.

"You're a silly ass, Franky!" said Bob bluntly. "I tell you I know these critters. That scallywag would as soon use a knife as a white man would his fists!"

"I can't believe it!" said Frank.
"Anyhow, he'll never use this sticker again," said Bob.

He put the knife under his heel and snapped off the blade close to the hilt. Then he pitched both blade and hilt into the thickets.

The Mexican watched him with glittering eyes, but did not venture to interfere.

"Now I'm going to let you have your way, Frank," said Bob Lawless. "But I guess you're a jay, and I'm going to keep an eye on this bulldozer, I reckon. And mark you, Ricardo Diaz, the next time you show the cloven hoof you're going to have two dozen with a trail-rop, as hard as I can lay it on, and then you'll be taken to Miss Meadows. Savvy that? Come on, you fellows! That sulky brute makes me sick!"

Frank Richards & Co. went on through the timber towards the school, leaving Ricardo Diaz alone under the trees. The Mexican shook his fist after them in sullen rage, muttering to himself in the Spanish tongue. Then he swung away sullenly into the wood.

The 2nd Chapter.

The Outcast.

Frank Richards' brow was troubled as he entered the lumber school with his chums.

In spite of what he had said to Bob he was a little doubtful in his mind as to whether Diaz had meant his threat seriously.

He could not, in fact, quite make up his mind on that point; but he knew the savage, revengeful nature of the half-wild Mexican.

Greasers were not popular at Cedar Creek, but Frank Richards & Co. had really tried to get on civil terms with the new schoolboy. His sullen temper and savage ways had prevented that, and his fight with Frank Richards had followed, in which he had been severely thrashed. Frank was quite willing to shake hands over it and forget all about

it, but the Mexican was too bitter and revengeful for that.

During the days he had been at Cedar Creek, Diaz had kept to himself with sullen Spanish pride, aware that some of the fellows looked down on him as a Greaser, and fancying slights in every glance or chance word. That was not the way to conciliate the frank, careless-hearted Canadian schoolboys, who had "no use" for sullen, punctilious pride.

The Mexican was very cheerfully left to himself by the other fellows, who found him unpleasant, and did not trouble to waste a thought on him. Frank Richards gave him a thought sometimes, and sometimes a glance, as he saw the lonely schoolboy moseying away by himself after lessons, but his first attempt at cordiality had met with a savage rebuff, and he did not try again.

It was a startling and shocking discovery to Frank that so much hatred and revenge could exist in any heart, and he felt now towards the Mexican as he might have felt towards an adder.

Chunky Todgers met the three chums as they came into the playground at the lumber school.

"Seen the Dago?" he asked.
"Yes," answered Frank shortly.

"I guess he's looking for trouble again," said Chunky, with a grin. "I saw him moseying into the wood, scowling like thunder, and grimacing. He's a queer critter, and no mistake. Bit soft in the roof, I calculate. I say, Franky, have you been rowing with the critter again?"

"Chunky, old chap, you run on as if you were wound up," answered Frank, and he passed on without answering Chunky's question.

"Don't say anything about it, you chaps," he said. "Diaz is unpopular enough here now. All the fellows would be waxy if they knew about this."

"We ought to tell Miss Meadows," growled Bob Lawless. "Next time he draws a sticker on you I mayn't come along with a paddle just in time."

"I can't think he was in earnest—anyhow, I hope not," said Frank. "I shouldn't wonder if the chap has his good points, in his own way, among his own people. He's come here from Mexico, and he hasn't learned our manners and customs yet."

Bob grunted.
"What do you think about it, Cherub?" asked Frank.

Vere Beauclerc shook his head.
"Blessed if I know!" he answered frankly. "He would be turned out of the school if Miss Meadows knew what he did; but he may only have been playing the fool. Give him another chance, Bob."

"Oh, all right!" growled Bob. "I'm num. But a galoot who draws a knife on a chap—"

"Great gophers! Did Diaz do that, you chaps?" howled a surprised voice; and Frank Richards spun round angrily, to find Chunky Todgers close behind. The fat schoolboy had followed them from the gates.

Chunky's round eyes were rounder than ever as he blinked at the chums in inquisitive astonishment.

"You fat scallywag!" exclaimed Bob. "You—"

"I couldn't help hearing you, could I?" said Chunky. "I was just going to speak to you, when you said—"

"For goodness' sake don't tattle it all over the school, Chunky!" said Frank Richards sharply.

