

**JIMMY SILVER RESIGNS!
SKULL ISLAND!** By DUNCAN
STORM.

**VAL MORNINGTON'S VICTORY!
THE SPORTS OF ST. CLIVE'S!** By ARTHUR
S. HARDY.

The BOYS' FRIEND 1^{1d}/₂

TWELVE PAGES!

No. 945. Vol. XIX. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending July 19th, 1919.

Jimmy Silver's Resignation!

By Owen Conquest.



The Day of Reckoning for Smythe & Co!

The looks of their unwelcome visitors were very grim indeed. "I suppose you know you're going through it!" said Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four tramped into the study, and after them came the Colonial Co., the three Tommies of the Modern side, and a dozen other juniors. The nuts were on their feet now, with alarm in their faces.

The 1st Chapter.
Done to the Wide!
"Rookwood at last!"
"Thank goodness!"
"Oh, dear!"
"That's a day!"
There was almost a chorus of groans.
Jimmy had Jimmy Silver & Co. felt
pleased to see the gates of Rookwood
opened, and never had they returned
as fast to his body and troubled in
the present occasion.
Senior cricketers had left that
morning. In the cheeriest spirits.
had returned in the depths of
depression, as the dusk of evening
over the old red roofs of
Rookwood.
They were tired, they were wrath-
ful, and they were, perhaps, a little
dazed. It was not to be wondered at, con-

sidering what had happened to them
that day.
Old Mack, the porter, blinked at
them as they trailed in, and grinned
a little. Several fellows in the quad
stared at them, and grinned a good
deal. Tubby Muffin, of the Classical
Fourth, came rolling up to greet
them.
"Beaten Greyfriars!" he asked.
"No!" grunted Jimmy Silver.
"Oh, my hat!" said Tubby. "Well,
I must say you don't look like a win-
ning crowd. But you shouldn't have
let Greyfriars beat you, Jimmy. You
shouldn't be really, you know. You
could have had me in the team if
you'd liked."
"Fathead!" growled Arthur
Edward Lovell.
"Well, it might have made a
difference," said Tubby. "In fact,
I'm sure it would. How many

innings did they beat you by,
Jimmy?"
This question was intended to
convey deep sarcasm.
"We haven't played the match, you
silly ass!" was Jimmy Silver's reply.
Tubby stared.
"Haven't you been to Greyfriars?"
"No!"
"Well, my word!" ejaculated the
fat Classical. "You started for
Greyfriars in Smythe's motor-car.
Did you lose the way?"
"Oh, rats!"
"He, he, he!" chuckled Tubby.
"What are you chortling at, you fat
duffer!" snorted Lovell. Arthur
Edward Lovell did not see anything
humorous in that day's disastrous
happening.
"You haven't been to Greyfriars!"
chuckled Tubby. "He, he, he!

Well, that takes the cake! You look
a happy lot, too! He, he, he!"
"Oh, squash him!" growled
Mornington.
Jimmy caught the fat, Classical by
the shoulder.
"Where's Smythe of the Shell!" he
asked.
"Blessed if I know," answered
Tubby Muffin. "He went out with a
crowd of his pals soon after you
started in the motor-car. They
haven't come in yet. I suppose
they're making a day of it."
"Did they take cricketing things?"
"I noticed that some of them had
cricket bags."
"That settles it," said Valentine
Mornington. "Smythe & Co. went
to Greyfriars in our place, all right,
after spoiling us to get into that
dashed motor-car. Or, to speak more

correctly, after spoiling you, Jimmy
Silver."
Jimmy knitted his brows.
"We were all spoiled!" he said
angrily. "How was it to suspect that
Smythe had tipped the chauffeur to
take us wandering across country, and
keep us away from Greyfriars?"
Mornington shrugged his shoulders.
"I warned you that Smythe was up
to some trick," he answered.
"You said he was!" snapped
Jimmy. "But you're always suspect-
ing somebody of something, Morning-
ton. You couldn't give a hint as to
what trick he was up to, anyhow."
"I guessed he had something up his
sleeve!"
"A pity you couldn't guess what it
was then."
"Look here—"
"Oh, rats! We're all as wise as



JIMMY SILVER'S RESIGNATION!

(Continued from the previous page.)

round his rival, in order to give the junior captain a fall.

Adolphus Smythe & Co. heard the news with delight. They would have backed up Morny, or anybody else, against Jimmy Silver. Lattrey and his friends, the black sheep of Rookwood, took precisely the same view.

There was no doubt that on Morny's side would be ranged all the nuts, and the slackers, and the shady black sheep.

Erroll shook his head; but he did not argue with his chum. He was loyal to Mornington; though he had his doubts about the wisdom of Morny's new course.

Erroll, naturally, backed up his own chum; and the grave, quiet junior had a good deal of influence.

On the Modern side there was jubilation. "This is good—real good!" Tommy Dodd said. "When rogues fall out, you don't—not that they're rogues;" but when Classics fall out, it's a chance for the Moderns. They outnumber us too much for a Modern to get in unless they're divided. Now they're divided."

"Sure they are!" said Tommy Doyle. "And if they split Tommy Dodd and Jimmy Silver and Mornington, beaded you may get in on the Modern vote, Tommy!"

"It's a jolly good chance," said Tommy Cook, rubbing his hands. "And what Rookwood really wants is a Modern junior skipper!"

"That's it!" said Dodd.

So the three Tommies rejoiced. And there was not likely to be any split in the Modern vote. Tommy Dodd had a chance in a three-cornered contest for the captaincy. At the same time, once at the business of electing Mornington, on the same business, dropped in at Tommy Dodd's study, and found the three Tommies engaged in comparing notes and lists of names.

"Gettin' ready for an election?" asked Morny, with a grin. "What's on?" answered Tommy Dodd.

"You'll be voting for me?"

"Stickin' Jimmy Silver?"

"Stickin' to myself!" grinned Dodd. "If there's an election, my pippin, there's going to be a Modern candidate, and I'm not see?"

"Oh!" ejaculated Mornington. "With three candidates, I think we shall get our man in," said Cook. "What do you think, Morny?"

"I think you're a set of cheeky asses," said Morny, with a grin. "And he retired from the study rather discomfited, leaving the Modern trio chuckling."

