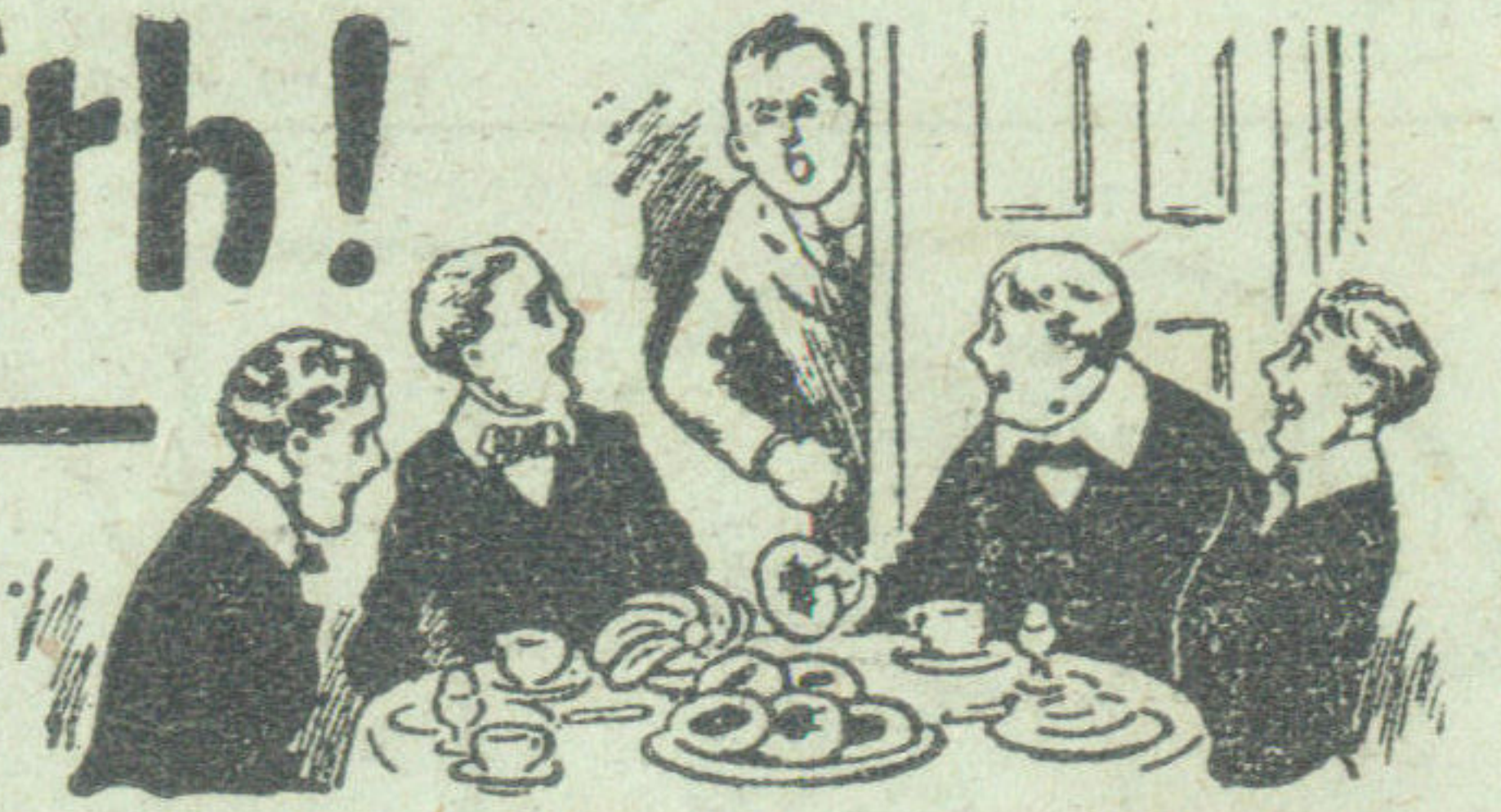




Jimmy Silver Stands Up to the Fifth!



(SEE THE SPLENDID COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY IN THIS ISSUE.)

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending August 9th, 1919.

Fagging for the Fifth!

By Owen Conquest.



CHUCKING HANSOM OUT!

"Your turn now!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "Chuck him out!" Hansom went out of the study headlong. He fell into the crowd of Fourth-Formers outside, and Jimmy Silver and Co. followed him out. His comrades of the Fifth had fared roughly—but their experience was a joke to Hansom's!

The 1st Chapter. Trying It On!

"Fag!"
It was Hansom, of the Fifth Form at Rookwood, who called. And—amazing as it was—Hansom of the Fifth was evidently addressing Jimmy Silver & Co.
Jimmy Silver looked at him. Arthur Edward Lovell gave a loud snort, a good deal like an angry war-horse. Raby sniffed, and Newcome grinned. But Hansom of the Fifth, undeterred by those signs of contempt and resentment, raised his hand and beckoned to the Fistical Four, and repeated:

"Fag!"
"Are you talking to us, Hansom?" demanded Jimmy Silver, more in surprise than in wrath.
"Yes; I want a fag!"
"You want a fag!" repeated Jimmy Silver, as if scarcely able to believe his ears. "You want a fag!"
"Yes, and sharp!"
"Well, my hat!"
"I don't care which one of you it is," said Hansom. "Any one of you will do. You'll do, Silver! Cut down to the tuckshop—"
"You cheeky ass!" roared Arthur Edward Lovell, in sulphurous wrath. "Do you think the Fourth fag for the

Fifth?"
"You burbling jabberwock!" said Raby. "Why, we don't even fag for the Sixth unless we choose!"
Hansom made a lofty gesture.
"I don't want any cheek! I want a fag!" he said. "Now, Silver—"
"Go to sleep and dream again!" suggested Jimmy Silver.
"Look here—"
"Bow-wow!"
"I tell you—" roared the captain of the Fifth.
"Rats!"
Then there was a pause.
The Fistical Four stood their ground. There were three other

Fifth-Formers with Hansom—Lumsden, Talboys, and Brown major. If it came to a "scrap," four juniors hadn't much chance against four seniors. But Jimmy Silver & Co. didn't even think of that. Wild horses would not have dragged them into the humiliation of fagging for the Fifth.
Jimmy had a shrewd suspicion, too, that Hansom did not specially want a fag. What he wanted was to establish fagging rights. There had often been trouble between the two Forms, Hansom & Co. looking on the Fourth as cheeky fags, and the Fourth looking on Hansom & Co. as swanking

duffers, who strove to imitate, at a distance, the manners and customs of the mighty Sixth.
While Jimmy Silver was captain of the Fourth, that rather unruly Form had certainly kept its end up. But Mornington was junior captain now, and Jimmy Silver only a "common or garden" junior, so to speak. Perhaps Hansom regarded that as a favourable opportunity for asserting his long-disputed and resisted claim.
Hansom had a walking-cane under his arm. He had cornered the Fistical Four near the archway which led from Little Quad into Big Quad—a rather deserted spot. He let the case



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FAGGING FOR THE FIFTH!

slide down into his hand as he came nearer to the quartette.

"Now, I don't want any nonsense!" said the Fifth-Former. "I've had enough chinwag from you, Silver!"

"I've had more than enough from you, old bean," answered Jimmy Silver. "Give your chin a rest. It can do with it."

"Are you going to the tuckshop for me?"

"No fear!"

"I shall be sorry to liek you."

"You will if you begin," assented Jimmy.

"You kids in the Fourth think a lot too much of yourselves, don't you know," remarked Talboys. "You're only dashed fags, you know!"

"Merely that, and nothing more!" grinned Lumsden.

Hansom shook his cane at Jimmy Silver.

"I give you a last chance," he said magnanimously. "I don't want to be hard on you. Cut off to the tuckshop or—"

"Bow-wow!"

"Get the things on this list, and take them to my study—"

"Think again!"

"And you shall have one jam-tart for yourself," said Hansom generously.

Jimmy's eyes gleamed.

"You silly ass—" he began.

"I've arranged with Sergeant Kettle about paying," went on Hansom. "You've simply got to present the list, and take the goods. See?"

"Fathead!"

"And if you don't, I'll jolly well wallop you!" roared Hansom.

Jimmy Silver's lips opened for a defiant retort.

But he checked himself suddenly, and a glimmer came into his eyes.

"You'll wallop me if I don't?" he asked.

"Yes, and jolly hard!"

"Then I'd better obey orders?"

"You had—rather!"

"Give me the list, Hansom."

Jimmy Silver held out his hand meekly.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome simply blinked at him.

That Jimmy Silver would consent to fag, at the order of the Fifth-Former, was a thing far beyond their imaginations.

Hansom himself was surprised.

This was really what the juniors would have called a "try-on" on the part of the Fifth-Formers, and they had not been at all certain of success.

And here was success, easy and simple.

Hansom smiled with satisfaction as he handed the list to Jimmy Silver. The latter read it over.

"One currant-cake, pot of jam, pot of marmalade, pound of biscuits, tin of bloater-paste, tin of pineapple, half-pound of chocolates, half-dozen new-laid eggs. Is that the lot, Hansom?"

"That's the lot!" said Hansom, with a triumphant glance at his companions. "Get a move on!"

"Right ho!"

"Take the stuff to my study," continued the Fifth-Former. "Get tea ready there. Mind you don't boil the eggs hard, or you'll catch it. If it's not all ready in a quarter of an hour, I'm sorry for you, that's all!"

"I'll have tea ready in a quarter of an hour, Hansom."

"You'd better! Cut off!"

Hansom waved his hand loftily, dismissing the fags.

"Come on, you fellows!" said Jimmy Silver, starting through the arch, with the paper in his hand.

"You—you—you howling idiot!" gasped Lovell. "You're not going to fag for the Fifth! You're not—"

"Dry up, old chap, and come on!"

"But I tell you—" shrieked Lovell.

"Do come on, or Hansom will be annoyed!" murmured Jimmy.

"What the merry thump do I care if Hansom is annoyed!" belted

Lovell. "Are you off your silly rocker?"

"Come on, I tell you!"

Jimmy fairly dragged his incensed chum away. Raby and Newcome followed, amazed and angry.

"Well, by gad!" murmured Talboys, as the four juniors disappeared into Big Quad.

Hansom smiled.

"It only needs a firm hand," he explained, as he strolled on with his chums. "That's all—a firm hand! Bless your little hearts, I know how to manage fags! Leave it to me! A firm hand—that's all it wants!"

And Hansom's chums had to agree that he did know how to manage fags. It looked like it, at all events. And Hansom swanked even more than usual as he sauntered round Little Quad with his friends, quite elated with his success.

The 2nd Chapter.

A Spread in the End Study.

"Jimmy, you ass—"

"Jimmy, you chump—"

Lovell and Raby and Newcome were all speaking together as the Fistical Four crossed the quad towards Sergeant Kettle's little shop behind the beeches.

Jimmy Silver was smiling, but his chums were quite wild with wrath.

They had been prepared for a scrap with the Fifth-Formers, and even for a "walloping"; but for this abject surrender on the part of their leader, they had not been prepared—far from it.

"You—you—you idiot!" gasped Lovell. "Can't you see it's a put-up job? Hansom's fixed this up just to show off that he can fag the Fourth."

"I know—I know," assented Jimmy.

"He's paid for the stuff at the tuckshop, and could have taken it in himself quite easily; but he's not done that, so as to fag somebody in the Fourth."

"I know."

"And you've let him do it!" shrieked Lovell.

"Why not? Why, you—you silly ass—you—you—"

"Easy does it," urged Jimmy Silver. "Nothing to rag about."

"You—you—" stuttered Lovell.

"Hallo! What's the row?" asked a cheery voice.

Mornington and Erroll, coming away from Little Side, met the Fistical Four in the quad.

"Not rowing, surely, you chaps?" asked Erroll, with a smile.

"Not at all," answered Jimmy. "Lovell seems excited about something, that's all."

"I put it to you, Morny, as junior skipper," shouted Lovell. "Do we fag for the Fifth?"

Mornington frowned.

"No jolly fear!" he answered emphatically.

"That's what Jimmy's doing."

"Rot!"

"He is, I tell you!" shrieked Arthur Edward. "Hansom's given him a list of stuff to get at the tuckshop, and he's going to get tea in Hansom's study in a quarter of an hour. What do you think of that?"

"Bosh!" answered Morny. "I suppose Lovell's off-side, as usual, isn't he, Jimmy?"

"Naturally."

"I tell you—"

"I'll explain how the matter stands, if you like," said Jimmy Silver, with a yawn. "Hansom is standing us a tea in the end study—"

"Wha-a-at?" stammered Lovell.

"He's given me an order on the sergeant for the stuff. Now we're not on the best of terms with the Fifth; but if Hansom chooses to stand us a tea, why refuse?"

Lovell blinked.

"He told you to take the stuff to his study!" he howled.

"I believe he did," assented Jimmy. "But I'm going to take it to my study, old top."

"You—you said you'd get tea in a quarter of an hour."

"So I shall—in our study."

"Oh!"

"Understand at last?" asked Jimmy cheerfully. "I think this will be rather a valuable lesson to Hansom about fagging the Fourth. And we're stony, and this feed will come like corn in Egypt in one of the lean years. Come on!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Raby and Newcome.

Lovell grinned.

He understood at last.

"Good man!" chuckled Mornington, and Erroll laughed. "You're full of good ideas, Jimmy. Go it!"

