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# The BOYS' FRIEND 1<sup>1d</sup>/<sub>2</sub>

TWELVE PAGES!

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending November 8th, 1919.

## Looking After Teddy!

By Owen Conquest.



### BROTHERLY PERSUASION!

jacket, and by sheer strength forced him away. Nearly all the Classical Fourth had gathered round, and were quite enjoying the scene.

"Come downstairs," muttered Lovell. "You've got to see your Form-master."  
"I won't!" yelled Teddy. "I'll write to father about this! I'll tell him you started bullying me directly he'd gone!" Lovell gripped his minor by his

#### The 1st Chapter.

#### Uncle James is Worried.

"Hallo! That's Lovell's pater!" Jimmy Silver stopped, as he made that remark.

Four juniors were tramping up Coombe Lane towards Rookwood, in a steady downpour of rain, when they met the village hack coming away from the school.

It was a half-holiday at Rookwood, and the rainiest half-holiday the juniors remembered.

Jimmy Silver was enveloped in macintosh, leggings, and umbrella, and all were running with water. His three companions were in the same happy state. They were Conroy, Pons, and Van Ryn, the Colonial juniors. Jimmy's own chums, Lovell and Raby and Newcome, were otherwise engaged that afternoon, and Jimmy had gone for a tramp on the

heath with the Colonial Co.—in spite of the downpour.

The village hack came rumbling and splashing from the direction of Rookwood School, the driver muffled up against the rain. The windows were closed, and blurred with water; but Jimmy Silver recognised the stout gentleman sitting inside. It was Mr. Lovell, the father of his chum Arthur Edward, of that ilk.

Mr. Lovell did not glance at the juniors passing. He was sitting very upright, with a frown on his brow; even through the blurred windows Jimmy saw that Mr. Lovell was in a very cross temper. But it was necessary to salute Lovell's pater with respect, and Jimmy changed his dripping umbrella from his right hand to his left, and lifted his dripping cap with his right—a spot of rain running down his sleeve at the same moment. And that respectful salute was

wasted, after all, for Mr. Lovell did not glance through the blurred windows, and did not even see Jimmy Silver; at all events, did not recognise or heed him.

The hack splashed on and passed. "Lovell's pater is it?" said Conroy. "Yes. He seems rather cross about something."

"The weather, perhaps!" grunted Van Ryn. "How you people stand your weather is a mystery to me. Now, in South Africa—"

"Or in Canada—" remarked Pons.

"Cheese it!" said Jimmy Silver. "Bad enough without you fellows grousing!"

"We're not grousing, you ass; only comparing—"

"Well, don't! I wonder what's the matter with Lovell's pater?"

"I wonder how you recognised

Lovell's pater; I shouldn't have noticed him—"

"Well, I knew he would be at Rookwood this afternoon," said Jimmy Silver. "As soon as I saw the hack, I guessed he was in it, and looked for him. He didn't see me, though. He looked waxy!"

"Oh, blow the rain!" said Conroy, evidently more concerned with the weather than with Lovell's pater, waxy or not. "Now, in Australia, it—"

"He was waxy, right enough," said Jimmy Silver, following his own thoughts. "I hope there's been no trouble at Rookwood. He was bringing Lovell minor to the school this afternoon, you know!"

"Was he? Oh, I remember now—a new kid for the Third!"

"That's it!"

"Well, he ought to be looking pleased now!" remarked Conroy.

"If the new kid is anything like the rest of the Third, it was must be a relief to land him at Rookwood and leave him there!"

"He wasn't looking pleased; he was looking waxy—"

"Blow the rain!"

"Bless the weather!"

"Oh, come on!"

Jimmy Silver quickened his pace, and the juniors tramped on through the dropping rain to Rookwood.

Jimmy was not feeling quite easy in his mind.

There had been some slight disagreement among Jimmy Silver & Co. of late; Arthur Edward Lovell's chums had found Arthur Edward a little exasperating. Jimmy would willingly have stayed in that afternoon, especially as it was raining, to help Lovell entertain his father and his young brother; but Lovell did not want him, and Jimmy had spent the





## LOOKING AFTER TEDDY!

(Continued from previous page.)

afternoon out of gates with the Colonials.

But though there was, to a certain extent, a rift in the lute, Jimmy Raby was concerned about his chum, and was a little worried by the grim, angry expression he had discerned on the face of Lovell senior. He wondered whether there was anything amiss at Rookwood; and was anxious to reach the school and ascertain.

The juniors arrived at the gates of Rookwood at last, and tramped in. Raby and Newcome were in the big doorway of the School House when they arrived there. They were waiting for Jimmy.

"Hallo! You look wet!" remarked Raby.

"And feel it!" growled Jimmy Silver.

"Well, you were an ass to go out in the rain, you know!" observed Newcome.

"Rats!"

Jimmy Silver took off his dripping mac and leggings in the lobby, and shook himself. He wrung out his cap, and rubbed his face dry, and changed his drenched boots for shoes. Raby and Newcome watched him. Jimmy was finished before Conroy & Co.; he was anxious to see Lovell. Conroy & Co. were still drying themselves, and making remarks about the weather, when Jimmy left the lobby with his chums.

"Where's Lovell?" Jimmy asked. Raby and Newcome exchanged a glance.

"Don't know!" answered Raby, rather shortly.

"His minor's here, I suppose?"

"Yes."

"His father passed me in the hack, going back to the station," said Jimmy. "He was looking rather edgewise, I thought!"

"I suppose he would be!"

"Anything happened?"

"Ahem!"

Jimmy Silver stared at his chums. It was only too evident that something had happened during his absence.

"My hat! You chaps can't have been rowing with Lovell, while his father was here!" he exclaimed.

"Oh no! No! Not exactly!"

"Is Lovell in the study?"

"I—I think not!"

"He was going to have his pater and his minor to tea in the study," said Jimmy Silver. "He tipped the maid to make it spick and span for them, and asked us to keep out of it—"

"Like his dashed cheek!"

"Well, I don't say it wasn't," said Jimmy Silver. "Still, we agreed, as he was so touchy about the study being tidy—"

"Well, we kept out of it," said Newcome. "We were in it for about a quarter of an hour while Lovell was fetching his pater. That's all! We didn't stay in it, as we'd agreed not."

"Well, what's happened, then?"

"Ahem!"

"Well, I never saw such a pair of owls," said Jimmy Silver, mystified. "Let's get up to the study. I shall be glad to see a fire!"

Jimmy Silver started up the staircase, and Raby and Newcome followed him, without a word. Tubby Muffin was in the Fourth Form passage, and he greeted Jimmy with a fat chuckle.

