

Jimmy Silver & Co. Skull Island!

Declare War

On Carthew! South Seas Treasure.



No. 939. Vol. XIX. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending June 7th, 1919.

Owen Conquest.



Dr. Chisholm's gaze fastened in a fascinated way on the blackened face of the figure tied to his desk. Then, with a brow of thunder, the Head strode towards the unhappy Sixth-Former and dragged away the duster from his mouth. "Who are you?" he exclaimed, in great wrath. "Is it—is it Carthew? What does this mean?"

The 1st Chapter. The New Captain.

"RATS!!!"

letters, emphasised by three big notes of still captain of Rookwood! exclamation, stared Carthew of the Sixth | So his look was lofty and his face wore | juniors. I suppose it is the work of some | Carthew. in the face.

dark oak of his study door. Form passage, with his nose in the air | Carthew stopped and stared at it.

Carthew of the Sixth had been feeling | thought of his captaincy. very pleased with himself. Nobody else at Rookwood was pleased with him; but | glittering eye. that did not matter to Carthew. He had | But there was no junior in sight of the reached the goal of his ambition at last-

he was head prefect and captain of Rook- | late captain, and Neville, his chum. Car- | wood School. True, Rookwood did not want him. He had been imposed upon the school as captain by the autocratic will of the out answering, turned his back on Car-Head, in defiance of the rights of clec- | thew. But George Bulkeley called back: | tion and all the traditions of Rookwood. | "What is it. Carthew?" Jimmy Silver & Co. of the Fourth Form | "This foolery on my door!" shouted |

had announced that they still regarded | Carthew. "old Bulkeley" as captain of the school, and didn't intend to take any notice of | Carthew. But the new captain did not heed the attitude of the Fourth, even if he was aware of it.

The whole of the Sixth gave the new ; captain the "marble eye," but even that Perhaps you wouldn't tell me if you appointed without an election. I, for as "old top" by a junior in the Fourth did not mar Carthew's satisfaction. He | did!" growled Carthew. hoped that they would come round in Probably not," assented Bulkeley, un- And with that Bulkeley rejoined that a fellow like Carthew had been

a smile as he lounged along the corridor, junior." It was daubed in white paint on the feeling a truly great man in his own eyes. And then that daubed inscription As Mark Carthew came up the Sixth on his study door struck him.

scription on his study door dawned upon lious spirits in the Lower School, who the former captain of Rookwood. But thew shouted for a fag. wanted Carthew to understand what they | that feeling only led Carthew to assert |

The head prefect looked round with a

captain, and only two seniors-Bulkeley, on my door!" thew then called to them:

"You fellows seen this?"

Bulkeley came a step or two along the the fags will refuse to do so, I think. afflicted with sudden deafness.

Then he smiled. "I hadn't noticed it before," he said. "You don't know who did it?"

unior."
"I'll skin him!" him angrily. Although he was captain cess. now, and Bulkeley had fallen from his He scowled again at the daub on his and rather a strut in his walk, that in- Evidently it was a message from rebel- high estate, he still felt his old awe of door. The paint was still damp. Car-

> himself all the more. "Look here, Bulkeley!" he rapped out. "Well?"

"I want the fag found who daubed that | heard him, but if so they did not take | terrogations.

"You had better find him, then." "I leave that to you," said Carthew. "I believe you know that I am head pre-

from me." "Nothing of the kind, Carthew!" "Look here--"

"I do not think you will find anyone to | "Fag!" he shouted. take your orders," said Bulkeley. "Even passage and looked at the inscription. The fact is, Carthew, you have put yourself into a false position. You know very well that the Head has no right to l appoint a captain of the school, and the

fellows will not acknowledge a captain, captain of Rookwood had been addressed one, certainly shall not."

That expressive word, in large capital | time; but even if they didn't he was | moved. "As I am not a prefect now it | Neville, and the chums of the Sixth | captain of the school. is not my business to keep an eye on the | walked away, without another glance at "You look rather excited, little one!"

The latter scowled blackly after them. grin. His first attempt at the exercise of Bulkeley turned away. Carthew eyed authority had not been much of a suc-

"Fag!"

His voice echoed along the corridor, but only the echo answered him.

the trouble to reply or to come. "Fag!" roared Carthew. Still no reply.

Carthew strode away furiously towards | fect, Silver?" Neyille looked round, and then, with fect now. You will take your directions the big staircase. On the staircase four "The prefects are on strike, areas juniors were chatting-Jimmy Silver, they?" smiled Jimmy Silver. "If you're Lovell, Raby, and Newcome, of the Classi- | not backing up the rest, Carthew, you're cal Fourth. Carthew looked up at them. | a blackleg! Blacklegs don't count."

The Fistical four went on chatting, as if

"Silver!" yelled Carthew. Then Jimmy glanced down.

"Hallo, old top!" he said. It was the first time on record that a l

Form. But it was also the first time

remarked Arthur Edward Lovell, with a

Carthew gasped. "I want a fag!" he howled. down at once, Silver!"

"Come to my study at once!"

"What?"

"Will you come at once?"

"Which?" Carthew's face was a study in itself Certainly some of the juniors must have as Jimmy replied with that series of in-

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Lovell. "You-you-you-" gasped Carthew. "Do you know you're talking to a pro-

"You-you-" stuttered Carthew. "Run away and play!" suggested Raby. That was too much for Carthew. He charged up the stairs at the Fistical

Four. He expected them to break into flight, (Continued on next page.)

versus CAPTAIN!

(Continued from the previous page.)

and to smite them as they fied. But they Gidn't. They lined up across the stairs and waited for him.

"Come on, old nut!" said Jimmy Silver. "Collar him, you chaps, and bump himhard!"

"What-ho!" chuckied Newcome. Carthew halted.

"You-you dare!" he panted.

"Come on and see!" cooed Jimmy Silver. But Carthew did not come on and see; he could see without coming on. was looking for a fag, not for a scrap with four sturdy juniors on the staircase, in which, as he knew, there would be no aid for him from the other seniors.

With a black and furious look he turned and descended the stairs again, and a chortle from the Fistical Four followed him.

They had won the first round in their tussle with the new captain of Rookwood.

The 2nd Chapter. Not All Lavender!

Mark Carthew entered his study with all the jaunty satisfaction gone out of his manner.

Already it had dawned upon his mind that his new and lofty position as captain of the school was not destined to be a bed of roses.

The fact was, that a captain of Rookwood could not hold the position, and exert due authority, without the support of the rest of the Sixth, and the respect of the school generally. And Carthew possessed neither the one nor the other.

He had the Head's support, and that was all. That was a great deal; but it was certain that he could not venture to I drag the Head into every trifling dispute. At that rate, Dr. Chisholm was likely to get tired of his newly-appointed captain even sooner than the school.

Carthew took a duster and rubbed the paint off his study door, and then closed it with a slam. He was about to pitch the duster into a corner when his eyes fell on the looking-glass over the mantelpiece. He started, and gritted his teeth. Across the glass was chalked in large letters:

"RATS!" Breathing hard, the new captain of Rookwood rubbed out the chalk letters.

His fire was out, and he wanted his tea. But he hesitated to call a fag. He was doubtful whether even one of the Third or the Second would obey his call. He had already had a specimen of the obedience he might expect from the Fourth. There was a sound of footsteps outside his door.

They stopped. Carthew expected a knock, or to see the door open. Neither happened. He stared

at the door, wondering why anyone should have stopped outside. After a few moments he stepped to

the door and dragged it open.

"Oh!" came a startled exclamation. Teddy Grace—otherwise Putty of the Fourth-stood there, with a brush in one hand and a small can of paint in the other. On the door there were three large capital letters: "R A T--" Putty of the Fourth had not had time to add the "S" before Carthew opened the door. The junior jumped back as Carthew's

furious glance fell on him. "So it was you!" shouted Carthew.

"Oh!" gasped Putty. "I-I'll smash you!"

Carthew rushed out of the study, and Putty of the Fourth promptly fled. The prefect's hand dropped on his shoulder at the end of the passage, and Putty uttered a yell. "Rescue!"

From somewhere five or six juniors appeared with a rush, and Carthew was seized in as many pairs of hands and dragged away from Teddy Grace.

Bump! The bully of the Sixth went spinning

along the floor. He sat up in a dazed state.

Footsteps died away round the nearest corner. Teddy Grace and his rescuers had vanished.

"Ow!" gasped Carthew. "Oh!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

Jones major and Lonsdale of the Sixth were looking out of a study near at hand -and laughing!

As Sixth-Formers, it was really their duty to lend the captain of Rookwood their aid against rebellious fags. But apparently nothing was farther from their thoughts. They roared with laughter. Carthew gave them a furious look as he staggered to his feet.

"You rotters!" he shouted. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Why didn't you help me?" shrieked Carthew.

"Help yourself, my boy!" grinned Jones major. "I've never seen a captain of Rookwood handled like that before. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You're backing up the fags against the captain of the school!" hissed Car- | But the rest faced him firmly enough. "They don't seem to need much backing

up!" chuckled Lonsdale. "The fact is, Carthew, you've bitten off more than you can chew, old scout! You'll never be captain of Rookwood. Chuck it up!" "Br-r-r-r!"

"If you give it up the Head will very likely come round and give Bulkeley his old place back," said Jones major. "Do l the decent thing, Carthew!"

"Go and cat coke!" Carthew tramped back to his study and slammed the door-still adorned with three capital letters.

Something whizzed in at his study window and dropped on the floor at his feet. In astonishment he stooped to pick

it up. It was a square of cardboard, and it bore the familiar word:

"RATS!"

Carthew hurled it into the grate and rushed to the window. Three or four grinning juniors were in the dusk outside. They did not flee, as they might have | been expected to do after such an outrage upon the lofty dignity of a captain of the school. They stood where they were, and grinned at Carthew.

"Mornington!" shouted Carthew. "Hallo, cocky!"

"Take two hundred lines!" "Bow-wow!"

"Take two hundred lines, Rawson!" "Rats!"

"Take five hundred lines, Conroy!" "When will you have them?" asked Conroy. "This year, next year, now, or

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you young rascals——"

shall report this to the Head--"

Carthew slammed his window.

The 3rd Chapter. The Flead's Ultimatum!

The next day, after lessons, Jimmy Silver looked into Neville's study, in the Sixth, with a rather peculiar expression on his face.

"Message for you, Neville," he said. Neville looked round—and Jones major and Scott, who were with him, looked round also. "Well, Silver?"

"From the Head!" said Jimmy. "Oh!" said Neville, becoming grave.

Well, what is it?" "Dr. Chisholm told me to tell you," said Jimmy Silver. "He's coming to the prefects' room to speak to you, and he wants all the prefects of Rookwood present-except Bulkeley."

"There are no prefects at Rookwood, excepting Carthew," remarked Scott. "You'd better take your message to Carthew, young 'un."

"Well, that's what the Head said," | answered Jimmy. And he left the study.

one another.

"I-I suppose we'd better go," Neville remarked. "The Head is rather a trial, but we're bound to treat him with respect. We haven't had a word from him, since we all resigned in support of old Bulkeley. This looks as if he's coming l

"He ought to have summoned us through Carthew, as Carthew is captain," | that you are ready to return to your | owing to Bulkeley pasting Raby a bit too | crowded meeting poured out after him. remarked Lonsdale. "It looks as if it's dawning on the Head the kind of captain | Carthew is."

"Well, the present state of affairs can't last for ever. It's time the Head saw reason. Who ever heard of a school without prefects?" said Jones major. "I'll cut over to the Modern side and tell I Knowles and the rest."

"Do!" said Neville. The late prefects of Rookwood were glad, upon the whole, to receive that summons to a meeting with the Head. They hoped that it was a sign that Dr. Chisholm was coming round to their point

The "strike" of the Rookwood prefects had lasted some time now; and none had deserted the cause, with the exception of Mark Carthew, who had turned "blackleg" to serve his own ends-without much

profit to himself so far. Sixth Form prefects formed a very important part of the administration of the school; and so long as they were out of office, their work and responsibilities fell

upon the masters-not at all to the satisfaction of the staff. But awkward as the strike was for the Head and the staff, it was not exactly

agreeable for the prefects themselves. They had lost their powers and privileges.

All parties would have been glad to see the present state of affairs come to an end; but Bulkeley's supporters were determined not to give in. Unless Bulkeley was made head prefect again, the rest of the august body intended to remain on strike. Even Knowles, Bulkeley's old rival on the Modern side, had lined up with the rest. If the thought had crossed his mind of taking personal advantage of | the state of affairs, the scorn and odium | poured upon Carthew was a warning to

One by one the Sixth-Formers who had held the rank of prefect dropped into the prefects' room in the School House, and there they awaited the arrival of the

Some of them looked a little uneasy as the rustle of a gown was heard without. Dr. Chisholm was an awe-inspiring old gentleman, and it was not easy to stand up in opposition to him.

Frampton and Catesby moved a little to screen themselves behind the other fellows as the Head entered.

They felt that they were in the right, and I that encouraged them. Dr. Chisholm's brow was very stern.

He greeted the assembled Sixth-Formers with the curtest of nods. "I am glad to see you all here." he

said, though there was not much gladness in his look or tone. "All except Bulkeley, sir," said Neville.

The Head frowned. "Bulkeley is not a prefect." he said. "Neither are we, then, sir."

"I accepted your resignations," said Dr. Chisholm. "I supposed, however, that in a short time you would return to a sense of duty. One of your number, I am pleased to say, has dene so."

Carthew smirked. "One of our number, sir," said Neville, "has acted in a way that the rest of us regard with contempt,"

There was a murmur of applause. The Sixth-Formers had not expected so easygoing a fellow as Neville to speak up so bluntly to the headmaster. And the Head's deepening frown indicated that he had not expected it, either.

"I did not ask your opinion on that I point, Neville," he said tartly. "I repeat that Carthew has acted well and dutifully in returning to his proper allegiance. expect the same of the rest of you." Silence.

"The present state of affairs cannot continue. While you are neglecting your duties--"

"Do not interrupt me, Neville. While you are neglecting your duties, they fall upon others to perform. This cannot | continue. I have, therefore, come to speak to you, and to offer to reinstate you all in your former positions. I am willing to overlook your disrespectful act in resigning in a body."

There was a pause. "Does that include Bulkeley, sir?" asked Neville, at last.

"Certainly not."

to reconsider it."

"Really, sir-"

"Bulkeley was dismissed from his position for good reasons. You know the reasons. That matter is closed."

"But, sir--" "I can listen to nothing further on that subject, Neville. My decision was not taken hastily, and it is impossible for me

"Very well, sir." "May I take it, then, that you accept I my offer?" inquired the Head, looking | round at the serious faces of the prefects.

"No, sir!" answered Neville. "We acted in support of Bulkeley. Unless he | their Classical rivals. It was, as both is reinstated we do not desire to be reinstated." Dr. Chisholm closed his lips tightly.

"I hope that you speak only for your- ? self, Neville," he said. "He speaks for all of us, sir," said Lonsdale.

"Certainly!" said Knowles. "Very well," said the Head. "I have given you this opportunity of receding from the absurd and disrespectful position you have taken up. You decline. I shall now take other measures. Other prefects will be appointed in your places."

"Not from the Sixth Form, sir," said Neville quietly. "No member of the Sixth will become a prefect until Bulkeley Neville and his companions looked at is reinstated. We are all agreed on that. Only Carthew is cad enough——"

"Silence! If the Sixth refuse, undutifully, to act as prefects, I shall have no resource but to appoint prefects from another Form."

"The Fifth!" exclaimed Neville. "Precisely so."

There was a grim silence in the room. "I am still prepared to hear you say duty!" said the Head. No answer.

"I will give you," said Dr. Chisholm, "till this hour to-morrow. If you have not by that time applied to me for reinstatement, I shall proceed to appoint prefects from the Fifth Form in your places. That is my last word."

With that, Dr. Chisholm turned and rustled out of the room. He left a rather dismayed silence behind him.

Mark Carthew broke it. "You fellows had better give in." he remarked. "You can't keep this up."

"Shut up!" snapped Neville. "Where will the Sixth be-with the Fifth-Formers swanking over them as prefects?" said Carthew. "It won't do. and you know it! It's not good enough.' "It's rather thick, I must say," mut-

tered Frampton. "Better toe the line while you've got the chance!" urged Carthew. "And acknowledge you as captain of

Rookwood-what?" asked Neville. "Of course!" "Bosh! You're no more captain of Rookwood than Tubby Muffin is! Get out of this!" growled Neville. "We want

to consult, and we don't want a spy present." "Get out yourself!" retorted Carthew. "This is the prefects' room, and I'm the only prefect at Rookwood, at present. You've no right here at all, unless you

accept the Head's offer."

Neville's eyes gleamed. "I've told you to get out!" he said.

"And I've told you I won't!" "Then I'll jolly soon make you!" exclaimed Neville.

He advanced upon Carthew. The new captain of Rookwood backed away towards the door. Once more he had found his authority break in his hands.

"I'm not going to scrap like a fag," he said loftily. "If you touch me, Neville, I shall report you to the Head."