"You two fellows come to tea with us," said Jimmy Silver. "There's lots for a whole family. And I think we may have a visit from the Fifth before tea is over. You never know."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"We'll come," said Mornington. "I'll bring a cricket-stump with me, in case it's wanted."

"Come on, you chaps," said Jimmy.

And the Fistical Four headed for the tuckshop again, in quite a cheery and contented mood now.

Four faces were smiling brightly as Jimmy presented Hansom's list to Mr. Kettle.

The old sergeant had the goods ready. It was evidently, as Lovell had said, a "put-up" job on the part of Edward Hansom. He was going to establish the right of fagging the Fourth, and he was beginning with Jimmy Silver.

Jimmy Silver certainly was a hard nut to crack; but Hansom possibly considered it judicious to crack the hardest nut first.

If Jimmy Silver gave in, it was probable that others would follow his example. No doubt that was how Hansom looked at it.

And the egregious Hansom was now busily engaged in counting his chickens before they were hatched.

Jimmy Silver & Co. left the school shop laden with Hansom's parcels.

In the distance, Hansom and his friends, sauntering through the arch from Little Quad, caught sight of them, and smiled.

"There they go!" murmured Brown major.

"Faggin' for us, begad!" said Talboys.

Hansom smiled superior.

"I think I told you so," he remarked.

"You did, old chap!" said his chums admiringly. "You did!"

And Edward Hansom's nose was an inch higher as he strolled on.

Doubtless the Fifth-Formers would not have felt so satisfied if they had known the real destination of the good things.

The Fistical Four did not head for the Fifth Form quarter in the School House, far from it. They headed for the end study in the Fourth Form passage. Tubby Muffin joined them as they progressed along that passage with their parcels.

"Feed on?" asked Tubby, with keen interest.

"Yes. Like to come?" grinned Jimmy Silver.

"My dear old chap, I'm your man!" said Reginald Muffin affectionately.

And he came.

Teddy Grace was met farther along the passage and he also was invited, and accepted. "Putty of the Fourth" was a good man in a scrap, and Jimmy thought it probable that there would be scrapping later on.

There was soon quite a festive scene in the end study.

The Fistical Four, Morny and Erroll, Tubby Muffin and Putty, made quite a numerous party.

But there was enough for all. Hansom's goods were quite enough to go round, and the Fourth-Formers piled in with a will.

The good things vanished fast under the attacks of eight hungry juniors.

Tea in the end study was rapid, and it was nearing its end when Conroy, the Australian, looked in.

"You kids been asking the Fifth for trouble?" he inquired.

"They've been asking us," said Jimmy Silver. "And the answer was in the affirmative, as the political chinwaggers say in the House of Chinwag."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Well, they're coming," said Conroy.

"Let 'em all come. Try these biscuits, Conroy, they're good. Hansom paid a good price for these biscuits."

"Hansom did?" ejaculated Conroy.

"Exactly."

"Oh! So that's why—"

Jimmy Silver explained, and the Australian junior roared. He called in his chums, Pons and Van Ryn, to

help him try the biscuits. They were also on the scene, ready for the expected arrival of the Fifth. If Hansom & Co. came to the end study they were likely to wake up a very serious hornets'-nest there.

The 3rd Chapter.

Not According to Programme.

"Ready?" asked Edward Hansom. He glanced into his study in the Fifth Form passage.

Hansom had allowed a good quarter of an hour to elapse. He wanted to give his fags time to get tea nicely for him.

Hansom was judicious in this. Later on, he could hurry up his fags, and cuff them for delay, and so forth, like the great men of the Sixth. But this was an experiment, at present; and he was anxious to break the ice successfully, as it were.

So he gave Jimmy Silver plenty of time to get tea.

And his tone was quite cheery and polite as he looked into his study, and asked if it was ready.

His expression changed the next moment, however.

No. 1 in the Fifth was empty.

There was no sign of tea, and there was no sign of fags. The grate was cold and empty. There was no fire—no pile of warm toast. There was no set table—in fact, there was nothing that hadn't been there when Hansom had left his study.

"By gad!" ejaculated the Fifth-Former.

He stared into the study blankly.

The captain of the Fifth could not quite make it out. He had ordered Jimmy Silver to get his tea ready in a quarter of an hour, and he had allowed him twenty minutes in which to do it. And there was no tea, and there was no Jimmy Silver.

It was quite perplexing.

"All serene?" asked Cecil Talboys, from the passage.

"Nunno."

"Isn't a tea ready?" inquired Lumsden.

"N-no."

"My word! Give those fags a jolly good hiding, then!" exclaimed Brown major wrathfully. "They've had plenty of time."

"They—they're not here."

"Eh?"

Lumsden and Talboys and Brown major looked past Hansom into the study.

They were surprised, like their leader, to find it empty.

"Jolly queer!" said Lumsden.

"Where are they?"

Hansom knitted his brows.

He had "swanked" over his success in fagging the Fourth; but secretly he had been very much surprised at his easy success. It was now dawning upon him that he had not been so successful as he had believed.

"I—I—I think—" he began haltingly.

"Well, they're not here!" said Talboys.

"Where are they, Hansom?"

"And where's tea? I'm hungry."

"I—I think perhaps they— It's jolly odd," said Hansom, colouring.

"I—I suppose that young cad Silver wouldn't have the nerve to disobey my orders—my direct orders, you know—"

"Hum!"

"Hem!"

Hansom's followers thought it very probable, as a matter of fact, that Silver would have the nerve.

"I—I say, what's become of the grub, though?" exclaimed Brown major, in dismay. "They had that right enough; we saw them carrying it away from the shop."

"They—they've got that!" stammered Hansom. "They—they wouldn't have the cheek to—to—"

He stopped.

The Fifth-Formers looked at one another.

The dreadful truth occurred to all of them at once. They understood rather too late the real reason of Jimmy Silver's meek submission. He was not fagging for the Fifth, after all! He was bagging the Fifth Form spread, which was quite a different matter, and not at all gratifying to the hungry heroes of the Fifth.

"Let's go and look for the young sweeps!" said Lumsden abruptly.

Hansom nodded, and the four seniors hurried off towards the Fourth Form quarters. They met Rawson on the staircase, and inquired if he had seen Jimmy Silver. It was then that Conroy spotted them, and took the news to the end study.

"Seen Jimmy Silver?" asked Rawson reflectively. "Oh, yes!"

"Well, where did you see him?"

"In the Form-room."

"Come on, you chaps," said Hansom hurriedly. "They're feeding on our stuff in the Form-room! Out of the way there, you know! We—we'll jolly well slaughter them!"

The Fifth-Formers rushed downstairs to the Fourth Form room, deserted at that hour. Rawson grinned and went into his study. His statement had been well founded; he had seen Jimmy Silver in the Form-room. He only omitted to mention that he had seen him there during lessons, a couple of hours earlier.

But his meaning dawned on Hansom & Co. when they rushed into the Form-room with warlike looks, and found it empty.

"They—they're not here, begad!" ejaculated Talboys.

Hansom gave a snort of fury.

"That cheeky young rascal was pulling our leg!" he howled. "Come on! We shall find them in Silver's study, I expect."

"Oh, gad!"

In a frame of mind, by this time, that was almost Hunnish, Hansom & Co. rushed upstairs again.

This time they did not inquire after Jimmy Silver; they rushed along to the end study to see for themselves.

The door was shut. It opened with a crash as Hansom drove his boot against it.

The four seniors rushed in.

"Here they are!" gasped Hansom. The rush of the Fifth had to stop. The study was crowded. There were eleven juniors in the room; and junior studies were not planned for parties of eleven. There was not much room for the seniors. And there were loud and wrathful exclamations as they collided with the Colonial Co., who were nearest the door.

Jimmy Silver jumped up.

"Hallo, you fellows! Want anything?" he asked.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Where's my tuck?" yelled Hansom furiously. "He had forgotten, for a moment, his claims to fagging service, in his anxiety for the spread."

"Only one egg left, old bean."

"What?"

"But you can have that!" added Jimmy Silver kindly.

Whiz! Crack! Smash!

Hansom received the egg—in his nose!

"Grococch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Hansom made a wild jump at Jimmy Silver. The egg was streaming down his face, and the Classical juniors were roaring with laughter. The Fifth-Former drove his way through the juniors and reached Jimmy Silver.

"Back up!" roared Jimmy.

"What ho!"

"Collar 'em!"

"Kick 'em out!"

"Hurrah!"

And the scene that followed was worthy of the pen of a Homer, or at least of the typewriter of a Kipling.

The 4th Chapter.

Vae Victis!

"Back up!"

"Give 'em socks!"

"Yaroooh!"

"Down with the Fifth!"

"Hurrah!"

"Oh! Ow! Yow! Yoop!"

Against the Fistical Four alone the four seniors would no doubt have proved themselves victors. But eleven juniors were rather too much for them. Even Tubby Muffin joined in the scrap. Tubby Muffin was not a warrior; but he was equal to sitting on anybody who was down, and he sat on Hansom when that warlike youth was floored.

And when Tubby Muffin sat on a person, that person was hors de combat. There was no arguing with Tubby's avoirdupois.



FAGGING FOR THE FIFTH!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"I say, I'm goin', you know— Yoooop!"
Talboys went. Three or four boots behind him helped him to go; and he left the end study almost whizzing.
Fourth-Formers were hurrying along the passage now, to the scene of the uproar. The alarm had gone forth that the Fifth had invaded the sacred quarters of the Fourth; and there was not a man in the Fourth Form who was not prepared to do battle with the invaders. Even Peele and Gower and Lattrey, even Towny and Topsy, rushed up with the rest. And Talboys, as he fled, had to run the gauntlet of the new arrivals.
"Kick him out!" yelled Jimmy Silver from the doorway of the end study.
And his direction was obeyed.

Every foot in the passage seemed anxious to get a kick at Cecil Talboys as he fled; and there seemed to be innumerable feet. The hapless Talboys felt like a football by the time he reached the stairs, and bounded down them three at a time.
"Any more there?" roared Higgs from the passage.
"Three more!"
"Chuck 'em out, and we'll give 'em beans!"

"What ho!"
Jimmy Silver turned back into the study. The end study had rather a wrecked appearance, but it did not look so wrecked as Hansom and Lumsden and Brown major. Those three unhappy youths were wriggling painfully under the weight of the juniors who pinned them to the floor.
"Brown next!" said Jimmy Silver.
"Leggo!" roared Brown major.
"I—I'll go, if you like—"
"You will, old top!"
"On your neck!" grinned Lovell.
Brown major was hauled to the door and hurled forth.

He landed on his hands and knees in the midst of the excited crowd of juniors outside.
A dozen feet found him as he dropped on the floor.
"Oh, my hat! You young villains! Help! Yaroooooh!"
"Punish him!" roared Higgs.
"Kick him out! Gerrout of the way, Peele! I've only kicked him once!"

Brown major picked himself up and fled. A hurricane of kicks accompanied him along the passage, till he scrambled down the stairs and escaped.
Lumsden was the next.
He was tossed out of the end study like a sack of coke, and kicked along to the stairs, amid yells of laughter.
Edward Hansom was left till the last. The captain of the Fifth looked very apprehensive as he was yanked to his feet.

"Your turn now!" grinned Jimmy Silver.
"Chuck him out!"
Hansom gasped. Tubby Muffin's weight had told on him. He was in a breathless state as he was hustled to the door.
"You—you young sweeps! Leggo! Oh crumbs! Oh crikey! Yaroooh!"
"Do you want us to fag for you any more, Hansom?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Yaroooooh!"

Hansom went out headlong. He fell into the crowd outside; and Jimmy Silver & Co. followed him up. His comrades had fared roughly; but their experience was a joke to Hansom's. By the time the captain of the Fifth reached the stairs, he felt as if he had been through an earthquake and a cyclone and an air-raided rolled into one. And even then he was not done with. The exuberant juniors rolled him down the first flight of stairs, bumping him on each stair. He was allowed to roll down the next flight by himself; and he lay on the next landing in a dazed state.

The unfortunate fagger of the Fourth was just able to crawl away. He was followed by yells of derision from above, and loud invitations to come back and fag the Fourth again; but the hapless Hansom was not

thinking just then of fagging the Fourth.

He picked himself up and limped off to his study, where he sank into his armchair, and for the next quarter of an hour was chiefly occupied in gasping and groaning.

The Fourth-Formers cheered loudly as they went back to their studies, victorious.

Jimmy Silver and his chums came back into the end study, chuckling. The study was in a deplorable state; but they set to work very cheerfully putting it to rights.

"I rather think that Hansom will be tired of fagging this study, after this!" Raby remarked.

"I shouldn't be surprised!" grinned Jimmy Silver. "I don't think the Fifth got much change out of us this time. Anyhow, they're pretty certain not to send us for tuck again."

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"But where did Morny come in?" grinned Lovell.

"Morny?"
"Well, Morny's junior captain now, and it was up to Morny to deal with the Fifth. But it's left to this study to take Hansom down a peg."

"The principle of the thing!" repeated Hansom. "That's what we've got to think about!"

"The fact is, old chap," said Lumsden, with a cough, "it looks to me to be more trouble than it's worth. The unruly little beasts—"
"Unruly little beasts require ruling with a firm hand."

"Well, after all, we ain't prefects, and the Fourth don't matter a tuppenny button to us."