"He, he, he! What a lark!" he said.

"Hallo! What are you burbling about, Tubby?" asked the captain of the Fourth.

"He, he, he! You should have seen old Lovell's face, when he looked into the end study!" chortled Tubby Muffin. "Mr. Lovell's, I mean, you know. It was a picture! Putty said it was worth a guinea a box. He, he, he!"

"What on earth do you mean, you fat duffer?"

"He, he, he!"

Jimmy Silver strode on to the end study. Tubby Muffin's fat chuckle followed him. The fat Classical was evidently highly amused.

Jimmy threw open the door of the end study.

Then he jumped.

That celebrated apartment was in a state of disorder that almost defied description. Everything that could be overturned or displaced, was overturned or displaced. The end study looked as if a cyclone had dropped in during the afternoon.

"Great Scott!" yelled Jimmy Silver. "Who's done this? Somebody's been ragging the study!"

"Looks like it!" agreed Newcome.

"What a rotten shame, when Lovell's pater was coming!" exclaimed Jimmy hotly. "Was this done before Mr. Lovell came?"

"Yes!"

"It's rotten! Who did it?"

"Us!"

### The 2nd Chapter. Major and Minor.

Jimmy Silver stared at his chums.

He had been prepared to hear that the Modern juniors had raided his quarters, or that the rag had been perpetrated by Higgs, or Putty, or some other Classical fellow with a misguided sense of humour.

The reply made simultaneously by Raby and Newcome took his breath away.

"You did it!" he ejaculated, at last.

"Little us!" said Raby, with a grin.

"You thumping ass! What have you been ragging your own study for?"

"For Lovell!"

"What?"

"Pulling Lovell's leg, you know," explained Raby. "He's been jawing us for a week past about the study being untidy, because his precious minor was coming. We thought it was rather too thick. So while he was gone to meet his pater, we got the study ready for him—see?"

"Rather effective—what?" remarked Newcome. "Lovell will think a bit before he lectures his old pals again about keeping the study tidy."

"Oh, my hat!" said Jimmy Silver. "Well, why don't you laugh, you sober old judge?" demanded Raby warmly. "Wasn't it a good jape on Lovell?"

Jimmy Silver did not laugh, however. He looked very grave.

He could quite understand his chums' exasperation with Lovell. For Fourth-Form fellows to be lectured and found fault with because a fag of the Third was coming, was really too much to be borne with patience.

Jimmy Silver had borne it with patience; but Raby and Newcome had evidently run short of that great quality.

Jimmy could not exactly blame them; but he was worried.

"Lovell's seen this, I suppose?" he said.

"Yes, rather. He came up with his pater and Master Teddy," grinned Raby. "His pater went down to the visitors' room to talk to him—they didn't go into the study after all. Wasn't tidy enough."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Newcome. Jimmy Silver smiled faintly.

"That's why Mr. Lovell was looking cross, I suppose," he said.

"Very likely. He was slanging Lovell in the visitors' room. Tubby Muffin listened at the door, and it's all over the Form now. Of course, we didn't mean that to happen. We never thought of that," confessed Raby.

"We couldn't guess that Lovell's pater would jaw Lovell because some other fellows had ragged the study," explained Newcome. "Jolly unreasonable old gent, I think."

Jimmy Silver frowned.

"I—I wish you hadn't done it," he murmured.

"Didn't Lovell ask for it?" demanded Newcome.

"Well, yes; but—"

"He asked for it, and he got it. I don't see that he's got anything to complain about."

"You've seen his minor?" asked Jimmy, changing the subject.

"Oh yes!"

"What's he look like?"

"A little cub."

"Oh!"

"Spoiled darling, and all that—turning up his nose!" said Raby.

"If he turns up his nose near me, he'll get it pulled—I know that!"

"For goodness' sake don't let's

have any rows," said Jimmy.

"Lovell is rather an ass about his minor; but, after all, the kid's his brother, and it's jolly decent of him to think so much about the little beast. We ought to try to make the best of Teddy."

"Huh!"

"Where's Lovell now?"

"Don't know, I tell you. He gave us a glare after his pater went, and stalked off with his dashed minor. Haven't seen him since, and don't specially want to," grunted Raby.

Jimmy Silver became very grave. He was rather a more thoughtful fellow than his chums, as it befitted "Uncle James" of Rookwood to be.

"Look here, you chaps," he said quietly; "we don't want the Co. busted up over this Third-Form kid. I know Lovell's jolly trying just now—he does make a fellow rather wild with his blessed minor. But we've been pals with Lovell for a long time, and we're not going to quarrel. We've got to bear with him, not because he deserves it, perhaps, but because he's a chum. Now, you can see that?"

"Oh, we knew you'd jaw us, Jimmy!" said Raby resignedly.

"That's why we were glad to see you bunk off with the colonial chaps. It was a relief to get you out of the way while we ragged the study."

"Never mind that now. It's agreed that we're going easy with old Lovell, and we're going to swallow his minor—as much as we can?" said Jimmy, with gentle persuasion.

"Any old thing!" said Raby. "I don't mind! I'll keep my hands off the cheeky little cad, if I can."

"We needn't see him," said Newcome. "We don't want to, and if we don't see him, we sha'n't be tempted to lick him."

"Well, we must see him, you know. We—we've got to make him welcome to Rookwood, and all that. For old Lovell's sake, you know. Chaps have to make sacrifices for friendship," urged Jimmy Silver.

"There's a limit, though."

"Never mind the limit; let's do it."

"Oh, all right!"

"You chaps clear up the study, and get it in order, while I look for Lovell," said Jimmy. "We'll have his minor to tea, and make much of him."

"Oh, my hat!"

"We'll make this our self-denial week!" said Newcome sarcastically. "All right, Jimmy; go and hunt for Lovell, and bring his dashed minor along, and we'll fold him to our waistcoats, and weep over him. Come on, Raby!"

Raby grunted, but he assented. The two juniors started work in the end study—undoing what they had done with such humorous intent. Ragging a study was rather easier to do than to undo; but the two juniors put their beef into it, and made good progress. Meanwhile, Jimmy Silver looked for Lovell and his minor.

Although he could not blame Raby and Newcome for the way they had taken Lovell's exasperating attitude, Jimmy was deeply troubled by it; and he wished he had not gone out that afternoon. The thought of the Co. being "busted" was quite dismaying; and in the present mood of all three of his chums, it seemed only too possible. However, he had brought Raby and Newcome to a proper state of reason; and it only remained to try his eloquence upon Lovell. If the famous Co. remained united as of old, it evidently depended upon Jimmy Silver to keep it so. And that object was worth some trouble and sacrifice.