On Saturday afternoon there was a notice on the board, calling a meeting of the electors of the Lower School in the Common-room. The notice was to decide the question whether an election was to be held. All a good number of the juniors demanded it, it was understood that

Jimmy Silver was to resign, and the matter was to be settled by a new election. Morny had high hopes that there would be a sufficient show of hands.

The meeting was a crowded one. Nearly all the Fourth and Shell were there, and a goodly contingent of the Third and Second.

The Fistical Four came in together; three of them frowning, and only Jimmy Silver wearing a smiling and placid expression. Jimmy's chums were a good deal more annoyed at the turn affairs were taking than Jimmy himself. The captain of the Fourth did not seem much troubled.

It was soon seen that the meeting was generally in favour of a new election—Smythe & Co. were vociferously in favour of it.

Jimmy Silver took it smilingly. He did not remain many minutes at the meeting; but when he left the Common-room with his chums he was no longer junior captain of Rookwood, but only a candidate for the election, which was to take place on Monday.

His chums had insisted on that, and Jimmy had yielded to them; though he was more inclined personally to stand out altogether.

The notice of the election duly appeared on the board, with the names of three candidates—Jimmy Silver, Valentine Mornington, and Thomas Dodd.

"Cheeky Modern set like Edward Lovell," said Tommy Dodd. "I don't see how he can get in as anybody else's opponent. Silver molly. I'm a Modern, but I'm a good glasser, too."

"A classical Modern," said Lovell. "I'd rather be a Modern than a Modern!"

"Classical, of course," said Morny. "Oh, rather," said Tommy Dodd.

"Jimmy Silver looked like a Modern," said Morny. "I agree to that," said Lovell. "We want a Classical Modern in with the Classical vote, and that case!"

"Morny ought to stand out, but that case!" growled Lovell. "He's not likely to, is he?"

"Well, he ought; and I'll well tell him so," exclaimed Morny. "Pretty state of affairs, isn't it? In like this should lead to a Modern skipper!"

And Lovell called on Morny to Study No. 4, and stated his views with great emphasis, but without the slightest effect.

"I'm going ahead!" said Morny. "And suppose a Modern skipper snorted Lovell."

"I hope he won't," said Morny. "One of the Classical candidates ought to stand down to prevent you, you know that, Morny?"

Arthur Edward hotly. (Continued on page 251.)



Our Special Cricket Article

THIS WEEK:

WHAT IT MEANS TO BE A "PRO."

By A FAMOUS PROFESSIONAL.

(For obvious reasons, the author of this article cannot allow his name to be published.)

As a youth my sole ambition was to become a first-class professional cricketer. I loved the game; I paid my visits to county matches; I looked upon the men with famous names as the only heroes worth knowing. And so I worked—or played—with that end in view, making my opportunities of learning a trade; and eventually I played for my county.

I wanted to give an outline of a cricketer's life—a life full of joys and disappointments, but never sufficiently lucrative to make up for the idle years which follow the closing of active participation in the game. The best cricketer in the world doesn't earn so much as a first-class carpenter; this is no exaggeration.

However, to get on with the career. First of all, we have him in his youth, when he has just finished with school, and the local club perhaps have obtained his services for the Saturday afternoon fixtures. He is not much—if at all—better in point of skill than his fellow-members of the village eleven; but, whilst perhaps they are at their best, he is merely starting, has much to learn, and with care may develop into a great player.

One pair of keen eyes has noticed and brought the county authorities the possibilities of the youngster, and he has received a letter from the secretary, asking him to present himself at the county ground on a certain day to take part in net practice. Such a trial may not have so many terrors for the reader, but the most conceited young cricketer will feel very real at such a time, for he knows that he is being carefully watched by experienced men. At the county nets, perhaps owing to the fact that the local village was in the habit of playing a bit slowly, the ball seems to whip along off the pitch at a terrific pace, and has not been delivered. But the authorities understand all these difficulties, and do not judge a youth in his display during the first few days of a colts' match may follow the net practice, and, taking it for granted that the youth is successful, he is notified that he is to be engaged to play in the first ring of the summer season. As a rule this sends the youngster into a reverent beam of delight, it is the first rung of the ladder, and he endeavours to copy every good example, putting aside every temptation to indulge in things

which are likely to prove detrimental. We see him now with every hope of playing for the county eleven. Let him persevere, and there is no knowing to what heights in the cricket world he may eventually attain.

Look at the said young cricketer in the next phase of life. Perhaps some years have passed since we saw him at trial at the nets. He has acquired a more athletic figure—the exercise has done that—and his face is tanned by long days of fielding and batting in the sun. He must have a mump, so we will call him Jones. He struts across the ground on the morning of a big match, dressed in his flannels and pads, and carrying a couple of bats towards the practice net.

There is a little crowd at his heels, for Jones has become a popular idol, and he is soon to be seen opening his shoulders at the deliveries of three or four other, but not so successful, players, with a large number of the public standing around watching his every movement. Yes, Jones has become a great player, and the crowd have recognised his greatness by calling him George. Whilst he is driving at the nets a voice will perhaps come from the midst of the spectators, "Morning, George!" and if the player turns round with a smile and responds, "That particular spectator feels amply repaid for his expenditure of the gate-money, and beyond the centre of interest for a moment. So much for greatness.

Jones is batting in the big match. His ordinary good shots are made in silence, for the crowd have become used to his brilliance, and his boundary-hits are applauded to the echo. He is nearing his century, and everybody is at the highest pitch of excitement. He gets it, and in a quarter of an hour the newboys are running round the ground with their placards bearing, "Latest Cricket. Jones gets a century."

At last he is out, and the applause is deafening as he makes his way back to the pavilion. Evidence of his popularity is even to be seen in the players' room, at the door of which a journalist is waiting to interview him. Some one wants him to write his name in a special autograph-book; another man wants to purchase the century-making bat, still another wants him to come and play at his county place over the week-end, and the number of individuals who want to stand him a drink may run into

hundreds. Jones is the idol of the public.

The third phase is short. The days of regular centuries are over, and, somehow, instead of starting the batting, Jones's name figures sixth or seventh on the card. It seems to be a different side altogether, for the older members of the team of years ago have dropped out, and younger men have taken their places. Still younger men are waiting their chances, and it has become quite an ordinary thing to hear spectators asking one another, "If Jones is worth his place in the eleven?" "Isn't he getting a bit beyond it?" and so on.