"I'm fed up with the scrubby little scoundrels," said Talboys. "I know they simply ruined my clobber the other day!"

"Bother your clobber!" said Hansom irritably.

"Well, you'd think about your clobber if your tailor sent you in bills like mine!" said Talboys mournfully. "I hadn't had that jacket a week—"

"Blow your jacket!"

"And they ripped it up the back. I'm goin' to have it repaired for knockin' about in—chap has to be economical these days. I can't wear it out of doors again. Simply can't—with a seam up the back and across the shoulder. And the tailor—"

"Hang the tailor!"

"The tailor man is chargin' me a guinea for repairs. Perhaps you'd like to stand the guinea, Hansom?" suggested Talboys, rather sarcastically.

"If you can't talk sense, Cecil, old man, you'd better give your chin a rest!" said the exasperated Hansom.

"Now, as I was saying, it's the principle of the thing. We're seniors, and therefore we have a natural right to fag the juniors. The Sixth do. Car-

want is to get the principle of the thing recognised."

"Well, go ahead!" said Lumsden. "We'll back you up, of course; the young rascals ought to fag for us!"

"They ought, for certain!" assented Talboys. "A fag would be no end useful to me; brushin' clothes, and all that. But—"

"I've told Muffin to come to this study," said Hansom casually.

Lumsden indulged in a wink at the ceiling.

"Will he come?" he asked.

"He will come."

"It's like that Welsh chap in Shakespeare, you know," remarked Lumsden. "He said he could call spirits from the vasty deep. And Hotspur said, 'But will they come when you do call to them?' Now, it's all very well to tell Muffin to come here. But—"

"I've given him orders to come."

"Hem!"

Tap!

Hansom gave his study-mates a triumphant glance as a tap came at the study door.

The door opened, and the fat face of Reginald Muffin, of the Classical Fourth, looked in, with a beaming, fat smile on it.

"Oh!" ejaculated Lumsden, taken aback.

Tubby Muffin had evidently obeyed orders.

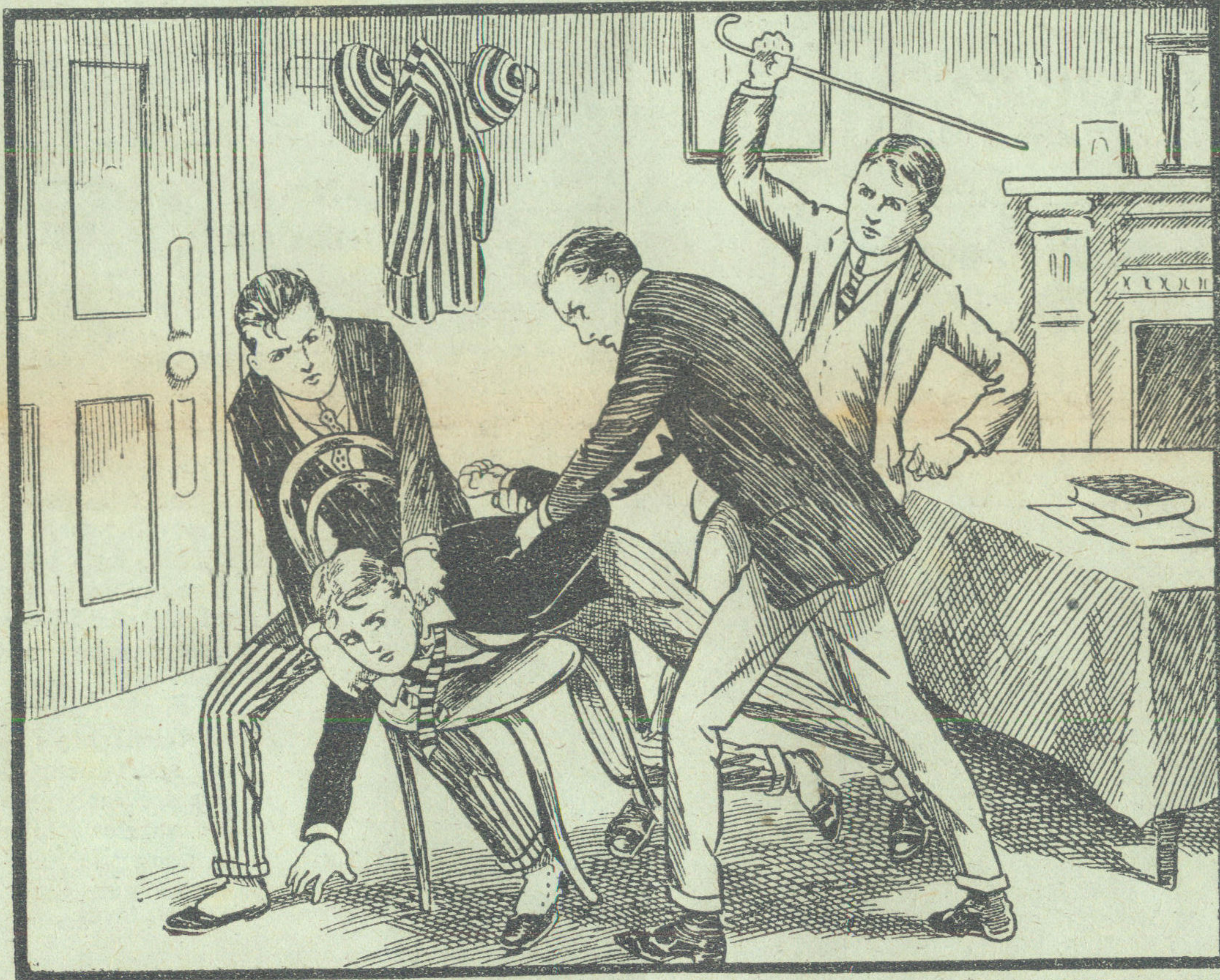
"Come in, Muffin!" rapped out the captain of the Fifth.

"Yes, Hansom!"

The fat Classical rolled in.

"Shut the door!"

Tubby closed the door obediently.



MORNINGTON GETS IT HOT!

"Lay him across the chair!" commanded Hansom. Morny fought like a tiger, but the three seniors got him down at last. Then Hansom started in with the cane. Whack! whack! whack!

Arthur Edward Lovell chortled. "Morny was in a back seat all the time—it was Jimmy Silver first, second, and all the time."

Jimmy Silver looked rather serious. "I don't want to be taking the lead now Morny's captain," he said. "A fellow must play the game. But—"

"But it can't be helped, old top. You're a bit of an ass, in your way, Jimmy, but you ought to be skipper, and you know it. Morny isn't really big enough for the job."

"Oh, rot!" said Jimmy uneasily.

But other fellows in the Fourth took Arthur Edward Lovell's view. There had been a tussle with the rival Form, and the Fifth had been beaten; and it was Jimmy Silver who had been the leader. And from Morny's very thoughtful look, when Jimmy saw him again, Jimmy could guess that the same thought had occurred to him.

The 5th Chapter. A Fag at Last!

"It's the principle of the thing!" Edward Hansom of the Fifth made that remark a couple of days later in his study.

His audience consisted of his study-mates, Lumsden and Talboys.

Both of them were looking dubious.

threw of the Sixth was sniggering at me this morning over our affair the other day in the fag quarters. Carthew thinks he can manage fags."

"Carthew's a bully!"

"Well, a certain amount of bullying isn't bad for kids, you know, when they don't know their place. But I'm not thinking of ragging the Fourth. The fact is, I was rather hasty the other day."

"You were!" agreed Lumsden.

"I started with Silver—a thoroughly obstinate little beast, if ever there was one. I would have been wiser to begin with a less obstinate young scoundrel—like Muffin, for instance."

Lumsden grinned.

"Muffin would fag for the giddy old Kaiser himself, if he was offered a jam-tart!" he said.

"We can't bribe the fags!" said Hansom loftily. "We've got to remember that we're seniors; and there's the dignity of the Fifth Form to consider. But a thick ear would do it. Offer him a thick ear for refusing, and a fat little funk like Muffin would come to heel fast enough. It's making a beginning and breaking the ice. I ought really to have started with Muffin instead of Silver; I can see that now. What I

Lumsden and Talboys looked on in surprise. Here was a member of the Fourth Form obeying Hansom's orders, at all events. True, Tubby Muffin was likely to obey anybody's orders rather than take a licking. But he hadn't been licked yet, at all events. Yet his only object in life at the present moment seemed to be to make himself agreeable to Hansom.

Hansom was growing loftier than ever in look. He had rather a weakness for "showing off" before his friends.

"Muffin!" he rapped out.

"Yes, Hansom?"

"Put some more sticks in the fire, and shove the kettle on!"

"Certainly, Hansom!"

Tubby Muffin carried out those directions with cheerful alacrity. It really looked as if Hansom had found an obedient fag at last.

But when the kettle was disposed on the blazing sticks, Tubby Muffin turned towards the captain of the Fifth with an inquiring look.

"Where are they?" he asked.

Hansom coughed.

"Oh, I said you could have some tarts, didn't I?" he remarked carelessly. "There they are—in the bag."

"Oh!" murmured Lumsden.

The tarts were in the bag; but the cat was out of the bag now. The magic power that had turned the fat Classical into an obedient fag for the Fifth was not Hansom's eye of command or the terror of his glance. It was the promise of jam-tarts.

Hansom avoided meeting his chums' eyes as Tubby Muffin travelled through a couple of jam-tarts. They did not take him long. Two jam-tarts weren't much to Tubby Muffin. Two dozen would probably have left him inquiring for more.

"Is that all, Hansom?" he asked.
"Yes," grunted the Fifth-Former. "Do you think I keep a tuckshop here for fat fags?"

"Well, you said tarts!" answered Reginald Muffin, in rather an aggrieved tone. "Of course, two tarts are tarts. But I thought—"

"You needn't trouble to think!" snapped Hansom. "You're not wanted to think, Muffin! You're wanted to do as you're told!"

"Oh, am I?" said Tubby warmly.

"Yes. And don't argue!"

"I'll argue if I like!" retorted Reginald Muffin independently.

"You'll get a licking if you do!"

Evidently the fagging was beginning in earnest. The fly had walked into the spider's parlour—attracted by jam-tarts. It was not going to be so easy to walk out again.

That consideration seemed to dawn upon fat Muffin's brain, for he began to back towards the door.

Hansom raised his hand.

"Stop!" he commanded.

Edward Hansom was firmly under the impression that, like the lamented parent of the Prince of Denmark, he had "an eye like Mars, to threaten and command." He was exercising it now.

So far, however, from being awed by Hansom's eye like Mars, Tubby Muffin made a jump for the door. He scented danger.

Hansom jumped up.

His commanding eye was evidently useless in this case. But a commanding hand dropped on Tubby's fat shoulder before he could get the door open and swung him back. Hansom had a heavy hand, and it was much more efficacious than his eye.

"Now, then, you cheeky young rascal—"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Shurrup!"

"Help!"

"You silly young ass!" roared the exasperated Hansom. "Stop making that row! I haven't touched you!"

"Leggo!"

"Now, Muffin—"

"Rescue!"

"Give me that cane, Lummy!"

"Here you are," said Lumsden, grinning.

"Hold out your hand, Muffin!" said Hansom, just as if he was a prefect of the Sixth Form.

Muffin blinked at him.

"Mum-mum-my hand!" he stammered.

"Yes; sharp!"

"Wha-a-at for?"

"I'm going to cane you!"

"Kik-kik-cane me!" howled Tubby Muffin indignantly. "Yah! Do you think you're a prefect, you silly owl? Yah!"

Lumsden and Talboys grinned; they couldn't help it. Hansom flushed with wrath.

"Hold out your hand!" he thundered.

"Yah!" retorted Tubby Muffin.

"Then you'll get it harder!"

Whack, whack, whack!

The hapless Tubby did get it—across his fat shoulders. Hansom laid it on with great energy. He felt that he was upholding the dignity of the Fifth, as well as establishing the important rule that the Fourth fagged for the Fifth. Tubby Muffin squirmed and howled.

But there was no help at hand for poor Tubby. He was in the spider's parlour, far from help.

Whack, whack, whack!

"Yoop! Stoppit! I say, Hansom, old chap— Yaroooh! You beast! Chuck it! I say, old fellow, leggo! Yaroooh!"

"There," said Hansom severely, "I think that ought to be a lesson to you, Muffin!"

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Do you want any more?"

"No!" howled Tubby.

"Then set to work, fagging!" commanded Hansom. "Clear the tea-table, tidy up the grate, and put the kettle away, and—dust the room! I'll watch you do it!"

"I'm not going to fag for the Fifth!" roared Tubby.

Whack!

"Yaroooooh!"

"What did you say, Muffin?"

"I—I said—I—I mean I'll fag for

you with pleasure, old fellow!" gasped the unhappy Tubby.

"Don't call me old fellow! I don't like it from fags!"

"All right, old fellow—I mean, you beast—I—I meaner say, yes, Hansom! All right!"

"Pile in!" commanded Hansom.

Tubby Muffin cast a longing glance at the door. But Hansom was between him and the door. The fat Classical was paying dearly for two jam-tarts. With a furious face, he set to work fagging, under the commanding eye of Hansom of the Fifth.

Hansom had bagged a fag at last!

The 6th Chapter. The High Hand.

"Jimmy!"

"Hallo, porker!"

Jimmy Silver was on his way to the cricket-ground, when Tubby stopped him, red and wrathful and plaintive at the same time. Jimmy paused good-naturedly.