Jimmy inquired up and down the Fourth-Form passage for Lovell; but his chum was not there. He looked in at No. 4 first, thinking that Lovell might have gone in to tea with Mornington and Erroll, his own quarters being so inhospitable. Mr. Lovell, apparently, had not stayed to tea. But Morny and Erroll had seen nothing of him. Rawson and Flynn, and Oswald and Higgs and Grace, were inquired of in vain. Jimmy received his first information from Cyril Peele, who was lounging in the doorway of the first study.

"Lovell—oh yaas!" said Peele, with a grin, when Jimmy inquired of him. "I've seen him. Lookin' like a grizzly bear on the warpath, by gad!"

"Well, where is he now?" asked Jimmy.

"I asked him to tea," pursued Peele, still grinning. "Hospitable, wasn't it? I said I'd stand his minor a smoke after tea. Ha, ha, ha!"

"You rotter!" growled Jimmy. There was a laugh from Lattrey and Gower in the study.

"And he answered quite rudely," grinned Peele. "But his minor said

he'd like it, and he looked savage when Lovell dragged him away! Ha, ha, ha!"

Jimmy Silver walked on without making any further inquiries of Peele. He left the cad of the Fourth chortling. Peele was evidently highly tickled by the proclivities he had discovered in Lovell's young brother.

Some of the juniors were going in to tea in Hall, when Jimmy Silver came downstairs. Jimmy joined them.

"Seen anything of Lovell, you chaps?" he asked.

"There he is, with his minor," answered Hooker of the Fourth, jerking his thumb towards a window recess.

"Thanks!"

Jimmy Silver turned towards the big, deep windows. Voices proceeded from the recess, as Jimmy came up.

"Oh, don't talk to me! It's a rotten place, and I hate it already!"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Jimmy, as he heard that charming remark from Lovell minor.

"But, old chap—" came Lovell's voice.

"Why couldn't you let us have tea with that chap who asked us upstairs?" pursued Teddy Lovell, in an aggrieved tone. "That well-dressed chap. He looked jolly decent, and it was civil of him to ask us. You grunted at him like a bear. You always were a bear!"

"I don't like him, Teddy."

"No reason why you shouldn't be civil?"

"The fact is, Teddy, that chap Peele is a rotter, and I'd rather you didn't speak to him."

Snort from Lovell minor.

"Are you going to arrange whom I speak to, and who I don't speak to?" he inquired. "Because if you are, Arthur, I may as well tell you now, that I'm not going to stand it!"

"Ahem!"

Jimmy Silver coughed loudly. Lovell and his minor looked round.

"Here you are, old chap," said Jimmy Silver cordially. "I've been looking for you, Lovell. Tea's nearly ready. So this is your minor? How do you do, Teddy? You remember me?"

Arthur Edward Lovell had bestowed a rather grim look on his chum at first, but there was no resisting Jimmy's determined geniality, and Lovell's brow relaxed. Master Teddy shook hands with Jimmy in a very perfunctory manner. He remembered Jimmy certainly, but he did not take the trouble to pretend that he remembered him with pleasure.

"Quite a long time since I've seen you, Teddy," said Jimmy cordially.

"Is it?"

"You remember me coming down with Lovell for a vac. once?"

"I remember I chucked a bike-pump at you," said Teddy.

"Ahem!"

"So I would again!" said Teddy.

Jimmy Silver did not seem to hear that. He was engaged in restraining a deep yearning to take Master Teddy by the scruff of his neck, and knock his head against the wall.

"Shut up, Teddy!" muttered Lovell, flushing with vexation.

"Sha'n't!" answered Teddy.

"Look here—"

"Oh, don't jaw. I've told you before that I'm not going to stand any jaw!"

"We're getting rather a spread in the study," Jimmy Silver remarked casually. "We want your minor to come, Lovell, if he would care to."

"I'm not coming to the study," said Lovell curtly. "Do you know what those rotters did—"

"Only a joke, old chap—"

"Nice joke for me!" said Lovell bitterly. "I was trying all I could to make it nice for the pater when he was here, and then—"

"Lovell set his lips. "I had a good hour's jaw from the pater. He thinks I'm an untidy, slovenly pig, and don't care about him or Teddy, or—or anything. He said he would have taken Teddy straight back home with him, only it was fixed up with the Head, and he couldn't. He said he had doubts now about leaving him in my charge. He's gone away in a bad temper, and feeling worried. And—"

"I'll come to tea if you like," said Teddy, interrupting his elder brother without ceremony. "I'm jolly hungry, and Arthur doesn't care if I starve. A jolly nice chap asked us to tea, and Arthur snubbed him. He seems to want to quarrel with everybody, from what I can see. He's always like that—always rowing or something!"

"Oh!" gasped Lovell.

"I'll come," said Teddy. "Arthur can please himself. I want some tea!"

"Come on, Lovell, old chap," said Jimmy Silver.

Lovell hesitated. But it was scarcely possible to keep up his offended dignity by staying away from the end study if Teddy went there as a guest.

He nodded with a rather black look.

"All right!" he muttered.

"We'll go round to the tuckshop first," said Jimmy, as Lovell major and minor came out of the window recess with him. Jimmy's idea chiefly was to give Raby and Newcome time to get the study in order. "We've got some shopping to do—"

"All right!"

And the three juniors left the schoolhouse, and walked over to Sergeant Kettle's little shop, where Jimmy protracted the shopping as long as he could. But Master Teddy's emphatic repetitions of the remark that he was hungry, drove them out of the shop at last, and they headed for the study.

### The 3rd Chapter. A Happy Tea-Party.

Raby and Newcome had done wonders in a short time.

The end study was looking quite neat and nice by the time Jimmy Silver and his companions arrived there.

The two juniors were, in fact, feeling a little remorseful. Lovell had, in their opinion, fairly asked for the "rag" they had played on him. But on reflection they admitted to themselves that they had been rather thoughtless. They had not intended, certainly, to land Lovell into a scrape with his father, but that had been the result. So their remorse, added to Jimmy Silver's persuasive eloquence, had brought them round to a friendly and even self-sacrificing mood; and they agreed to "stand" Lovell minor with all the politeness and patience they could possibly muster for the ordeal.

This was very fortunate, for Arthur Edward himself was hardly in a promising mood. It required very determined patience and good-fellowship to get on with Lovell just then.

"Got the stuff?" asked Raby, as they came in. "Right! Hallo, is that your minor, Lovell? Glad to see you, Teddy!"