"Then it's true?" howled Todgers.
"Never mind whether it is or not. Give your chin a rest."

"I'm not a talkative chap!" said Chunky Todgers with dignity. "I'm not going to ask you any questions, Richards. But what did Diaz draw a knife for?"

"Oh, dry up!"
"But, I say, you might tell a chap—"

Frank Richards made an angry movement with his boot, and Chunky Todgers dodged away, full of excitement.

A few minutes later the chums of

Cedar Creek saw him in excited confabulation with three or four fellows.

Chunky's discovery was too startling to be kept.

"Can't be helped," said Bob Lawless, as Frank knitted his brows. "After all, I don't see why the fellows shouldn't know. It's Diaz's own funeral, I guess. He shouldn't have done it."

"It will make things worse for him here," said Frank.

"What does that matter?"
"Well, I suppose it doesn't matter; but I'm rather sorry for the poor brute, in a way."

"Franky, old scout, you're too soft for the Thompson Valley," answered his Canadian cousin. "Diaz is a bad egg, and the sooner he gets out of Cedar Creek the better it will be for the school. He can go to Hillcrest if he likes. Dicky Bird and that gang are welcome to him."

At dinner in the lumber school there was some suppressed excitement among the Cedar Creek fellows. Chunky's startling news had spread.

Miss Meadows observed it, though, fortunately for the Mexican schoolboy, she did not know the cause.

Diaz did not come in to dinner; he was accustomed to returning home for his meals at Old Man Diaz's shack on the creek.

When he turned up at the school after dinner, however, nearly every fellow at Cedar Creek knew what had happened in the wood. Eben Hacke came up to Frank Richards & Co. in the playground and demanded particulars.

"Chunky says the Dago drew a knife on you in the timber, Richards!" began Eben.

"Chunky is always talking out of his hat!" answered Frank.

"Isn't it so?"
"Ask Chunky."

"Can't you tell a galoot?" demanded Hacke.

"Nothing to tell."
"Do you galoots know?" asked Hacke, appealing to Bob and Beauclerc.

"Ask Frank!" answered Beauclerc, with a smile.

"Well, you, Bob Lawless—"
"Ask the Cherub!" answered Bob.

"I guess I don't see what you're keeping it dark for!" growled Hacke. "If you don't deny it I take it that Chunky's got it right."

No reply.
"It's a cinch, then, I reckon," said Hacke. "and I guess we'll show that gold-darned Greaser what we think of a black-jowled Dago that draws a sticker on a galoot."

"Let him alone," said Frank uneasily.
"Bosh!"

With that Eben Hacke stalked away. And when Ricardo Diaz came in at the gates he found Eben Hacke and a crowd of other fellows waiting for him.

He noted their hostile looks at once, and his black eyes glittered. There was a storm of hissing from the Cedar Creek fellows as he came in.

Eben Hacke shook a large set of knuckles under his nose.

"You gol-darned Greaser!" he began.
"Duck him in the creek!" exclaimed Chunky Todgers.

"Good!"
Frank Richards pushed between the Mexican and the excited schoolboys.

"Let him alone!" he said. "Cut off, Diaz! Cut off, you fool!"

"Carambo! But I will not go!" answered Diaz disdainfully. "So you have told them—"

"I've told them nothing. Todgers heard—"

"Bah! I do not care! There will come another time!" said the Mexican.

"You hear him?" roared Eben Hacke.
"Boot him!"

There was a rush at the Mexican, and Frank Richards was shoved aside. Diaz retreated then, running towards the schoolhouse. The Cedar Creek fellows whooped after him in hot pursuit.

Bob caught his chum by the arm.
"You can keep out of it, Franky," he said coolly. "You heard what the rotter said. And he can take his medicine. Let them boot him."

The Mexican reached the porch of the lumber school, panting, as the angry crowd of schoolboys overtook him. Eben Hacke's hand was on his shoulder when Miss Meadows stepped out.

"What does this mean?" the Canadian schoolmistress exclaimed severely.

Hacke dropped his hand.
"That galoot, ma'am—" he began.

Then he stopped short. It was not his business to "give away" the young rascal to the schoolmistress.

"Cease this at once!" said Miss Meadows sharply. "Diaz, go into the house!"

The Mexican went into the schoolhouse without a word. Hacke and his companions dispersed. But when the Cedar Creek fellows went in to lessons dark looks were cast at the Mexican schoolboy.