"Report, and be hanged!" said Neville. He shoved Carthew out at the doorway; and the captain of Rookwood did not resist. He certainly was not looking for a "scrap" with Neville-whatever his reasons might have been!

Neville slammed the door after him. After Carthew's departure there was a long and anxious consultation among the former prefects. But the decision was to "carry on"-there was to be no surrender. And if the Head waited in the expectation of repentant prefects visiting him, he waited in vain.

The 4th Chapter. Carrying the War into Africa!

"It's up to us!" Jimmy Silver, the captain of the Fourth, made that remark in the end

There was a gathering in that famous study—quite a representative gathering of the Fourth Form.

The Fistical Four were there, and Conroy, Pons, and Van Ryn, the Colonials, and Mornington and Errol and Teddy Grace. Tommy Dodd and Cook and Doyle, of the Modern side, were there also-for once on the best of terms with parties agreed, a time for the lion to lie down with the lamb; House rows could | thew, we've got to take the offensive and stand over till the common enemy had been dealt with-Carthew of the Sixth being the common enemy.

"Right on the wicket, Jimmy," agreed Tommy Dodd. "It's up to us. And we're going to solve the giddy problem.'

"We are—we is!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "What's the programme, though? Are we going to boil Carthew in oil?" "Something lingering, with boiling oil in it-what?" grinned Mornington. "Or

is he to be imprisoned for ten years or the duration of the Peace Conference?" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Be serious, please," said Jimmy Silver.

going to the dogs." "Hear, hear!" "Full steam ahead for the merry bowwows!" agreed Mornington. "What's

"This is a serious matter. Rookwood is

going to be done?" "Carthew is!" said Raby.

"Hear, hear!" "Go it, Jimmy!" "The Head isn't a bad sort." said Jimmy Silver considerately. "It was I

hard that he sacked him from the captaincy. The Head meant well. He went too far. The fact is, the Head is

a bit of a mule." "More than a bit!" remarked Conroy. "There was that trouble with the masters last term," resumed Jimmy Silver. "The Head simply forced them to go on strike; and now he's got the prefects up against him in the same way. They've taken a leaf out of the masters' book. They're in the right; they ought to stand by old Bulkeley. But it's a rotten state of affairs. We elected Tubby Mussin to the captaincy, to show the Head what we thought of his precious candidate, Carthew. What does he do? Instead of reinstating Bulkeley, he cancels the election, and appoints | Carthew captain of Rookwood over our heads-simply ignoring all our rights of election, and all the historic traditions of

Rookwood. Is that good enough?" "No fear!"

"Never!" "Now, we can't exactly back up against ! the Head," said Jimmy Silver. "It's rather bad form—"

"And might lead to lickings," remarked Van Ryn. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Never mind that. Carthew is our game. He's appointed captain of Rookwood, and he's got to be disappointed___"] "Ha, ha! Good!"

"My idea is to lead him a dog's life till he gets out." "Hear, hear!" "Nobody will support him," said Jimmy

4 New Coloured Story-Books

Windlan Kaned Talleo

TELIGHTFUL fairy stories, school stories and tales of adventure, with many dainty illustrations. Funny drawings, riddles, and little verses galore. Two numbers every month.

lager samo

LINE long stories of the funny doings of the famous Bruin Boys - Tiger Tim. Bobbie Bruin, etc. Games, toy models and pictures. -Two numbers every month.

On Sale Everywhere. 120. Each.

have been caned--" "We have!" said Lovell, rubbing his hands. "But we can stand that---" "Carthew can't keep it up. He took me in to the Head this afternoon," said Jimmy Silver. "The old bird looked very ratty. He caned me, but after I was gone

Silver. "The Sixth turn their backs on

him; the Fifth sneer at him to his face.

Even the kids in the Third turn a cheery

deaf ear when he howls for a fag. I saw

Wegg of the Third walk off right under

"Morny's cousin, in the Second, refused

"He did!" grinned Mornington. "And

Carthew didn't pitch into him, as I came

" "He's reported several fellows to the

Head," went on Jimmy. "Some of us

to fag for him-didn't he. Morny?"

along with a cricket-bat in time,"

his nose to-day."

"Good old Weggy!"

to be caned every ten minutes." "Ha, ha!" "Hitherto-" continued Jimmy. "That's a good word!" said Lovell

Carthew stayed to be jawed. I don't know

what the Head said, but I can guess. He

doesn't want fags marched into his study

admiringly. "Go it. Jimmy!" "Hitherto," repeated Jimmy Silver. "we've just cheeked Carthew, and made it a point to disobey all his orders. He's no more captain of Rookwood than he's Emperor of China, as a matter of fact. But he's still clinging to the name, though he can't have the game, and standing in Bulkeley's way. We've got to take active measures now."

"Hear, hear!" "Like merry old Scipio, we're going to carry the war into Africa," said Jimmy Silver. "Having declared war on Car-

go over the top." "Bravo!" "We're going to lead him a dog's life till he resigns, or until the Head gets fed up and sacks him. We don't care which.

Now, Carthew's gone out-I watched him from the window. I suggest getting his study ready for him when he comes "Fagging for him?" exclaimed New-

"Yes-in a way. We're going to rag the study." "Phew! Rag a prefect's study!" said

"Yes-when Carthew's the prefect. That's what I mean by carrying the war into Africa. In this case, Carthew's study is Carthage, and we're the merry Romans. Gentlemen of the Fourth, follow your "Oh, we're game!" exclaimed Morning-

"Hurrah!" Jimmy Silver threw open the door of the end study and led the way. The

and followed him downstairs. Three or four more juniors joined up on the way, as the news of the expedition spread.

There were fifteen or more in the party when Jimmy Silver & Co. arrived in the sacred quarters of the Sixth Form. Jones major met them in the passage.

"What the thump do you want here?" he demanded. "Calling on Carthew," answered Jimmy Silver.

"He's out." "I know. That's why we're calling on

There was a chortle from the army of Jones major looked at them very doubt.

"If this is a rag—" he began. "You've hit it."

"Well, look here---" "Sorry, old man, but we've no time to waste," answered Jimmy Silver politely. "What!" roared the Sixth-Former. "You must allow me to point out that you're not a prefect, and you've no right

to interfere, Jones major," said the captain of the Fourth, with great politeness, but still more firmness. "We're on the war-path, and we mean business. See?" "That's how it is, old chap," said Jones minor, who was in the crowd. "Let's get

along, Bert!" Jones major, with a very curious expression on his face, backed out of the way. After all, it was none of his business, as he was not a prefect any longer.

Jimmy Silver & Co. marched on triumphantly to Carthew's study. That apartment was empty-but it was soon swarming.

There was not really much room for fifteen or sixteen fellows in the study, but they found room. They swarmed all over it.

The "rag" was soon going strong.

Such proceedings in the study of a captain of Rookwood were simply unheard of. They were heard of now for the first Jimmy Silver started with the table. which was up-ended into the fender. Ashes and cinders were dragged from the grate and scattered far and wide. The

carpet was dragged up and hung in festoons over the table-legs, further adorned with a pile of chairs, and pictures from the walls. Meanwhile Putty, who had brought his paint and brush, was adorning the walls and the glass and the windows with inscriptions, such as "Rats!" "Blackleg!"

"Outsider!" till the whole study reeked with complimentary messages to Carthew of the Sixth. A quarter of an hour sufficed to make quite a startling change in Mark Car-

thew's quarters. Fellows strolled along the passage to look at the juniors at work, and walked away chuckling. Nobody seemed to think it was his duty to interfere. The raggers were careful not to make noise enough to bring masters on the scene. And there were no prefects to take a hand in the proceedings.

The only fellow who came along and showed a disposition to chip in was Hansom of the Fifth—rather a lofty

youth. But Hansom's first expostulation was answered by a roar of defiance;

"Get out!" "Yah!"

"No Fifth-Formers wanted!"

"Rats!" "Look here, you cheeky fags--> roared the captain of the Fifth.

That was all Hansom had time to say. There was a rush of the raggers, and Hansom went spinning out of the study with a daub of paint on his nose, a fist in his eye, and three or four cushions crashing after him. He sprawled in the passage, where he made a good target for several portable articles belonging to Carthew. Hansom picked himself up and | mean?" he ejaculated. ran for it-a sadder and wiser Fifth. Former.

Then Jimmy Silver & Co. finished their work-conscientiously and thoroughly. By the time they had finished, Carthew's study looked as if a horde of Prussians had been let loose in it.

Jimmy Silver surveyed the havoc with a

satisfied eye.

"I think that will do," he remarked. "I should say it would!" gasped Lovell. "I'm blessed if I know how Carthew will ever get this to rights again!"

"That's his funeral," remarked Conroy. "Hallo! We've forgotten the clock! Better put the ink in it."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Their work well done, the raggers marched off in triumph.

Carthew's study, in an extraordinary state, awaited his return. And the raggers, satisfied as they were with their handiwork, could not help wondering what would come of it-and some of them rubbed their hands in anticipation.

The 5th Chapter. Going Through It!

"Silver!" Hansom of the Fifth looked into the end study. He found the Fistical Four

finishing their tea in that apartment. "Hallo, old gun!" said Jimmy Silver cheerily. "Trot in! We don't often have the Fifth to tea; and there's still the tail

of a sardine—" Hansom snorted. Evidently he had not come to tea, and was not to be tempted by the remains of the sardine.

"The Head-" he began. "No-the tail!" said Jimmy Silver

innocently. "I tell you," roared Hansom, while the Fourth-Formers chortled, "the Head-"

"And I tell you, the tail-" "The Head wants you!" yelled Hansom. "Oh! You're alluding to the Head of Rookwood? I was talking about the tail

of the sardine." "You'd better go, the lot of you!" snorted Hansom.

And he turned and strode away in lofty wrath.

Lovell rubbed his hands. "Looks like trouble for little us!" he

remarked. "It do-it does!" sighed Jimmy Silver. "Carthew's reported us, of course. How did he guess we had a hand in wrecking his study?"

"How, indeed!" grinned Newcome. "Even Carthew's brain was equal to that, I should say."

"And the Head's sent Hansom to tell us!" remarked Raby. "There's a rumour going round that the Head is going to make some of the Fifth into prefects. It looks as if Hansom is getting ready for the job."

"Let me catch him prefecting!" growled Jimmy Silver. "I-I say, we'd better go. Rather bad form to keep the Head wait-

"Ahem! We'd better go!" There was really no doubt upon that point. The Fistical Four agreed that they had better go; and they went.

"Trouble?" asked Mornington, as he met the chums of the Fourth in the passage, heading for the stairs with rather serious faces.

"The Head's sent for us," answered Jimmy.

"About ragging Carthew?"

"I suppose so." "Then you're not going alone!" said Mornington decidedly. "We are all in it, and we'll all come!"

Jimmy Silver shook his head. "No," he answered. "No good the whole crowd getting licked; it may discourage the chaps. Besides, it mayn't be that affair at all. You stay where you

And the Fistical Four went on to the Head's study.

They found Mark Carthew with the Head. The captain of Rookwood was pale with rage; and even the Head's presence could hardly restrain him when Jimmy Silver & Co. entered. The effect of the rag upon Carthew had been like that of a red rag on a bull!

Dr. Chisholm's face was grim and stern. "Silver!" he rapped out. "Carthew's study has been, he tells me, wrecked during his absence this afternoon."

"Indeed, sir," said Jimmy. "He suspects you of being concerned in the affair."

"Does he, sir?" "Kindly tell me at once, Silver, whether you had a hand in such lawless proceedings!" exclaimed the Head.

Jimmy was silent. "Do you hear me, Silver?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then answer me at once!" "Of course it was Silver, sir!" burst out Carthew. "No other junior at Rook-

wood would have the nerve-" "Let Silver speak, please. I am waiting for your answer, Silver. Were you concerned in the outrage in Carthew's study?"

"I was there, sir." "He was the ringleader!" exclaimed

Carthew. "You cannot possibly know that, as you were not present, Carthew," said the Head, rather sharply. "Silver, did you take the lead in the proceedings?"

us-less, in fact."

"All who were concerned in the affair will be severely punished!" exclaimed Dr. 1 Chisholm. "Such a thing is too serious for a caning. I shall——"

The door opened, and Mornington of the Fourth marched into the study. He was followed by his chum Erroll and the Colonial Co., and the three Tommies, and Putty, and several other juniors.

Dr. Chisholm gazed in astonishment at the army of fags that had suddenly invaded his quarters.

"Bless my soul! What does this

cheerfully. "We're all down on Carthew, sir, for being a blackleg--"

thundered the Head. "And we all took a hand, sir," said Mornington coolly. "If Jimmy's going through it, it's only fair for us to take our whack!"

"We were all equally to blame, sir, if anyone was to blame," said Erroll, in his the blame upon Carthew, instead upon his quiet way.

"Bless my soul!" murmured the Head. He gave Carthew a look that was not exactly pleasant. Evidently he did not to "land" him with fifteen juniors to cane at once. He dismissed the idea of flogging from his mind; fifteen floggings was rather too large an order.

He rose and took up his cane. "As you were all concerned in the outrage, I shall punish you all," he said. "You first, Silver!"

Swish, swish, swish!

For a good ten minutes there was a sound of swishing in the Head's study. It | not venture to make more complaints and | Carthew!" said Tubby Muffin; and he | Chisholm could come back. But Putty was accompanied by other sounds-of woe | reports to the Head-yet, at all events. and suffering.

"Jimmy did no more than the rest of to the task of caning fifteen boys on a single occasion."

> "They refuse to be caned by me--" "They did not refuse to be caned by Bulkeley, when he was head prefect," said Dr. Chisholm. "I was seeking a better captain of the school, not a worse one, Carthew. Such a scene as this must not be repeated. You must find some way of making yourself respected in the school, or it will be quite useless for you to retain the captaincy. You see that, of course." Carthew mumbled something indis-

tinctly, How he was to make himself respected in the school was a problem far beyond | his ability to solve. He could only have I first step would have been to resign the captaincy he had "bagged" by deserting "Mornington! How dare you!" his comrades of the Sixth. The Head, in fact, was just a little unreasonable; but he was annoyed and troubled by the wholesale execution that had taken place in his study. He felt that it did not accord with the fitness of things, and perhaps it was natural that he should lay own error of judgment in selecting that youth as captain of Rookwood.

"Kindly bear in mind what I have said, Carthew!" added the Head tartly. "Such expect his new captain and head prefect. I a scene as this must not recur. You may go, Carthew!"

> And Carthew went, leaving Dr. Chisholm shaking his head very seriously.

The captain of Rookwood was in need of a fag to clean up his study—in fact, of a good many fags. But he shouted for a fag in vain. He took his ashplant and started for the junior quarters, but he stopped, and turned back. He knew that there would be resistance, and he could

The hapless captain of the school had | him questions. Carthew of the Sixth looked on with to clear up the wreck himself, and it kept

the Head's study," answered Jimmy

"But the Head's gone out!" "Carthew's wanted there all the same. We want him."

"Oh, I see!" grinned Tubby. And the fat Classical rolled away on his errand. Jimmy Silver & Co. repaired to the Head's study. That sacred aparttrembling by juniors, but the rebellious fags of Rookwood were making very free with it now. Jimmy Silver's latest scheme seemed to some of the Fourth rather the limit of prudence, but he found plenty of followers.

The juniors had a shrewd suspicion that "We're all in it, sir," said Mornington | done it by "playing the game"—and the | the Head was far from satisfied with his new captain, and that he was tired of the incessant troubles that had followed Carthew's appointment. Jimmy's idea was to make him "tireder," as he expressed it.

While nine or ten of the Fourth were ensconcing themselves in the Head's study Tubby Mussin rolled away to deliver his message to Carthew. He found the new captain of Rookwood in his study with a gloomy brow. Carthew had had his tea in Hall, his fag, with the general support of the Lower School, having gone on strike. Carthew, certainly, could have gone on "strike" in another waywith his ashplant—but he had had enough of rousing hornets' nests of enraged fags about his ears.

He was, in fact, a hopeless failure as captain of the school, and he was no longer in a mood to look for trouble.

He scowled at the fat face of Tubby Mussin as the Falstass of the Fourth looked in.

"You're wanted in the Head's study, disappeared before the prefect could ask

Carthew growled under his breath as

Carthew dragged open the door, and there was a startled exclamation! Teddy Grace SURPRISED! of the Fourth stood in the passage with a can of paint and a brush. The junior jumped back as Carthew's furious glance fell on him. "So it was you!" shouted Carthew.

There was no enjoyment for the hapless raggers.

Dr. Chisholm looked a little fatigued when he had finished with the cane. He had put in some rather hard exercise, and he was not an athlete.

He pointed to the door, and the unhappy victims filed out, with suppressed moans and mumbles. In the passage they looked at one another dolorously.

"This is what comes of carrying the giddy war into Africa!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell. "Ow! Wow! Ye gods! My hat! Wow!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" "Oh, crikey!"

Jimmy Silver. "It was going to be a flogging, if you hadn't come in with your crowd, Morny! Yow-ow! Keep smiling! Yoop!"

The raggers wandered away disconsolately. They were still keen on the war with Carthew; but for the present their keenness was damped.