"Lovell minor coming to tea?" said Newcome effusively. "That's right. Come right in, Teddy! Glad to see you here! Take the armchair, kid, and warm your toes. Tea's a brace of jillies!"

Lovell minor sat down in the armchair, and put his boots in the fender. He was rather pleased at being made much of in the end study; he took it as his due. He had always been made much of at home, and he would have been surprised if it had been otherwise at Rookwood. As a matter of fact, there were some surprises in store for Master Teddy!

Jimmy Silver unfolded his parcel from the school shop, and Raby and Newcome busied themselves with preparations. Lovell's brow gradually relaxed as he looked on.

After what had already happened, he was far from expecting this, and it pleased him and relieved him. The "rag" in the study ceased to occupy such a prominent place in his thoughts.

Jimmy Silver was thinking; and he drew Lovell aside, while Raby and Newcome were busy, and Master Teddy was warming his toes.

"I've got an idea, old chap," said Jimmy. "I suppose Teddy doesn't know anybody in the Third yet?"

"Not yet, Jimmy."

"Well, suppose I fetch my young cousin here to tea—young Algy, you know. He's in the Third, and if we can make him friendly with Teddy, that's a beginning, isn't it?"

To Jimmy's surprise, Lovell's brow clouded at the suggestion.

In the kindness of his heart, Jimmy had thought of that pleasant little scheme, to make things easier in the Third for the new fag. Apparently Lovell did not regard the suggestion with favour.

"Don't you like the idea?" asked Jimmy in astonishment.

Lovell flushed.

"No—no—thanks all the same—but—but—"

"But what?" asked Jimmy, still more surprised. "My young cousin will come if I ask him—you can generally get a Third-Form kid to tea if you want to. It will break the ice!"

"I—I—"

"Algy isn't a bad little kid, and he will help to see your minor through if I ask him, Lovell."

"I—I don't want my minor to get friendly with him!" blurted out Lovell.

Jimmy started.

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I don't want to say anything



against Silver II, of course," muttered Lovell hastily, "but—but the pater's so particular about Teddy—"

Jimmy Silver drew a deep breath. He could hardly believe his ears for the moment.

He simply looked at Lovell. Arthur Edward Lovell coloured more deeply, but he was evidently determined.

"Don't take this amiss, Jimmy," he muttered, "but—but you know—your young cousin—he smokes, and—and—"

"He doesn't!" said Jimmy in a hard voice.

"Well, he used to. You know what a wild little scallywag he was when he first came here!"

"I know that. You know he's different now."

"Well, I dare say he is. But—but the pater—dash it! Teddy did anything of that kind—dash it all, Jimmy, I know the kid's your cousin, but you know he ain't the fellow for Teddy to be friendly with!"

Jimmy Silver breathed harder. It was true enough that Algy Silver had been an unruly little rascal when he first came to Rookwood—much given to kicking over the traces, though there was at bottom no real harm in him.

Algy Silver had become leader of the Third, and had immense influence in that important Form; and, unless Jimmy could gain his favour for the new fag, it was pretty certain that Master Teddy's airs and graces would earn him a thrashing from Algy before he had been twenty-four hours in the school.

Algy did not share his cousin Jimmy's exemplary patience; and, moreover, he had no motive for putting up with airs and graces from a cheeky new fag. But Lovell's amazing answer quite took the wind out of Jimmy's sails.

In spite of Uncle James' great patience and real regard for Lovell, he came very near quarrelling with Arthur Edward at that moment. He restrained himself, but he could not help feeling bitterly wounded, and he turned away from Lovell abruptly without another word.

"Tea's ready!" said Raby, glancing rather curiously at Jimmy. The other fellows in the study had not heard what had been said.

"Right-ho!" said Jimmy, speaking as cheerfully as he could. "Come up to the table, young 'un!"

"Here's a chair for you, Teddy!" said Newcome.

"Oh, all right," said Teddy. "I say, this study isn't bad."

"Not at all, is it?" said Newcome amiably.

"Of course, it's small," said Teddy. "I suppose all the studies are rather small. I've got a big room at home."

"Oh!"

"My room's bigger than Arthur's," said Teddy. "I wanted it, though."

"Oh!"

"I've got an idea!" said Raby.

"What about asking your young cousin up here for tea, Jimmy? He'd like to meet Lovell's young brother."

Jimmy crimsoned.

"Jolly good idea!" said Newcome heartily. "Might get Algy to bring a kid or two from the Third, and Teddy can make their acquaintance. I'll cut off and tell him if you like, Jimmy."

Lovell kept his eyes on his plate.

"No, thanks!" said Jimmy.

"But Algy would come like a shot," said Raby, puzzled. "Tell him we've got a cake and two kinds of jam, and you can rely on him, and all the Third Form, too, if you wanted them."

"No, no! Never mind Algy."

"Well, you're a queer ass, Jimmy!" said Raby, in astonishment.

"Algy's no end of a big gun in the Third, and it will be just as well for young Hopeful here to get on his right side."

"I say, never mind Algy," said Jimmy, with crimson cheeks. "It's all right. Pass the salt, somebody!"

"You've got a minor here, Silver?" asked Teddy, with a slight show of interest.

"No; a cousin—Silver secundus!" said Jimmy. "You'll come across him in the Third, I dare say."

"What's he like?"

"Oh, you'll see him presently."

"I'd like to meet some Third Form chaps," said Teddy. "I don't know a chap in my Form. 'Tain't so jolly nice, going among a lot of strangers. Why can't you ask him here?"

"I—I'd rather not!"

"Well, you ask him here, Arthur, if Silver won't," said Teddy sulkily. "I'd like to know a chap or two in the Third before I'm landed on them."

"I—I'll take you along there after tea, Teddy," said Lovell, in great discomfort.

"After tea ain't so good," said

Teddy sulkily. "Raby's offered to have him here. You might have asked a chap or two in the Third to meet me, anyway. You never think of a fellow's comfort."

"Another egg, Teddy?" asked Newcome, feeling that it was time to interrupt this brotherly discourse.

"Yes, thanks."

Master Teddy looked sulky for a few minutes, but he brightened up as the feed proceeded. It was really a handsome spread, and Teddy was hungry, and he did it full justice.

Raby and Newcome did most of the talking, for, to their surprise, Jimmy Silver was very silent. As for Arthur Edward Lovell, he uttered hardly a word if he could help it.

When tea was over, Raby and Newcome rose to clear away the tea-things; also to give a slight hint that it was time for guests to retire. Teddy sat down in the armchair, however.