The outcast of Cedar Creek was more unpopular than he had ever been before; and he had himself to thank for it, if that was any comfort to him. But his dark, sullen face gave no sign that he cared.

The 3rd Chapter.

Face to Face!

"Franky! Where's Franky?"
Bob Lawless was leading three horses from the corral after lessons, and Vere Beauclerc met him near the gates with a smile.

"Where's Franky?"
"Saying good-bye to Molly," answered Beauclerc, laughing.

"Oh!" said Bob; and he laughed, too.

Outside the gates Frank Richards was chatting with Tom and Molly Lawrence, who had mounted for the ride home on the Thompson trail. He raised his Stetson hat to Molly as Bob and Beauclerc came out, and Molly and her brother rode away towards Thompson.



THE Middies of the Dauntless

By
HARRY REVEL.

A Magnificent New Story
dealing with the Adventures
of Three Midshipmen on a
Cruise Round the World

STARTS IN THIS FRIDAY'S NUMBER OF

"CHUCKLES."

"Finished already?" asked Bob. "Finished what?" demanded Frank, colouring.

"You generally don't cut it short when you're chewing the rag with Molly," answered Bob, with a chuckle.

"Rats!"

"Well, here are the gee-gees," said Bob, laughing. "If you've got anything more to say to Molly, we'll ride round that way home."

"Fathead!" answered Frank. "As it happens, I'm seeing the Lawrences to-morrow, as it's Saturday."

"Ha, ha!"

"If you'll tell me what the joke is, Bob, I'll chortle, too!" remarked Frank Richards.

"You're the joke, old chap," said Bob. "Have you forgotten that we're going to have a ride round the ranch to-morrow, as it's a holiday?"

"That's all right—in the afternoon. I was thinking of taking the canoe out in the morning," said Frank. "We've got a canoe here, you know, and I can ride over and take the canoe down the creek to the Lawrences. You fellows can come if you like, of course."

Bob grinned and shook his head. "I dare say you'll be taking Molly out in the canoe," he remarked.

"Well, there's no reason why I shouldn't, is there?"

"None at all, old fellow—only I'm going to ride round the ranch with Billy Cook and the cowboys, and I guess I'll let you look after the lady in the canoe all on your lonesome," grinned Bob. "The cherub may come and keep you company."

"I'm helping my father on the clearing to-morrow," answered Beauclerc. "Frank will have to take care of Miss Lawrence by himself."

"I guess he can do that all right!" chortled Bob.

"Ass!" said Frank.

The chums of Cedar Creek mounted their horses for the ride home. Close by the gateway two dark eyes were watching them in the dusk. They had not observed Ricardo Diaz; but not a word of their careless talk had been lost on the Mexican.

As they rode away Diaz looked after them with a strange glitter in his black eyes, and his brow was clouded in sombre thought as he plunged into the timber on his homeward way.

Frank Richards was not bestowing a thought upon his enemy at the lumber school.

He rode cheerily on his homeward way, thinking chiefly of the morrow and of canoeing on the creek in the pleasant spring weather.

Saturday was a holiday at Cedar Creek, and the chums had the day to themselves so far as school was concerned. But in homesteads in the Canadian West there was generally something to be done, and little room for idle hands. Vere Beauclerc was to spend the day helping his father, the remittance-man, on the Beauclerc clearing, and Bob Lawless was going out with the cowboys.

Mr. Lawless cheerfully gave his nephew permission to "clear off" for the morning. Frank was not of much use on the ranch, though he tried to make himself useful in leisure hours. Still, Frank was glad to have the fresh spring morning to give up to the canoe. His cousin Bob had taught him to handle the birch-bark canoe, and Frank had proved an apt pupil.

He was up bright and early in the morning, and after breakfast he mounted his horse to ride to Cedar Creek, though not for school.

"Back to dinner, Bob!" he called out as he started.

Bob Lawless waved his hand, with a grin.

"Remember me to Molly!" he answered. Then Bob's face became more serious as a thought struck him, and he ran after Frank.

"Hold on a minute!" he called out. Frank Richards drew rein.

"What is it, Bob?"

"Keep your eyes peeled, and don't go anywhere near the Mexicans' shack," said Bob. "There may be trouble if you meet Diaz."

"I shan't go anywhere near him," said Frank, with a smile. "He's not at Cedar Creek to-day, you know; and I don't go within a mile of the Diaz clearing."

"We ought to have told the poppa what happened, I guess," said Bob uneasily. "Well, keep your eyes peeled, anyway, Franky."