Jones has been left out of the side a few times, because, so they say, the wickets didn't suit him so well as they suited So-and-so, and he has formed a habit of looking at the list of players needed for each match, which is pinned up in the players' room. Still, the worst has not arrived yet. He begins to get left out altogether, and then somebody approaches him about a position which is vacant, entirely away from the world of championship cricket. It is the beginning of the end, and he wonders whether, his one day's fame, he can manage to keep him for the remainder of his days.

The fourth, and last, phase is a sorrowful affair. Many years have passed since Jones has played his last match, and, his name every other popular man, he is forgotten. A big game is to be played on his old county enclosure, and he journeys up to witness it. Even the old familiar faces at the gate are gone, and, instead of a respectful greeting and a smile, he is met with the turnstile, which registers his sixpence in the same manner as it does the money of the other.

The old player walks around the ground, and seats himself upon a hard bench to look on at those who are fighting all his old battles over again. Nobody looks twice at the grizzled and lined face. He is simply a spectator who is occupying a seat which another man occupies. Perhaps somebody in the crowd recognises him, and tells his nearest neighbour, "That's Jones." And the reply hurts more than anything. "Who is Jones?" "What, one of the old players? Humph! A bit old-fashioned in his ideas, I expect. Those old fogies always think they know more about the game than anybody else. By Jove! There's a drive for you! Bravo! Bravo!"

It must not be imagined that I have any particular old cricketer in my mind's eye. I have not. These are merely observations I have made during my very happy cricket career. And, after all, one cannot expect even the greatest of them to remain long in the memory of the public. Each man has his innings, and when he is dismissed he must abide by the decision of the umpire and retire.

Add to this the fact that Jones has neglected to learn any trade, that his best years are gone, and that the workhouse looms large in the distance, that he has an idea of doing what many hundreds of young fellows have done for themselves. Don't imagine that I am running down the game, or that you have to go and get it, but I can't help but to adopt it as a profession, to first of all, have something else to fall back upon.



No. 5. Val Mornington.

Special New Feature!

WHEN Vernon-Smith to Greyfriars came
He led a life luxurious;
Played many a dark and shady game,
And made his schoolmates furious.
The same remarks apply, in truth,
To wild and reckless "Morny."
Who sowed wild oats in early youth,
And found his path was thorny!

A dandy of the first degree,
Yet very far from silly,
He gars himself most stylishly,
Like swells in Piccadilly.
Top-hat and monocle complete
His slim and slender figure;
Though on occasions he can treat
His chums to feats of vigour!

No longer with the shady set
He occupies his leisure;
No longer does he smoke or bet
Or stoop to doubtful pleasure.
The merry revells of the past
Are faded and forgotten;
And Mornington may now be classed
With those who shun things "rotten."

The heroes of the Classic Side
Could scarcely do without him;
And Modern juniors, when they've tried
To fluster or to flout him,
Have found that Morny is a chap
Whose blows are scientific;
And when he figures in a scrap
His prowess is terrific!

Three cheers for Morny! May he stand
For ever 'mid the foremost!
And lend the Classic chums a hand
When they desire to score most.
All honour to him, he has thrust
His shady past behind him;
In every future yarn, we trust,
A sportsman keen we'll find him!

—THE ROOKWOOD RHYMESTER



Warned Off!

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

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter. The Man from Chicago!

"So, Bub!" Frank Richards & Co. looked at the man with a strong voice with a strong voice... Cedar Creek were the chums of Old Man Hopkins... they had walked... morning lessons at the school to see Mr. Todgers'... showing it to... voice was... indignation as he told... steam-plough was not in...

way from Montreal to New Westminster you can find farms with some pesky machine of this sort rusting on the waste land. And nearly every one of them means a mortgage on a Canadian farm. "But what does the farmer buy them for, then?" asked Frank Richards, puzzled. Bob shrugged his shoulders. "Why does anybody buy a thing he doesn't want?" he asked. "People are always doing it. Advertisements and a drummer with an oily tongue do the trick. The farmer man knows all about crops and cattle, but he doesn't know much about City trickery, and the drummer takes him in every time. Some of the machines are good, some of them are rubbish. Most of them go the same way. They rust in a corner, while the farmer is paying off the mortgage, or being sold up because he can't pay." Frank Richards whistled. "And does that happen often?" he asked. "Every day. It's a regular scandal."

"It ought to be stopped." "Well, the law can't stop a simple and unscrupulous chap from being fooled by an oily-tongued drummer," remarked Vere Beauclerc. "The machine-man delivers the goods—that is his part of the bargain. If the farmer finds out that he's bought a white elephant, that's his look-out; only it comes hard on him, as in the case of Chunky's father." "Poppa was going to make no

that the sleek, sly drummer was selling him a pup, so to speak. It was just then that the nasal voice fell on the ears of the chums of Cedar Creek school: "Say, Bub!" "A tall thin, sharp-nosed man had stopped in the trail that ran by the fence. He had a long, thin nose and a pair of very sharp eyes, and a little pointed beard on his sharp chin. Frank Richards & Co. looked at him with some interest. They did not need telling that this exceedingly sharp-looking pilgrim came from "over the line"—that is to say, from the States. "Hallo, Brother Jonathan!" said Bob Lawless.

Chunky Todgers eyed the slim stranger with great disfavour. His sharp face and the bag he carried were enough for Chunky. He knew a machine-man from the States when he saw one. It was such a sharp gentleman as this who had sold Old Man Todgers his famous plough.

"I guess you can put me right for Hopkins' Farm," said the sharp-looking stranger, his sharp eye on Frank Richards. "Is that correct, Bub?" "My name isn't Bub," said Frank, in surprise. "Franky, old man, you're still learning," said Bob Lawless. "Bub is a polite form of address to youth in this pilgrim's native land." The stranger grinned. "Tenderfoot, I calculate," he remarked. "Perhaps you can give me the office, Bub."

thresher, and we're giving them away. Yep!" "Well, that's jolly generous of you, anyhow."

"Practically giving them away, I mean. We charge only six hundred dollars."

"Oh!" Frank understood that this was a machine-man now—the first specimen he had seen of that enterprising race. He was a drummer, from Chicago, looking for business in the Thompson Valley.

The sharp eyes of Snooker & Sniggs' representative rested on the four schoolboys sharply. "I guess your folks are farmers?" he remarked.

"Something of the sort," said the sharp gentleman, in a burst of confidence. "I'm drumming up business in this section. A bit outside the usual beat—a rough country, sir."