"You fellows smoke?" he asked.

"Eh?"

Lovell jumped, and Jimmy Silver & Co. stared. Master Teddy gave them a very knowing wink.

"I do!" he said.

"Oh!" gasped Jimmy Silver.

"The pater objects," said Teddy cheerily. "There was a row when he found my room smelling of smoke once. I don't see any harm in a fag or two. Do you?"

"Yes," grunted Raby.

"Oh, you're an old codger!"

To the intense astonishment of the

Teddy's mouth, and threw it into the fire. There was a howl of wrath from Teddy.

"What the thump are you up to?" he shouted.

"It's not allowed at Rookwood," said Lovell.

"Do you think I'm not going to smoke if I choose?" shouted Teddy furiously. "Mind your own business!"

"You can't smoke here, anyway!" said Raby.

"I don't want to stop here. You asked me here, didn't you? I'm jolly well going to smoke, though!"

Master Teddy jumped up in great wrath and indignation, and started for the door. Lovell followed him.

"Give me those fags, Teddy!" he muttered.

"I'll give you one if you like, if you want to smoke."

"I don't, you little ass! I want to throw them away."

"Catch me giving you my smokes to throw away! I gave a shilling for that packet!" said Teddy, with shrill indignation.

"I—I'll give you the shilling!"

"I don't want your silly shilling. Let me alone!"

"Teddy—"

"Oh, rats!"

Lovell minor stamped out of the study, and disappeared. Arthur Edward turned a crimson face on his chums.

"That's only his rot, of course," he said. "He doesn't smoke, really."

came quickly along the passage. Lattrey and Gower, his study-mates, were with him, and they stared at Lovell minor. For that hopeful youth had a cigarette in his mouth, plain for all to see. Peele made a hasty sign to his comrades, and greeted Teddy Lovell with great politeness.

Lovell minor paused.

"Got a light?" he asked.

"A—a—a light!" stuttered Lattrey.

"Oh crumbs!"

Lattrey & Co were reckless young rascals, the blackest sheep in the Fourth Form at Rookwood. But certainly they never ventured to walk along the passage cigarette in mouth. It was only too clear that Master Teddy, so far, was blissfully ignorant of the manners and customs of Rookwood School.

"Step in!" said Peele graciously.

Teddy Lovell came into the study. He remembered Peele as the well-dressed, polite fellow who had asked him and his brother to tea, and he was disposed to be gracious to Peele.

Peele had his own reasons for being gracious to Lovell's brother; but he was rather anxious to get the cigarette out of general view.

He closed the door rather quickly when Teddy was inside the study.

"Sit down, old chap," said Peele.

"Right, I will," said Teddy, dropping into the armchair Peele wheeled out for him. "Thanks! You fellows smoke?"

"Oh, yes!"

Lattrey grinned, and nodded.

As a matter of fact, the black sheep did not want Lovell to look in just then. It was great fun, from their peculiar point of view, to encourage Lovell's brother to "act the goat"; but it would not have been so funny if Arthur Edward had come raging into the study with clenched fists.

Much to their relief, Lovell's footsteps passed on towards the stairs.

"Make yourself comfy here, kid," said Peele.

"I will," said Teddy. "I say, I like this study. Do you fellows belong to my Form?"

"You young ass—" began Gower warmly.

"Shurrup, Gower!" murmured Peele. "No, young 'un; we're in the Fourth. You're in the Third, I understand."

"Yes," said Teddy. "I'd like to dig in this study. I could get on with you fellows."

"I'm sure you could," assented Peele. "I hope you'll give us a look in sometimes."

"Oh, I will, certainly! My brother says you're not friends of his."

"H'm! Well, you see—"

"That don't matter," said the cheerful Teddy. "I don't want to see too much of Arthur. He's a regular worry. I can see that he means to interfere with me at every turn. I'm not goin' to stand it, I can tell you."

"I wouldn't," said Lattrey.

"Grabbed a fag out of my mouth!" said Teddy indignantly. "Fancy that! Like his cheek!"

"Awful cheek!"

"If he interferes with me, there's goin' to be a row," said Teddy independently. "I'm my own master, I suppose?"

"Of course you are," said Lattrey. "I'd keep that up, if I were you."

"I'm jolly well going to!"

"Teddy!" came a voice in the passage.

"There he is again!" grunted Lovell minor. "Can't let a fellow alone for a minute or two."

"Teddy! Where are you?"

Lovell had been downstairs after his vanished minor, but had not found him, and he had returned to the Fourth Form quarters. He had stopped almost outside the first study to call his name, guessing that he had been asked into one of the studies.

Peele & Co. regarded one another rather uneasily.

"I say, put that smoke out of sight, kid," muttered Gower.

"What for?"

"Your major might look in."

"Let him!"

"But—but if he sees—"

"I don't care what he thinks."

"Have you seen my minor, Muffin?" came Lovell's voice in the passage. "What are you grinning at, you fat frog?"

"He, he, he!" came Tubby Muffin's fat chortle.

"What's the joke, you grampus?"

"Look in Peele's study!" chuckled Tubby Muffin. "He, he, he! Young Lovell wanted a light for his cigarette—"

"What?"

"He, he, he!"

"Put it out of sight, kid!" gasped Lattrey, as Lovell's grasp was heard on the door-handle.

"Rats!" retorted Teddy. "I'm not afraid of my brother."

It did not occur to the fag for the moment that his three new friends were afraid of Arthur Edward. He was soon to make the discovery.

The door was thrown open. Lovell looked in, with lowering brows. His eyes glittered as he saw Teddy in Peele's armchair, smoking. The three Giddy Goats drew together, rather alarmed by Lovell's look.

"Teddy!" gasped Lovell.

"Hallo!" said Teddy coolly.

"Put that smoke away."

"Sha'n't!"

Lovell's eyes gleamed at Peele & Co.

"So you asked my young brother in here to smoke, you cads!" he shouted.

"He didn't need much askin' to smoke," said Peele, with a sneer.

"You rotter!"

Lovell strode straight at Peele.

"Here, hands off, you fool! Back up, you fellows!" panted Peele, as Lovell assailed him.

Lovell was not in a good temper, and the discovery of Fourth Form fellows encouraging the foolish fag in his folly was the last straw. Whether Teddy was to blame or not, there was no doubt that Peele & Co. were to blame, and Lovell "went for" the three at once, without thinking of counting odds. As a matter of fact, the three weedy Goats were not too much for a sturdy fellow like Lovell to tackle, especially when he was in a furious mood. Peele's defence was



**TEDDY'S LITTLE WAY!** To the extreme astonishment of the Fistical Four, Master Teddy groped in his pocket and produced a packet of cigarettes. With a manner that he fondly imagined to be that of an experienced man of the world, the astonishing fag offered the packet round. "My only hat!" murmured Newcome.