"That's all right."

And Frank Richards rode away in great spirits. He was not likely to waste much thought on Ricardo Diaz that sunny morning, and there seemed little likelihood of his falling in with the revengeful Southerner.

The horse's hoofs rang cheerily on the trail through the timber, where the green of spring was showing thick among the trees. Frank Richards arrived at Cedar Creek, and put up his horse in the corral.

Then he took the light birch-bark canoe and carried it down to the creek.

Cedar Creek was shining and rippling in the morning sunlight.

Frank jumped into the canoe and pushed off, and plied the paddle as he glided along with the current.

Beyond the island in the stream were the rapids; but at that point Frank intended to land and carry the canoe along the bank to the lower reach—a "portage," as it is called by the Canadians. He had not yet learned to "shoot the rapids" with the skill of his Canadian cousin.

The canoe glided swiftly along the stream, and Frank came in sight of the little island, with the water rippling round it.

He was nearly abreast of the island when a canoe shot out from the thickly-wooded bank right across his path.

Frank Richards uttered an exclamation. Seated in the canoe, plying the paddle, was Ricardo Diaz, the Mexican schoolboy. Frank steered with the paddle to avoid him, but the Mexican closed up.

"Keep clear!" shouted Frank. "Do you want to run me down, Diaz?"

The Mexican did not answer. The two canoes were almost touching, when the Mexican leaped up from his place and sprang with the activity of a panther.

He landed in Frank Richards' canoe, causing the light craft to dance on the water with the impact.

His own canoe went rocking away, unheeded, to the bank, where it jammed in the thickets that grew out into the water.

Frank Richards stared at the Mexican, amazed by his action; but the canoe was oscillating so violently that he had little time to heed Diaz. He plied the paddle to steady his craft.

The Mexican remained standing, keeping his feet actively as the little craft rocked on the water.

There was a grim and mocking smile upon Diaz's swarthy face.

He made a motion nearer to Frank, and the English schoolboy instantly flashed his paddle out of the water, ready for an attack.

"Keep back!" he snapped. The Mexican laughed.

"There is plenty of time, seniorito," he said. "Your friends will not come on the scene as before, amigo. Carambo! We are alone together this time!"

Frank Richards looked at him steadily, gripping the paddle ready for use as a weapon of defence. It was his only weapon; and he could see that the Mexican had a knife in his belt.

Frank felt a chill at his heart for a moment, though he was not conscious of fear.

For it was borne in upon his mind now, in spite of his former doubts, that his enemy was in savage, relentless earnest; that, incredible as it seemed, Ricardo Diaz intended him deadly harm—and they were alone together on the lonely creek—and his friends were far away.

In spite of his courage, his handsome face paled a little. Diaz noted it, and he laughed again, a harsh, mocking laugh.

"You wonder to see me here!" he said, in a bantering tone. "I waited for you, mi amigo—I have waited an hour by the stream. Yesterday I heard you speak of

back, losing his footing, and sitting down heavily in the canoe.

Before he could rise, or even think, Frank Richards was upon him.

He gripped the right wrist of the Mexican and jammed it on the gunwale, with such force that Diaz shrieked with pain, and his nerveless fingers loosened on the handle of the knife.

With a flash the cuchillo disappeared into the rippling water beside the canoe.

Frank Richards panted with relief. But the next moment the Mexican's grasp was upon him, clutching him like a cat, and the two schoolboys were struggling furiously together in the bottom of the canoe.

The 4th Chapter.

The Valley of the Shadow!

"Carambo!" panted the Mexican. Frank Richards did not speak. He was keeping all his breath for the struggle.

On firm land Frank was more than a match for the Mexican; but in the rocking, dancing canoe it was another matter.

The little craft rolled and dipped, as they struggled, and once or twice there came a wash of water over the gunwale.

Neither of them heeded it; nor did they heed the deepening murmur, deepening to a roar, of the rapids now close ahead.

The Mexican was fighting like a tiger, with hands and feet, even with his teeth.

Again and again Frank drove his clenched fist into the swarthy, savage face, but Diaz seemed hardly to feel the blows.

Once the English schoolboy had him pinned down, with a knee planted on his chest, and the Mexican squirmed helplessly under him, spitting like a cat; but a roll of the canoe flung them over, and Diaz came uppermost.

Then his sinuous hands were fastened on Frank's throat, and the swarthy face looked down on him in terrible menace.