Carthew was not exactly enjoying himself now, in the Head's study. As soon as the door had closed on the last of the juniors Dr. Chisholm turned to him with a very severe brow.

"This is not what I expected of you, Carthew," he said. "In appointing you captain of the school, I anticipated, of course, that you would exert the usual authority over the juniors. A dozen times, at least, you have brought cases before me which would naturally be settled by the head prefect. My time is

of value, Carthew!" "I--I've done my best, sir---" stammered Carthew.

"Yes, sir."

you would be able to do better than this. What am I to say?"

"We were all in it!" exclaimed Lovell. It is most unpleasant for me to be put "Simply tell Carthew he's wanted in

glittering eyes. He was enjoying the I him busy for quite a long time. Other I he rose to obey the summons. He was scene—the only fellow there who did! Sixth-Formers came along to glance in at | not aware that the Head had gone out, him and smile.

Carthew's temper was at boiling-point all that evening.

But he had to control it, and consume his own smoke, as it were. It was dawning upon his mind that the captaincy of the school was no sinecure; and he was beginning to doubt very seriously whether he had been so very clever, after all, in "bagging" Bulkeley's place.

The 6th Chapter. The Last Straw. "He's gone out!"

Tubby Mussin came up to the Fourth "Might have been worse!" groaned Form passage with that news after lessons the next day.

Tubby had been on the watch, and he had seen the stately figure of Dr. Chisholm crossing the quadrangle to the

"He's gone!" announced Tubby; and there was a buzz of voices at once in the Fourth Form passage.

"This is where we begin!" said Lovell. "Come on, you fellows!"

"You'll get into an awful row!" remarked Townsend. "Aren't you coming, Towny?"

"No fear!" "Yah! Funk!" roared Lovell. "Oh, we don't want Towny!" said away in a suffocated gurgle. Jimmy Silver. "Half a dozen would be Arthur Edward Lovell, with his hand-

wanted, anyway." "Plenty of us, and no mistake!" said | nose was the only casualty. Mornington. "We'll, get along to the Head's study, and Tubby can take the | "Groogh! Scalp him! Ow! Look at my message to Carthew. He won't be sus- nose! Give him jip!" picious of Tubby."

"I'm your man!" said Tubby Muffin at | tain of Rookwood.

and he wondered what he was wanted for. He little guessed.

A few minutes later he was tapping at the door of the Head's study. As he was not told to come in he tapped again, and opened the door. Then he stared.

Dr. Chisholm was not there, but nine members of the Fourth were there in a state of breathless excitement. Carthew stood in the doorway and

blinked at them. "What---" he began.

"Collar him!"

There was a rush.

Carthew jumped back into the passage in alarm, but the Fistical Four rushed him down, and he was seized outside the doorway. The startled prefect struck out furiously, and Lovell yelled as he caught the blow and spun over on the floor. But the rest of the juniors swarmed to the aid of the Co., and Carthew, in the grasp of many hands, was swept into the

He sprawled on the Head's carpet, with worn off a little there was a greater celethree or four knees planted on him to bration in the end study over the fall keep him there. Putty of the Fourth of Carthew of the Sixth. shoved a duster into his mouth as he opened it to yell, and Carthew's yell died

enough to handle Carthew. Funks aren't | kerchief to his nose, followed his comrades in and closed the door. Lovell's "Jump on him!" gasped Lovell.

"Gerrroooogggh!" came from the cap-

"You certainly led me to suppose that once. "I don't mind taking a message. | "Hold him!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "I've got the rope!"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

Carthew struggled desperately. But he was helpless in so many hands.

Jimmy Silver whipped out a coil of cord, and proceeded to bind the senior's wrists together, and then his ankles. Meanwhile, Teddy Grace secured the duster in his mouth by binding twine | round it and round Carthew's head. It was fortunate for the Rookwood captain ment was usually trodden with fear and I that he had his nose to breathe through.

"Up with him!" grinned Mornington.

"Heave-hot" "Ha, ha, ha!"

Carthew was swung up against the Head's desk. There, Jimmy Silver proceeded with the rest of the rope. Carthew was secured in an upright position to the desk, facing the door.

The expression on his face was extraordinary.

"Now, where's the ink?"

Carthew gurgled wildly as the ink was applied to his face. In a few minutes he looked like a Christy minstrel. The juniors chuckled spasmodically as they regarded him.

"I think that will do!" said Jimmy. "I rather think so!" gasped Lovell. "What on earth will the Head say?".

"Goodness knows!" "It will be rather a surprise-packet for him," remarked Mornington. "It ought to show him that Carthew is no good as captain of Rookwood."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Jimmy Silver & Co. streamed out of the Head's study, closing the door carefully after them.

The captain of Rookwood was left to face the Head when he returned. Carthew's eyes glittered. He made

frantic attempts to get rid of the gag, to yell for help and get released before Dr. had done his work too well, and the duster silenced Carthew's voice effectually. He gave it up at last, and waited. The sunset changed to dusk, and the

dusk deepened into night. Carthew still waited.

His feelings while he waited were the reverse of enviable. What the Head would say and do when he found him there he could hardly guess. Certainly he would be very angry with the raggers. But what was he likely to think of a captain of Rookwood who was treated like this by the fags!

The schemer of the Sixth felt that the game was up. Whatever severe measures the Head took with the daring raggers he was not likely to sustain Carthew any longer in a position for which he was so obviously unfitted. The game was up -and, indeed, just then Carthew would willingly have given the captaincy, and a great deal besides, to escape from his

position. But there was no escape for him. The silence was broken at last by footsteps in the corridor.

Carthew shivered.

It was the Head returning. Dr. Chisholm pushed open the study door, felt for the light-switch, and turned it on. He came into the study, for a moment unaware that anyone was there. Then Carthew dawned on him, so to

speak. The Head stopped suddenly, as if transfixed. His gaze fastened in a fascinated way on the blackened face of the figure tied to his desk. For the moment he did not recognise Carthew.

"What—wha-a-at—" he stuttered. "Grrrooogh.!" "What—what is it—what—who—" "Mmmmmmmmmmm"

"Goodness gracious!" "Mummmmmmmmm!" With a brow of thunder the Head strode towards the unhappy Sixth-

Former and dragged away the duster from his mouth. "Who are you?" he exclaimed in great

wrath. "Is it—is it—is it Carthew?" "Ow! Yes!"

"And what does this mean?"

"Oh! Wow!" "What does this mean, Carthew?" thundered the Head. "Ow-wow! Wasn't my fault! Fags-

Jimmy Silver! I've been ragged! Ow!

Carthew's voice died away. The look on the Head's face rendered him dumb. Five minutes later Carthew of the Sixth limped away from the Head's study, free at last, but feeling as if life were not worth living as captain of Rook-

wood School.

That evening there were canings in the Fourth—canings numerous and painful. But Jimmy Silver & Co., as they rubbed their hands, had good news to solace

For they had been successful. The news ran like wildfire through Rookwood that Carthew of the Sixth had

resigned the captaincy! Whether he had resigned entirely of his own accord, or under pressure from the Head, the fellows did not know-or care. The fact remained that he had resigned, and was no longer captain of the school.

And Jimmy Silver & Co., as they rubbed their aching palms, rejoiced, and rejoiced still more heartily when the pain had worn off. They had led the new captain of Rookwood a "dog's life," and this was the result; and after the licking had

THE END.

NEXT MONDAY.

"THE FIFTH FORM PREFECTS!"

BY OWEN CONQUEST. DON'T MISS IT!

works at cross-roads!" exclaimed Mr. Lal Tata, shaking his head. "And there will be some more dirty work, boys, if you do I not secure that goat fellow again. He is looking very disagreeable since he has given himself headaches through hitting great kicks at tortoise, and, if he makes collisions with me, this nitro-glycerine will go pops, and I shall become but a dirty smear upon the hillside. There will be great bomb explosions!"

And Lal nursed the two lemonadebottles which, carefully padded with cotton-wool, reposed in his side pockets.

said Dick readily. parchment mean, Captain Bones? Who was this Alf Dixon fellow, and where did you get that parchment?"

was mate on the Susan and Anne, a barque sailing out o' Bristol, and employed in the old trade of shipping hides New York," replied Captain Bones, slapping the parchment with his hand. "Along o' a mate he came up here when his ship touched at these islands, an' they made by some o' the old buccaneers that used to come to these islands for wood and tortoises."

"Do they eat tortoises?" put in Skeleton, who always bucked up when there was mention of eating.

Bones. "There's two hundred and fifty pounds of good meat and oil in this chap of the cactus that grew on the trail. here. And I've heard tell of a ship's company from an English frigate bringing down as many as two hundred tortoises to the beach in a single day. Ho, ho! A shellback what's been punchin' his way round th' Horn on salt horse that you could carve into snuff-boxes, he's glad enough to get a taste o' fresh tortoisemeat!"

And Captain Bones chuckled to himself. "An' what happened up here," he continued, "was that the two mates found the treasure, and fell out over it after they'd dug for it. Alf knifed his pal Jacob, d'ye see, and got frightened at what he'd done. So he shoves Jacob's body into the cave, and, doing so, started a rock-slide where they'd been digging. Down comes the big rock he writes of, and shuts the mouth of the cave, with Jacob

and the treasure still inside." "That sounds all right!" said Dick. "Alf Dixon couldn't go back to the ship and tell them about the finding of the treasure, for if they'd opened the cave again they'd have found Jacob's body, and that would have been a hanging job for Alf Dixon."

"That's about the size of it!" said Captain Bones.

"But what's the tortoise got to do with

it?" asked Dick. "Why, Master Dick," answered Captain Bones, "this selfsame tortoise was the only witness that saw the crime committed, over a hundred an' thirty year ago. It's the selfsame tortoise that was drinking at the spring when those two lads came up here with their picks and their shovels and opened the cache. D'ye see what it says on the parchment? Alf cut his name on the shell feeling as merry and clean-hearted as a boy on holiday. Then they found the treasure, and started quarrelling over it. They was sailormen, an' they wore sheath-knives. Maybe Alf says to Jacob, 'I'll fight you'-same as the Scandinavians an' Timberheads do-'inch o' knife-two inches o' knife or the whole blade, which means death!' Lend me a knife, one o' you young gents, and I'll show you how th' Russians an' the

Finns and the Timberheads fight."

Skeleton opened his jack-knife and handed it to the old man, who grasped it by the handle, with his thumb down the blade uncovering an inch of the point. "D'ye see, boys?" said he. "If a chap fights like that he only cuts and stabs an inch, and there's no great harm done. Maybe Jacob was a Timberhead, and he challenged Alf, and maybe Alf hadn't the Scandinavian way of fightin', an' he let Jacob have th' whole blade by accident. But there it is! Alf killed Jacob, an' lost his nerve when he'd done it. He went back to the ship an' told the captain that Jacob had tumbled down the cliffs. And the cappen he had a fair wind up coast, and a fair wind on the Equator is a thing that you don't get every day or every month o' the year. So he didn't worry about Jacob breakin' his neck. Jacob was only a sailor, an' sailors were cheap as mud those days afore there was Seamen's an' Firemen's Unions. So cappen he up sails, an' off he goes to where his cargo o' hides is waitin' for him."

"But I don't see how the tortoise helps us," said Dick.

Captain Bones chuckled hoarsely. "He's th' clue, Master Dick!" said he. "Doan' you see, this ole tortoise, he's been usin' up and down this here tortoise path for a hundred an' thirty years? There's tortoise-walks all over these here islands, but the same tortoise always uses the same track an' the same spring. They ain't what you may call enterprisin'

creatures." Dick looked at Captain Bones admir-

ingly. "Jiminy, captain," said he, "you're a

regular Sherlock Holmes!"

"Never heard on him!" said Captain Bones, taking a pinch of snuff. "But that's the way I read that tortoise's back, Master Dick."

"Well, shall we shove the old tortoise the other way round, and see if he'll walk back to the spring that he uses?" asked

Dick. Captain Bones shook his head. "He's had his drink, Master Dick."

way again for a matter o' three months. "Tortoises has more sense than many men. They know when they've had enough. rose some twenty feet around them. They don't 'old up a pub-front looking for work."

Published

Every Monday

They threw themselves upon the worried | It was a weird place, and they all tortoise and, using all their strength, twisted him round so that his nose pointed uphill.

But the tortoise had no intention of going uphill to please them.

He hissed angrily, as much as to say: "Shut up, you idiots!"

Then slowly he stuck out his stubby so that his head pointed downhill along

"I'll carry the stuff if you like, sir," | kettle all the time. "Do not let us waste more precious

"No, my boy," answered Lal firmly. "I I times on tortoises," said Mr. Lal Tata imwill take all risks. I would not trust these I patiently. "I am getting very fearsome bottles to you. You would go playing of these bottles of nitro-glycerine in my some fool trick and blowing yourself to pockets. Nitro-glycerines are most unshivercens. But what does this mysterious | stable forms of explosives, and, in this heat, I fear I shall blow up like powdermagazines. And if stuff explodes itself I shall be blown to Jerichos. I propose that I "It means, sir, that this here Alf Dixon | we make immediate moves and track tortoise to spring from which he started. We can catch tortoise again as we descend | We are gettin' near the treasure. I can | waving his turban. Horace don't wag his | with obsidian, weighed about five tons. the mountain."

right thing to do.

once started strolling, in his leisurely | "The Pacific is the place for treasure! | from the boys! fashion of two miles a day, down towards | There's hidden gold on every island of stumbled on one o' the caches o' treasure | the coast, chewing his lump of cactus as | it for them as knows how to find it!" he went.

for he was an expert tracker. He read get nervous or excited there's nothing the signs on the ground easily enough. I like a meat-pie to soothe you down. He pointed out to the boys how the giant | always get awfully peckish if I am | beneath the coarsely-matted grasses. tortoise had been feeding all the way excited or upset about anything." "Course they did!" replied Captain | down, blazing a fresh trail for himself | But Captain Bones had no thought for | by chewing at the great succulent leaves

And the boys could not help admiring Lal's sagacity as every few hundred l yards he stopped to show them the fresh incisions that the brute's horny beak had made in the great fleshy leaves.

Presently these incisions grew drier and

the crystal-like filaments of obsidian.

agreed that it was the sort of background in which one might expect to distortoise, or any other antediluvian animal.

"You might expect to see one of those prehistoric peep beasts lookin' at you ache that would keep him off raspberry- tries to get at the good red gold. He over the top of those little cliffs," said | puffs for the rest of the afternoon! legs from his shell, and started turning | Skeleton. "But give me the nosebag, | But there came a shout from the boys | there, too! He knows! See how his boys. The air up here is making me feel | at the end of the straining measuring- | jaws grin!" the tortoise-track, hissing like a boiling | quite peckish again. I'm nearly hungry | cord. enough to go back and eat that old tor- "What is it? What is it, boy?" said black ebony of the carved Obi stick toise, shell and all!"

> Skeleton's nosebag, and which was brought ashore on all excursions, was Skeleton. produced, and Skeleton, unpacking it, revealed a fine selection of meat-pies,

"Have a meat-pie, Captain Bones?" said he politely.

sign that we are near the red gold. I doing!" The tortoise was left behind, and at | Ho, ho, Master Skeleton!" he added. I

"Why don't you have one of these Lal took the head of the column now, | meat-pies?" persisted Skeleton. "If you |

> meat-pies. His blind eye gazed up at the grey, lowering sky, through which the fierce tropical rays of the sun seemed to beat as though they were shining through a black gauze curtain.

now?" he asked anxiously.

The great haversack, which was called grabbed at Skeleton's arm. "Horace is wagging his tail!" reported | ran down their faces.

"Pah!"

and disappointment. "Not for me, Master Skeleton!" re- | pirate!" said Skeleton. "And don't grab | them.

And, sure enough, there came a yell

"There's a big rock here!" the rocky floor of the old crater, unwit- | his sumptuous nosebag! I ting of the crevasses in the lava that lay

Down he went with a thump. "I've broken my leg!" he yelled.

mouth full of ginger-cake.

"Wooden leg!" replied the captain. "That's all right!" replied Skeleton.

"I've got a couple of French nails and unison. "What are the young gentlemen doing a bit of string. We'll mend you up presently, old Bones. Good job you weren't antly. "I knew there was a doughnut in "Why, they've stuck the crowbar in I carrying the nitro-glycerine bottles!" |

"Let's try turning him round," said | scored with cracks, which were lined with | I shouldn't be surprised. But to quarrel | which were apparently not caused by over a lot of dirty yellow gold-well, it any movement of the old pirate's fingers. fair beats me!" "Ho, ho, boys!" chuckled Captain Captain Bones growled. At that Bones. "We are close upon treasure moment he would have given anything now! Look at the Obi stick which was cover an uncanny creature like a giant | for the use of his eyes. He was so im- | given me by a Mandingo king and sorpatient that he felt inclined to give the | cerer man. He was a great witch-doctor, leisurely Skeleton a waggle of his Obi and a great seeker after hidden treasure. stick, and to conjure him up a tooth- | See how the old skull dips an' twists an' knows—he knows! And there's a skeleton

And the ivory skull that crowned the Captain Bones in agitated accents as he seemed to be grinning down at the rock as the boys worked till the perspiration

They all took turns on the crowbar whilst Tom Morton and Pongo scraped Captain Bones made a sound of disgust | away industriously at the earth round the fallen mass of stone with the en-"Don't you be so cocksure, old trenching-tools they had brought with

plied Captain Bones nervously. "I'm | my arm like that; you are smashing up | As far as they could judge, the fallen beginning to feel all of a twitter up here. | my puff. Mr. Lal Tata is dancing and | mass of rock, which was of lava laced feel the treasure-feelin' pricking in my tail for nothing, I can tell you! When It would have been entirely beyond their from the Spanish farms in California to | Everyone agreed that this was the | thumbs and fingers, and that's a sure | Horace wags his tail there's something; strength to have shifted it without the help of explosive.