Fistical Four, Master Teddy groped in his pocket, and produced a packet of cigarettes. With a manner that he fondly imagined to be that of an experienced man of the world, the astonishing fag offered the packet round.

"Help yourselves!" he said.

"We don't smoke here!" said Newcome drily.

"What rot! You don't mind if I do, I suppose?"

Without waiting for an answer to that, Master Teddy lighted his cigarette, and blew out a cloud of smoke.

"Well, my hat!" murmured Newcome, quite overcome.

Jimmy Silver restrained a smile. After Lovell's observations about Algy of the Third, his minor's conduct was rather entertaining.

Lovell's face was crimson with vexation and chagrin.

"Stop that, Teddy!" he muttered.

"Stop what?" asked the fag, looking at him.

"Put that rubbish in the fire!"

"What rubbish?"

"That cigarette, you young ass!"

"What rot!" answered Teddy, blowing out smoke.

Jimmy Silver and Raby and Newcome were silent. Lovell rose to his feet, jerked the cigarette from

"Ahem!"

"Don't you believe me?" said Lovell gruffly.

"H'm! Hem! Oh, yes, of course!"

"I'd give him a licking if I were his major!" remarked Raby.

"I dare say you would; but I'm not a rotten bully!" retorted Lovell.

"What?"

Lovell left the study, shutting the door hard after him. The three juniors looked at one another.

"Well!" said Raby, with a deep breath. "Precious little waster! Lovell will have his hands full if he's going to look after that kid!"

"He wants looking after," said Newcome. "I say, Jimmy, why wouldn't you have your fag cousin here to tea?"

"Lovell was afraid he might teach Teddy to smoke!" replied Jimmy Silver drily.

"Oh, my hat!"

**The 4th Chapter.**

**Looking After Teddy.**

"Hallo, kid!"

"Oh, my word!"

"Of all the cheeky cubs—"

"Shush!" murmured Peele.

Cyril Peele was lounging in his study doorway when Lovell minor

"Here you are, old tops!" said Teddy.

He extended the packet of cigarettes. Lattrey & Co. exchanged glances, suppressing their mirth. Teddy's man-of-the-world air was almost too much for them.

Peele's chums understood what was in his mind, and they played up. It was very amusing to the black sheep to encourage Lovell's brother in proceedings of this sort. It was "one up" against a member of the Fistical Four, and any chance of scoring over the Co. was not to be lost by the young rascals.

Teddy's cigarettes were of a cheap variety. The young rascal was not exactly a connoisseur in smokes. The nuts of the Fourth were accustomed to much more expensive brands. But they accepted a smoke each with all the seriousness they could muster.

Master Teddy felt a good deal more easy now. He had fallen upon kindred spirits.

There was a quick and heavy step in the passage outside, and Arthur Edward Lovell's voice was heard calling:

"Teddy!"

Lovell minor put his finger to his lips with a grin.

"Don't let on that I'm here," he whispered. "My brother wants to jaw me!"



knocked aside in a moment, and Peele went to the floor under a terrific drive, yelling.

Lattrey and Gower "backed up" desperately as Lovell turned on them. They assailed Arthur Edward together; but their assault was feeble. Lovell's blows sent them spinning right and left.

"Oh! Yooooop!"

"Ow! Get out! Yow-ow!"

The three merry blades lay sprawling on the carpet, and they did not get up again. They were safer where they were until Lovell had gone. Lovell gave them a glare of angry contempt, and turned to Teddy, who had watched his warlike proceedings with wide-open eyes.

"Come out of this, Teddy!"

"Shan't!" retorted Teddy.

What happened next surprised Teddy; in fact, it rather surprised Lovell himself. But his temper was at boiling-point now. He grasped the fag by the collar, and spun him out of the armchair.

"Now, come!" he said, between his teeth.

"Ooooooh!" yelled Teddy.

The cigarette had slipped into his mouth, and the warm end was not palatable.

Lovell minor spat out the cigarette furiously, and turned a passionate glare upon his brother, who still held him by the collar.

"Let go, you bully!" he shouted.

"Come out of this!"

"I won't!" shrieked Teddy.

"You will!"

And Teddy did, for Lovell major exerted his strength, and swung the yelling fag clear through the doorway into the passage. Peele staggered to his feet then, and kicked the door shut after them.

#### The 5th Chapter.

##### Nice Boy!

"Let me go! I'll kick your shins!" roared Lovell minor, struggling in the grasp of Lovell major in the Fourth-Form passage.

"Shut up, you little fool!" panted Lovell.

"Let go!"

"Will you come with me quietly?"

"No, I won't!"

"Then I sha'n't let go!"

"I'll kick your shins!" yelled Teddy.

"By gad, what an interestin' scene!" yawned Mornington, looking out of his doorway. "Who's that interestin' youth, Lovell?"

"My minor!" snapped Lovell.

"Oh! Nice boy!"

"You can mind your own business, Morny!"

"I'm mindin' it, old sport! I suppose I can look on at a dog-fight if I like!" said Mornington, shrugging his shoulders.

"Dry up, Morny, old chap!"

whispered Erroll.

"What rot! This is quite amusin'!"

"He, he, he!" cackled Tubby Muffin. "Lovell don't like his minor smoking! He, he, he!"

Fellows were looking out of their studies all along the passage, and some were gathering round the brothers. Most of them were laughing. There had been some talk in the Fourth about Lovell's minor, owing to Arthur Edward's somewhat injudicious talk on the subject in the end study. The juniors were rather interested in the hopeful youth, especially after the information imparted by Tubby Muffin.

"Make him let go!" howled Teddy.

"You bully! Let me go!"

"Come downstairs!" muttered Lovell. "You've got to see your Form-master!"

"I won't!"

"You must, Teddy!"

"I won't!" yelled Teddy. "I'll write to father about this! I'll tell him you started bullying me as soon as he was gone! Let go my collar!"

"Let the kid alone!" said Higgs of the Fourth. "What are you bullying a fag for, Lovell? Let him alone!"

"What on earth's this row?" asked Conroy, coming out of his study.

Lovell did not answer. He was bitterly chagrined and humiliated by the scene. Nearly all the Classical Fourth had gathered round. Only the door of the end study remained shut. Jimmy Silver & Co. were judiciously keeping off the grass. Lovell, by sheer strength, forced the yelling fag away to the staircase, followed by laughter from the juniors.