But it wants the Snooker-Sniggs' thresher all the more for that. I've seen threshing in this valley, sir, but that fairly made me weep. I'll call on your folks with pleasure—real pleasure, and if they haven't heard of our thresher, I guess I can tell them all about it, and open their eyes some. Hyer's my keywords."

The sharp gentleman opened a card-case, and to the astonishment of the Canadian schoolboys, jammed business-card into their hands—one each. The cards bore the inscription:

HIRAM K. HIKES. Snooker and Sniggs, Chicago, Ill.

Mr. Hikes beamed on the chums of Cedar Creek. Evidently he considered that he had done a good stroke of business; introducing his business-cards into four farming homes. The possible sale of four Snooker-Sniggs' threshers loomed ahead.

"You hand those cards to your poppas, and tell them I'm always to be heard of at the Occidental Hotel in Thompson," he said impressively. "I guess I'll mosey out to anywhere, to call on anybody—I don't ask anybody to buy; I simply tell 'em about our thresher, and they tumble over one another to buy it. Because it's the goods, you see."

"Oh!" gasped Frank Richards. "I guess I'm calling on Mr. Hopkins to-day—if I can find the darn place!" said Mr. Hikes. "You let

"Turn there, and keep on till you get to the corduroy road," said Bob. "Follow the corduroy as far as the creek, and then strike up the creek and keep on." "So, Bub!"

And the sharp gentleman marched on; Bob Lawless glancing after him with a smile, and Bob's chums staring at Bob's smiling face in wonder. Bob's direction had been very clear, and the Chicago gentleman could not possibly mistake them; but they had the advantage that the route they went on was exactly opposite to the direction he should have taken for the Hopkins' farmstead.

The sharp gentleman did not know that it was a discovery he was to make later. "What are you pulling his leg for, Bob?" murmured Frank Richards. "To keep him away from Old Man Hopkins, if I can!" answered Bob coolly. "Old Man Hopkins doesn't want a mortgage on his farm, like 'Gard's poppa."

"Oh!" "By the time he's tramped up the creek, and landed in the hills, he may give up the trail, and take the route for the night, too," yawned Bob. "It may tire him of doing business in the Thompson Valley—and a jolly good thing that, too. Now, then, it's time we got back to Cedar Creek."

The chums of the lumber school grinned as they started. "To get to keep him away from Old Man Hopkins, if I can!" answered Bob coolly. "Old Man Hopkins doesn't want a mortgage on his farm, like 'Gard's poppa."

Probably he was still tramping wearily on with his back to his destination. That day, at least, it was pretty certain that he would not sell a Snooker-Sniggs' thresher in the Thompson Valley; which, as Bob Lawless slyly remarked, was all to the good.

The 2nd Chapter. Mr. Hikes in Luck!

"Hopkins, old chap!" "Allo!" said Harold Hopkins cheerily.

It was a couple of days later, and Cedar Creek were coming out after lessons. Frank Richards & Co. were waiting for the arrival, when Frank paused to speak to the cockney schoolboy.

Frank was rather curious to know whether Hiram K. Hikes had ever arrived at the Hopkins' farmstead. The chums of Cedar Creek had seen nothing of the sharp gentleman during the past two days. "Have you had any drummers round your shebang, kid?" asked Bob Lawless.

"Hopkins nodded. "Chap named Hikes?" asked Beauclerc. "That's it!" answered Hopkins. "Father's buying a thresher of 'im—something wondrous 'im. Saves no end of labour, and labour's scarce 'ere in the threshin' season, of course."

Harold Hopkins had been some time at Cedar Creek, but he still made the Canadian schoolboys smile with his spirates. "So, Mr. Hopkins is buying that thresher, is he?" asked Bob. "Tain't concluded yet," explained Hopkins. "You see, the price is six hundred dollars; and that's a bit too steep for us 'Opines. We didn't bring the Bank of Hengland over with us, you know. But Mr. Hikes is a very accommodating gent. His firm makes it easy for you to buy. They take a mortgage on your land agin the payment."

"Oh! Do they?" murmured Frank Richards. "Father was jolly pleased when Mr. Hikes told 'im that," said Hopkins. "You see, it makes it all so simple. The thresher makes it easy for itself in a couple of seasons, so the mortgage is really only a matter of form. In fact, Mr. Hikes says he, 'inself, would trust the ole 'ole 'im in father's promised, but his firm don't know father, of course, and they 'ave to do business in the usual way."

"No doubt," grunted Bob. "With that thresher, it works out at saving the labour of six 'ands, at least," said Hopkins; "and out 'ere, you know the ole 'ole 'im in father's promised to come along and mend the machine if it goes out of order?"

"Eh? No! It doesn't go out of order—it runs 'imself!" "How do you know that?" "Mr. Hikes says so!"

the famous plough went into... it was rusting—what was left of it and Old Man Todgers was still going on the mortgage. "The mortgage!" said Frank Richards as Chunky referred to it. "That means that means?" "Oh, you're a tenderfoot here!" said Chunky Todgers. "Bob knows all about it, don't you, Bob?"

"You see, Franky, Mr. Todgers has five hundred dollars for that mortgage," he explained. "Naturally, he had the cash in hand; so he got a mortgage on his farm."

"My hat!" Frank Richards exclaimed. "Is that a usual way to do a steam-plough?" "Quite," said Vere Beauclerc. "We've still got some things to say about Western Canada, and you'll see, so," said Frank, with a grin.

"You see, the American machine-man is a regular feature in this country," said Bob Lawless explained. "It comes along selling the very best of agricultural devices—good things in their way, but not much used on these farms out in the West. The man doesn't want cash down, and he wouldn't get it if he did. His business is to mortgage on the farm for you. It's their regular business. The drummer—"

"What?" "That's American for commercial traveller," said Bob, with a grin. "The drummer books the simple farmer Johnny Todgers into the latest thing in ploughs or threshing machines or combine harvesters. So he does go ahead like steam."

"He lives the contraction gets, then the trouble comes—perhaps two or three hundred miles from home. Something goes wrong with the works, and there isn't a man with much knowledge about the machine, and if he were, he wouldn't get the parts without no end of trouble."