"Carambo! Now it is my turn!" panted Diaz.

Frank Richards freed his right hand and struck up at the evil face, and Diaz

life. Diaz, dazed by the peril, was holding on helplessly.

Crash!

There was a rush of water over the canoe and its occupants, and Frank Richards found himself struggling amid foam and dashing water, with a roar like thunder in his ears.

Instinctively, half-stunned as he was, he struck out for his life.

What followed was like a fearful dream—whether it lasted seconds or minutes Frank Richards never knew. Dashed and buffeted by the wild waters, with a stunning roar in his ears that never ceased, he struggled blindly, breathlessly, for his life. His head came up into the air and the sunlight; he was swimming half-consciously, and the rapids were behind him. The roar was still in his ears, but it was not so thunderous. His wild eyes looked round him, as one waking from a fearful dream, and he still swam, though he was hardly conscious of his own actions.

He was past the rapids, and his hand came in contact with something that floated—a mass of driftwood. His grasp closed on it, and he held on and floated, resting his exhausted limbs.

He had come through the valley of the shadow of death, and he still lived. Almost in that spot, as he remembered dizzily, Vere Beauclerc had dragged him from the water, when he was wrecked in the rapids, in his early days in Canada. The thought came strangely into his dazed mind, and it made him think of the Mexican. Where was Diaz?

Holding on to the floating trunk, he raised his head higher and looked about him. Where was Diaz? Had the sullen, revengeful Mexican gone to his death in the depths of the stream?

"Diaz!" exclaimed Frank.

A hand was thrown up, as something floated past him; he caught for a moment a glimpse of a white, despairing face.

It was the Mexican.

Swept helplessly down the rapids, Diaz was still living, but utterly exhausted, and he was sinking as Frank Richards caught sight of him—that flinging up of

his arms over the floating trunk, relieving Frank of his weight. They drifted on in silence. In the distance now the smoke from the Lawrences' homestead rose against the sky.

Frank Richards clambered astride of the trunk, and broke off a short branch to steer towards the bank. The Mexican watched him in silence, a strange look in his glittering black eyes.

"Safe now," said Frank, glancing at him. "We shall land in a few minutes."

"Por Dios!"

Still the Mexican was fixing that strange look on Frank's face.

"Porque!" he exclaimed at last.

Frank smiled faintly.

"What does that mean?" he asked.

"Porque—why—why? You have saved my life!" exclaimed Diaz. "You have saved me from the water!"

Frank nodded.

"But why? You know that I would have killed you!" said Diaz.

"I know," answered Frank quietly.

"And yet you saved me!"

"Yes."

"And it was a close call—you came near to going down with me."

"We were lucky."

"But why—why?" exclaimed the Mexican.

Frank Richards laughed. His strength was fast returning now, and he was feeling more like himself.

"I would have killed you in the canoe," said Diaz, "and you have saved my life. Is it that you wish to hand me to the sheriff at Thompson for punishment?"

"No, you ass!" said Frank, laughing.

"I got hold of you because you were in danger. That is all."

"You forgot that I was your enemy?"

"I suppose I did just then."

"Por Dios! That would not be my way," said Diaz. "In your place, I should have struck. I am not an Ingleso, mi amigo."

"Lucky for you I am an Ingleso, then," said Frank. "Here we are. You can get ashore here."

The driftwood bumped on the bank, and Frank Richards jumped lightly into the thicket. Ricardo Diaz followed him more slowly, and Frank lent him a helping hand to land.

He squeezed the water from his clothes, keeping one eye, as it were, on the Mexican. But Diaz made no hostile movement. He seemed buried in wondering thought.

He did not move till Frank Richards turned to go.

"You have lost your canoe, seniorito," said Diaz, in a low voice.

"You've lost it for me," answered Frank.

"Por Dios! But my canoe is along the creek, above the rapids, and I shall find it, and you shall have it for yours."

"You mean that?" asked Frank, staring at him.

"Si, si, seniorito. And that is not all." The Mexican hesitated, and then came towards Frank Richards. "Seniorito Ingleso, I do not know why you have done this. The Ingleso, perhaps, is not like the Mexican. You have saved my life. Seniorito, you need not be on your guard; I am no longer your enemy."

Frank Richards looked at him very curiously. The Mexican's dark face was earnest; his voice was humble.

"I am from this moment your friend, if you choose to let it be so," said Diaz, in the same low, earnest tone. "I swear it, by nuestra Señora del Soledad."