There was only one member of the party who did not take a part in the "Come on, Captain Bones!" they called. treasure-seeking. This was Skeleton, who, seated by the crystal-clear pool in Captain Bones started up, and, asking the centre of the crater, was seeking for for no guidance, began to stump over other treasure amongst the contents of

> "I've found it!" he yelled. The boys started, and looked up from their work.

Surely Skeleton could not have found "Which leg?" called Skeleton, with his another hiding-place of the treasure! But there he was, dancing wildly by the pool, holding up his skirny hand. "What have you found?" they yelled in

> "A doughnut!" called Skeleton triumphthe bag!"

> "Oh, shove your head in the bag!" cried Dick disgustedly. "That's just what I'm going to do!" answered Skeleton. "I believe there's

another doughnut there!" Then there was a yell from Pongo Walker.

"Gold!" he cried.

And he held up a golden coin which he had fished up on the point of his entrenching-tool. It was passed from hand to hand, a noble Portuguese moidore of pale yellow Guinea gold.

Captain Bones chuckled and rubbed his

"That's the stuff," he muttered-"the daify yellow gold that the Portygese got from the Guinea coast in the old days! That's the real stuff, my boys! Where's the blow-up liquor?"

Lal had turned to get his lemonadebottles, but he gave a yell of horror. Horace, who had been sniffing about

amongst the rocks, had found the bottles. Of late Horace, led away by the sailors of the Bombay Castle, had been getting into bad habits. He had learned to drink rum and water from a bottle.

In his dim, goatish brain he had therefore come to the conclusion that every bottle contained rum.

So he had picked up one of Lal's lemonade-bottles between his teeth and was nibbling at it, perilously shaking it about, trying to shake some of its supposed contents through the cork and down his throat.

"Horace!" yelled Lal. "Desist, you imps of Satan! Oh, thou wicked one, have a care, or thou wilt blow thyself to mincemeats!"

"Maw!" bleated Horace, in muffled tones, as much as to say, "I don't care so long as I can get the cork out of the

The bottle was wobbling round dangerously in his mouth, for Horace's mouth was not constructed to hold bottles. If it broke, or if it were dropped on the hard lumps of lava that stuck up through the matted grass, that long-extinct volcanic crater would have given a very fair imitation of its former activities.

But, luckily for Horace, Arty Dove, who saw the danger, pluckily raced forward, and, seizing Horace's jaw and the bottle, neatly forced open the mouth of the unwilling goat, and gently removed the carefully-swathed bottle.

The cork was already dribbling nitroglycerine, and some of it had found its way into Horace's mouth.

Horace choked violently, and for a moment looked as though he had it in his mind to go for Arty.

But Horace, luckily, had a long memory, and he recalled the power of Arty's fist. He bleated defiantly, as much as to say, "You bit me!" and backed away like a small boy who does not mean

Lal wiped the perspiration from his black forehead.

"Phew!" he puffed. "That was most narrow escapes. I did always say that goat fellow would bring us into trouble. He is a no-luck animal. He has swallowed a thousand devils!"

"He's swallowed some of this nitroglycerine," said Arty, examining the bottle. "Will it do him any harm, sir?" "Not a bit!" replied Lal. "I wish it would give him great stomach-aches. But a little of the stuff is only cure for seasickness!"

"Then we'd better save some against we get to sea again!" put in Skeleton, who, eating ginger-cake, had looked on unmoved at this little scene.

All was in readiness now for the charge

of nitro-glycerine. Lal carefully arranged the detonators crowbar, digging its sharp point deep to the mouths of the bottles and adjusted

that was gathered round the fallen rock. To prevent accidents, Horace was col-Captain Bones was seated on a knob lared, and, much against his will, teth-"Well, have a raspberry-puff!" re- of lava close by, and to him, listening to ered once more to his long length of line.

Then Captain Bones was carried well away from the spot where the explosion They are better than any treasure or He held his Obi stick in his fingers, and was to take place, and his leg was re-These low, broken cliffs were of jagged | pieces of eight! Now, if your pal Alf | the grim skull nodded and dipped towards | paired with two nails and a cunning



THE SECRET OF THE CAVE! Lying across the entrance to the cave was a skeleton, which mentioned in the parchment. And, scattered among the stones and rubble of the floor was gold!

previous day.

And the tortoise track led them constantly up and up, winding amongst the jagged little craters of weathered lava and tufa, studded thickly with acacia, myrtle, and the giant cacti.

The old tortoise in his laborious journey had left his trail as clear as a paperchase, and something like a shout went up from the explorers as they came in sight of a small, clear pool of water, surrounded by thick grass, upon the brink Captain Bones? You want keeping up, of which showed the distinct mark of the you know, and it was no end of a pull | rock with his hands. great shell, where the tortoise had rested up the mountain-side!" upon its brink, shoving his head into the "I don't want no raspberry-puffs!" re- Arty boy!" said he. water and taking in his drink for three

months. Captain Bones rubbed his hands as the boys told him of the signs which Lal

had picked up. "You black man is no fool!" said he in a whisper to Dick. "He talks like fool and behaves like fool. But he is a deep 'un! That's what he is—a deep 'un!

"Now boys," said he, "there is no doubt that this is the tortoise spring that Alf Dixon wrote about in his last will, and here is a bit of string, which I have measured off twenty-six paces, with a compass to show us which is the

He dived into the great pockets of his old-fashioned coat, balancing himself nimbly on the uneven ground on his

The boys looked around them. The

said he, and he won't want to come this | circular spring, which was deep and clear, | seemed to be the very centre of an old and broken crater, the walls of which

harder. Water had ceased to exude, by the spring," said Skeleton, helping added Skeleton philosophically. from them. This showed that they were himself leisurely to another meat-pie and would have taken more'n a couple of on the track covered by the Flying hunting in the nosebag for a hard-boiled Dutchman, as they called him, on the egg. "They stuck the crowbar in by the together again then!" spring. And where can that salt have got to? I hate hard-boiled eggs without

> "What are the young gentlemen doing | the crevasse in which it had landed. now?" again demanded Captain Bones i impatiently.

sure you couldn't nibble a raspberry-puff, ground.

plied Captain Bones shortly. "What's the good o' givin' raspberry-puffs to a pirate? I want to know what the young gentlemen are doing. What's the good of offerin' raspberry-puffs to a poor, blind ole pirate?"

"Why," said Skeleton, "how awfully impatient you are, Captain Bones! They've pulled out the string, and they are chalking it off with the compass. suppose they are trying to find out which is due north from the spring. And Mr. Lal Tata is giving them some sort of a lecture. Oh, don't worry about the old treasure! Have a puff?"

"What be they a-doing now?" asked Captain Bones, fidgeting, and disdaining the proffered puff.

"Why, Mr. Lal Tata has put down his l two bottles of blow-up mixture, and he's taken off his turban, and he's wiping his napper with a red handkerchief!" reported Skeleton. "What's the good o' that to me?"

growled the old pirate. sponded Skeleton, diving into his nose- the tinkle of the crowbar, the sound of bag again. "These puffs are top-hole! | the clinking steel was as music.

nails and a bit of string to put you Arty Dove ran back and picked up the disabled Captain Bones, pulling the broken shank of the wooden leg out of

He lifted Captain Bones in his arms and carried him over the spot where "Why," replied Skeleton, "they've | they had discovered the fallen rock under stuck the crowbar in the ground close by | the low crater wall, and he put Captain the spring, and they've made fast the Bones upon his hands and knees on the line to the crowbar, and --- Are you rock, which was half buried in the

Captain Bones patted and slapped the "Lift me up and let me feel the wall,

And Arty lifted him up in his arms so that he could reach high up the face of the lava cliff. Captain Bones seemed to have eyes in his fingers. He touched the face of the

rock all over, as though he were playing the piana "That's where the rock fell from!" he cried triumphantly. "Now, boys! Stick the crowbar down here, and dig out a good hole for that there blow-up stuff

o' Mr. Lal Tata's!" "I shall be jolly glad to see the last of that explosive stuff!" said Lal solemnly. "Never again will I walk about mountain paths with my pockets filled with great explosions. It was most silly assome thing to do. But I always play goat, fool tricks when I run I with you, you boys!"

Arty and Dick got to work with the into the powdered tufa and broken stone | the long fuses.

wooden leg. First he produced a long length of cord; then he fished out an l ancient but efficient compass. "See where the end of yonder string will take ye to," said he.

lava, still reddened by the old fires, and Dixon had slain Jacob to pinch his puff | the rock in short, convulsive movements, | splicing of tar-twine.



Published

Every Monday

All was in readiness now to fire the

Lal struck a match carefully, and, holding it between his hands, lit the fuse. Then he ran back to take shelter with his friends, who were hiding in one of the countless crater-holes which studded the interior of the extinct crater-like shell

Five minutes passed; then ten minutes. Still the explosion did not take place.

Lal began to look uneasy. "I arranged that fuse to go off in seven minutes!" said he. "Perhaps there is something wrong with the fuse!"

"Are you sure you mixed the jossop all right, sir?" asked Dick. "Perhaps that old shark, when he busted up the lab, mixed up some of the bottles?" he suggested.

"Nonsense!" replied Lal irritably. "That shark fellow could not kick the contents of one bottle into another. I am sure of my mixture. It is most highly explosive. Dynamites is stickjaw compared with it. If it does not explode with speediness I shall go and see what has happened to fuse!"

Lal waited another two minutes. Then he put up his head cautiously.

"I cannot see fuse sparking or sending up smoke!" said he. "Without doubt it has extinguished itself. I will go and make observations!"

He climbed up out of the crater and stood on its edge, and was about to step forward when, with a flash of flame and a shattering roar that echoed loud through the savage hills, the charge went. Lal was blown into the shell-hole just in time. He landed on Horace, who promptly butted him in the stomach. But he missed a huge lump of rock which whistled close over the top of the crater in which they were hidden and burst like

a bombshell a few yards behind them. Lal sat up and rubbed his stomach and scowled at Horace.

"That goat ought to be executed!" said he. "He is not fit for polite society. A goat who will hit kicks with his head on stomach of Master of Arts, Calcutta University, ought to be pole-axe!"

But Lal soon forgot his stomach troubles as the boys ran across the intervening space between their shelter and the crater wall.

The home-made nitro-glycerine had done its work. The rock was shattered to atoms, revealing a small, shallow cave or crevasse in the lava wall.

And, lying across the entrance of this was a skeleton, which could be none other than that of the ill-fated sailor Jacob, mentioned in the parchment.

Against the wall of the little cave stood a pick and a shovel, the metal of which was pretty well rusted to flakes by the passage of over a century.

There were a few tattered remnants of faded clothing on the skeleton, the remnants of a pair of coarse, wide canvas trousers such as sailors wore in the eighteenth century, a pair of square shoebuckles blackened by time, and a hardglazed sailor-hat which was apparently as good as new.

The boys felt depressed and saddened as they gazed upon this scene of a longforgotten crime. That skeleton, with its tattered remnants of clothing, lying exposed to the cold, grey light, told its own story of the tragic outcome of that sailors' lark ashore.

Alf Dixon and Jacob had gone ashore together good chums. But the finding of the treasure had aroused fierce passions. Those were rough days and rough men, and a sailors' fight had ended in a

tragedy which had haunted the survivor for the rest of his life. But they all cheered up a bit when

Lal, stepping into the cave, gave a cry of exultation. Half buried in the loose rubble which

covered the floor of the cave was a heavy golden candlestick, curiously wrought, whilst the base of a jewelled cup stuck out of the ground. "By Jingos, boys!" exclaimed Lal

excitedly. "We have found some Tom Tiddlesome Ground! Without doubt there is gold here!"

And gold there was, scattered in the rubble and stones broadcast—thrown . there, probably, in the fight between the two sailors.

They were not long in discovering the source of the gold and the plate, for under the floor of the cavern they speedily unearthed two boxes of decayed wood bound with copper bands. One of these contained the fellow of the great golden candlestick, and several massive cups of gold set with emeralds. The other was still chock-a-block with gold pieces of all sorts and nationalities. representing something over fifteen hundred pounds in value.

the cave to Captain Bones, who chuckled | the gold in the haversacks and stuffed

as he fingered them. venturers!" said he. "Feel the weight of out. 'em! They are solid gold all the way through. They used to melt 'em up like one! Huh! Get away, you brute!" that so that they could not easily be carried away. But the lads of the Jolly

it was worth their while!" The bags which had held the gold coins | the party. tindery fragments of fabric. But the | burrow-which was like the burrow of a | its hunting.

boys were well provided with stout canvas haversacks, which they had ostensibly brought ashore for collecting plants and geological specimens. And into these the gold was shovelled.

Even Skeleton's nosebag was filled with the treasure, and it was given to Captain Bones, who chuckled as he dug his hands among the coins.

"It's all for you, boys!" he exclaimed. "And this is only a promise of what we are going to find on Skull Island when we get there. These are just the filchings of some sailor chap amongst the buccaneers who used these islands—one of Crafer's gang or, maybe, a sailor of Richard Sawkins' ships. He hid away this little nest-egg after they had plundered Lima, maybe, so that he should not spend it in roystering. What like are the jewels in the cups?"

Lal examined the emeralds that studded the thick yellow gold of the cups. Like most Hindus, Lal knew a good bit about precious stones.

"They are fine stones," said he-"emeralds of Bolivia-but they are all flawed!"

"That's about it!" chuckled Captain Bones. "Trust the captains for seeing that a poor sailor-man was put off with a mouldy four or five thousand pounds' worth of the stuff. You may be sure they kept the best jewels for themselves. It's a tarry Jack's cache, boys!"

"But, Captain Bones," protested Dick Dorrington, "the stuff really belongs to

Captain Bones waved his hand royally. "What's the good of gold to me?" he said. "I'm an old. old man. All I want now is just a bed and baccy an' not so much o' them spellin' lessons from that there Scorcher Wilkinson! Ho, ho, boys! Old Bones may spell cat-k-a-t, but he knows where the good red gold is to be found. He can take his spellin' lessons from a tortoiseshell! And it's all for you, boys! I promised you that if you'd take Old Bones back to the Pacific he'd ask no more than that, and that you should all dress in jewels and silks afore you've done with him! I'll see Skull Island again afore I die! I feel it in my bones, I do!"

And Captain Bones was silent for a few minutes, digging his fingers into Skeleton's golden nosebag, turning over the yellow coins as though he were mixing

"Is the gold all out of the cave?" he

"I think we've got it all, captain," replied Arty. "We've just buried up that poor skeleton chap in the hole where we took the boxes from, and there may be a few golden pieces lying about in the rubble from its roof.

"Come out of it quick!" said Captain Bones, with sudden agitation. "Never mind the odd pieces. There's plenty to spare. The Obi stick is on the jump! It's a warning! It's a warning! Out. boys! Quick!"

Thus exhorted, the boys came tumbling

out of the little cavern. Certainly the Obi stick, which was leaning against Captain Bones' knee, was behaving in a most extraordinary manner, for, though Captain Bones was not moving a muscle, the stick, with its grinning skull head, was dancing up and

down in an agitated manner. "That's a licker!" said Skeleton, regarding the stick and watching closely for some trickery. "The old Obi stick has got the jumps! Come and look at him, boys! He's doing a Jazz!"

The boys had barely turned their backs on the mouth of the cavern to view the phenomenon of the Obi stick, when there was a sudden rumble and a crash behind

They looked round with a jump. A cloud of dust was rolling out of the mouth of the cave, and, when this cleared, they saw that the little cavern was nearly blocked by an immense fall of rock and rubble from its roof.

The boys turned pale, and looked at one another. Lal's nitro-glycerine had been too strong for that rotten weathered rock. Then they looked at the Obi stick. which had ceased to dance about.

"Crikey!" exclaimed Chip. "If we had stayed in there another minute we should have stayed altogether! That was a close call!"

Captain Bones gave his uncanny chuckle and patted the skull head of his Obi

boys!" he said. "'Twas given me by a Mandingo king, and it always tells when old lawyer's parchment. And that was there's danger about. Now, my hearties. it's time that we was packing up and getting back to the ship. I've no mind to be left behind on Chatham Island along with th' tortoises an' the Dagoes an' the big lizards!"

The boys had heard a lot about the big lizards of the Galapagos. But, as yet, they had not seen one.