"The result?" "The result is that the contraction comes along after it gets out of order, and the farmer and rust," said Frank. "You've little heart! all the



HANDS UP! "Hande up!" The thin, bony hands of Hiram K. Hikes went up as if they had been moved by an electric shock. He blinked nervously at the masked ruffians, one of whom was covering him with a revolver.

end of that steam-plough," said Chunky Todgers disconsolately, "but it got out of order. And how was he to get it put in order, right up here in the Thompson Valley? He hadn't thought of that in advance; and the agent had told him the thing never got out of order, and that it was simplicity itself to put it right if it did. And poppa is still paying off the mortgage, and there's the pesky plough!" Frank Richards looked at the plough again.

It was an eloquent testimony to the trustfulness of the bluff Canadian farmer, unused to the city's wiles, and never suspecting

This time "Bub" was addressed to Bob Lawless. The Canadian schoolboy nodded. "You've got it," he answered. "You're looking for Old Man Hopkins' farm?" "Yep!" "Selling him something, I reckon?"

"Right where I live," answered the sharp gentleman. "I guess I represent Snooker & Sniggs, of course—biggest works in Chicago. They turn out the Snooker-Sniggs' thresher by the hundred thousand every week, and I guess no farm is complete without a Snooker-Snigg

on that you could put me wise. Bub." Bob Lawless nodded again. As Harold Hopkins, the son of Farmer Hopkins, was his schoolfellow at Cedar Creek, he was naturally quite able to direct anybody to the Hopkins' holding.

"I guess I'm your antelope," said Bob. "I know the Hopkins' lay-out as well as I know the back of my hand, sir. You could follow this trail—but if you turn to the right by the big deadwood yonder—you can see it from here."

Mr. Hikes looked along the trail, and spotted the dead tree in the distance, and nodded. "Yep!" he said.

WARNED OFF!

(Continued from the previous page.)



"Oh!" "There's the testimonials, too," said Hopkins cheerily. "Letters from farmers, you know, sayin' 'ow they've made piles over that thrasher. 'Ow it's saved them from cloving down in some cases. There's a big farm in Texas where they've a hundred of them at work!"

"Texas is a good step from here. Is your father going down to Texas to see them at work?" Hopkins grinned. "He couldn't, of course, as it's right across the States. But he's seen the photograph of the thrasher at work, and it's wonderful. It's dirt cheap at six hundred dollars! I can tell you, our firm is going ahead. Well, I've got to get on my way."

And Harold Hopkins got off! Frank Richards & Co. led out their horses in a thoughtful mood. "The thrasher's bound to go to Hopkins' place, after all," Frank remarked. "Not that day, I guess," grinned Bob.

"Ha, ha! No. But he got there the next day, and he's selling Old Man Hopkins his precious thrasher. I hope the old chap will make a success of it."

"How can he make a success of it?" he grunted. "As soon as something goes wrong, Old Man Hopkins will try to mend it, and make matters worse. Then he will come scotching down to Thompson for a man who knows—and he won't find one. He won't find a man nearer than Kamloops. And what do you think it will cost him for a man to come that distance to see to his pesky machine?" "Goodness knows. He won't be able to pay if it's little," growled Bob. "It may run him into a hundred dollars, or more, and he never has ten dollars to bless himself with. Why, he can't even pay for the thing he's buying. It may be a good thing, but it's no use on a backwoods farm for a poor farmer. The Hopkins' have had a hard time since they got out here, and they've just pulled through, so far. How are they going to pull on with a mortgage round their necks?"

Bob and Bob Lawless granted angrily. He knew more than Frank about the wiles of the smooth-tongued machine-man, and the rustling lumber that dotted the waste lands round them.

"The blessed contraption will be about as much use to Old Man Hopkins as a gold watch to a Digger Indian," he said. "There was a machine-shop in Thompson that might be some use. But there isn't a machine-shop within a hundred miles. That pesky thrasher will be lying around like Old Man Todges' steam-buggy, and Hopkins will be paying off the mortgage, and working night and day to do it and keep his holding. He's made a good farm out of nothing, and all for the benefit of Snooker and Sniggs in Chicago."

"That seems rather rotten," said Frank. "I guess I'll go and ask the poppa to give me an advance," said Bob. "He may take advice from a man who knows the country." "That's a good idea."

And when the cousins arrived at the sales room that evening Bob explained the matter to Mr. Lawless. The rancher listened and nodded. "I'll ride over to-morrow," he said.

The following evening, when the chums returned from school, they were anxious for news. They were concerned for Old Man Hopkins, who had had a hard struggle in a new county, to make good.

But Mr. Lawless shook his head when Bob questioned him. "I've spoken to Mr. Hopkins," he said. "He says that 'All I could do. He's going ahead.' " "Buying the thing?" asked Bob. "Yes; and it's a pity," said Mr. Lawless, knitting his brows. "He's just made good, so far, but this rubbish will land him. That smooth-tongued rascal has talked him over, and he's expecting great things. I hear that the man is doing business just as well as ever. He's sold a machine to old Grimm, and he's in negotiation with half a dozen

more. Can't be helped; experience has to be bought, and can't be taught. And the matter dropped. But the chums of Cedar Creek were still thinking about it, and Bob Lawless confided to his cousin that something was going to be done.

The machine-man had sold one of the Snooker-Sniggs contrivances to Old Man Grimm; and one was enough, in Bob's opinion. His activities in the Thompson Valley ought to put an end to, and Bob considered that something should be done. But what was going to be done Bob was not yet able to explain.

The 3rd Chapter. Something Like a Stunt!

"My hat! There's the merchant!" On Saturday Frank Richards & Co. were travelling to Thompson for shopping, and just outside the town, as they trotted up, they came upon their acquaintance of a few days before.

Mr. Hikes was coming out of the town, with a very cheerful expression upon his sharp, skinny face. Judging by his looks, the machine-man was quite satisfied with the prospects of business in the Thompson Valley.

"Say, Bub!" called out Bob Lawless, in playful imitation of Mr. Hikes' own form of greeting. Mr. Hikes looked up sharply, and frowned at the sight of the three cheery schoolboys. He halted in the trail, and they drew near.

"You young scallywag!" he said, shaking a bony finger at the rancher's son. "Me?" said Bob innocently. "You?" snorted Mr. Hikes. "You gave me a pesky long tramp 'tother day. I guess I found myself loose in the hills, and never got back to town till this morning!" "Missed your way, after the directions I gave you?" exclaimed Bob. "I reckon you was foolin' me!" growled Mr. Hikes. "I was moseying on with my back to the Hopkins' shebang, as I found out afterwards."