"I would rather be friends than enemies, certainly," said Frank, hardly knowing what to reply.

And, acting upon impulse, he held out his hand to the Mexican. Ricardo Diaz grasped it; then, without speaking again, he turned and plunged into the wood.

Frank Richards, in a state of considerable amazement, walked on to the Lawrences' homestead.



OVER THE RAPIDS! The canoe, tilting at an angle that almost hurled out its occupants, shot like an arrow amid the falling, foaming water.

coming here—alone—and I knew that it would be my chance. We have good memories in my country, seniorito; we do not forget, and we do not forgive!"

"I think you must be mad, Diaz!" said Frank Richards, as calmly as he could.

"If you use that knife, you know what waits for you!"

The Mexican grinned.

"But I shall not wait!" he answered.

"Before they find you at the bottom of the rapids, amigo mio, I shall be far away. Por Dios! I am tired of your school—I do not like your Thompson valley. I shall be many leagues away before they take you out from the creek, seniorito!"

"Oh, you are mad!" said Frank. "Keep your distance, Diaz! Come a step nearer to me, and I will knock you into the water!"

He raised the paddle, though his heart sank at the thought of using that flimsy weapon against the long, bright cuchillo that now gleamed in the Mexican's swarthy hand.

Diaz grinned.

"That will not serve you, seniorito!" he said.

"We shall see!" answered Frank, between his teeth.

"Por Dios! We shall soon see!"

The canoe was still gliding swiftly along the stream, on the current, which was increasing in force as it drew nearer the rapids. From the distance there was already a murmur of falling water.

The Mexican half-crouched, his black eyes fixed on Frank Richards, as he came a step nearer.

Frank drew a quick breath.

When the spring came, he knew that the paddle would be of little use against the Mexican knife, and he did not wait.

With a sudden jerk of his arm, he hurled the paddle full at the swarthy face of the Mexican as he came closer. The sudden missile took Diaz by surprise. It struck him across the face, and he reeled

backed his head with a yell of pain; but his savage grip was still on the English boy's throat. A heavy wash of water came over the side of the canoe, now drifting almost broadside to the current, unguided, and swamping heavily as it was rocked by the struggle.

The roar of the falling waters was close at hand, almost deafening.

It struck upon Frank's ears, as he struggled to free his throat. The canoe lurched again, and as it lurched, and Diaz reeled, Frank hurled him aside.

Breathless, almost exhausted, he clambered up, gripping the Mexican, who was still clinging to him.

A fearful sight met his gaze as his head rose above the gunwale. The canoe was fairly on the rapids. Here and there, where a rock cropped out of the water, white foam and spray flew in the air in clouds. There was a heavy jar as the canoe struck on a rock and scraped along it, whirled by the water.

Frank Richards did not stop to think.

Death was hovering over both of them now: the canoe was in the grip of the rapids, and shooting the fall—not bow on, with a steady hand at the paddle, but unguided, drifting, and helplessly-tossed like a cork upon the foaming waters.

Frank clenched his teeth, his face was white.

Diaz scrambled up, to leap at him again; but as he saw the surroundings of the canoe, he paused. He lost his footing and fell upon his knees, clutching at the sides of the canoe.

The struggle was over.

The canoe tilted at an angle that almost hurled out its occupants, shot down like an arrow amid the falling, foaming water.

Frank Richards did not even-look at his enemy again.

Death in many forms was on all sides, and he needed all his care and all his coolness for the slightest chance of

the hand was the last sign of life in the wretched Mexican.

Frank Richards did not stop to think. He forgot that the Mexican was his enemy; that it was his evil hatred that had brought this peril upon both of them.

It was the instinct to help the helpless that moved him.

He quitted the friendly driftwood, and plunged in the direction of the Mexican, and grasped him as he was sinking for the last time.

His own strength was almost spent; but, with an effort, he brought the sinking body to the surface of the water, and dragged Ricardo Diaz's head into the air.

The Mexican was almost unconscious, but not quite, for he made a kind of movement to fling off the hand that grasped him. Frank did not heed. Still supporting the exhausted Mexican, he struck out with the other hand for the driftwood. He was too far from the bank to hope to reach it; two lives depended now upon his regaining the driftwood he had quitted to save his enemy.

Fortune is said to favour the brave, and it favoured Frank Richards. A swirl of the current brought the trunk closer to him, and he grasped a branch and held on.

For many minutes he held on, without motion, floating on with