"Been in the wars?" he asked.

"Yow-ow-ow!"

"Well, what's the trouble? Lovell's yelling to me!" said Jimmy Silver.

"I've been fagging for the Fifth!" gasped Tubby.

"What?"

"They got me into Hansom's study," groaned Tubby dolorously, "and then the beast licked me till I fagged for him, Jimmy!"

Jimmy Silver frowned.

"You oughtn't to have done it," he said.

"What could I do?" demanded Muffin warmly. "Think I could fight three of the Fifth? Three of the Fourth would be as much as I could tackle."

"And a little over, I think," said Jimmy, laughing.

"Well, ain't you going to take it up?" exclaimed Tubby. "Are those Fifth Form cads going to fag the Fourth, and wallop 'em?"

"No fear! But—but—" Jimmy hesitated. "Morn's junior captain now, Tubby; it's Morn's bizney to take it up for the Form. You'd better go to Mornington!"

Tubby Muffin gave a snort.

"Morn's no good!" he answered.

"Go to Morn!" answered Jimmy Silver. "Why, you young sweep, you voted for him at the election—"

"Well, he stood me a feed, you see—"

"Well, Morn's your man!" grunted Jimmy, and he detached Tubby's fat hand from his sleeve and joined his chums, who were waiting for him impatiently.

Tubby Muffin blinked after him, and then rolled away to Valentine Mornington's study. Tubby was simply athirst for vengeance for his manifold wrongs, and although he had voted for Mornington at the junior captain's election, his faith was stronger in Jimmy Silver. But there was no choice for him now, and he

rolled away to pitch his tale of woe to the new skipper.

Morn was alone in No. 4; Erroll was on the cricket-ground. The new junior captain was wrestling with French conjugations, a task set him by Monsieur Monceau, when Tubby rolled in. He pointed impatiently to the door.

"Travel!" he snapped. "I'm busy!"

"Look here, Morn—"

"Shut the door after you!"

"Do you call yourself junior captain?" roared Tubby Muffin, in a white heat of indignation. "Am I going to be fagged by the Fifth, and nothing said about it? Jimmy Silver would have made the rotters sit up for it, when he was captain, I can tell you!"

"Oh! Is that it?" Mornington laid down his pen and rose to his feet. "The Fifth have been fagging you, have they?"

"Yes; Hansom, and Lumsden, and Talboys, in their study!"

"And you fagged?"

"I had to. Hansom whacked me till I did. I—I fought hard!" said Tubby Muffin. "I—I knocked him flying once—fairly spinning. But there were three of them—"

"Didn't you knock them all spinning?" asked Mornington sarcastically. "Why didn't you take all three, and bash their heads together?"

"Well, I would have, only—only

after I'd knocked Hansom down, the others, you know—"

"You should have knocked them down, too!" grinned Mornington.

"Well, I did, you know," said Tubby. "I fought like a—like a lion. But altogether, they were too much for me. See? And—and I've been thrashed, and made to fag, and it's your bizney to take it up as junior captain, Morn, you know it is!"

Mornington frowned.

"You're such a thumpin' fat, little liar," he said, "I don't know how much there is in your yarn. But I'll go and see Hansom about it!"

"Fat lot of good that will be!" grunted Tubby Muffin discontentedly. "Jimmy Silver would have—"

"Never mind Jimmy Silver now—I'm skipper. Shut up, and leave it to me!" snapped Mornington.

The junior captain left his study, and made his way to the Fifth Form quarters. That was rather a reckless proceeding on his part in the circumstances, but Morn did not stop to think about that; he was reckless by nature, and it did not occur to him to be prudent.

There was a sound of laughter in Hansom's study as Morn reached the door. He threw it open.

Hansom & Co. seemed in a merry mood.

The principle of the thing, as Hansom termed it, had been established—the ice had been broken. The Fourth had started fagging for the Fifth.

True, only Tubby Muffin had started; but it was a beginning.

Edward Hansom confidently predicted that Muffin's example would be followed, especially if a few more thrashings were handed out. And Hansom was prepared to hand them out as fast as required.

The three Fifth-Formers stared at Mornington, still smiling.

"Hallo! Did you tell this fag to come here, Hansom?" yawned Talboys.

Hansom shook his head.

"No; I'm not wanting a fag at present," he said. "You can cut, Mornington. I'll call you when required!"

"You silly chump!" was Morn's reply.

"Cut off at once!"

"I want to know whether you've been fagging Tubby Muffin, of my Form?" said Mornington.

Hansom nodded genially.

"Yes; I believe it was Muffin who fagged here," he assented. "One of your scrubby gang, anyhow. I think it was Muffin!"

"I think you're already aware that the Fourth don't fag for the Fifth!" said Mornington.

"We're going to knock all that nonsense out of you, my boy," assured Hansom. "I shall probably want you to-morrow. Be ready."

"You picked Muffin, I suppose, because he's a funky ass, to begin with?" said Mornington disdainfully.

(Continued on page 288.)



THIS WEEK:

A CRICKET TALK. By A. M. DUCAT.

(The brilliant batsman who recently scored 306, not out, in one innings, and so set up a record for the first-class cricket season of 1919.)

There are many points in cricket which every junior player must take note of and remember if he has the slightest ambition to excel in what must always be regarded as the best and cleanest of all branches of manly sport. The word "Cricket" is now used to express the very essence of fairness, and no matter where you are you will hear the game referred to as one which has never lent itself to petty trickery.

When a shady or unsportsmanlike action is committed in business, somebody will say "it's not cricket." What better recommendation could any game have? Football, golf, tennis, or, indeed, any game other than cricket is never mentioned with the same amount of reverence, and I am sure there is no necessity to tell my young readers that the chief point to remember is absolute fairness, because, as I suggested before, "cricket" and "fair dealing" are synonymous.

I was once acting as an amateur umpire in a junior match in which a very eager batsman at the bowler's end was backing up, or starting to run, as the ball was being delivered. The young bowler noticed this, and on one occasion, instead of delivering the ball at the completion of his run, knocked the balls off and appealed. "How's that?" cried he.

"Not out!" I replied. "And certainly not in the spirit of the game. Warn your young friend the batsman, and probably he will be more careful, but never resort to sharp practices."

However, according to the laws of the game, my decision should have been "Out!" Yet I shall never believe a young cricketer would be guilty of taking a mean advantage by starting a run too early.

The points I want my readers to remember are those not connected with fairness. I would rather feel that every cricketer plays in the proper spirit; so let us get to work.

We will start with batting. Somehow, this department of the game always comes first in the mind of the boy cricketer. It is his greatest ambition to shine as a batsman; and, although I ought not to say so, this is quite natural.

Now, the chief point to remember in batting is never to lose sight of the ball from the time that it leaves the bowler's hand until it has been struck by the bat, or has passed the wicket. I have seen hundreds of young players hit at the ball with

their eyes closed, making terrible lunges at the place where they imagine the ball will come. Never play by guesswork. You may make a huge hit as a result of a blind swipe, but you will never be worth your salt as a batsman unless you keep your eyes glued on to the ball.

At first, you may feel that your movements are hampered, and that you are not getting so much out of the game as you ought, but the habit of watching, once properly contracted, is never lost, and in a very short space of time you will find yourself picking out the right ball to hit, the right one to play back at, and the right one to leave alone.

A. M. DUCAT,



the famous Surrey Athlete, who has written this article specially for the BOYS' FRIEND.

I often read the BOYS' FRIEND, and I remember seeing some rattling good advice in an article written by a great cricketer who is a close friend of mine. He said that a good rule to follow in the case of a straight ball is—if the ball pitches so far away that you cannot get to the pitch of it, play back. If it comes farther up, so that you can get to the pitch of it with some slight difficulty, play forward; and if you can get to the pitch of it with ease, jump into it and hit it for all you are worth. Good! But unless you watch the ball all the

time, you cannot do any one of these three things.

Another point—don't try to copy the strokes of a first-class cricketer until you know how to defend your wicket. Let defence come first, defence afterwards. There will be plenty of loose balls to hit at, when the sphere begins to look as big as a cabbage.

Now, just a few words to bowlers. Don't let pace be your one ambition, and, above all things, never bowl short-pitched stuff. Remember that so long as you don't bowl full-pitchers you cannot overpitch a ball. Nobody can help bowling a half-volley occasionally, and as for a yorker—it is priceless. The great fault of some young bowlers is their fear of being hit. Let the batsman "have a go." If he hits you two or three times he'll probably miss-hit the next one and give somebody a catch.

I know any number of young cricketers who hate fielding; yet if they only remained on the tiptoe of expectancy all the time they were fielding, they would probably agree that it is one of the most enjoyable departments of the game. Watch the flight of the ball; watch the attitude of the batsman, and you can anticipate his stroke, so that when the ball is hit toward you, you will have already started on your task of fielding it. Get slack, and when the ball comes it catches you napping.

That is how catches are missed and many runs are given to your opponents.

There is just one piece of advice I would venture to give, however, to those who are perhaps a little too fond of recreation and not sufficiently fond of hard work, which is absolutely necessary to an honourable career. Games of any kind should never take precedence in a young man's life. It must not be forgotten that every man owes it to himself, his friends, and his country to do something to the nation's credit, and pastime should be kept rigidly for the hours of leisure which follow work.

There are many young people who excel in some particular branch of sport who imagine that their natural ability to shine in recreation should not be wasted, even if it does away with all hopes of realising a higher ambition to achieve a position of usefulness. Cricket does much in teaching us how to keep our tempers under provocation, it teaches us how to think and act quickly, to be self-reliant, and to be fair in all things; but if we simply give the rein to sport and make it our master, we undo all the good influence and tend to become selfish and ambitious for our own vainglory. Home influence and school environment naturally go far to mould a boy's character, but through the medium of a game like cricket, he generally becomes imbued with a love of fair play which rarely, or never, leaves him in later life.

There may be many good qualities lying dormant in a youth which make him self-reliant, physically and then mentally; he learns early to see that it is mean to take unfair advantage.

A. M. Ducat



I TELL of Grace—not "W. G.,"
The mighty man of cricket;
But one who loves a boyish spree
And always hits the wicket.
Of japers he's the reigning king,
For fun he's always ready;
And we should miss like anything
The daring pranks of Teddy!

The Fistic Four are men of might,
In friendship's bonds united;
True sportsmen, pluckily they fight
To see each grave wrong righted.
This quartette takes the pride of place,
Among the first they're reckoned;
But all agree that "Putty" Grace
Comes in an easy second!

He ranks a sportsman in our eyes,
His prowess has no limit;
And when the Channel he espies
No doubt he'll try to swim it!
At cricket he is all the rage,
His fame scarce needs extolling;
One day he'll give us, on this page,
Some useful hints on bowling!

On one occasion, Teddy saved
The life of Rookwood's skipper;
With splendid courage he behaved
And proved himself a "ripper"!
But Tubby Muffin sought to steal
The glory and the credit;
That story made a wide appeal
To everyone who read it!

Then raise your glass of ginger-wine,
Already overflowing,
And drink to Grace, a sportsman fine,
A fellow worth the knowing!
By Owen Conquest, week by week,
May all his deeds be written;
For none could ever hope to seek
A truer type of Briton!

—THE ROOKWOOD RHYMESTER.

Held up!

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

By **MARTIN CLIFFORD.**



The 1st Chapter.

Poker Brown.

"Tucker's Tailings are taken." Chunky Todgers imparted that peculiar piece of information in the playground at Cedar Creek School.

Frank Richards & Co. were chatting in the playground, waiting for the bell to ring for morning classes, when Chunky joined them.

The chums of Cedar Creek were discussing a subject which was just then uppermost in the minds of most of the inhabitants of the Thompson Valley; the deeds of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones. The Californian outlaw, who had lately "located" in that section of British Columbia, was still at large, and no one had yet succeeded in earning the five hundred dollars offered as a reward for his apprehension.

But as Chunky Todgers imparted his information, Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was dropped as a topic, and the three chums looked inquiringly at Todgers—Frank Richards in considerable surprise.

"Tucker's Tailings!" repeated Frank.

Chunky nodded.

"It's taken!" he said.

"What the merry dickens are Tucker's Tailings?" demanded Frank Richards, half-suspecting that the fat Chunky was pulling his leg.

Frank had been some time at Cedar Creek now, but he still had some things to learn that were not included in the school curriculum.

But Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc evidently understood, for they exclaimed together:

"Who's taken it?"

"A tenderfoot, I reckon," answered Chunky. "He's built a shanty near the old mine, and he's working on the tailings. Must be green!"

"But what—" began Frank.

Bob Lawless grinned.

"What's what?" he asked.

"What on earth are tailings? And why should they be taken?" asked Frank. "And what is Chunky driving at, anyhow?"

"Oh, you're a greenhorn!" said Todgers.

"I guess you are still a little green, Franky," said Bob Lawless. "Tucker was a miner, who sunk some thousands of dollars in a mine near Thompson, years back. He had what he thought was a regular bonanza; but it was a quartz proposition, and he had to get machinery up from the railway. He found some gold, too, but I reckon it never paid his outlay, for he chucked up the mine, and moved on after a time."

"But the tailings—"

"The tailings are the stuff left over. You'll find stacks of tailings round any old mine."

"Oh, I see! After the ore's crushed, and the gold extracted?"

"You've got it!"

"What use are the tailings?" asked Frank.