But Master Teddy was by no means disposed to give in. He had been too spoiled at home to think of yielding up his own sweet will and fancy. He clung to the banisters and yelled, utterly regardless of the fact that his yelling was heard far and wide.

"Let go, you bully! Let go!"

"Here comes Bulkeley, Lovell!" called out Putty of the Fourth.

Lovell set his teeth. He could not help it. It looked as if he was bullying his minor on the latter's first day at Rookwood, but he could not help it. He could not allow Teddy to smoke in the black sheep's study.

Bulkeley of the Sixth came up the stairs two at a time. His brow was grim.

"Now, then, what's this row?" he demanded gruffly.

"Leggo!"

"Let that kid go at once, Lovell!"

Lovell, crimson and panting, released his minor. Teddy Lovell gasped for breath, glaring defiance at his major.

"Hallo, that's a new kid!" said Bulkeley, looking rather curiously at the fag.

"It's my brother!" said Lovell shortly.

"And what are you handling him for, please?"

"He—he—I—" stammered Lovell.

"Because he's a rotten bully!"

howled Teddy shrilly. "I'm not going to stand it! I'm not going to be bullied! I won't stay at Rookwood! I'll go home!"

"Shut up, you little ass!" growled Bulkeley. "Lovell, this isn't the way to treat your minor, his first day in the school!"

"You—you don't understand—" stammered Lovell.

"No, I don't!" said Bulkeley sharply. "What's he doing up here, anyway? Has he seen the Head?"

"Yes, yes! I—I just met Mr. Bohun downstairs, and he told me to bring my minor to his study."

"Well, that's not the way to take him, by the collar. Lovell minor, you can clear off, and go to your Form-master at once!"

Lovell minor looked at Bulkeley rebelliously. But there was something in the big Sixth-Former's manner that stopped the rebellious words on Teddy's lips. Teddy did not know who the Sixth-Former was, but he understood that he was not a person to be "cheeked."

"I don't know where he is," he answered sullenly.

"You might have shown your minor the way about, Lovell."

"I—I—"

"Well, I'll take him! Come with me, kid!"

Bulkeley went down the stairs again, and did not look back to see whether the fag was following. He took that for granted. But Master Teddy hesitated, in two minds whether to follow the prefect or to return to Peele's study and finish his smoke.

"You'd better go, kid!" said Putty of the Fourth good-naturedly. "That chap is captain of the school, you know. Cut after him!"

Lovell opened his lips, and closed them again. If he had told Teddy to follow Bulkeley, it was pretty certain that the fag would have refused to go. Even after what had passed, poor Lovell was anxious to protect the obstinate fag from his own folly.

Fortunately for Teddy, he decided to do as Bulkeley had told him, and, after a last glare at his major, he trotted down the stairs after the Sixth-Former.

Bulkeley glanced round in the lower passage, and found the fag at his heels.

"This way!" he said.

He led the way to Mr. Bohun's study, and knocked at the door.

"Lovell minor, sir!" he said, opening the door.

"Thank you, Bulkeley! Come in, Lovell minor!"

Teddy Lovell entered the study, and Bulkeley closed the door and walked away. Lovell was looking over the banisters, anxious to see whether Teddy was in for more trouble, and greatly relieved to see him disappear quietly into Mr. Bohun's study. Bulkeley glanced up at him.

"Lovell!" he rapped out.

"Yes, Bulkeley!" muttered the Fourth-Former.

"That minor of yours is new here. It would be only decent to look after him a bit at first and help him through!"

"I—I—"

"And taking him by the collar isn't the way to do it!" said Bulkeley gruffly. "Try to be a bit better-tempered with him!"

And the captain of Rookwood walked on, without waiting for a reply from the unfortunate Lovell. Lovell bit his lip hard, and came down the stairs to wait for his minor. It was some time before Teddy emerged from Mr. Bohun's study, and when he did so his face was dark and sulky. His eyes glittered as he saw his brother in the passage.

"How did you get on with your Form-master, Teddy?" asked Lovell.

## GOOD STORIES!

Guest: "Hey, waiter how long will that steak be?"

Waiter: "The average length is about four inches, sir."

Tommy: "What's that animal, pa?"

Pa: "That's a hyena, my boy."

Tommy: "It's not a bit like you. Mamma doesn't know what she's talking about half her time."

Ferdy: "I have sent that girl ten pounds' worth of flowers and sweets in the last six months."

Algy: "Anything come of it?"

Ferdy: "Yes; the bill!"

## CASH PRIZES ARE WAITING TO BE WON IN OUR GRAND NEW "RHYMESTER" COMPETITION.

For full particulars see the Chat Page in this issue.

Herbert: "I hear your golf club is in financial difficulties?"

Ada: "Yes; there's only one rich girl in it and forty penniless men, who insist on playing with her!"

Fair Ones: "Will your dog bite us?"

Navy: "I shouldn't wonder, miss. 'E's got a very sweet tooth, 'e 'as!"

Madge: "Don't you think a girl should marry an economical man?"

Dolly: "I suppose so; but it's awful being engaged to one!"

Winkle: "My wife would make a good member of Parliament."

Hinkle: "Why?"

Winkle: "She's always introducing bills into the house."

speaking as calmly and cordially as he could.

"Find out!"

"Teddy, old chap—"

"Oh, shut up! Let me alone!" Lovell minor turned his back on his major and walked away. Lovell made a movement to follow him, and then desisted.

With a heavy heart, he ascended the stairs and passed through a grinning crowd in the Fourth-Form passage to the end study. In that study he found Jimmy Silver & Co., who assumed an elaborate unconcernedness of the scene in the passage. Lovell gave them a grim look, pulled out his books, and started on his preparation, with a knitted brow. It was not a happy evening in the end study.

THE END.

(Next Monday's long, complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co. is entitled "The Trials of Teddy!" Don't miss it!)

"So you want to marry my daughter, young man?"

"Y-y-es, s-sir!"

"Well, can you support a family?"

"H-how many are there of you, s-sir?"

"There seems to be something the matter with Brown's hearing."

"Yes; he's head over ears in debt."

Mr. Waylayem (suggestively): "Can't you help a poor, lonely man who hasn't got anything in the world but a loaded revolver?"

"Auntie, did you ever get a proposal?"

"Once, dear. A gentleman asked me to marry him over the telephone, but he had the wrong number!"

Hawker: "One penny the dying duck!"

Deaf Lady Purchaser: "How much are they?"

Hawker: "Tuppence each, lady!"

"What's most liable to get broke about your motor-car?"