"I don't believe there are any big The candlesticks were handed out of lizards!" exclaimed Chip, as he packed branches of myrtle under the flaps of the "This is the right stuff, my jolly bags to prevent the coins from shaking

"Don't you?" cried Dick. "Well, there's He picked up a stone and hurled it at

a huge orange-coloured lizard, which had Roger, they would carry a house away if I popped up out of its burrow amongst the lava rocks, and was glaring stupidly at

A the state of the

rabbit—a great deal faster than it had popped out.

"There's two sorts o' them lizards on these islands," said Captain Bones, lighting his pipe. "There's the sort that uses about up here on the high land, which feeds on cactuses and the acacia, an' there's the sort that lives on the seashore, an' swims in the sea an' lives on seaweeds. The Dagoes o' these parts eat 'em both, an' they say they are good white meat-like chicken. But I don't fancy a lizard in my stomach!"

The boys were packing up the candlesticks now. They had no intention of carrying these weighty objects all the long distance back to the ship. They had made up their minds that Horace was to do a bit of work for once in a way, and that the treasure should be slung over his back.

"Cover them candlesticks up well, boys!" said Captain Bones. "Wrap 'em round with the branches of the myrtle till they are right hidden, and tie them up well. We don't want any eavesdroppers or keyhole men about. Don't let anyone handle them haversacks as you go on board, either, an' remember to say that they are full of rock specimens which you've got for the doctor."

The boys did as they were bidden. They started to lash the golden candlesticks up in thick coverings of sweet-scented myrtle branches.

And whilst they were engaged on this Captain Bones again showed that queer, nervous agitation that he had shown before in the captain's cabin when he had been displaying the sample of the famous treasure of Skull Island.

He started up suddenly, trembling all over, and gripping the skull head of the Obi stick.

"Look out, boys!" he cried, in warning tones. "There's spies and eavesdroppers about! Keep down amongst the rocks. | to a pause as well. and don't show yourselves! It's a keyhole man-a lurking, sneakin', murderin' hound! It's the man with the yellow

The old boy was pointing with a trembling finger towards a thick mass of myrtle scrub. "I do not see man with yellow face,"

remarked Lal, in a whisper. Lal had dropped down at the old pirate's warning, and was lying very uncomfortably between two sharp spikes of obsidian rock.

"You know, Dick," he added, "I sometimes think that this old pirate fellow is afflicted in the head. He is off chumps! He has bats on his belfries! Who is this man with yellow faces?"

"I don't know," replied Dick. "But whoever he is, he doesn't seem to be a very nice person. But what I want to know is, how can Captain Bones, who is blind, see the man with the yellow face, when we chaps, who have our eyes and our wits about us, can't see him!" But Chip, who was lying close by the

two and heard their talk, said nothing. He had turned quickly at Captain Bones' cry, and he had just glimpsed, as it disappeared hastily behind the screen of the myrtles, a yellow face which had been peering at them-a face that was incredibly evil in its expression.

The momentary glimpse had not enabled Chip to recognise the face. It might have been that of a native of the island, or it might have been a member of the mixed native crew of the Bombay Castle who had tracked the little party up the mountain-paths, suspecting the treasure-

seeking object of their expedition. Captain Bones was still shaky and trembling when they had packed up for

their journey back to the ship. "I say, Uncle Bones," said Dick, "tell us something about this man with the yellow face you are so funky about. Who is he? And what is he?"

But Captain Bones would give no answer to this blunt question. He merely shook his head and answered:

"Never you mind who he be, Master Dick." he replied. "He's a bad man, a dangerous man, an eavesdropper, a keyhole man, a murderin' cutthroat man that's more fiend and devil than any man I ever met! And I've known some!"

"Did he know anything about this treasure?" asked Dick curiously. "And how did you learn about this treasure, Captain Bones?" he added. "Where did you get that parchment from?"

Captain Bones shook his head. "There's nothing in this treasure, Master Dick," said he. "This is a sideshow. Just a little venture that I found by accident. In my old junkshop I used to buy all sorts of old parchments, old deeds an' mortgages, and lawyers' documents that had outlived their uses. And I used to sell 'em again to the Ikey Mo's in the toy trade. Did you never have a toy drum when you were a little chap, Master Dick?"

"Of course I did," replied Dick. "That is, until my dad put his foot through it because I kicked up such a row with it!"

"'Twas the Obi stick that warned ye, the head o' that toy drum you would ha' He felt the scar on the fleshy, fibrous found that it was made of some bit o' the sort o' parchment I used to buy and sell again to the Jews for making their toys. And that's all the story o' the Galapagos treasure. I used to read the parchments sometimes to amuse myself. and I found that old sheet of Alf Dixon's will and testament. I kept it because it was about the Pacific, but I didn't know more than you do that we should put in at Chatham Island and get the stuff!" There was no doubt that Captain Bones

> was speaking the truth. "Then the man with the yellow face knew no more about this treasure than you did!" exclaimed Dick. "Not him!" replied Captain Bones.

"Does he know about the treasure on | pig-headed and obstinate at that moment Skuil Island?" demanded Dick. But Captain Bones would not answer. of lime in that slight scar on the cactus-

So Dick came to the conclusion that the leaf. dreaded man with the yellow face was aware of the existence of the Skull Island | The few buildings they had seen on the had long since mouldered away into And the lizard popped back into its | treasure, and meant to have a hand in | island were of wood, miserable huts

The Unknown Peril.

Horace, considering that he had never carried a load in his life, behaved very well when the boys loaded him up with the haversacks containing the treasure and the massive candlesticks.

These were hung over Horace's back and strapped up to him by many turns and hitches of their long length of line. Horace seemed to understand the meaning of his golden load, and to appreciate his responsibility. He stepped out staidly as they made their way out of the crater of the extinct volcano, and headed through the tangle of myrtle and acacia seeking their path back towards the ship.

Lal acted as guide through the tangle, for here there were many tortoise-paths, all converging towards the spring. And the track by which they had come was almost obliterated by these

But Lal had taken his precautions by bending and breaking, here and there, a twig of acacia or myrtle, and by these he guided his little party.

Perhaps, if Lai had looked a little more carefully at his blazed trail, he would have discovered that it had been tampered with.

For instance, as a leading mark, he had tied a small loop of string to an acacia branch.

If Lal had been thinking less about the treasure and more about his tracking he would have noticed that, by some mysterious means, his guiding mark of string had shifted from an acacia to a myrtle bush.

Horace presently came to a pause, turned, looked at Lal, and bleated.

"Maw?" bleated Horace, in an interrogative tone. Then Captain Bones, who was stumping along on his jury-rigged wooden leg, came

"We are off the track!" he exclaimed.

"I know we are off the track!" "Nonsense!" said Lal, rather heatedly. "I can find my marks where I have broken branches, and a little way back I passed a piece of string which I tied on branch as I came up. In two hundred yards more we shall come on piece of red tape tied on branch at right-hand side of our path. You see!"

"We are going wrong!" replied Captain Bones obstinately. "I know it, although am only a poor old blind man. We are off the track already, and the goat knows it as well. Hark to him, trying to tell you so!"

And, sure enough, Horace was bleating discontentedly as the boys led him

Lal was rather ruffled. He prided himself on his woodcraft and his powers of observation. Yet he had to admit to himself that this blind tangle of thicklygrowing bushes, all of which looked alike, with its tracery of tortoise-paths, was a very fair imitation of the Hampton cast about for the right path. Court maze.

"There are eavesdroppers and keyhole men about," grumbled Captain Bones, straining his blind eye as he looked around him. "Don't you forget that, Mr. Lal Tata. There are rascals and rogues, gallows' faces, and yellow men!"

Lal got thoroughly irritable now. "I think you are off your chumps, old pirate man!" he snapped. "Do you think that I. Chatterjee Lal Tata, sometime of his Majesty's Indian Secret Service, am to be lost like Boy Scout cubs? Do you think that I, who have tracked the deserts of Bikanir and the jungles of the foothills of the great Himalaya Mountains, am going to play puss-in-corner on little twopenny-farthing mountain like this pimple. Pah! Tush! Pooh-pooh to you, pirate, with thy talk of eavesdroppers and keyhole men!

"Behold!" he added. "Here is the piece of red tape which I tied to tree when we passed up this track. Here is mark where the big tortoise clipped the cactus-bush with his beak! Thou art potty, O pirate!"

Captain Bones grinned. "Not so potty as you think, black man!" said he. "This bit of red tapelet me feel it."

"Here it is, you most rude mans!" said Lal, very angry now with Captain Bones, for if there was anything which upset Lal more thoroughly than anything else it was to be called "hubshee," or black

Captain Bones lifted his hand. He could just reach the bit of red tape. "We are off the track!" said he. "And

there's some evil man misleading us. Yon bit o' tape is a foot higher than you I tied it when we came up. I felt for it when we passed this way to see what you were up to. And I know! I could reach it easy then. Now I have to stand tiptoe on my timber leg." Then he told the boys to lead him to

the mark where the tortoise had nibbled "Well, Master Dick, if you'd looked to at the cactus.

> "Yon's been cut with a knife, within half | bomb." an hour!" And Captain Bones put his finger to his | high above, had passed them.

with lime, to stop the bleedin' o' the "Lime?" asked Chip.

"Ay, lime," replied Captain Bones. "Quicklime! D'ye think that I don't know the taste o' quicklime-me that's used it fightin' the niggers down the Solomons?" Chip gave a slight start.

He glanced at Lal, but Lal was too to notice the significance of the presence

There was no lime in Chatham Island. a crected by the Weary Willie gang of Please order your copy in advance.)

Dago fishermen and tortoise-hunters who

were the only inhabitants. And who would be likely to be walking

about with lime in his pockets? Chip's quick mind turned to this

There were a certain number of the natives amongst the crew of the Bombay Castle who were in the habit of chewing betel-nut. These were for the most part Malays, though some of the niggers and the Burmese had picked up the habit. These men could easily be noticed amongst the crew by their blackened teeth and slightly scarlet-stained lips. And Chip knew that the habitual chewer of betel invariably chews the nut wrapped

up in a leaf containing a little lime. The man with the yellow face was not, then, a myth, or a creature of Captain Bones' imagination. Chip was pretty well certain that he had seen a yellow face disappearing amongst the bushes up in the old crater above.

Suppose this man was deliberately misleading them from their path!

What could be his object? These questions flitted through Chip's mind as Lal grumbled and mumbled about "This stupid old pirate fellow who has bats in his belfries."

He knew Lal well enough now to know that it was of no avail to persuade him that, for all his marks, they were on the wrong track.

But it was not long before Lal discovered that he was off the track after all. After rambling about in a wild and erratic manner amongst the thick bush, the track suddenly brought them on to the outer wall of the great volcano. Here was no slope of ashes and scoriæ.

All this had been cleared away by centuries of weather and rock-slides, and the solid lava core of the volcano stuck up almost sheer in a cliff over a thousand feet in height—a pile of savage precipices of black, weathered lava and basalt.

And along the face of this cliff was a wild-goat path, which wound into its hollows and bays, twisted round capes and projections, with, all the time, a sheer drop of five to seven hundred feet over its dizzy edge.

Nowhere was the path more than three feet wide, and the only member of the party who was thoroughly happy on it was Horace, who, sure-footed, and rejoicing in dizzy heights, tripped along quite nimbly under his burden of gold.

The path gave them a view over a wild expanse of tangled scrub and huddled craters, which rose like an ash-heap into the huge crater of a crowning volcano which was brushed by the low-lying

"This is no tortoise-path!" exclaimed Dick. "Any tortoise who could come along here must be off his chump." Lal made no answer to this sally. A

wise man would have turned back and But Lal, when he had got a bee in his bonnet, was not a wise man. He saw that the path gradually rambled down-

wards over the face of the cliffs, and that it led generally in the direction of the harbour in which they had left the Bombay Castle. And this was good enough Captain Bones chuckled as he hobbled along the path, supporting himself on the

obi stick, and keeping one hand against the rock-face of the towering cliff that rose above them. "Ho, ho! We are on the path, ain't we?" he chuckled. "This is the right way home-I don't think! If we don't watch it we'll take a short cut to Davy Jones'

Scout and his bits o' tape? Ho, ho!" This made Lal wilder than ever. He, above all, would have liked to have gone back when he saw some of the mountain-path which lay ahead of them.

locker! Ho, ho! Where's our black Boy

It was an admirable walk for a fly or a goat, but for human beings it was distinctly dangerous.

It was desperately hot, too, for the enormous crags were giving out the heat they had absorbed in the day like a vast radiator. But Lal's pride was aroused. He would

not go back. He led his little party onwards past the edges of dizzy breaks and precipices, round

which they crawled almost with closed eyes, not daring to look at the gulf below. Captain Bones was wonderful. Considering that his wooden leg was only secured by two nails and a lashing of tartwine, he managed this wild mountaineering splendidly.

All of a sudden Lal came to a stop and "Look out, boys!" he yelled. "Keep close to the wall, for goodness' sakes!"

There was really no need to tell the boys to keep close to the rock wall which they were hugging. If they pushed away from it they would drop over into an abyss that was about a thousand feet

"Hang on!" yelled Lal. The little party cowered against the "Yon's no tortoise mark," said he, as | wall of rock. There was a whistling sound his fingers groped blindly about it. through the air like the dropping of a

A huge stone, detached from the cliff They heard it smash, a few seconds "Ay." said he, "and it's been rubbed | later, far below, exploding with the report

of a little gun. "Ho, ho, ho!" chuckled Captain Bones, who seemed to be in quite good spirits. "Here comes another!"

A second rock of great size hurtled through the air.

They felt the wind of it as it passed. "'Um!" grunted Captain Bones. "That's him—the eavesdropper, the keyhole man! That's him at work! It's the man with the yellow face that's rocking us!"

(Another exciting instalment of this splendid new adventure story in next Monday's issue of the BOYS' FRIEND.



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

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

property of the second second

The 1st Chapter. Good News for Gunten.

"Richards!" Frank Richards did not answer. It was a sunny spring afternoon, and lessons were proceeding in Cedar Creek

School. Frank Richards was absent from his usual place in Miss Meadows' class. He had come away from the gates of

the backwoods school with a white face and an almost tottering step. He was dismissed for the afternoondismissed in disgrace, with worse disgrace

to follow. He saw nothing as he moved blindly out upon the grassy trail.

"Richards!" His name was called again, but still he

did not heed. Kern Gunten, the Swiss schoolboy of Hillerest School, was lounging against a tree near the gates, with a cigarette between his thick lips.

His eyes fell upon Frank Richards at once, as the English schoolboy came out, with a glitter in them.

He threw the cigarette into the bracken and stepped out into the trail towards Frank.

It was not till he called a third time that Frank Richards heeded him. Then he stopped, a look of angry dislike coming over his face at the sight of Gunten. His old enemy was the last person Frank Richards wished to see at that moment. But Gunten's manner was quite genial

-in fact, friendly. "Anything the matter?" he asked.

"Yes!" muttered Frank. "You're looking rather bad. And I you're out of school," said Gunten, with

a curious look. "Lawless and Beauclerc at lessons?"

"Yes." "And you're out?"

"So are you, it seems!" snapped Frank. "You ought to be at Hillcrest!" Gunten smiled.

"I've got a holiday," he said. "Mr. Peckover goes rather easy with me, you know. I happened to be strolling this way, and I sighted you coming out. Has anything happened at Cedar Creek this afternoon?"

"You've been fighting; your face looks a bit damaged," remarked Gunten.

Frank nodded. "You're not sent home for fighting?" exclaimed Gunten.

"But you're sent home?"

Frank Richards' answers were in monosyllables. "Going home on foot?" smiled Gunten.

"You've forgotten your horse." Frank started. "I-I-- Yes: I forgot!" he muttered. "Don't bother me, Gunten! I don't want |

to talk to you!" "You look awfully upset," said Kern Gunten. "Tell me what's happened."

"I don't care to tell you." "I don't see that you need to be unfriendly," said Gunten. "I'm not thinking of the rows we've had, and you needn't, Richards. If you're in trouble

at school I guess I'm sorry!" Frank Richards looked at him dully. He was thinking of the late scene in the Cedar Creek school-room; of Miss Meadows' stern brow, and the scornful murmur of the class; of his own chums' averted looks. Even Bob Lawless and Vere Beaucierc seemed to have lost their faith in him. At that moment of terrible Ioneliness, almost of despair, there was something of comfort in the unexpected friendliness of the Swiss, much as he disliked the cad of Hillcrest.

"I used to be at Cedar Creek with you," continued Gunten. "We had plenty of rows; but that don't matter. You've pitched into me for playing cards with Yen Chin. the Chinee. Never mind that. guess I'm not a galoot to bear malice. I'm real sorry if you're in trouble!"

"If you mean that, it's very good of you," said Frank. "My own pals have turned on me now."

"So bad as that?"

"Yes!" groaned Frank. "Perhaps I could help you out," suggested Gunten. "Sit down on this log; you look worn out. Spin me the yarn, anyhow, and perhaps I can help you through."