"None at all."

"Then why should they be taken? Chunky says that Tucker's Tailings have been taken."

"Listen, my infant, and be enlightened!" said Bob, with a laugh. "When the gold's extracted, they don't extract the lot—there's always some left. You can't get out the last ounce. But every improvement in the mining machinery gets out more and more. Tucker's didn't have the latest machinery, naturally. He probably left a good deal of pay-dirt behind. It's often happened that the tailings of an old mine have been worked at a profit, by a galoot coming along with later dodges in machinery. Some pilgrim has spotted Tucker's Tailings, and has pegged them out as a claim, to try for the gold Tucker left in them—see?"

"I see!" said Frank.

"It's been tried before," went on Bob. "I've heard of half a dozen galoots who have squatted on Tucker's

tailings, and some of them have washed out some dust. But I reckon that if Tucker left much in the tailings, it's been got out before this."

"Then the new man is only wasting his time?" asked Frank.

"Sure!"

"Must be a greenhorn!" said Chunky Todgers with a sniff. "I hear that it's a man from over the Line. He's got a room at the Occidental Hotel in Thompson, and rides out every morning to Tucker's Tailings to work."

"What's his name?" asked Bob evidently interested in the stranger who was trying his luck on the tailings of the abandoned mine.

"Brown," answered Chunky. "He's signed himself Amos Brown in the register at the Occidental; but the galoots have nicknamed him Poker Brown. He plays every evening in the poker-room at the Occidental."

"And does he make anything out

of the tailings a week now, and he hasn't missed a day."

"That looks like work. Well, I hope he'll find a fortune in Tucker's Tailings," said Bob Lawless, laughing.

"Not likely!" remarked Vere Beauclerc. "But if he should strike anything, it's rather a dangerous place for him, with Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones hanging about the valley. It's a couple of miles from the town, with no other shanty anywhere in sight."

"I don't reckon he's heard of Jones," said Bob. "That bulldozer is a new thing in this section, too."

Beauclerc nodded.

"It might be a good idea to ride over and see him," he said. "Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones attacked my father at the shack, because he had some money there; and he's tried to rob Cedar Creek. He would be quite capable of shooting down a lonely

alarm. Mr. Slimmey was still suffering from the wound he had received on that occasion, and his class was taken by Mr. Shepherd, the other assistant master. But the class was not large, for many of the younger pupils of Cedar Creek were being kept at home for the present. Even Miss Meadows' class was less than half its usual number.

Frank Richards & Co. were coming to school as usual, but they carried shot-guns on their saddles. For some days Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones had not been seen; but no one supposed that he had "vamoosed" from the section. And where and when he would next put in an appearance was rather an anxious question.

It was a new experience for the Thompson Valley to be the scene of an outlaw's depredations, and there was alarm in many homesteads. There were a dozen or more of the North-West Mounted Police in the valley searching for the outlaw, but so far they had not been successful.

The discovery had been made that the outlaw's red beard and hair were a disguise, and that in his proper person he probably presented a very different appearance. Without his disguise, he might have been passed in the street unrecognised; and that, of course, made the task of tracking him down more difficult. There were always plenty of strangers coming up the valley; and any one of them might have been Mr. Jones, of California, minus his disguise.

During lessons at Cedar Creek the school gates were now kept barred, and Black Sam, the stableman, kept his gun handy. Under those conditions, a good many of the parents naturally considered it advisable to keep their boys and girls at home.

Nobody supposed that such a state of affairs would last long. The out-

three schoolboys rode away from the Thompson trail, past the place claims on the creek.

The original Tucker had located his mine a couple of miles out of Thompson, in the hills, and the way was not marked by a trail. Here and there in the earth the schoolboys discerned tailings.

Bob Lawless raised his riding-whip and pointed at last.

"There's the shebang!"

The "shebang" was a roughly-built cabin of logs and lumber, backed against an almost perpendicular cliff.

Close by were the "tailings" which Mr. Brown was working.

The lumber from the old mine showed signs of pick and shovel, but it did not look as if much work had been done there.

There was no smoke rising from the pinewood chimney of the shanty, and it looked deserted.

The chums looked round in vain for Mr. Brown.

There were still some hours of daylight, but he was not to be seen at work on the tailings. This did not quite agree with Chunky Todger's statement that he left Thompson every morning, and returned every evening, putting in a hard day's work on his claim.

The chums dismounted, tied their horses to a stump of a tree, and walked up to the cabin.

Bob Lawless gave a loud rap on the door with his riding-whip.

There was no answer from within.

"I guess the galoot's not here," said Bob.

"We've had our ride for nothing, then," remarked Beauclerc. "According to Chunky's yarn, he should be here!"

Bob Lawless nodded.

"The cabin's locked up," he said. "Looks a pretty strong lock, too! He must have got that from a distance; they don't make those locks in the valley. May as well wait a bit as we're here; if he's as industrious as Chunky has heard, he can't have knocked off work so early. He may be hanging about somewhere!"

The chums returned to their horses and waited.

They had ridden a good distance, and were indisposed to return without having seen the new squatter at the tailings.

But the sun sank lower towards the far Pacific; and when an hour had passed, there was still no sign of Mr. Brown.

Bob Lawless gave a grunt of annoyance.

"I reckon we've come here for nothing," he said. "The ornery galoot has knocked off early to-day, that's clear!"

"Bother him!" said Frank.

"Never mind; we've had a pleasant ride, and we'll have another home!" said Beauclerc. "If you want to see him, we can drop in at Thompson on the way home, and see him at the Occidental."

"Well, I admit I'm rather curious about the galoot," said Bob, "and it would be only good-natured to give him the office about the bulldozer Jones, as we know what kind of a hair-raiser he is. Let's!"

And the chums rode into Thompson on their way back from Tucker's Tailings. They dismounted outside the Occidental Hotel, which was the general meeting-place of the better class of Thompson's citizens in the evening. The rougher variety fogathered at the Red Dog Saloon.

Beauclerc uttered a slight exclamation as he tethered his horse, and Frank Richards looked at him.

"My father!" said Beauclerc, in a low voice.

Mr. Beauclerc, the remittance-man of Cedar Camp, was just entering the hotel. He did not observe the schoolboys, but passed in without glancing round. Frank Richards & Co. followed him in, and Beauclerc was moving quickly forward to speak to his father, when he stopped suddenly. Lascelles Beauclerc had opened the door of the poker-room, and gone inside, closing the door after him.

Beauclerc stopped dead.

There was only one thing the remittance-man could want in the card-room, and that was a game of poker with some of the other habitués. At one time Mr. Beauclerc had been a frequent enough visitor there; in the days when he had spent his remittances as fast as they arrived, in reckless riot. But those days were over; at least, his son had firmly believed that they were. It was a shock to Beauclerc to see his father going into the poker-room.

He stood quite silent.

Frank Richards understood well enough the feelings of the remittance-man's son; his fear that his father was falling back into the old, evil ways. But there was nothing Frank



HANDS UP! "Hands up!" The newcomer's right hand whipped from under his coat, and the bank manager suddenly found himself looking down the barrel of a revolver. A cry of amazement escaped Frank Richards. "Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!"

of the tailings?" asked Frank Richards.

Chunky grinned.

"I guess not. But he seems pretty flush of money, so I suppose he brought some durocks with him to sink in the mine, like poor old Tucker. Still, he sticks to work; he's out at the mine every day, and sometimes stays there all night at the shanty. He don't look much like a galoot to work; but he does stick to it. I've seen him lounging about the Occidental though. He looks a good deal like a sport."

"A sport?" repeated Frank.

"Short for sportsman?" explained Bob, with a smile.

"Hunting?" asked Frank.

"Ha, ha! Nope! A sportsman out here isn't a merry Nimrod. It means a man who plays cards for a living."

"Oh, a gambler!"

"Correct! But they like to call themselves sports; it sounds nicer. It's quite possible that he makes his way at poker, and has pegged out a claim to keep up appearances. Sports ain't popular here, of course. But Chunky says he sticks to work."

"Every day," said Chunky. "He's

miner, if he thought there was gold in the shanty."

"Good idea!" said Frank Richards. "We can tell him how the matter stands, as we've come in contact with Jones. He mightn't pay any attention to the talk of people in Thompson who haven't seen the man."

"But we could give him the straight goods," said Bob Lawless, with a nod. "I reckon that's a good idea, Cherub. We'll ride over to the tailings after school."

"There goes the bell!"

The Cedar Creek fellows trooped off towards the school-house. Frank Richards & Co. having quite decided to visit Tucker's Tailings after school, and put the "tenderfoot" on his guard against the outlaw. They were rather curious, too, to see the "pilgrim," who was trying his luck on the tailings, as a good many pilgrims had done before him.

The 2nd Chapter.

At Tucker's Tailings.

Cedar Creek School had less than half its usual attendance that day.

The raid on the school by Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, a few days before, had caused a great deal of

law was certain to be run down sooner or later. But it was indubitable that he had not been run down yet.

There were a good many at Cedar Creek who were thinking as much of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones as of their lessons that day; but Miss Meadows was very lenient with her class.

She only chided Chunky Todgers gently when that bright youth, asked for the name of the victorious general at the Battle of Quebec, answered absent-mindedly: "Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!"—a reply that made the class chuckle.

After lessons, Frank Richards & Co. mounted their horses for the ride to Tucker's Tailings.

Chunky Todgers declined to join the party; he declared that he was wanted at home to help on the farm before dark. The chums of Cedar Creek grinned as they left Chunky on the trail, and rode away. The fat Todgers was not usually keen on helping on the farm; and they could guess that he had a dislike for lonely places while Mr. Jones of California was at large. And Tucker's Tailings was a lonely place.

Bob Lawless was the guide, as the



HELD UP!

(Continued from the previous page.)

"Look here, Beau!" he began.

"Yes, Frank?"

"You're worrying about your father."

Beauclerc coloured deeply, and did not answer.

"I know it's not my bizney, old chap," said Frank quietly.

"But I can see it. Look here, Mr. Beauclerc may have had a dozen reasons for dropping into that dashed card-room last night. You're an ass to give it a second thought. I really think that."

Beauclerc's lips quivered.

"I can't help being afraid," he muttered.

"My father is one of the best men breathing, but under the influence of others, he—he—you understand. He's not been to the Occidental for a long time, that I know of, and he's never mentioned to me that he's going there again. He was not home till midnight last night—"

"You ought to have been asleep then."

"I couldn't sleep."

"But if you asked him—"

Beauclerc shook his head.

"He did not say a word to me this morning, and I did not mention that I saw him last evening," he said.

"It's odd, if it— But most likely you're right, Frank; I'm a fool to worry."

And Beauclerc endeavoured to smile cheerfully; but it was rather a failure. He could not drive the doubt from his mind. The usual remittance from England had arrived only a week before, and the boy knew what the remittance-man was only too likely to do when there was money burning in his pocket.

Frank did not pursue the subject; it was too painful to his chum. The trio were rather silent when they arrived at Cedar Creek.

They found the playground in a buzz.

Chunky Todgers rushed up to them, his fat face full of excitement.

"You fellows heard?" he gasped.

"Heard what?"

"About Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones," gasped Chunky.

"Oh! Is he on the warpath again?"

"Yes, rather—you bet!" said Chunky breathlessly. "I heard it in Thompson this morning. He's raided a claim down the Thompson river, and shot a Chinaman—and wounded a white man. He's vamoosed with a thousand dollars' worth of dust. What do you think of that?"

"My hat!"

"News got into Thompson last night," said Chunky. "It was at the Spotted Dog claim—that's a mile out of the town. It happened about six. I say, you galoots might have run into him."

"We didn't," said Frank. "We were at Tucker's Tailings at six."

"Did you see Brown?"

"No; he wasn't there."

"We're going to see him again to-day," said Bob. "We'll go after morning lessons, and catch him at work on the tailings."

There was a thrill of excitement in Cedar Creek School that morning, and it was not easy for Miss Meadows to keep her pupils' attention upon school work.

The latest outrage by Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was the one thought in all minds, and the one topic on all tongues. The attendance at the school was even smaller than the day before.

After morning lessons, very few of the fellows went outside the school fence. But Frank Richards & Co. mounted their horses to ride to Tucker's Tailings. They had provided themselves with sandwiches, for there would be no time to return to the school for dinner. The ride was a long one from Cedar Creek.

They rode at a good pace, and came in sight of the shanty on the old mine at last. The door of the shanty was open now, and a pick was standing against the wall outside.

"Mr. Brown's at home to-day!" remarked Bob Lawless.

"Looks like it."

"He's watching us from the window," said Vere Beauclerc quietly.

"What?"

"Look at the window."

Bob Lawless and Frank glanced at the little, unglazed window of the shanty, in surprise. The shutter was open, and they caught a glimpse of a clean-shaven, dark-complexioned face, watching them. The face disappeared the next moment.

"He's heard our horses," said Frank. "Perhaps he thought it was Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones coming."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's on his guard, anyhow; doesn't seem to be so much of a tenderfoot," remarked Bob.

A slim man of medium height stepped out of the cabin as the school-boys rode up.

They looked at him rather curiously.

He was a rather good-looking man, clean-shaven, with very sharp eyes of an uncertain colour.

"Mr. Amos Brown?" asked Bob Lawless.

"I guess so. What do you want here?"

"Called to see you, Mr. Brown," answered Bob.

"You might have saved yourself the trouble."

"What?"