"But you got there?" "I got there next day. And if I had a sick with me," said Mr. Hikes, "I'd say it round you for your leetle jokes!"

"Lucky you haven't got a stick with you, then!" grinned Bob. "I should wipe up the trail with you, Hiram."

"Ha, ha, ha!" Hiram K. Hikes scowled. "Bob's little joke wasted a day for him, during which he might have brought off a successful swindle. It was no wonder that Mr. Hikes was annoyed. "I've a good mind," he said, "to have a sick with me, and make the shavings of you! But I'm in a hurry to get to Cedar Camp."

"Selling a machine there?" asked Frank. "No business of yours!" answered Mr. Hikes sourly. "But I don't mind letting on that the Snooker-Sniggs' thrasher is goin' like hot cakes. And you can go and chop chips for a set of cheezy young scallywags!"

"Hold on!" called out Bob Lawless, as Hiram K. Hikes started again, "you're going by the trigger trail?" "Yep." "Look out for the road-agents!" "What?"

Mr. Hikes stopped very suddenly. "Road-agents—here!" he ejaculated. "Haven't you heard of the Flour-Bag gang?" asked Bob.

"Oh, Jerusalem! Blessed if that doesn't sound as if it was home in the States!" said Mr. Hikes. "I never heard of road-agents in Canada." "Well, keep your eyes peeled," said Bob. "You'd be a pity if Mr. Hikes stopped very suddenly. "Road-agents—here!" he ejaculated. "Haven't you heard of the Flour-Bag gang?" asked Bob.

"What the thump are you driving at, Bob?" asked Frank Richards. "There are no road-agents in the Thompson Valley." "There was a gang once—the Flour-Bag gang," answered Bob, with a grin. "They were toughs from over the line, but they made things lively till they were rounded up."

"I know that; but they were the only lot, and they were roped in. There's none now." "I guess so, and I guess I've succeeded. Look at him!" The chums glanced back. "The Flour-Bag band had turned back, and was following them into Thompson town. Evidently he did not wish to run the risk of meeting highwaymen on the lonely trail through the timber. "He's turned back!" exclaimed Beaulere.

"That swindle is more in his line than scrapping," answered Bob Lawless. "There would be no road-agents in an unsettled section like agents in the States, and Hiram knows more about the States than he does about Canada. I guess he'll wait for the post-wagon to take him over to Cedar Camp. He's nervy, my pippins; and that's what I wanted to know."

"Why?" "Because I've thought of a stunt." "You're going for his scalp?" asked Frank Richards, laughing. "I guess I'm going to try and clear him out of the Thompson Valley. He's doing no good here, and he's doing a lot of harm. Suppose he found that the Flour-Bag gang were his mark of him."

"The Flour-Bag gang are all in chokey," said Frank, mystified. "Yep; but he doesn't know all that. Suppose a gang of road-agents got 'Wh—?" "And scared him nearly out of his wits—?"

"I guess it's very likely that he would make tracks for his native States, and give Thompson Valley a rest. He's here to make money, not to do any good." "But there aren't any road-agents here!" shouted Frank. "There's going to be."

"The Flour-Bag gang are coming to life again—on this occasion only!" grinned Bob Lawless. "Think again, Frank! Any galoot with a flour-bag over his head would pass. "Us!" gasped Frank.

"Three ferocious ruffians, you know—masked—" "Oh, yes!" "You awful duffer!" exclaimed Beaulere. "Don't you think it's a good stunt?" demanded Bob.

"What we call a rob him, even a spoofing swindler like that!" yelled Frank. "Ha, ha, ha! Nope; we stop short of that. We can frighten him out of his sharp eyes, and make him glad to mosey on to more settled sections."

"Oh, my hat!" "I tell you it's the stunt of the season!" said Bob Lawless. "The Flour-Bag gang are coming to life again—just for once. And they're going to make Hiram K. Hikes tired of life in the Thompson Valley. And it was quite useless for Bob's cheery advice with him. The rancher's son was determined, and he had his way. But Frank Richards and Vere Beaulere were exceedingly doubtful as to how that remarkable stunt would pan out."

The 4th Chapter. Enough for Hiram!

"Hands up!" "Oh, Jerusalem!" "I've got you cornered!" The thin, bony hands of Hiram K. Hikes went up as if they had been moved by a sudden electric shock. Hiram K. Hikes, a sharp gentleman with a levelled revolver at close quarters, with a masked face behind the revolver.

"What was he, was he naturally couldn't guess that the revolver was an old weapon that did not work, and was only used in stage-plays by the Cedar Creek Thespians. "That man was not to be expected to own so sharp a gentleman as the man from Chicago, Illinois. He had never heard of the Thespian Club of Cedar Creek School, and he was far too practical a school-teacher to have taken any interest in stage-plays. Neither was he aware that the chums of Cedar Creek were on the warpath.

"That masked face, a six-shooter was levelled at his sharp eyes, and that finger on the trigger, and that was enough for him. His hands were up above his head. He had trembled, and he was held there. Hiram K. Hikes' eyes were held very sharp man, but the fate that had endowed him with so much sharpness had omitted to put in very much courage.

"Go ahead, Fr—Jake!" said

His bony knees knocked together as he blinked at the revolver. Cedar-Night was falling on the Cedar Camp trail. Hiram K. Hikes, Thompson, was "held up" on the trail. Three dim figures, in deer-skin coats, with flour-bags drawn over their heads, by way of masks, had suddenly leaped on him, and one—evidently the leader—had covered him with the levelled revolver. "I'll kill him!" rapped out one of the masked men.

"Gents—!" gasped Hiram K. "Put daylight through him!" growled the masked man. "Easier to handle the galoot dead than alive."

"I guess so," said the ruffian with the levelled revolver. "Gentlemen," yelled Hiram K. Hikes, "I'm your mutton! Let's a fat one! Let up!"

The road-agent with the revolver seemed to hesitate, though the gleaming barrel never swerved from its line with Hiram K. Hikes' sharp, pointed nose. "Spare my life!" bawled the man from Chicago breathlessly. "Take my word and let me go."

"I guess you know who you've got to let go," growled the masked leader, in a deep bass voice. Mr. Hikes groaned. "I guess so! You're the Flour-Bag gang!"