Frank Richards sat down on the log

silently. He was still feeling stunned by the scene he had been through, and cut to was-what fellow could he accuse of it? the heart by the averted looks of his There was no one at Cedar Creek whose chums. Nobody at Cedar Creek believed I name he could mention. in him; he was condemned by the school. bring him comfort at that moment of heavy features of the Hillcrest fellow. utter misery. He felt a glow of somewhich was very new to him.

help me. Nobody can help me. I-I me."

don't even know how it's happened. I-

I--" He broke off. "Go ahead, old scout! Whom have you been fighting with?"

"Tom Lawrence." "I reckoned he was a friend of yours!" said Gunten, with a very curious look at Frank's stricken face. "You've always seemed chummy with him and his sister

Frank Richards winced. "It's about Molly!" he gasped.

"You haven't quarrelled with her?" "No. no! But-but," Frank stammered, "she's had a letter—an insulting letter and it's in my handwriting! understand it. I didn't know what was the matter at first. She wouldn't speak to me. Then her brother rowed with me. and we fought. I couldn't make out what was the reason. Then it all came out before Miss Meadows, and the letter

"In your fist?" "Yes."

was produced."

"Then you wrote it?" "No!" gasped Frank. "It was a rotten letter-insulting. It-it was signed with my initials, and written in my hand. I never wrote it! It-it said that she was always bothering me, and wouldn't give me any peace, and that I was fed up, and all that-horrid stuff that no decent chap would write to a girl, even if she was bold and forward. And, of course, Molly isn't. Some awful cad wrote the letter, and put my initials

"And in your fist?" grinned Gunten.

"But if it was in your fist you must

have written it!" "That's what they all think!" groaned ! Frank. "It fairly knocked me over. I-I suppose it was a forgery. Miss Meadows has sent me home for the day. I-I can't go home. How can I explain to my uncle and Mrs. Lawless? I-I can't go! But-but I don't think Miss Meadows will let me go to the school again. I-I don't know what will happen now."

Frank Richards let his face fall into his hands.

Gunten rose from the log.

The sneering grin was still on his hard face, and Frank Richards started as he saw it. It dawned upon him that Gunten's sympathy had been a pretence to lead him on to tell his story.

"Don't they believe you?" grinned Gunten. "I should say not! I guess your yarn wants some believing, Frank Richards."

Frank started as if he had been stung. "You-you-" he began. "You don't believe---"

"Not a word!" answered Gunten contemptuously. "Not a syllable! I guess I'm not jay enough to believe you!"

"You cad!" exclaimed Frank savagely, starting to his feet. "Leave me alone, then! I was a fool to speak to you, knowing what you are!"

"A fool, right enough, if you thought should swallow such a yarn!" sneered Gunten. "You wrote the letter right enough, and you've got what you deserve! | two. And if you're kicked out of Cedar Creek, serve you right!" Crash!

Frank Richards' face was crimson with anger, and he struck out at the Swiss with clenched fist, straight from the shoulder.

Gunten gave a yell as he rolled in the

"Now keep your distance!" muttered Frank savagely. He turned away, with a moody brow.

Kern Gunten scrambled to his feet. He did not follow Frank. He was dabbing his nose as he plunged into the timber and disappeared.

The 2nd Chapter. Loyal Chums!

"Bob!" Bob Lawless started.

Lessons were over at Cedar Creek, and Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc were riding away togther on the timber trail-Bob leading Frank's horse, which he had found still in the corral at the school.

In the shadowy timber his name was called, and he looked round, to see Frank I

after what you've done, Frank Richards? You're my cousin, but I'm ashamed of you! You're not fit for a white man to speak to!" "Frank!" muttered Beauclerc sadly.

"You think I did it, then?" said Frank. "All Cedar Creek knows what you did!" retorted Bob. "You've insulted Molly Lawrence, the nicest girl in the school. Miss Meadows has given me a letter to take to my father. I guess she doesn't want you to go back to Cedar

Creek. And no wonder!" Frank drew his horse aside.

"You can ride on," he said bitterly. "If you don't believe in me, I don't want ever to see either of you again!"

"You're coming home, I suppose?"

"Where are you going, then?" "Anywhere-I don't care much!" said Frank. "I suppose my uncle will believe the same as you do, Bob. If he does, I'll never sleep another night under his roof!" "What do you mean?" exclaimed Bob. "Do you want us to believe that that letter was decent—that it was manly, or honest, or anything but cowardly and rotten?"

"It was all that, and worse; but I expected my friends to believe that I never wrote it," answered Frank quietly.

"It was in your fist." "It was a forgery."

"What?" shouted Bob. Vere Beaucierc uttered a cry. "Frank, I believe you, old chap -- I believe you! I couldn't believe -- I take your word that you never wrote it!"

Bob stared at his cousin blankly. "A forgery!" he repeated." "You mean that some galoot imitated your handwriting, and wrote the letter-"

"I mean that that's the only way it could have happened, as I never wrote it, and never even saw it till Miss Meadows had it in the schoolroom," said Frank Richards steadily.

"Oh, gum!" gasped Bob. His face was a study for a moment or

"Do you believe me now?" asked Frank. "But-but why should any galoot play such an awful trick?" gasped Bob. "And -and who's so hefty with his pen that he can imitate your fist like that,

Frank?" "I don't know! I only know that that's

what must have happened." "I believe you, Frank," repeated Vere Beauclerc. "I felt all the time that you ! couldn't have done anything so base, though I couldn't understand--- And Bob believes you, too. Don't be an ass,

Bob Lawless nodded.

"I guess I take your word, Frank!" he

Frank Richards' face brightened. The whole school had condemned him: but it was something, at least, if his two

chums kept their faith in him. "Come on, Frank, get on your horse!" Frank vaulted into the saddle.

The three chums rode down the timber trail together.

"I guess I was a jay not to have thought of that!" Bob Lawless said, after a long silence. "I guess you've got it, Franky. Some mean galoot has got a

enough to act like that. I was a fool not to think of it before—especially when I found him waiting outside Cedar Creek this afternoon!"

"You found whom?" "Kern Gunten."

"Wasn't he at school?" "He had a holiday—you know how his headmaster favours him, owing to his father having money invested in Hillcrest School," said Frank. "He was outside Cedar Creek when I came out. He said he came along by chance. I'm quite sure that he was curious to see how his scheme had worked, and came along for that reason."

He described his meeting with Gunten and how it ended, his chums listening in

grave silence. "I-I guess it may have been Gunten," said Bob slowly. "I know Gunten's hefty with his pen. He keeps books for his popper, at the store in Thompson, and does some of the post-office accounts. But-but-"

"Who else could it have been?" said

"That's so. But look here, Frank. there's no proof. Gunten's a bad lot, and we all know it; but forgery-"

"It could have been no one else," said Frank Richards, with conviction. "He hates us all three, and he wouldn't stop at much against us. He's played this trick on me; but it might have been either of you two."

Bob knitted his brows. "How did he get a copy of your fist, Frank?" he asked. "He couldn't have done it without that."

Frank was silent. "He used to be at Cedar Creek," remarked Beauclerc. "He saw Frank's

hand often enough then." "He left before Christmas," answered Bob. "It can't be supposed that he had planned all this then, and kept some of Frank's exercises and things as a copy, on purpose. I guess that's no good!"

Frank shook his head. "Whoever forged that letter must have had a good copy in front of him all the time," said Bob. "And not a few words. either—he's got every_trick of the writing to a T. I guess I don't see how it could have been Gunten. Frank!"

"I can't think of anybody else who could have done it."

"That's not enough to accuse him on." "I know-I know." The chums rode on in silence. Beauclerc left the cousins at the fork of the trail, and Frank and Bob rode on to the

Lawless Ranch together. Frank's face was troubled and clouded as the ranch came in sight.

He had a miserable ordeal before him. What view his uncle was likely to take he did not know, and he winced at the thought of contempt and scorn in the honest face of the Canadian rancher.

If Mr. Lawless did not place faith in him he was determined to leave the ranch at once. He would not remain where he was doubted and despised. His heart was heavy as he alighted at

the ranch, and he did not even bear the cheery greeting of Billy Cook, the ranch foreman, who was passing on the trail. "Give your father Miss Meadows' letter at once, Bob!" he muttered, as they went

into the house. "For goodness' sake, get it over as soon as possible!" "I guess you can depend on the poppa, Frank," answered Bob. "You come in and pitch your yarn first, and then I'll hand

him the letter." That seemed good advice, and Frank

Richards resolved to act upon it. A few minutes later he was relating the story to his uncle and aunt, with downcast face and flushed cheeks, helped out by emphatic interjections from his cousin.

sympathy; the good lady did not doubt his explanation for a moment. Rancher Lawless was grim and silent.

To his great relief. Mrs. Lawless was all

"Give me Miss Meadows' letter, Bob," he said at last. Frank Richards waited with beating heart while his uncle read the school-

mistress' letter. Mr. Lawless spoke at last.

"I believe you, Frank," he said quietly. "I will ride over and see Miss Meadows in the morning. This will want looking into. For a few days, anyhow, you'd better stay away from school. I guess I can keep you busy about the ranch. You can't show up at Cedar Creek again till this is explained—and I guess it will be looked into till the truth is found. Keep a stiff upper lip, my boy; you've got friends to stand by you."

Frank's eyelids were wet. He could not speak; his heart was too full for words.

The 3rd Chapter. Dark Days.

"Awful about that galoot Richards, Chunky Todgers made that remark when Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc arrived

at Cedar Creek School the next day. Chunky's face was very serious. "Who'd have thought of his turning out like that?" continued Chunky.

"Like what?" growled Bob. "Like he's done!" said Todgers. "I'm surprised at him! He's not coming back to school, I suppose? I see he's not with

Bob gave a snort. "He's coming back right enough as soon as this rotten affair is cleared up," he said. "Frank never wrote that letter, you fat

jay, and it's going to be proved some-

Chunky Todgers whistled.

"I reckon it was in his fist," he said. "It was a forgery!" "Oh, come off!" said Chunky Todgers

incredulously. "That's how it is, Chunky," said Beauclerc quietly.

"By gum!" said Chunky, his eyes glistening. "I see! It's a plot! Just like you read in novels-what?"



CAUGHT IN THE ACT!

"Yen Chin! You young rascal!" exclaimed Bob Lawless in angry tones. The Chinee was bending over Bob's desk, going through it with his slim, deft fingers.

boy gave way like this, bu at this moment he felt utterly overcome and

hopeless. He felt shackled by the chain of circumstances, and in despair of ever being able to prove his innocence. His own handwriting was a testimony against him that could not be contested. If the letter was a forgery—as undoubtedly it

His face buried in his hands, Frank did It would be strange enough if his old | not see Gunten's look—the grin of malienemy, Kern Gunten, was the one to cious, malevolent satisfaction upon the

He looked up at last. thing like gratitude towards the Swiss, "That's how it is," he said. "I'm done for at Cedar Creek. I don't know what "I'll tell you," he said. "You can't to do. Even my own chums don't believe I

It was seldom that the plucky school- Richards. He pulled in his horse at once, I copy of your fist, and imitated it, and and Beauclere followed his example. The two schoolboys were looking grave and moody.

Frank Richards came out into the trail from the trees as they stopped. "You haven't been home?" asked Bob awkwardly.

"I've brought your horse along."

Frank took his horse. He held the animal, and looked at his two cliums with a miserable and bitter look. "So you're down on me, like the rest of the school!" he exclaimed.

Bob Lawless shifted uneasily in his saddle and Beauclerc coloured. "You-like all the rest!"

"Do you expect a galoot to stand by you,

written that letter to Molly. But-but who? There isn't a chap at Cedar Creek that would do it." "I don't think so," said Beauclerc.

"But then, nobody outside the school could get hold of Frank's handwriting to copy," said Bob, in perplexity. "It was Frank's fist to the last crossing of a T!"

Frank set his teeth. "It was done by an enemy," he said. "Somebody who wanted to get me into disgrace. As soon as Molly got that letter it was certain that it would make her down on me-and it would be noticed, and it was all bound to come out, just as it has done!"

"I guess so! But--" "It's got me into disgrace with the | "Oh, bother your novels!" growled Bob. Lawrences, and Miss Meadows, and every-"Hang it all!" Bob burst out angrily. I body at the school!" said Frank bitterly. "There's only one fellow who hates me I

He was in no mood just then to listen to the romantic Chunky on that topic.

"I guess it's just like the forged letter

that wicked marquis wrote to the missing duke in the book I've just been reading," said Chunky eagerly. "I say, Bob, though, there isn't any wicked marquis at this school!"

"Fathead!" was Bob Lawless' polite

reply. Chunky Todgers was not long in spreading the news; but it found few believers. Chunky was a romantic youth, and a forged letter appealed to his fat imagination. But the other fellows were rather more practical. Even Molly Lawrence shook her head when Beaucierc explained to her. She had been deeply hurt by the letter, and deeply aggrieved, and she was | in angry tones. sorry that the matter has become public was too "steep."

sniffed contemptuously at the suggestion. | had left under his desk, little dreaming back on a yarn like that, he's making a Yen Chin started and jumped away going to hammer him if I see him at Cedar I and angry voice. Creek again—and every time I see him!" "You didn't have much luck with your !

last hammering!" growled Bob. "Better luck next time!" answered Lawrence. "And I'm surprised, too, at your standing up for him, Lawless!"

"I believe in him." "More fool you!"

"Look here--" Fortunately, Molly Lawrence came along in time to stop the argument, which i was growing warm.

It was pretty clear that strong proof would be required to convince the Cedar Creek fellows of Frank Richards' inno-

How and where that proof was to be I there." found was a mystery.

Chinee, professed to be shocked at what | you tinkee?" Frank Richards had done: though it was | "You were after something, and you've | "Wha-a-at?" rascal in the school being shocked at any- i rags," growled Bob. "I saw you."

"Flanky velly bad boy!" Yen Chin conboy-oh, yes! Me despisee!"

"And you're such a precious good boy, aren't you?" grunted Bob.

Yen Chin nodded calmly.

"Me velly good boy!" he answered. "Oh, yes! Me velly good boy allee samee white Chlistian!" "How long since you've played poker

with Gunten?" growled Bob. "No playee pokee with Guntee. Guntee

velly bad boy!" answered Yen Chin. "Me good boy!"

"You lying heathen! Only the other day we gave Gunten the trail-rope for gambling with you. As for Frank, he never wrote that letter," said Bob. "You ungrateful little rascal! Frank's done you a lot of good turns, and you ought to stand by him now."

"No can. Flanky velly bad boy." "Then shut up!" snapped Bob.

"No shutee up!" answered Yen Chin cheerfully. "Me tinkee Flanky velly bad boy, sultee nicee ole Molly. Velly bad boy, and you velly bad ole Bob for speakee to bad ole Flanky. Oh, yes--- Yoop!" wound up Yen Chin, in a wild howl, as Bob Lawless, losing patience; took him by the neck and shook him.

Bob strode away angrily, leaving the heathen Chinee yelling.

Bob and Beauclerc looked rather grim

in class that morning. They were the only fellows in the school who believed in the absent boy, and their belief in him was making them unpopular. arrived from the ranch, and Miss Meadows

During morning lessons Mr. Lawless left the school-room for a few minutes to | she asked. speak to him. She came back with a severe brow.

The fact that the rancher supported his nephew surprised her, and did not shake her opinion in the least. The suggestion that the letter had been forged by some revengeful hand she dismissed as an absurdity. And she did not want the rancher's nephew at the school. Indeed. she pointed out that it would be scarcely ? safe for Richards to venture among his schoolfellows in their present state of exasperation. Molly Lawrence was much liked and admired at Cedar Creek, and the letter in Frank's handwriting had made all the Cedar Creek fellows bitterly angry.

After lessons Bob Lawless and Beauclerc left together, without exchanging a word with their schoolfellows. They came on Tom and Molly Lawrence on the trail outside the gates, but the brother and sister looked the other way, and rode off as quickly as possible.

Bob's brow was black as he took the homeward trail.

"Pretty state of affairs now, isn't it, Cherub?" he growled.

Beauclerc nodded. "We can't wonder at it. Bob." he answered. "The fellows all believe that Frank wrote that letter. We've got to

prove somehow that he didn't." "But how?" said Bob hopelessly. "Somehow-I don't know how yet. But I can't believe that such a piece of rascality will be successful," said Beauclerc.

with conviction. Bob Lawless found his cousin in a far from happy mood when he arrived home

at the ranch.

hard work as he was not at school. On a L Canadian ranch there was always plenty? to be done by willing hands. Frank was more than willing to work; but that day he had worked with a heavy heart. He's looked hopefully at Bob as the Canadian schoolboy came trotting down the trail. There was a faint hope in his breast that something might have been discovered about the forged letter.

Bob Lawless shook his head, and Frank's handsome face clouded again.

"Any news, Bob?" he asked.

"But we'll get at the bottom of it

say die, Franky, old scout!" And the chums went into the ranch together.

On the following morning, and for some days, Bob Lawless started alone to school, Frank Richards remaining at the ranch. And during those sunny days of the bright Canadian spring Frank Richards' face had lost its old sunny look, for the hope that his innocence would be proved was growing fainter with every day that passed.

The 4th Chapter.

A Startling Confession!