"I guess I'm not entertaining visitors," answered Mr. Brown coolly.

"Next time you make a call, make it where you're welcome."

Frank Richards & Co. stared at him, colouring. There was a deliberate offensiveness about Poker Brown that raised their ire at once.

"Well, by gum!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. "Is that the kind of manners you've brought over the Line with you, Mr. Brown? You'll find that they won't do for Canada."

"I guess the sooner you levant, the better I shall like the look of you," answered Mr. Brown. "I'm too busy to chinwag with schoolboys."

"You don't look so jolly busy," retorted Frank Richards. "There's precious little work been done here, that I can see."

"That's my business."

"We came to do you a good turn," exclaimed Beauclerc indignantly.

"I guess I'm not asking for it."

"Well, we'll give you the office, all the same," said Bob. "Have you ever heard of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones?"

Mr. Brown stared at him.

"I guess I've heard the boys in Thompson talking about that firebug," he answered. "What about him?"

"Well, we've come in contact with the rascal, and we know he's quite as dangerous as folks say. You're in a very lonely place here."

"Not so lonely at present as I'd like it to be," said Mr. Brown rudely.

"If the man Jones came along, you'd be in danger," said Bob, controlling his anger. "That's what we came to tell you, as you're a stranger here, and a tenderfoot into the bargain. If you're making money out of the tailings, Jones is as like to hear of it as not, and he might give you a look-in any day."

Mr. Brown laughed.

"I guess he won't worry me," he answered. "I reckon I'm making a fairish thing out of the tailings, too. I guess it's a bonanza, and the guy who gave it up was a prize jay from Jaysville, I guess."

"Glad to hear it," said Bob; "but that's all the more reason why you should keep an eye peeled for Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones."

"And that's what you came to tell me, is it?" asked Poker Brown, eyeing the three schoolboys curiously.

"Sure!"

"Well, I guess I'm obliged; and now you can travel. Good-bye!"

"Oh, go and chop chips!" growled Bob Lawless.

And the chums wheeled their horses and rode away.

Poker Brown stood watching them till they were out of sight, and then went back into the cabin.

"What do you think of that galoot?" grunted Bob Lawless, as the chums rode at a gallop for Cedar Creek.

"Well, he's not exactly polished," said Frank Richards, laughing. "It's pretty clear that he doesn't want visitors on his claim."

"Bless his cheek! It's not because we interrupted his work, anyhow," growled Bob. "Precious little work he seems to have done there. As for his making dollars out of the tailings, that's rather a tall story. More likely he makes it playing poker at the Occidental, I reckon."

And the chums of Cedar Creek rode back to school, quite decided not to pay any more visits to the pilgrim at Tucker's Tailings.

The 4th Chapter.

Held Up!

"Bob!"

"Yes, dad?"

"I want you to ride over to Thompson this afternoon, to the bank."

"Right-ho—pop!"

It was Saturday, and there was no school that day for Frank Richards and his Canadian cousin. A summer rainstorm had come on in the afternoon, and the chums were watching the rain from the window of the ranch-house, when Mr. Lawless called Bob.

"I guess we've kicked our heels indoors long enough," remarked Bob. "I'll be glad of a ride in the rain; what about you, Franky?"

"Same here," answered Frank, at once.

"I was going myself," said Mr. Lawless. "But now the rain's come on, I'm wanted here. I guess you can manage, Bob."

"Easy as falling off a horse, popper. Nothing much in riding over to the bank at Thompson, is there?"

"Not as a rule; but with Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones in the section it might be different."

"Oh, never mind the man Jones!" answered Bob cheerfully. "If you're sending money, it's safer with me than with one of the ranchmen; Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones isn't likely to go through a schoolboy."

Mr. Lawless nodded.

"Yes; that is what I was thinking," he said. "I've received six hundred dollars in notes this morning, and I'd rather not keep it in the house. If the rustler is in this quarter, he's not likely to bother his head about a couple of schoolboys. But put the packet in your boot, Bob, to be safe in case the unexpected should happen."

"You bet!"

Bob Lawless concealed the wad of notes in his riding-boots, and the cousins left the ranch-house.

The rain was still falling, the sun-baked prairie drinking up the water as if athirst. But the chums cared little for the rain. With their waterproof cloaks and big Stetson hats, they were well protected. They rode away from the ranch in cheerful spirits.

"What about calling for the Cherub, Franky?" asked Bob. "It's not much out of our way."

"He usually helps his father on the clearing on Saturday," said Frank doubtfully.

"That's so. I'll guess we'll get on."

The cousins rode at a good rate for Thompson. The rain was still falling upon them as they entered the frontier town, and there were few people to be seen in Main Street. They clattered on through the rain towards the bank.

The bank was rather a new institution in Thompson. It was a branch of a bank at Kamloops, and it was not much like a bank to look at, being a long-built edifice. But it was built very strongly, and the windows were barred; and the strong-room was a cellar beneath the building. Leaving their horses under a tree outside, Frank and Bob opened the door and entered the building, closing it after them to keep out the rain and wind.

There was no other customer in the building just then, and no one to be seen save Mr. Hooker, the manager, who was smoking a big cigar behind the bank counter, with his feet on the counter—in the free and easy Western style. He nodded to the two callers without rising or removing his cigar.

"Still raining?" he asked.

"I guess so," answered Bob.

He extracted the wads of notes from his riding-boots and pushed them across the counter. Then Mr. Hooker yawned, rolled off his stool, and picked up the notes. With his cigar poking out of a corner of his

mouth, he counted over the notes, locked them in a drawer, and began to write out a receipt for the deposit.

He was thus engaged when the outer door opened, and a man, muffled in a greatcoat, came in, closing the door after him.

Frank and Bob glanced idly at the newcomer.

His coat was turned up against the rain, covering him to the ears, and his hat was drawn down almost to his nose. All that could be seen of his face, in fact, was the tip of a rather red nose, wet with rain.

Mr. Hooker glanced up from the paper he was writing.

"One moment, sir. Please take a seat!" he said.

"I guess I'm not taking a seat!" replied the new-comer, and to the bank manager's amazement his right hand whipped from under his rain-wet cloak, with a revolver in it.

"Hands up!"

"Wha-a-at!"

With his disengaged hand the new-comer pushed back his hat.

A red-bearded, red-whiskered face was revealed to view, and there was a yell from Frank Richards and Bob Lawless, and a horrified gasp from Mr. Hooker.

"Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!"

Three pairs of eyes were fixed on the desperado in consternation.

The ruffian had chosen his moment well.

The rain had afforded him a pretext for muffling up, so that the well-known red beard should be hidden as he rode up to the bank through the Main Street of Thompson, and it also made it unlikely that many of the Thompson folk would be abroad.

The revolver was levelled at Mr. Hooker, whose hands promptly went up over his head, the pen still in the fingers of his right.

Not for more money than there was in the Thompson Bank vault would Mr. Hooker have argued with a revolver in the grip of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones.

"Hands up!"

The outlaw's sharp eyes glittered at Frank Richards and Bob, and he made a menacing movement with the revolver.

He was reluctant to use the weapon, for a pistol-shot in the bank would have brought a crowd there at once, but there was no doubt that if the ruffian pulled trigger, he would shoot to kill. There were too many crimes on Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones' conscience for the desperado to care whether one more was added.

The chums of Cedar Creek raised their hands.

They were unarmed, and there was nothing else to be done. They had shotguns on their saddles outside, in waterproof covers, but it had never even crossed their minds that there might be danger in the bank itself. Such a "hold-up" was not an uncommon occurrence in the unsettled Western States south of the Line, but it was very new in the Thompson Valley.

"Keep your paws up!" grunted the outlaw. "If I pull trigger you won't know what happens next. Now, Mr. Hooker—"

"Oh, by gum!" groaned the bank-manager.

"Hand out the rocks—sharp! I've no time to cut to waste! I give you one minute, or they'll want a new manager for the Thompson branch!"

Mr. Hooker blinked helplessly at the red-bearded ruffian.

He was utterly at the Californian outlaw's mercy. It needed only the pressure of a finger to lay him lifeless behind the bank counter, and there was no doubt that Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones would fire if his orders were not obeyed.

The unfortunate manager's fat face was white, and his hands trembled.

"You hear me?" rapped the outlaw.

"Ye-e-es," gasped the manager.

"Get a move on, lively!"

Mr. Hooker cast a despairing glance around.

The door of the office behind was closed. There was a clerk in the room at work on the books, but he was unconscious of what was going on. And Mr. Hooker could not venture to call to him; even if he could have rendered aid if called upon.

With the revolver looking him in the face, the manager had no choice.

He was allowed to lower his hands, and he opened several drawers and laid bank-bills on the pinewood counter.

The outlaw watched him like a cat.

Once Mr. Hooker was tempted to make a grab at the six-shooter on a shelf under the counter; but the watchful eye of the outlaw was too keen for him. Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones guessed his intention before it had fairly formed in his mind, and the revolver made a menacing movement.

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"Mind your eye," grunted the red-bearded ruffian. "Don't make me shoot, pard."

And Mr. Hooker gave up all thought of the six-shooter. Even if he had grasped it, he was not likely to be so quick as Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones in an exchange of shots.

With his left hand the outlaw scooped up the banknotes that were handed over the counter. He stowed them away in some bag under his coat, in crumpled wads. All the time he was watching the manager like a cat, and with the tail of his eye, as it were, he kept observation upon Frank Richards and Bob Lawless, and upon the door on the street. At any moment the door might have opened to admit another customer. The ruffian was taking big risks. But it was such a risk as the reckless rascal delighted in. The very audacity of the raid made it more likely to succeed.

In the inner office, the scratching of the clerk's pen could be heard in the silence. Outside there was a sound of voices as two Thompson men stopped under the porch for shelter from the rain, and began to chat there. And all the time the reckless ruffian was scooping up the notes and coin handed out in desperate haste by the terrified Mr. Hooker.

"I guess that lets me out," grinned Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones. "Another time, pard, I'll call on you, and ask you to take me down to the vault. But I guess time presses this hyer afternoon."

"Oh, dear!" mumbled Mr. Hooker helplessly.

The ruffian had bagged fifteen hundred dollars. There was a much greater plunder in the cellar below,

but even Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones did not care to risk penetrating there. It was only too probable that his retreat would have been cut off.

Indeed, Mr. Hooker would have been very glad to see him carry his audacity to that length in the hope of turning the tables on him. But the Californian was too cunning to take the risk.

Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones backed to the door, the revolver still at the level. Frank and Bob Lawless watched him, breathing hard.

With his left hand the ruffian reached behind him and opened the door.

The next moment the revolver disappeared, the hat was dragged down over the red-bearded face, and Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones sprang through the doorway, slamming the door after him.

He brushed against the two men in the porch, and was followed by several emphatic remarks in consequence, as he ran to his horse; but they little dreamed that the man they were addressing was the outlaw for whose arrest five hundred dollars reward was offered.

Almost in a twinkling the outlaw reached his horse, sprang into the saddle, and spurred away in the rain.

The moment the door had slammed upon him, Mr. Hooker grabbed his six-shooter and yelled for help. Frank Richards and Bob Lawless rushed to the door, and dragged it open just in time to see the outlaw spur away down Main Street at a furious gallop.

"Stop him!" shouted Bob Lawless. "It's Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones! Stop him!"

"He's robbed the bank! Stop him!" yelled Frank Richards.

Clatter, clatter, clatter!

Almost before they had uttered the warning shouts, the outlaw had galloped down Main Street, and was whirling into the trail outside the town.

Someone cracked a revolver from a window down the street, but the bullet missed by yards, and then the Californian outlaw was gone.

The thundering hoofbeats were still heard in the distance when the shouts of alarm brought a crowd into the street.

"Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!"

The name was on every lip.

"He's gone!" said Frank Richards, in a low voice. "Bob, old chap, we ought to have done something—"

"What could we do?"

"Nothing, I suppose. But—but—"

Frank Richards clenched his hands. "But I'd like to have a chance at that rascal."

The chums of Cedar Creek returned into the bank. The room was crowded now, and Mr. Hooker was almost wringing his hands. Fifteen hundred dollars of the bank's funds had vanished with the outlaw; and the manager had little or no hope of seeing a single dollar of them again. Bob Lawless picked up his receipt from the counter. The notes he had paid in were among the plunder carried off by Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones; but that was the bank's business, and fortunately not Bob's.

"Poor old Hooker! This will turn his hair grey—what's left!" said Bob, as the chums left the bank. "That bulldozer ought to be laid by the heels. Hallo! Here's Old Man Beauclerc!"

The remittance-man of Cedar Camp

was in the street, with the excited crowd of Thompson folk, and he came towards the chums as he saw them. They could guess that he had been on his way to the Occidental, as usual, when the alarm was given.

"I think I saw you come out of the bank," said Mr. Beauclerc. "What has happened there?"

Bob and Frank explained, rather breathlessly.

"And it was Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones?" exclaimed Mr. Beauclerc.

"Yes."

The remittance-man turned and hurried towards the Occidental, without another word. He untethered his horse, which he had tied up there, and sprang into the saddle.

"My hat!" exclaimed Frank. "He's not going after the outlaw—alone—"

The remittance-man rode past the chums the next moment. But he did not take the trail the outlaw had taken. He turned from Main Street through an unbuild block, and dashed away on a trail eastward. Through the openings of the buildings the schoolboys watched him in wonder.