"Oh, You know us, do you?" "I've heard of you," groaned Mr. Hikes. "A pesky young cheezy scallywag warned me about you—"

"A young rascal, sir, warned me, and I asked them questions in Thompson, and those galoots told me that the Flour-Bag gang had been rounded up and sent to penitentiary. They did so, sir. I reckoned that young scallywag was trying to take a rise out of me."

"He was shot, but I hardly believe his enterprising footstep on a Canadian backwoods." "Once he was safe out of this town, Mr. Hikes vowed to himself that he would be closer to the best he had in the future—if only he could get clear alive of the ferocious Flour-Bag gang. There were profits to be made nearer to civilization; not to risk such a mystery, prize money, but on the other hand fewer losses and road agents."

"If only he got clear of the Flour-Bag gang!" He watched them with thumped heart. Even the fact that he had had a hundred dollars about him, and was in danger of losing it, did not tempt him much, as the danger in his precious skin. The dollars might be replaced, but the skin never!

The three masked men were looking in his face, and he was sure that the murmur of their voices was reaching Mr. Hikes, as he stood under the moon though he could not distinguish their words. "But he realised that his own life depended on the discretion of the man who was in the driver's seat. Buckskin Bill's rough hand had reached him at last.

"I guess I give in, and it's all my own way. Arter's a thundering drummer, and he was all right." Hiram K. Hikes almost collapsed towards him, his eyes peering through the eye-holes in the flour-bags.

"I guess you're a good one, Business-man!" he said coolly. "Give you five minutes; then you've got the range." "Mercy!" mumbled Mr. Hikes, faintly. "Five minutes?"

"And Buckskin Bill turned back to his associates. Hiram K. Hikes trembled in every bony limb. Two at least of the three ruffians were in favour of shooting him out of hand in the lonely trail through the timber there was no help. He was at the mercy of the Flour-Bag gang, and only one of them seemed inclined to show him mercy.

Fortunately, that one was the outlaw who held the revolver. "Gentlemen, go easy with a pilgrim," said Mr. Hikes, through his chattering teeth. "I ain't told on your coars that I know of. I'm a simple-minded business man, and drumming the Thompson Valley for orders. Go easy!"

"Buckskin Bill glanced along the dusky trail. "Get into the timber!" he rapped out. Mr. Hikes hesitated a moment. The trail was solitary enough, but to let it go for the shadowy depths of the timber was to abandon the last faint hope of help. There was a click as the trigger moved. "Stop lively, or—" "I'm going, sir!" gasped Mr. Hikes. And he backed under the trees, blinking at the levelled revolver that followed him up.

Buckskin Bill hastily let him pass, but he was not a bit in the mood to let him go. "I'm groaned Mr. Hikes' groans. "Oh, Jerusalem! Why come to this country? I'm unhappy machine-man. I allowed Jake decision. I'm a good one, with a levelled revolver. I'll get out of this."

"Shut your gang-trap, and let me go!" "Jake was leading the ruffians, and Hikes followed in the timber. He was still elevated above the ground. Behind him came the other flour-bag ruffians, Buckskin Bill keeping the revolver raised.

Hiram K. Hikes was in the line of the Philitianes, as in the line of the Philitianes. He could see, and as on an order, and he hoped for it. All his knowledge of woodcraft, the trickery thereof, had been of no use. He had lost all sense of direction, and had lost all sense of direction, and had no loss, however.

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(Continued on page 247)

Scotchman by a cross-bred Chink Malay, w' th' breed of a yellow dog."

Mr. MacStagers was overcome by the recollection. "But Jim Handyman an' me have waited for him," said he. "He kicked us out of Bashee on to a German steamer. That was when the Germans were getting their first hold on the Pacific. And the German skippers were all hand-in-glove, an' thick as thieves with the German captain, used us cruel. He took us to Canton, and he kicked us ashore there without a penny to our names—me and Jim Handyman. We'd been robbed of our ship—we'd been robbed even down to our boots, and I had been called a dirty Scotchman by this coffee-faced pirate."

"And what are you going to do about it, twenty-five years after?" asked Scorchor, greatly interested.

Mr. MacStagers rubbed his bony hands together.

"We are going to have a bit of our own back," said he, "on the Sultan of Bashee."

He looked at the indicators. "Mr. MacWhirter," he said to a second engineer, "I'll be wantin' another five revolutions out o' these grand engines before noontide, for we're goin' to visit the Sultan o' Bashee!"

And Mr. MacWhirter grinned.

He had already passed the word to the stokehold.

And very soon the stamping engines told of five extra revolutions per minute as the Bombay Castle raced across the Pacific on the

It was said that the Bombay Castle was going into Bashee, and was going to bombard the pirate in his lair.

Kids of the Lower School had visions of themselves covered with powder and glory, fighting, stripped to the waist and with cutlasses at their sides, against hordes of yellow-faced pirates, as they used to in the good old days of Jack Harkaway.

They did not think where the guns were to come from. There were no gun-decks on the decks of the Bombay Castle, although various nuts, who had peeped into that holy of holies—the chart-room—had seen a rack of two dozen rifles.

But all the kids on board had an overwhelming faith in Captain Handyman. They adored him distantly. They imitated his seaman's walk down the decks, and if they had been able to grow whiskers, they would all have grown that short, close-clipped, grey beard that the captain wore.

The only result of their excitement was that the kids got awfully quarrelsome amongst themselves.

Dirty Danby, a small kid in the lowest Form, had six fights on one afternoon, and scrapping was continuous in the after well-deck, where all the fights were brought off under the superintendence of the stewards' and engineers' department.

Scorchor Wilkinson kept the blind eye on these fights, and gave a bit too hot, even for Scorchor, when he counted over fifty per cent. of black eyes in the Lower School.

The boys who had not got black eyes were ordered to produce their handkerchiefs.

trousters from Snooks' manner. It cometh cheaper than buyin' 'em. I pay him two nubb'n a day, an' he owes me two hundred and thirty nubb'n. They're practically my trousers." "You're hot stuff, you are, Ike!" said Mr. MacStagers, regarding Ike with admiration. "They wouldn't get much change out o' you even up in Aberdeen!"

Ikey grimaced at the implied compliment.

"Look 'ere, Misher MacStagers!" said he. "Would you like to do a little bit o' biltness with th' ole firm? The boyth like to come down an' seee the engineeth. 'Spotthin' they pay twopenny admittin'. I collect the twopennies an' give you a penny for every boy that cometh down. Thixpenny to be shown round by the chief enginear, an' you get fourpenny out of the thixpenny, an' I get twopenny committin'!"