"Yen Chin! You young rascal!" Bob Lawless uttered that exclamation

He had come suddenly into the schooland caused Frank's punishment; but the room at Cedar Creek, and found the theory that the letter had been forged heathen Chinee bending over his desk, going through it with his slim, deft As for Tom Lawrence, her brother, he | fingers. Bob had come in for a book he "If Richards thinks that he can sneak of the discovery he was going to make.

mistake," said Lawrence. "I know I'm from the desk as he heard Bob's sharp

His hand, with a paper in it, disappeared into his loose garments, and came out empty. Bob Lawless strode towards him with a knitted brow. "What are you after, you young

rascal?" he exclaimed. "Pool lil' Chinee no do wlong," mumbled Yen Chin, with a longing look at the doorway. But Vere Beauclerc was standing in the doorway, waiting for his chum. "What's the matter, Bob?" called out Beaucierc.

"This heathen was going through my desk," answered Bob.

"What on earth for?" "Blessed if I know-there's no money

"Pol Iil' Chinee no takee anything!" Even little Yen Chin, the heathen howled Yen Chin. "Me no tief. What

not easy to imagine the most complete | taken something and hidden it in your

"Handsome ole Bob makee mistakee!" "I couldn't have left any money there, fided to Bob and Beauclerc. "Velly bad or I should jolly well know what to think," said Bob angrily. "But I want of your writing from your desk, Bob. It to know what you've taken." "No takee."

"I tell you I saw you!" roared Bob. "No see. Pool lil' Chinee no stealee." Bob Lawless made a grasp at the little l heathen, and Yen Chin dodged him and

"Stop him, Cherub!" roared Bob. Beauclere stood ready to stop the heathen, and Yen Chin halted before he reached the doorway. But he heard Bob's heavy steps after him, and ran on, seeking to dodge the schoolboy in the doorway. Vere Beauclere promptly caught him by his pigtail, and Yen Chin yelled dis-

"Yow-ow! You lettee go! Pool lil' Chinee cly."

"Hold him, Cherub!" panted Bob. "I've got him!"

"You lettee go!" shouted Yen Chin, wriggling. "Nicee ole Molly, you makee Chelub lettee goee."

Molly Lawrence was passing in the passage, and she looked round. "It's all right, Molly," said Bob Law- | less. "The heathen has taken something

from my desk, and I want to know what

"You bad boy, Yen Chin!" said Molly. "No takee!" wailed Yen Chin. "Ugly. ole Bob tellee lie, samee as bad ole

"You young rascal!" roared Bob. "Why, I'll--I'll---"

Molly Lawrence came quickly forward.

"No takee noting. Me good boy-oh,

"Hold on to his pigtail while I see what he's taken," said Bob. And Beauclere nodded-and held on. Yen Chin wriggled as Bob turned out

his pockets—a folded sheet of exercisepaper, covered with Bob's writing, coming to light. Bob stared at it in utter astonishment.

"What on earth did you want that for, you silly heathen?" he exclaimed. "No wantee," gasped Yen Chin. "You takee back. Ole paper-no good."

"You can have it if you like," said Bob. "Why couldn't you say what it was, and why couldn't you ask me first, if you wanted it."

"You givee me papee?" "Yes. you can have it if you like, you Bob's handwriting for?" young ass! Blessed if I don't think you're loose in the roof," grunted Bob.

"Let him go, Cherub." But Vere Beauclerc did not let the Chinee go. He tightened his grasp on Yen Chin's pigtail. His handsome face had taken on a very grim expression.

Moliy," he said. "Before we let the young rascal go we'll find out what he wants that paper for."

"No wantee," said Yen Chin hastily. "Then why did you take it?"

The heathen was silent. With all his Oriental facility in lying, he did not seem to have a falsehood ready. "What does it matter, Cherub?" asked

Bob, in wonder. "It's only a sheet of an essay, and it's done with." "It may matter a lot," answered Beau-

clerc quietly. "That old paper is covered with your handwriting, Bob." "Naturally, as it was in my desk.

What does it matter?" "A lot, I think. It's a specimen of your handwriting."

. "Last week a letter was written in Frank's handwriting, and we wondered how the forger got a specimen to copy," said Vere Beauclerc very quietly. "Now we find Yen Chin pilfering a specimen looks to me-"

"Ch!" exclaimed Molly Lawrence. Bob understood.

He grasped Ven Chin's shoulder, with a look on his sunburnt face that made the little heathen quake.

"Out with it, you rascal!" said Bob. between his teeth. "That paper's worthless, but you don't want it for nothing. Somebody has put you up to getting a specimen of my fist."

"Me no savvy." "It's worked so well in Frank's case that I'm to be the next!" said Bob, white with anger. "Somebody's going to get an insulting letter in my handwriting next-I see the game. Thank goodness you had the sense to think of it, Cherub. This young rascal is the man-unless he's been put up to this by somebody else. He stole a specimen of Frank's hand, same as he's stolen a specimen of mine. It's plain enough now. Yen Chin, you young villain, did you write that letter to Molly?"

Yen Chin gave a dismal yell.

"No wlitee nothing. No can." "He couldn't have done it, Bob," said Beauclerc. "We know his fist—he can hardly write English. It was some chap accustomed to handling the pen who forged Frank's hand. Yen Chin got the specimen for him: there's no doubt of that now. Yen Chin, you're coming to Miss Meadows."

"No wantee see Missy Meadee!" wailed "What have you taken, Yen Chin?" | the hapless heathen. "Missy Meadee whackee pool lil' Chinee!"

"Who got you to steal this paper?" demanded Bob.

"No stealee. Takee."

"Whom did you take it for, then?" Yen Chin cast a hopeless glance round. There was no escape for him.

"Guntee!" he whispered. "Kern Gunten!" shouted Bob.

"Allee light." "Gunten made you take this paper from my desk."

"Me stony bloke after playee piecee card!" wailed Yen Chin. "Guntee sayee givee dollee fol papee with handsome ole Bob's wliting. Me no tinkee any wlong. Papee no goodee." Molly uttered a cry.

"Yen Chin! You wicked boy! Don't you know what Gunten wanted a sheet of

"Guntee no say." "Didn't you think, you silly heathen?" exclaimed Bob.

"Me tinkee of Guntee's dollee," said Yen Chin simply. "Me gottee no money, me wantee dollee."

Bob tightened his grasp on the "Hold on a minute, Bob—and you, heathen's shoulder till Yen Chin squeaked with pain. "Now tell me this," said Bob savagely.

"Has Gunten got you to take him any other chap's writing-Frank Richards', for example."

"Answer that!" breathed Molly Law-

"You hurtee pool lil' Chinee!" wailed Yen Chin.

"Answer me!" snapped Bob. "Allee light. Lastee weekee Guntee givee me dollee for takee papee flom ole Flanky's desk," whimpered Yen Chin. "What did he want it for?"

"Guntee no say. Me no tinkee harm." "I believe the little idiot didn't know what Gunten's game was," said Bob, after a pause. "He was only thinking of the money, and gambling with it, the little rascal. You can come to Miss Meadows and tell her, Yen Chin."

"No wantee see Missy Meadee--" "That doesn't make any difference," answered Bob grimly. "Come on!" And Yen Chin, quaking, was and into Miss Meadows' sitting-room, with Bob's iron grasp on his shoulder.

The 5th Chapter. Cleared at Last!

Frank Richards started.

"Bob!" he exclaimed. Frank was talking with Billy Cook on the ranch trail after dinner that day, when Bob Lawless came galloping from. the timber.

Bob was riding hard, and he waved his hat to Frank as he came tearing up, and Frank's heart leaped as he saw it. There was evidently news.

"Franky!" yelled Bob, dashing up in a cloud of dust, and drawing in his horse so suddenly that the animal's hoofs struck fire from the stones. "Old man! Hurrah!"

"It's all O.K.!" gasped Bob. "Right as rain, Franky! You're all right!"

"Wall, I swow!" ejaculated Billy Cook. Bob Lawless jumped off his horse, his face ablaze with excitement and hard riding. Evidently he had made good speed from Cedar Creek. He grasped his cousin by the shoulders, and waltzed him round on the trail in the exuberance of his satisfaction.

"All O.K.!" he trilled. "All serene! Right as rain! You're all right!

Hurrah!" "But-but what's happened?" gasped Frank breathlessly.

"Oh, gum! I'm out of breath! It's all right! Gunten, Yen Chin, Miss Meadows I

Richards on the shoulder. "I knowed you was the real white goods, kid! You'd better go and tell your poppa, Bob. There he is in the doorway, with your

Hurrah!" panted Bob Lawiess.

"I guess that's good news," said Billy Cook heartily, and he clapped Frank moppa."

knows! You're to come back to school!

Bob Lawless, grasping Frank's arm, rushed him to the ranch-house, where his father and Mrs. Lawless were looking out of the doorway, surprised to see Bob

home from school at that hour. "What has happened, Bob?" demanded the rancher.

Bob gasped for breath. "It's all out!" he said. "All O.K., poppa! I found Yen Chin-that blinking little heathen, you know-rummaging over my desk. And what do you think

he was after? A copy of my fist! And then I never guessed. But the Cherub tumbled. The Cherub's sharp, poppa! And Yen Chin owned up that Gunten had offered him a dollar for a copy of my fist, and owned up that last week the foreign trash gave him a dollar for a copy of Frank's fist. What do you think of that, poppa?"

Mr. Lawless knitted his brows.

"It's pretty clear," he said. "Only the day before Molly Lawrence got that letter, Yen Chin took a copy of Frank's handwriting to Gunten," said Bob breathlessly. "He's owned up to Miss Meadows. I don't think he knew; in fact. I'm sure he didn't. He was only thinking of the dollars, the silly heathen! But it's plain enough what Gunten

wanted the copy for." "The wicked boy!" exclaimed Mrs. Lawless, greatly shocked

Frank Richards drew a deep breath. "I guessed it was Gunten," he said. "There was no proof. But this is pretty good proof. We'll see whether Gunten has the nerve to deny it."

The rancher nodded. "You can leave Gunten to me," he said. "I will ride over to the store, and see his father, and have the matter out. Leave it in my hands."

"Yes, uncle," said Frank, with rather reluctant assent. He would have preferred to deal with Kern Gunten with his own hands.

But the matter was too serious to be left to a schoolboy. Frank was aware that it was better for his uncle to deal with it, and he submitted cheerfully.

"Has Miss Meadows sent you for Frank, Bob?" asked the rancher. "Yes, dad. I'm to take him back to Cedar Creek this afternoon."

"Good!" Frank Richards' face was very bright when he rode away on the trail for school with his Canadian cousin. The clouds had rolled by at last. He was late for afternoon lessons, and all Cedar Creek was in the big school-room; and never had Frank Richards been so glad to see the school-room before. In the last few shadowed days he had wondered whether he would ever set his feet inside Cedar Creek again, or whether he had looked his last on the backwoods school.

There was a buzz in the school-room, as Frank entered with Bob Lawless. Vere Beauclerc waved his hand to him from the class, with a joyous smile; and Tom Lawrence gave him a welcoming grin. Molly coloured and smiled. It was clear that Frank was on his old footing with the Cedar Creek crowd.

Miss Meadows turned to the cousins as they came in, the lesson stopping. She

gave Frank a kind smile. "Come here, Richards!" the schoolmistress called out.

Frank joined her before the class, his cheeks red, but his eyes very bright. The buzz in the school-room deepened, and Miss Meadows made a sign for silence. "Richards, your cousin has made a

discovery here to-day. No doubt he has told you of Yen Chin's confession." "Yes, ma'am," said Frank. "There is no doubt in my mind now, that the letter sent to Molly Lawrence

was a forgery," continued Miss Meadows. her voice heard in every corner of the & school-room, in breathless silence. "Yen Chin has confessed that Gunten bribed him to obtain a copy of your handwriting, the day before the letter was written. I am disposed to think he is The conclusion is plain. The matter is mistaken. "What are the younger writers very serious, and I shall see your uncle doing?" he asks. Well, a great many of and Mr. Gunten about it. For the them are keeping the young generation present, Richards, the matter rests there. amused even better than some of the and you return to Cedar Creek cleared of authors who have passed on succeeded in a all suspicion of having acted in the base doing. The boy of the present day is manner for which you were condemned." "Hurrah!" came from Bob Lawless.

Miss Meadows smiled. "I am sorry, Richards, that you were, self for being deceived by what looked And Miss Meadows shook hands with

Frank Richards before the class, and Frank went to his place. "I'm sorry, old scout!" whispered Tom Lawrence, as he passed.

Frank nodded cheerily. "All serene!" he said. "You were "Me solly, too, ole Flanky!" murmured

"You little rascal!"

(Another grand complete story of the chums of the school in the backwoods

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

"THE FIFTH FORM PREFECTS!"

By Owen Conquest, is the title of our next story of Rookwood School, in which the confusion caused by the captainless and prefectless condition of Rookwood becomes worse confounded. The firmness—or obstinacy—of the revered Head causes him to try the experiment of appointing prefects from the Fifth Form—with results that drive him almost

to despair!

The next splendid long instalment of "SKULL ISLAND!"

Storm's wonderful new serial, brings the s.s. Bombay Castle to Honolulu, and the boys have their first taste of the exciting sport of surf-riding on the famous beach of Waikiki. Also Captain Bones, assisted by his weird Obi Frank Richards had spent the day in stick, gives an exhibition of "magic which strikes terror into the hearts of the nondescript crew of the Bombay

"A STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE!" By Wartin Clifford,

we have a new mystery, which upsets the even tenor of life at the School in the Backwoods. Vere Beauclerc vanishes POPULAR YARNS. without leaving a trace, and his chums' efforts to solve the mystery of his dissomehow." said Bob hopefully. "Never appearance lead to some strange hap-

> The next of our helpful series of cricket articles is entitled:

"WHEN AND HOW TO HIT!" By J. W. Hitch.

The famous Surrey professional is one of those who believe that a batsman goes to the wicket to get runs, and it is towards the gentle art of run-getting. pure and simple, that his valuable hints are directed.

These three things put a fellow on the

GRIT, BRAINS, AND WORK!

road to success, as a correspondent of mine points out in a very well thoughtout letter. He writes in answer to a growl from a lad of Lancashire. I have no hesitation in endorsing all that my correspondent says. Grumbling does not do any good. Whining because of lack same sort.

take the place of the works of Baynes | minded him of Hanover. Reed, Kingston, and Henty. He says these famous authors have had no suc-

as well catered for as was his father; but times have changed a good deal since the period when a lad was satisfied with an annual gilt-edged volume. That would condemned unjustly. I cannot blame mynot do for him now. He wants his stories fresh and fresh, and plenty of like conclusive evidence; but I am very them. It is precisely this want that the sorry! Your name is cleared, my boy." Companion Papers supply.

There are many Middlesex readers of the of education is sheer waste of time- old Green 'Un, and I think they will be taken in. It's all right." time that ought to be put in at the interested in a little publication, entitled library or at continuation classes, making | "Middlesex to Wit," issued at a shilling ? Yen Chin. up for what has been missed. Many a by Messrs. W. H. Smith & Son. It has successful man has done everything him- | been compiled by Clive Fenn, and has con- Molly Lawrence did not speak, but her self, and won distinction and wealth. I tributions from Sir Owen Seaman, the glance was eloquent, and showed that My correspondent tells me of a man who | Duchess of Northumberland, Mrs. Leopold & Frank Richards was forgiven-for what at thirty-three could not read or write, de Rothschild, and others. Middlesex did he had not done! yet settled down to steady work and won | much in the war, and some of the work & That afternoon was a very happy one through to an excellent position. I i it did is dealt with in this readable little to Frank Richards. When lessons were could tell him of a case I know of the book. By the way, what a number of sover he was surrounded by a friendly people, if asked for the name of the crowd as he came out of the lumber county town of Middlesex, would reply, schoolhouse. In his happiness he could "London, of course!" But it is not Lon- almost have found it in his heart to fordon. Brentford holds the place of give Kern Gunten's black treachery. honour-narrow, rather dirty, but quaint & But that was not to be. Gunten was A writer in a daily paper speaks of the old Brentford, which faces Kew Gardens, by yet to be dealt with. complete absence of stories which might and which King George the First said re-

THE EDITOR.

KULL SLAND of Thrilling Adventure in said he. the South Seas. By DUNCAN STORM. ~~~~~

NEW READERS COMMENCE HERE!

The famous school-ship, the Bombay Castle, is on the way to the South Seas on an educational voyage, with a mixed crowd of schoolboys drawn from many of the most famous schools in England. Our old friends, Dick Dorrington, Chip, Skeleton, Porkis, and Pongo Walker, with their famous pet animals, are of the number. Captain Handyman is in command of the liner, Dr. Crabbunter is the Head of the floating school, and "Scorcher" Wilkinson is responsible for the boys' discipline.

At the last moment Dick, Chip, Porkis, and Pongo manage to smuggle on board a quaint old riverside character, calling himself Captain Bones. Captain Bones is a little blind man of great age who sailed the South Seas in the bad old days, and is more than suspected of being a retired pirate himself. He tells the boys he has the secret of a wonderful buccaneer's treasure.