"That's the way to Tucker's Tailings," said Bob, in astonishment. "That trail ends in the foothills—and there's nothing in that direction but Tucker's Tailings, and the hills beyond. What the dickens—"

"I suppose he's going to see Brown," said Frank, mystified.

"But it was what we told him about Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones at the bank that started him off—you could see that."

Frank Richards nodded.

"Blessed if I catch on," he said.

The chums did not leave Thompson at once. They were wanted by

the sheriff, when that official came down to interview Mr. Hooker, and after that, a curious crowd wanted their story of what had happened. It was more than an hour later that they untied their horses to ride home; and as they started, they saw Mr. Beauclerc riding up Main Street, rain-wet and muddy. He had returned from his sudden ride to Tucker's Tailings.

"Mr. Brown at home, sir?" asked Bob Lawless, with a grin, as the remittance-man was passing.

"Mr. Brown?" he repeated.

"I guess you've been to Tucker's Tailings," explained Bob. "That trail led nowhere else."

Mr. Beauclerc gave him a rather sharp look, and then smiled.

"You are very keen, my boy," he answered. "Yes, I have had a ride out to Tucker's Tailings, and Mr. Brown was not there. I reckoned he would not be there, while Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was robbing a bank in Thompson."

With that mysterious remark—which made the chums of Cedar Creek stare blankly—Mr. Beauclerc rode on to the Occidental.

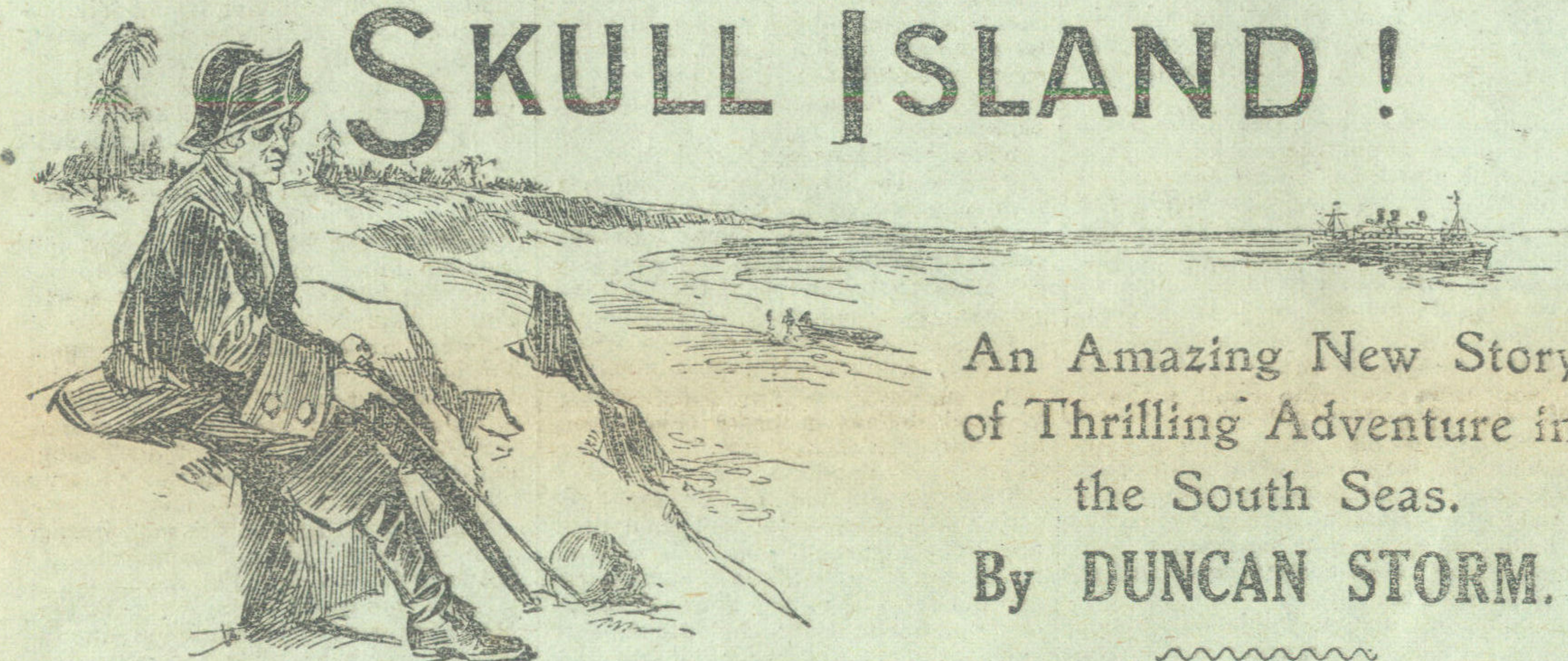
"What on earth was Old Man Beauclerc driving at, Franky?" asked Bob. "Why shouldn't Pooker Brown be at the mine while Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was in Thompson?"

"Blessed if I know!" answered Frank, shaking his head.

And the chums puzzled a good deal over the remittance-man's strange words as they rode homeward.

THE END.

(Another long, complete story of Frank Richards & Co. in the Boys' FRIEND next Monday.)



SKULL ISLAND!

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NEW READERS COMMENCE HERE!

The famous school-ship, the Bombay Castle, is on her 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, Chu, and Pongo Walker, with their famous pet animals, are of the number. Captain Handyman is in command of the liner, Dr. Crabhunter 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.

In Captain Handyman's younger days he and MacStaggers, the chief engineer, had been very badly treated by the Sultan of Bashee, and it is with the intention of paying off an old score that the Bombay Castle arrives at Bashee. Prince Chulungtoon, the heir-apparent, invites the boys to spend a day with him on the island, which the boys readily accept. After a thrilling ride upon the State elephant, Prince Chulungtoon expresses a desire for cricket. He tells the boys that they will play on the Maidan in front of the palace, so that his mother, the Sultana, can watch the game.

(Read on from here.)

The Sultan's Plot!

The prince's draggal-tail crowd of bottle-washers looked on rather apprehensively at these preparations for the noble game of cricket. They all nursed their fighting-cocks more closely under their arms, and scowled at the Nazarene boys who had imported this evil game into their Court.

But the prince gave them an order to put their crowing roosters away in their training-cages, and to rally up an eleven of the gentlemen of Bashee against an eleven of the Bombay Castle.

Of course, the Bashee Eleven was to go in first, and it was to be captained by the Prince Chulungtoon, and the prince was to bat first, for by the laws of Bashee, anyone trying to

go in before the prince would get his head cut off.

The sulky courtiers put away their fighting-cocks and marched, with lowering looks, to the great square of earth in front of the palace.

This was the parade-ground of the sultan's troops, and there was not a blade of grass on it. Neither did it offer a very good wicket.

But the stumps were pitched. The little prince was swathed up in pads, and marched out to take his place at the wicket, conscious that the eyes of his mamma and the ladies of the Court of Bashee and the whole of his courtiers were upon him.

Dick took the ball.

But he found that he could not bowl for the crowd of courtiers who, like wasps gathering round a jam-pot, swarmed round the prince, hiding him from view.

"Hi!" called Dick to Pongo, who was keeping wicket.

"Hallo!" replied Pongo, from behind the gaudily-clad crowd of turbaned loafers who surrounded the prince, flattering and fawning.

"Tell that crowd of fans to push off and give us a clear wicket!" called Dick.

Pongo attempted to convey this message to the courtiers.

But, having a very hazy idea of the game of cricket, they would not move.

"Bowl at 'em, Dick!" exclaimed Pongo, from behind this motley crowd. "And send down a good, fast ball—that'll shift them!"

Dick took a run, and the ball flew from his hand.

It was a fast ball, and it kicked up a spurt of dust where it hit the ground. Then—smack!

A prominent courtier rubbed the back of his leg and hopped around, smiling a sickly smile, looking at Dick and then at the ball.

But none of the group offered to move.

"Send 'em another, Dick!" called Pongo.

He threw back the ball, and Dick took another run, sending it flying

into the centre of the obstructing mob.

A dismal howl went up from the multi-coloured gang of courtiers who were gathered round the wicket as Dick's fast ball smacked in amongst them.

One fat, yellow-faced courtier took it in the bread-basket, and went hopping away.

The rest grinned in a sickly fashion, doubtless thinking what a strange game was this cricket.

But Dick's bowling had cleared the wicket of the mob of fawning, flattering bottle-holders, and the little Prince Chulungtoon was left alone to face the bowling.

The cricket-ground of the great match between the Gentlemen of Bashee and the Bombay Castle surely presented one of the strangest spectacles in the history of cricket.

The wicket was pitched on the bare ground of the wide maidan, or parade-ground, which stretched, bare and ugly, in front of the great white palace.

All sorts of tag, rag, and bobtail had assembled to watch the game. There were savage-looking Dyak soldiers, without arms; there were yellow-faced Chinese who manned the junks in the little harbour.

Ostensibly these were fishers of tri-pang, or the sea slug, in the neighbouring lagoons, the tri-pang being a great article of export from the Bashee Islands to China, where it is greatly appreciated for the making of soups. But these tri-pang fishers filled out their time with piracy.

None of these had ever seen cricket played before. So they gathered round curiously, marvelling at the strange sports of these English boys.

And from behind the lattices of the palace windows came the twittering of hidden women. Chulungtoon's proud mamma, the Sultana Gul Bejaze, with the whole of her attendants and ladies-in-waiting, had gathered there to see the match.

The prince stood up before the wicket, holding his bat like a spade,

with a fierce determination on his small face.

"Send the kid down an easy one, Dick!" called Pongo, from the wicket.

Dick bowled the prince a nice, easy ball accordingly.

The prince gave a tremendous swipe, missed the ball, there was a click amongst the stumps, and the balls flew.

"Next man in!" called Pongo.

But the little prince showed no sign of leaving the wicket.

"Op it, princey! You're out!" explained Pongo.

Prince Chulungtoon stared at him in surprise. His yellow face lengthened.

"Me wan' to play kriket!" said he. "Yes, that's all right. You can play cricket. But you're out!" explained Pongo patiently.

But the prince stuck to his bat. He could not understand why he, being a prince, could not go on wearing the fine white pads and batting all day.

"Me wan' to play kriket!" he urged, with Oriental persistency.

Pongo beckoned to the interpreter.

"Please explain to his Royal Highness Prince Chulungtoon of Bashee that he's bowled out, and that he's got to give up the bat to the next man in, and that he'll get another shy next innings!" said Pongo.

The interpreter dropped down on his face before the prince, waggled his head, and rubbed it in the dust.

And this is how he translated Pongo's instructions:

"Oh, prince! Oh, mountain of light! Oh, most beautiful young zamboo shoot! Oh, most powerful and illustrious! The Nazarene dog and son of a pig, who wears the big gloves, and who is called 'Pongo,' hath said that the most illustrious having not condescended to stop the ball with the piece of wood which he holds in his puissant and distinguished hands, is no longer entitled to smite the ball mighty blows. He therefore craves that the moon-faced son of the Lotes will retire to the pavilion, and rest his illustrious limbs, and that the next who is on the list shall take the place of the illustrious in enduring the attack of the ball-thrower!"

The prince's yellow face was a study. This was a very nice way of telling him that he was out for a duck's-egg. But he did not like it.

He petulantly kicked the interpreter in the neck with the upturned point of his jewelled shoe, and was going to give him a swipe over the head with a bat, when Pongo reached out from behind the wicket and grabbed the bat from his hands.

"Steady on, young Chulungtoon!" said Pongo sternly. "Do you know that if you hit that chap over the napper with a bat you might fracture his skull?"

This was really just what the prince intended to do. There were plenty of interpreters hanging about the Court, and he could always get a new

one, but he could not get back his innings.

He commenced to cry with passion and disappointment.

"Me wan' to play kriket!" he sobbed.

"Oh, the sissy boy!" exclaimed Pongo, regarding him sorrowfully. "Oh, the mamma's darling! He shall bat all day long because he's a prince, sha'n't he? Hey!" he added, with sudden fierceness. "Hop it out o' this! You're stopping the match!"

The prince was so astonished by the fierce look on Pongo's face that he took to his heels, and, stumbling in the heavy pads, rolled full length on the ground.

Pongo strode out and picked him up. Then he called to Ike Cohen, who, in command of a large crowd of Lower School boys, was giving vent to hideous howls calculated to encourage the Bombay Castle Eleven to victory.

"Hi, young Ike!" called Pongo. "Take this prince kid and make him merry. There's a spare bat and some stumps around. Give him a little practice, and don't bowl at him too hard. Remember, if you give him a black eye, you'll get your heads cut off!"

The Lower School received the prince with open arms; and it must be admitted that the prince took naturally and easily to the company of the Lower School boys and the fags. It was not long before he was seated in the midst of them, with his arm round Ike Cohen's neck, his disappointment forgotten, and yelling like mad—not for his own side, but for the Bombay Castle's.

"Pip, pip, pooray!" howled the prince. And he soon became so absorbed in the game that Ike Cohen, who was trying to get him to swap a pearl necklace worth some hundreds of pounds for a glass alley and a clockwork mouse that was broken in the spring, could do no business with him at all.

The Lower School were having the time of their lives in the palace grounds. They had teased the sultan's tigers till those royal beasts were nearly mad with rage. They had climbed the date-palms, and had treated themselves to fresh dates, and they had fed the sultan's pet alligator with a tin of beef—in the tin.