"You'll get a clump on your head if you don't watch it, you and your committin's!" replied Mr. MacStagers. "If you want to make a bit of money, you keep your eye on the Sultan of Bashee when we get there."

Ikey cottoned on to this idea.

He at once hatched out a plan that the Lower School should kidnap the Sultan of Bashee, and should hold him to ransom.

The ransom was to be two pints of the best pearls, a sack of gold pieces, and four hundred tons of mother-of-pearl, value £80 per ton. Also, four hundredweight of nests of the sea swallow, which are valued by the Chinese as the basis of birds-nest

Warned Off!

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

(Continued from page 246.)

With a frantic bound, Mr. Hikes disappeared into the underwoods and hid for his life.

"Arter him!" "Shoo'n 'em out!" "Run him down!"

There was a terrific crashing of bushes and branches behind Itraur K. Hikes as he fled.

He ran for his life, breaking through thorny bushes, scalding hands and face without heeding the scratches, stumbling and falling, and picking himself up again and running desperately.

The crashing died away behind him at last. The road-agents had apparently lost his track in the shadowy timber.

But Mr. Hikes did not stop.

He ran on, and on, and on, till many a mile had vanished under his feet, and at last he sank down exhausted.

And when Mr. Hikes recovered the sufficiency of his limp on the lipped away, and by morning discovered the trail to Cedar Camp, where his first proceeding was to hire a horse, and drive as fast as the horse could go to the nearest railway town. Hiram K. Hikes had had enough of the Thompson Valley, and the prospect of selling a hundred Snooker-Sniggers' threshers would not have tempted him back.

There was a room empty at the Occidental Hotel in Thompson that night. It was not until a couple of days later that instructions arrived for Mr. Hikes' belongings to be sent out to Kamloopy by post-sack.

That same night Bob Lawless and Frank Richards were late home to the Lawless Ranch, as was Vero Beauclere at the Beauclere shack on the coast. Mr. Beauclere's son and nephew when they came in.

"You're late!" he said.

"We've been round by Thompson and Cedar Camp, poppa," said Bob. "Only having a jark!"

And the rancher smiled and said no more.

Frank Richards and Bob smiled over their supper. And when the Co. rode to school on the following day they were in a humorous mood.

A day or two later they learned from Harold Hopkins that Mr. Hikes had not called to complete the bargain that he entered into with Mr. Thompson. Hopkins wondered why, and the Co. did not enlighten him. The exploits of Buckskin Bill, Jake, and the Co. were all in vain.

A day or two later they learned from Harold Hopkins that Mr. Hikes had not called to complete the bargain that he entered into with Mr. Thompson. Hopkins wondered why, and the Co. did not enlighten him.

The exploits of Buckskin Bill, Jake, and the Co. were all in vain.

Mr. Hikes was not seen in the Thompson Valley again. Old man Hopkins did not purchase the famous thresher, and he did not put a mortgage on his farm. He was disappointed, but he found comfort when it happened in it, from Mr. Grimm's farm, and saw the Snooker-Sniggers' contrivance which that hapless gentleman had purchased in the Thompson Valley, waiting for repairs, and it was likely to lie there till the weather disposed of it. And then Old Man Hopkins thanked his lucky stars that his nephew had never known how much he was obliged to them.

THE END.

OUT ON WEDNESDAY. "ON THE KING'S HIGHWAY!"

A Grand Complete Tale of Snooks' Life. By MARTIN CLIFFORD, in THE "GEM" LIBRARY.



THE 'FLUENCE! With a sharp movement of the hand Captain Bones waded the Obi stick in bully Goadger's face, and as the latter felt its magnetic influence creeping over him his face took on a look of terror.

20th parallel of latitude to interview the Sultan of Bashee.

The Brothers of the Scarlet Dagger.

Anticipation rose to fever heat as the Bombay Castle, steaming across the Pacific, with her nose down to the 20th N. parallel of latitude like a hypnotised chicken on a chalk line, drew near the Bashee Archipelago, where resided the snuff-and-butter potentate who called himself the Sultan of Bashee.

It was known throughout the ship that the Sultan of Bashee was no friend to Captain Handyman and to Mr. MacStagers, the chief engineer.

A quarter of a century ago, when the world and the sultan and the captain and Mr. MacStagers were all young, the sultan had practically lowered the pirate on a small Chinese-owned steamer, the Li-Ha, in which Captain Handyman and Mr. MacStagers were then employed, and had a share.

He had seized their steamer under pretext that they were dredging pearls within the limits of his coast.

He had cast away their ship by clumsily allowing it to drift on to the coral reefs that fringed his island. The sultan had become a total loss, and a Captain Handyman and Mr. MacStagers were then imprisoned without trial for the space of over three weeks in a dog-hole of a prison for human beings.

They had been starved and ill-treated, and finally they had been kicked off the island, penniless and unshod, for the sake of a peculiarly ferocious and rapacious breed, had eaten their boots.

The kids were athril when the story circulated round the ship.

And a nice lot of grabby dish-rags these were, too.

Every one of these handkerchiefs was stained—not with the heart's blood, but with the nose blood of their owners.

Then Scorchor Wilkinson put his foot down.

"This fighting has got to stop, you nubb'n!" said he. "Any boy caught fighting in the next week will be swished! If he is caught fighting again he will be swished twice! If he be caught fighting three times he will be swished thrice, and so on. Have you got me, Lower School Stephens?"

The Lower School grinned as one man.

They understood.

Fighting was suspended, but dallagers were looked in advance against a more fitting opportunity when they could land on some coral island and have it out.

Ikey Cohen, the Jew hope of the Lower School, arranged twenty-seven fights after school that day, and saved himself a winner for twenty-seven shillings.

Then they all went off to the engine-room to seek Mr. MacStagers.

Mac would always allow them to come down into the engine-room, for his love of boys and their talk, and was never tired of spinning them yarns or explaining the wonderful engines under his control.

And, over and over again, from Mac they got the story of his do with the Sultan of Bashee.

"Hath he got any money?" demanded Ikey Cohen eagerly.

"Any amount of it, Master Cohen!" replied Mac. "Any don't sit down there; you'll spoil your trousers!"

"They aren't my trousers," piped Ikey, sitting down. "I hire my