The first Pacific Island at which the Bombay Castle touches is Chatham Island, one of the Galapagos group. Here, according to Captain Bones, a small cache of the old pirates' treasure is hidden in a cave. A party is made up to search for it. Lal Tata brings a couple of bottles of nitro-glycerine. The island is covered with wild vegetation, through which anarrow path winds. Captain Bones tells the boys that this is a tortoise-path, and shortly after they meet a giant tortoise. Horace, the goat, is greatly excited, and at once charges the tortoise, head down.

(Read on from here.)

The Clue to the Parchment.

The boys gave a gasp as Horace, the goat, charged the giant tortoise of the Galapagos.

They knew that Horace had met his match at last.

The tortoise hissed, pulled his head back into his carapace, or tank, and waited for the collision.

It came with a crack that resounded through the scrub like the explosion of

a bombshell. Horace hit the sloping shell head downwards in his old, familiar style. But he glanced off the huge tortoise like a shell from an armour-plate, shooting into the air, turning head over heels three times, and descending with a thump that kicked up a cloud of dust and sand like a

fountain. Horace gathered himself together, staggered, squinted, shook his head in a dazed fashion, and, turning, faced the rear end a cricketer enjoys the sport for what it of the baffling tortoise.

The sight of it made him angry, for when he has tucked his tu'penny and his tail in, one end of a tortoise looks most uncommonly like the other.

And Horace naturally thought that the giant tortoise had turned round to face him and threaten him.

"Maw!" he bleated, and off he charged again.

The result was exactly the same. Horace might just as well have charged a bank safe. He glanced off the shell like a projectile, as his own thick head clashed on it. Then over and over he went,

landing in a sitting position well down the path, looking thoroughly dazed. "Better leave him alone, Horace, old -chap!" advised Pongo. "He's one too many for you, and you'll only give your-

self a headache!" But Horace, though dazed, was not beaten. He rushed at the tortoise, got his great horns under its shell, and rolled a preciates the fact more than those who it over on its back with a tremendous are at the head of the county clubs. Inheave, powerful enough to have upset a deed, I am not far wrong when I say furniture-van.

Then, backing away, he charged for a third time.

This time he caught his head on the square edge of the shell, and that settled

not shift the tortoise by a hair's-breadth. But the blow was too much for Horace. He rolled over on his side, stunned and game as a recreation, or as an antidote to insensible. He had met his match.

"Crumbs!" exclaimed Pongo. butted himself to death!" "No. he hasn't!" said Porkis, lifting

Horace's eyelid. "He's only stunned. Lend us that water-bottle, Skeleton." Skeleton was carrying a water-bottle filled with his own special mixture of

liquorice-water and lime-juice. "If anything will put Horace on his legs

such a refreshing drink in all my experience." The boys seated themselves on the back of the tortoise and watched the efforts

of the V.A.D. party to revive Horace. Pongo lifted the goat's lip, and opened

throat of the insensible goat.

appeared all right, as though it were I slowly rise on its flippers and move under running down a scullery sink.

"He's all right!" said Pongo, satisfaction. "He can't have broken his neck, or the stuff wouldn't run down his throttle like that. Besides, his head doesn't wobble much."

"Hi!" protested Skeleton. "Steady on with that liquorice-water! You don't want to drown the goat, and we shall all be wanting a drink presently." And taking the crowbar which they carried, he placed it as a lever under the mighty shell and turned the tortoise right side up

It must have been the effects of Skeleton's patent cordial, for, in a little while, Horace opened his eyes, bleated faintly, and struggled to his feet, where he stood, head and tail down, regarding the giant tortoise sorrowfully.

And when the tortoise put its head out of its shell and hissed at him, Horace backed away. He had had enough of giant tortoises.

great reptile!"

them. It was making its way inch by inch and yard by yard towards the sea sands, where it would burrow and lay drowsing in the warmth till hunger and thirst drove it once more into the moist uplands and out of the arid, waterless belt below.

THE BOYS' FRIEND

For this is the habit of the giant tortoise of the Galapagos, since all the fresh water in the island rises from springs which are situated in the higher ridges of the islands. The tortoises which frequent the lower districts are obliged to travel for a long distance for water.

The inhabitants say that each animal stays for three or four days in the neighbourhood of the water, and having drunk its fill, then returns to the lower country. The male tortoises are recognised by their greater size and their long tails, and when in the company of the females give | slow progress. a loud, roaring noise.

This particular tortoise which had bested Horace was evidently an old bachelor. He did not roar, but merely obliterated." "Ha!" said Lal, regarding Horace with | hissed like a punctured tyre as he lifted | "They need be," replied Captain Bones,

night and day, is a good speed for a tortoise.

"I vote we collar this chap and take him on board the Bombay Castle," said Pongo, who was always eager to add to his zoological collection.

"Who's going to carry him home?" exclaimed Dick. "I don't know how you chaps feel about it, but I don't feel like dragging along twenty stone of tortoise

in this heat!" Captain Bones chuckled.

"Let him go on walking downhill, young gents, and we'll catch him up for blacking the instep of boots, and a when we return this way. He'll keep to stick of chalk. the tortoise path all right. These tortoises always keep to their own paths,"

Captain Bones had been patting the shell of the giant.

"He's a fine, well-grown lad," said he. "As like as not he was running about here in the days of the old buccaneers, for there's no saying how long they wil live. Older'n than Ole Bones he is, and reckon he could tell a thing or two if he could only speak."

The boys had slipped off the back of the great brute now. Tortoise riding is not an exciting sport, and Captain Bones gave a sudden start as his fingers played over the top plate of the tortoise shell which had been just vacated by Porkis.

Porkis had been sitting on two initials and a date carved in the shell of the brute. They were almost grown out by time, and the boys had not noticed them, but the sensitive fingers of the blind man read them better than the eye.

"Young gentlemen," said he, in a trembling voice, "use your eyes, and see if there's not some letters scratched on this old fellow's shell. I can feel 'em with my fingers like old scratching on the bark of a tree, but they are very

The boys examined the top shell, and the tortoise, surrounded by them, pulled in his head, with the bit of cactus he was chewing, and stopped dead in his

"There's something that looks like initials and letters," said Dick. "But can't read them. They are pretty well

great satisfaction. "That goat fellow | himself slowly up on his flippers and | speaking half to himself. "Look again, will not kick any more butts at this so | started to march slowly downhill. He | young gents!" he pleaded. "I know there weighed all twenty stone, and he was in | are letters there an' figures. I can nigh | The boys seated on the tortoise felt it I no hurry-for two miles a day, travelling I read 'em with my finger-tips. An' you

are all scholards! Isn't there an A an' a D. an' 1792?"

Then a happy thought struck Skeleton, "Wait a minute, you chaps!" said he. "I've got one of my brain-waves. Half a mo', and let me look through my

pockets!" Skeleton emptied his pockets. There were all sorts of things in Skeleton's pockets. There was a lump of liquorice, a paper of brandy-balls, some tar string. and a champagne-cork. There was also a lump of heel-ball which cobblers use

These last two objects were those for which Skeleton was looking.

"Any of you chaps got a bit of paper?"

he asked. "Thin paper." Pongo obligingly produced a large, thin-

leaf pocket-book. "Don't use that top leaf, Skeleton," said he. "I'm writing to my mater on that, and it's taken me a long time to write that bit. I don't want to have to write it all over again. Writing home letters gives me a pain in the back."

Skeleton unblushingly read Pongo's letter as far as it went.

"Dear mother"-it ran,-"I am quite well, and I hope this finds you the same. The sea is very blue to-day. Skeleton is on board, eating as much as usual. I will write you some more to-morrow. (Tomorrow.) Skeleton is still eating, and the sea is very blue. We caught a shark this afternoon, and took him into the lab. He came to life, and kiked Mr. Lal Tata into the bottle and jug department. There was a great escaps of gas which killed the shark. Skeleton is still eating. I will write some more to-morrow, and send you a picture-postcard when we get to a place where they sell picture-post-

Here the letter broke off. "I don't think there is any need for you to write home all about my appetite, Pongo," said Skeleton reproachfully. "Your mater, reading that letter, might think that I was an awful pig. I am not really. It's just the heat makes me hungry. I think it is a rotten letter,

And Skeleton, pulling the letter from the pocket-book, laid the leaf, face down, on the top plate of the tortoise and rubbed gently with his lump of black heel-ball, just as if he were taking a rubbing of a memorial brass or a tomb-

He gave a start as he did so, for there on the paper, in white letters and figures, appeared the lettering which was visible to the eye on the worn tortoiseshell: "Alf. Dix.n, 1792."

"Who's Alf Dixon?" asked Skeleton, as the letters appeared. "Alf. Dixon,

Captain Bones gave a shout, and waved

"I told you so, boys!" he exclaimed. "I knewed there was writin' on that there my finger-tips!"

"Wait a minute!" said Skeleton. "We'll

He took his stick of chalk, which was a the laboratory, with the purpose of chalk-Smarler's back. He had little thought to find it useful in a treasure-hunting expedition. He rubbed the chalk across the top plate of the tortoiseshell.

The tortoise sat quite still, chewing his I can remember the time when I used can easily understand how simple it is a lump of cactus, and shoving his ugly head Dout of his shell now and then to hiss at disfavour.

Having chalked the top plate white, the cunning Skeleton lightly dusted it with the other to locate the spot where the a silk handkerchief borrowed from Dick half-voiley will pitch; then get your bat a Dorrington for the purpose, as Skeleton's and make a huge straight hit, getting & own handkerchief was in use for carrying the left leg well out toward the mark a small package of rock-cakes.

and trying to get all the force of the And sure enough, as the chalk was stroke when the bat meets the imaginary a dusted off, some of it remained in the ball, say about six inches after it has a faint scores in the shell, giving the same reading in plain white letters:

"Alf. Dix.n. 1792." "That's plain enough," said Skeleton,

"He did that!" replied Captain Bones, To be bowled out by a half-volley is a flourishing his Obi stick excitedly. "And humiliating; to play forward and smother ? this is the clue that I was looking for.

He dived into his pocket and produced a sheet of old and yellowed parchment. "Read that, Master Dick!" he ex-

Dick took the parchment and read: "'And I Alfred Dixon, sometime mate

of ye bark Susan & Anne of Brystol Porte, do hereby declare that my littel from the place where it pitches. It adds I share of ye treasure of ye Boucaniers is force to the hit-beside enabling the huried in ye hylltoppes of ye Chatham Island of ye Galapagos Grouppe, close by to jump in to meet the ball, even leaving & ye sprynge where ye great tortoyses do comme at to drynke. And ye bearing of thys cave is north by ye Pole star twenty although I do not advocate the jumping six payces from ye spryng, in ye syde of ye old crater. And there is buried my sinne and my treasure and may God in hys Mercie have pity on my soule. Note. there is ye greate rocke across ye mouth momentum of the body will be added to a of ye cave which did slyppe because of our dygging after I had hydden ye body of my shipmate which I did kill with my sheathe knyfe, in ye said cave. My sinne bably more batsmen have fallen a victim is heavy upon me for, but half an hour before I did commit this great crime, I was jesting and innocent as anny boye and did carve my name on ye shell of ye great tortoyse which was drynking by the sprynge—ye only wytnesse of my great cryme which I now confesse in thys my of my soul. And I dydde tell them on ye and was kylled and ye Captayne would not wayte to discover hys bodye since he had a fayre winde for ye Californian Coastes and many hydes were waiting us there

Here the writing stopped at the end cf the sheet of parchment. "What does it all mean?" asked Dick

wonderingly. "It means that there was some dirty

TO PUNISH LOOSE BOWLING.

A Special Article for Young Cricketers. - - -

unless the batsman chooses the proper a restraining effect on the man who has for it." ball to hit he is running risks of getting hitherto regarded the game in the light By the way, perhaps I'd better explain caught or bowled out; and there are only of a pastime.

paper, you will learn that one district somebody who can. team has perhaps beaten another by scoring 300 runs against about 250.

hours of 11.30 or 12 and 6.30. Surely it is a lesson which may as well be learned by players in first-class elevens, who have, as a rule, a far better wicket to play upon. But then, of course, the local

In this style of cricket the most unorthodox shots are sometimes made. A man forces a ball away on the leg-side, pulls, and runs extraordinary risks of being out leg-before in his efforts to score where the fieldsmen are not standing; but in the majority of cases the quick scoring may be attributed to the fearless manner in which the local cricketer flogs that loose, straight ball called the half-volley.

This quick rate of scoring simply means that the best players in our local clubs know how and when to hit. There is an idea amongst our young cricketers that the men who play in local or Saturday cricket are vastly inferior to the men who, by taking part in first-class or county games, have become well known, at least by name, throughout the length

and breadth of the kingdom. This is a huge mistake, and nobody apthat most of our best-class local clubs include in their Saturday teams at least one or two batsmen who are in every way fully qualified to play in first-class cricket.

In the first place, however, there isn't room in a county team to include all the It was a tremendous blow, and it did young amateurs who are sufficiently clever cricketers; and next, the majority of Saturday afternoon batsmen play the the worries of business, rightly regarding the claims of citizenship, or the serious side of life, as being more important than I the claims of sport.

And so it is that in most of our Satur-

batsmen who, with most monotonous regularity, score their centuries, or thereabouts, with lightning-like rapidity, and get an amount of enjoyment out of ting, and what it means to a side if a players, who are not generally aggressive, a laste Will and Testament for the easement that will do it!" said he. "I never found the game which is not perhaps appre- man really knows how to hit the half- trying to hit. For some reason or other ciated by the bowlers who oppose them. | volley. I have often seen men in first- the shot is made far too soon, resulting shyppe that Jacob fell from ye cliffe path would at first probably fail were they to dication of being great batsmen, and yet, either producing a lofty hit, or absolutely be drafted into their county sides, be- when that half-volley comes along, do missing the ball altogether. cause they would have to restrain, to a not attempt to give the loose ball the considerable extent, their natural impulse | punishment it deserves. his mouth with the marline-spike of his to hit. Bowling in club cricket is so Yet, as I give the matter longer and Then he started pouring much weaker than in first-class games; deeper thought, I appreciate the fact that Skeleton's liquorice cordial down the grounds are, as a rule, so much smaller, cricket of all grades, from the Test game in consequence of which the hit which played between England and Australia,

to take part in local cricket, and I appre- to punish instead of playing an ordinary

HEARNE,



the famous All-England and Middleday teams we find one or two pre-eminent | sex Cricketer, who has written this Article specially for the BOYS' FRIEND.

It gurgled in Horace's throat and dis- would "cart" a ball over the local boun- to the council school match in a public //

I have often heard people say, "Cricket | dary would run the risk of resulting in | park, would be better and brighter if his Obi stick. would be very much more attractive if the a catch on a larger enclosure; and then players would only take advantage of all county players would hit more than they the seriousness of county matches and the chances offered to them, and feardo." Quite right up to a point, but consequent loss of points by defeat has lessly hit the ball which absolutely "asks of tort'ise's back as soon as I touched it with

what is a half-volley. When the ball try it another way." many things to consider when taking such | In Saturday afternoon games there is comes along and pitches some yard and a risks while representing one's county. not much seriousness, because the hours half to two yards away from the batting- ine piece of chalk he had pinched from Of course, to see the purest and most set aside for a match are so few, that crease, you can be sure he is the fellow exciting game, you cannot do better than were the players to indulge in stone- you are looking for. In the case of an an ass. Kick me!" on Bully look on at a match between two strong walling it is quite likely that only a exceptionally tall batsman, a ball is a and local teams who have one day in quarter of the players engaged would get half-volley even if it drops somewhere which to do their level best. Even by an innings. It is a case of get runs shorter than the distance I have named. looking down the columns of your cricket | quickly, or get out and make room for | It is straight, and, if you like to practise with a bat but without a ball, you

Yet all this has been done between the ciate the real pleasures of fearless hit- forward shot, as do quite a lot of bats- Horace, who was eyeing him with great Make two chalk-marks on the ground, one to represent the batting-crease and

> pitched. By practising this shot both without a ball and when in the nets, merely a short space of time will bring about per- squinting at his handiwork with great fection, provided always that the left approval. "Alf. Dixon, 1792'! I supfoot is thrown out in the direction of the I pose Alf cut his moniker on old Slowcoach ball and the downward swing of the bat as far back as 1792." is perfectly straight.

it is to lose a chance; to play back to it > Listen, boys!" is probably fatal. The ball should be hit with a good swing of the bat, and when the stroke is correctly made every muscle of the legs, back, arms, and wrists seem to take part in it, and the ball flies off without an apparent effort.

The bat should meet the ball just when the latter is rising, or, say, six inches striker to get to exactly the right spotone's ground and taking the risk of being stumped if the ball is missed altogether: out of one's ground as a general thing.

When the down-swing of the bat has brought it against the ball, the right foot will close up on to the left, and the whole the swing of the arms and bat. Probably more runs have been scored off a half-volley than any given ball, and proto its temptations, as not only may a fair hit be as fairly caught, but also any error of timing or any inaccuracy may send it high into the air.

I ought to warn the young cricketer of the greatest fault which is committed by Some of the batsmen I have in mind class matches who have shown every in- in the bat getting under the ball, and