The alligator had now dived to the bottom of his pool, well under the shadow of the great water-lilies, and was thinking this out.

Now they were cheering themselves hoarse with the young prince, who took to their company as a young duck takes to water.

The second man in for the Eleven of Bashee was a rabbit-faced Burmese Malay, whose name was Kong-Yi-Pun-gi-Lap Choon. Mr. K. Choon was a timid batsman, but he scored.

He shut his eyes and swung his bat at Dick's first ball, caught it lucky, and sent it soaring over the boundary, where it hit a sentry in the ear. This was a four hit.

FAGGING FOR THE FIFTH!

(Continued from page 280.)

Hansom glanced round.
"Where's that cane?" he asked.
"Here you are, old top!" said Talboys.
"Now, Mornington," said Hansom, taking the cane, "you've been cheeky. Cheek to the Fifth isn't allowed. I'm sorry for you, but I've decided to put down this unruliness among the fags with a firm hand!"
"You silly ass!"
"Hold out your hand, Mornington!"
Valentine Mornington laughed. He was not likely to hold out his hand at the Fifth-Former's bidding.
"You hear me, Mornington?" said Hansom darkly.

"Oh, don't talk out of your neck!" said Mornny contemptuously. "Do you think I'm another Tubby Muffin, you swanking duffer? I've got this to tell you, Hansom—Tubby Muffin personally don't matter two pins; but you won't be allowed to fag the Fourth, not even Muffin. I'm goin' to make you sit up for it. That's all."
And Mornington swung round on his heel to walk away.
The next moment Hansom's hand was on his collar, and he was swung back. Without a word, Mornington hit out, and Hansom staggered back.
"Ow!" he gasped.
Mornington darted into the passage again, and almost into the arms of Brown major, who was coming to the study. Brown major grasped him at once.
Mornington struggled fiercely. But the big Fifth-Former held him securely enough, and bundled him back into the study.
Hansom closed the door and put his back to it.

"Now I think you'll sing a different tune, my pippin!" he said savagely.
"Hold out your hand, Mornington."
"Rats!"
"Will you obey orders?"
"Oh, don't be a goat!"
"Lay him across a chair!" commanded Hansom.
Lumsden and Talboys and Brown major laid Mornny across a chair. It required all three of them to do it, for Mornny was fighting like a tiger. There were signs of damage about the three seniors, and they were panting when they had Mornny safely down at last.
Then Hansom started in with the cane.
Whack, whack, whack!
Mornington still struggled furiously, but in vain. The grasp on him was too strong.
"Now, are you going to hold out your hand when you're told?" chuckled Hansom.
"No, you rotter!"
Whack, whack, whack, whack!

Not a cry left Mornny's lips; but he still struggled savagely. Hansom laid on the cane with great vim. It was a chance that might not occur again, and he was making the most of it.
"I say, that'll do!" said Lumsden at last. "He's had enough!"
"Well, perhaps that'll do," assented Hansom. "I don't want to be hard, even on a cheeky fag. Chuck him out now he's licked! I dare say he'll do as he's told to-morrow!"
Brown major opened the door, and Mornington was dropped into the passage. The door closed again, and the hapless Mornny heard loud laughter from within as he staggered to his feet. Hansom & Co. were enjoying their triumph.
Valentine Mornington limped away. Tubby Muffin met him on the staircase. The fat Classical blinked inquiringly at him, and then grinned. It did not need much perspicacity to discern what had happened.
"He, he, he! Call yourself junior

captain?" hooted Tubby. "Do you think Jimmy-Silver would have—Yarooooh!"
Mornington smote, and the fat Classical sat on the stairs with a yell. Then Mornny strode on to his study, leaving Tubby Muffin yelling.
There was excitement in the Fourth Form at Rookwood when Reginald Muffin spread the news—which he very quickly did.
The Fifth had started fagging the Fourth successfully! And they had licked the junior captain for objecting! The Rookwood Fourth was quite wild with wrath, and on all sides the question was loudly asked—what was Mornny going to do about it? And upon the answer to that question, Mornny's leadership of the Lower School at Rookwood depended.
THE END.
(Next week's grand story of Jimmy Silver & Co. is entitled "Turning the Tables!" By Owen Conquest. Order your BOYS' FRIEND in advance.)



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."

Readers of the BOYS' FRIEND are invited to contribute short original paragraphs of general interest for publication on this page. Cash prizes of five shillings and half a crown, according to merit, will be awarded to the senders of all paragraphs published.

NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME!

Next week's Rookwood story, entitled

"TURNING THE TABLES,"

By Owen Conquest,

is full of exciting interest. Hansom, the lofty Fifth-Former, comes a cropper, and his dignity is considerably lowered when he finds himself fagging for the juniors. None of my readers should miss this fine story.

In the next yarn of Frank Richards & Co., entitled

"RUN DOWN!"

By Martin Clifford,

Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, the notorious desperado, once more plays a prominent part, and as the title suggests, he is finally run to earth under the most exciting circumstances.

The next instalment of

"THE SPORTS OF ST. OLIVE'S!"

By Arthur S. Hardy,

contains many exciting incidents. Parker is the centre of interest in this fine instalment, which should not be missed by my chums.

In that popular serial,

"SKULL ISLAND!"

Ikey Cohen distinguishes himself by capturing the Sultan of Bashee, and subsequent events, penned in the well-known style of Mr. Duncan Storm, will keep my readers enthralled from start to finish.

In addition to the above full programme, to which must be added another poem of the popular "Rookwood Personalities" series. I have a special

SURPRISE FEATURE

in store for my chums in next Monday's issue. This is in the form of a

Special Contribution by

GEORGE ROBEY

to our famous series of Cricket Articles.

Mr. George Robey is "some" cricketer, as well as being the most famous comedian in the world, and he has written a splendid signed article, entitled

"SOME DON'TS FOR YOUNG CRICKETERS,"

especially for readers of the BOYS' FRIEND. This charming contribution is written in Mr. Robey's own inimitable style, in which his dual characters of cricketer and comedian are blended in the most amusing way. No one should miss this entirely novel and most diverting cricket article.

A LOYAL SUPPORTER.

A friend who does not give his full name and address sends me the following:

"I hope you will not think I am taking a liberty in writing to you,

but you tell us to write when in doubt or trouble, and I am right down in the dumps. In the first place I am a cripple, having had my left leg amputated below the knee after an accident in the mine where I worked. I have got an artificial leg, and it does me good service. The crutches that I use were made by my brother and myself. My brother was killed in France three years ago. I think the tales in the BOYS' FRIEND get better and better, and I can safely say that I have got a score of readers near my home. Fellows who used to say the 'B.F.' was baby stuff now read it with great interest. My brother was twenty-seven and I am twenty. My brother always used to read the BOYS' FRIEND. I have had three brothers serving in the Forces. One is a sailor, and is now at home. The other is on his way to Constantinople, and I save his papers. I wish you could introduce a one-legged boy to Rookwood—not one who has been to the war, but an ordinary boy like myself. You must have thousands of readers like me who would be ever so interested."

I am much obliged to my correspondent for his interesting letter, and wish him happy days. I think they will come to him, despite his terrible trouble, for there is the real fighting spirit in his excellent letter. If he will send me his full name and address I shall have great pleasure in sending him five shillings for his interesting contribution.

HOW LONG DO BUTTERFLIES LIVE?

"I have often heard people say, and have read in books, that butterflies live for a day or two only, but now I have found out that it is not so. About the middle of last term two butterflies were found in my bed-room in a half-frozen state, as the weather then was very cold. I made some holes in the lid of a chocolate box, and put the butterflies in it, placing the box on my dressing-table. I kept them there for the remainder of the term, looking at them now and then to see if they were still alive. At the end of the term—last December—I took the butterflies home, and they lived for some months, namely, till April. Therefore, there is certainly an exception to the rule respecting a butterfly's lifetime."
(A. C. Buller, Iona, 272, Lisburn Road, Belfast.)

With reference to the foregoing, of course my correspondent has heard of hibernating butterflies which are seen flitting about in the first sunshine of spring, looking, as a rule, a trifle ragged after their winter's sleep. There is no rule. A butterfly generally finishes its career at the end of the fine weather, but it is

not at all unusual for a stray specimen to lie up for the cold months.

I have sent my chum half-a-crown for the above contribution.

A BIT ABOUT JOURNALISM.

There is a tremendous amount of interest taken in journalism. This is perfectly natural, for the newspaper is the spokesman of nations and empires. During the last twenty years, thanks to the enterprise of the "Daily Mail," journalism has meant to a large extent the progress of the world. It was the "Daily Mail" which changed the old, worn-out type of newspaper with its heavy leading articles. People wanted to know about things which the newspapers of the past never troubled to give in the news columns. The great and up-to-date newspaper is able to take a lead, to show what is wanted. It can employ experts on many subjects which require tackling, and it can point out what is best to be done in heaps of problems. For a newspaper is in touch with the public more than politicians, and any number of reforms which have come to the world as it rolls on

"Down the ringing grooves of change"

have been brought about by well-managed newspapers.

ONLY ROOM FOR THE BEST

Journalism is, of course, one of the most difficult callings. I receive lots of letters from readers who say they want to become journalists. I am inclined to think that a journalist just "happens." A fellow wants to have something very special in him to succeed at the game. I heard the other day of a lad who went from an office-boy's position to a job as shorthand secretary to a very famous journalist. The place was no sinecure. The shorthand clerk had to be on duty early and late. The man he served dictated his stuff. There were articles, paragraphs about all manner of things, yarns, everything, and he poured out the "copy" as he fringed up and down his library in his North London house. His secretary would have fifty and sixty, and more, closely-written shorthand sheets to transcribe a night, or any old time, for the printers were always waiting for the article, and there was never any time cut to waste. Then the journalist died suddenly when on a trip abroad. The secretary was eighteen, but though minus a lot of experience, he had in the course of two years got so accustomed to the style of stuff needed that the chief newspaper for which his late employer had worked took his stuff when he asked to be allowed to fill the gap. As a

result, the temporary work became a permanency—a staff appointment. Of course, this was just a chance. He happened to be there at the time with just what was wanted. But journalism is a question of chances—and being on the spot!

A VISIT TO HAVRE.

A reader of the old "Green 'Un" is in luck's way, for he has received an invitation to France. He is anxious about his passport, but he should be able to get one of those very necessary official permits. My friend is in correspondence with two French boys—one who lives at Bordeaux and the other one at Saint Lo. It is a first-rate thing to have correspondents in foreign countries, and I always do my best through the companion papers to put readers in touch with fellow-readers overseas. My chum must have learned a lot about Bordeaux in the course of his correspondence. Bordeaux was under the British Flag for three hundred years, and the genial name of Smith still lingers there. I hope my correspondent who asked for help to get to France will manage his trip. Havre is a fine old city, full of interest, and the country round about is extremely well worth seeing.

HOW TO SIGN A LETTER.

You might think this just about the simplest matter in the world. Really, it is nothing of the sort—not the way many folks go about the business. Of course, those important mortals who dash off what is supposed to be their name at the bottom of a cheque for a million or so, as the case may be, can always worry along. Nobody will grumble at them. They are so rich. But such a number of otherwise right-minded individuals will write as if they were on the point of catching an express train. They never form their letters at all. They write as fast as the chap does in the play or on the cinema screen. You know how he does it—scrawls something in a second, and makes believe it is a long letter. A name ought to be written, not dashed down, else how is the fellow at the other end to read it? And some people are very touchy about their names and how they are spelt. There was the person in the rhyme:

"He was an old merchant of Hythe,
Who declared that his name was
John Smythe.

His kin and his kith
Said their name was Smith,
And this riled the old man of
Hythe."

Now, it is worth remembering that a name should be set down so that it

can be read. Writing letters should not be turned into a guessing competition.

HANDSOME IS AS HANDSOME DOES.

It is a good old saying, and though it has whiskers on it now, it is true enough to-day as it was the day before yesterday, or a bit farther back still. Recently, I have had a great number of letters about a character in the Companion Papers who has freckles. Some rather narrow-minded critics thought this was a hit at Scotland, as they were pleased to call it! Could anything be more ridiculous? Looks are so important in any case, and freckles have nothing against them any more than has red hair. In the times of the late King Rufus, red hair was most likely considered the thing—positively IT! But, anyhow, this matter of features and colouring seems trivial. It is the good, amiable physiognomy that the world likes. The handsome countenance with traces of bad temper about it—and how often the two things go together!—is very little wanted. Handsome folk sometimes seem to be occupied in thinking how pretty they are. This takes up time that ought to be given to other duties. Ugliness is fairly frequently the sign of generosity and kindness of heart.

THE PICTURES.

Without a doubt the cinema house is the chief amusement centre of the world these days. I wonder if any of my friends have happened to drop into one of the big factories of films which are to be found outside London. I chanced on one the other day. It was an old house, with a large, rambling garden, in beautiful order, and full of flowers. There were odd-looking temporary buildings here and there—one a representation of a royal palace, another a prison, and so forth. It was a brilliant sunny afternoon, and I met a gentleman in evening-dress strolling about, waiting for his turn to be photographed. Elsewhere there were other folk, dressed for a ball. The film operator wants daylight to do his work in. I dare say you have noticed that sometimes there is a strong wind blowing in a film picture—papers on a table being blown about. This is because the room is really only half a room, and, as a rule, minus a roof.

Your Editor