"The owner," replied Mr. Chuggins.

Reggie: "I thought you'd forgiven me what I said, and promised to forget it?"

Peggy: "But I didn't promise to let you forget I'd forgiven you."

"I want to pay that little bill of yours."

Creditor: "Very well, sir."

Debtor: "But I can't!"



Footballers, like other ordinary people, sometimes dream dreams. I remember that one night, some little time ago, I dreamt I was playing centre-forward in an International match. It was an ideal kind of game for me. The forwards on either side were continually giving me the most perfect passes, and the defenders I was up against in my dream were such accommodating people that they allowed me to do pretty much as I liked.

Anyway, the game of my dream had not been in progress very long before I had flashed the ball into the net seven or eight times, and I am not sure that I was not being carried off the field shoulder-high when I woke up.

Now, the minute your Editor asked me to write about playing centre-forward I was reminded of that dream, because writing about one's play is very much like dreaming about it—you can imagine all sorts of nice things.

You can, for instance, imagine that the rest of the players in the forward line are so ideal that they never give you the ball except when you are in a good position to receive it, and

that, on the other hand, your opponents are so thoughtful that they allow you to do pretty well as you like.

On the field of play, however, it is very different. For the most part you may bet that the other fellows are just as efficient—possibly a little bit more so—in the art of stopping goals from being scored, for instance, than you are in the art of scoring them.

While these things are true, however, there can be no harm in writing something about the duties of the centre-forward position, and if anything I may write should assist a young player to mount the ladder to success as a centre-forward, I shall be ever so pleased.

Anybody who knows anything about football will agree that the centre-forward has a very important position. In fact, it can be said with truth that on the success or failure of the centre-forward depends to a very large extent the success or failure of the whole of the forward line. That is so obvious that I sha'n't be accused of conceit when I mention it.

In the first place, it is particularly the duty of the centre-forward to score goals. In the course of the

ordinary game, more chances of scoring come his way than to any other member of the forward line. That being so, it naturally follows that the centre-forward is very well watched. Always must be thinking out ideas to dodge these watchers, and must be constantly on the alert to put himself into proper position for receiving a pass from one of his wing men.

Mind you, I sometimes think that in these days football teams generally are apt to rely rather a little too much on the centre-forward in the way of goals being scored. If the other members of the forward line continually push the ball into the middle, instead of varying the game and going through on their own sometimes, the defenders will simply concentrate their attention on the centre-forward, and there won't be many goals scored.

But, while it is possible that too much may be expected of the centre-forward, it remains true that, being in the centre of the field and receiving passes from the right and the left, he must do his full share of goal-scoring if he is to be a success in the position; and to be in the right place when the pass comes is one of the first things the centre-forward who hopes to be successful has to learn.

Being in the right place, too, means being in such a position that the moment he receives the ball he doesn't hear the whistle going for off-side. I confess that this off-side rule is a bit of a nightmare, and I think most centre-forwards find it so.

We are told by the ultra-superior people that it ought to be easy to keep outside, and that the centre-forward has only to keep his eyes open and watch the position of the opposing full-backs to keep outside. But that isn't so easy as it sounds.

It would be easy enough if the centre-forward had more than one pair of eyes. As it is, however, the centre-forward must keep his attention fixed on the man with the ball; otherwise he cannot expect to be in the right position for receiving the pass. That being so, it is not always easy to watch the movements of the opposing

#### SYDNEY C. PUDDEFOOT.



The famous centre-forward of the West Ham and English International teams.

full-backs as well, and sometimes, when I have thought I was being ever so careful, I have found myself in a hopelessly off-side position when I have received the ball.

A good turn of speed is also essential to the centre-forward who would approach the ideal, for without it he cannot hope to dash between the full-backs in such a way as to leave him-

self a clear chance to beat the goal-keeper. And, of course, a deadly accuracy in shooting with either foot is another necessary qualification.

Very often the centre-forward gets the ball in such a way that he has no time to change it from his right foot to his left, say, in order to shoot. Opponents are crowding round, and he must bang the ball goalwards on the instant, or risk losing it—altogether. In order that he may feed his wings impartially, too, it is necessary for the centre-forward to be a "two-legged" player.

Sufficient skill to enable him to keep the ball well under control, and to trick an opponent when necessary, is another qualification which the ideal centre-forward must possess, and, as I pointed out at the beginning of these notes, that on account of his goal-scoring position he will receive a lot of attention, then it obviously follows that he must be able to hold his own in a charging bout.

I don't suppose there is any other player on the field who, taking the average game, gets so many hard knocks as the centre-forward does.

Summed up, then, you see some of the things which are wanted for the ideal centre-forward. He must be of good average height and weight, must have speed, the ability to shoot and use either foot, brains to lend variety to his play, cleverness, and ingenuity. Other qualifications, too, might be mentioned, but these are enough.

With all those qualifications necessary, is it to be wondered at that ever so many clubs have to be satisfied with something less than the ideal?

Sydney C. Puddefoot





# ALGY'S TRIUMPH!

A Splendid, Long, Complete Story about the Adventures of FRANK RICHARDS & Co., of the School in the Backwoods.

By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

### The 1st Chapter. Algy on the Ice.

"I'm comin', dear boys!"  
 "Ahem!"  
 "Looks rippin', doesn't it?" said Algernon of Cedar Creek.

The creek did look ripping, as Algy expressed it; the waters, that bubbled and sang past the backwoods school in the summer, were frozen hard now, and the creek was covered with gleaming ice.

Morning lessons were over at Cedar Creek, and a crowd of boys and girls had come down to skate on the frozen stream. And with Frank Richards & Co. came Algernon Beauclerc. Algernon turned his eyeglass upon the creek with satisfaction in his glance. Apparently he was looking forward to the skating.

Bob Lawless grinned, Frank Richards coughed, and Vere Beauclerc looked at his cousin from the old country very dubiously. The elegant Algernon did not impress Cedar Creek as a fellow who could do things. He had shown that he could ride, and ride remarkably well; but the chums of Cedar Creek had not seen him on the ice yet, and they were exceedingly doubtful as to whether he could maintain his perpendicular there.

"Looks simply toppin'!" continued Algernon. "I've been lookin' forward to some skatin'."  
 "You skate at home?" asked Vere Beauclerc.

"Yaas, a little bit, you know."  
 "Well?" asked Frank.

"Well, I can keep up if I'm held, you know!" said Algernon confidentially. "I'm sure you fellows won't mind holdin' me."  
 "Oh!"

"Two of you could do it," said Algernon. "I suppose the ice is thick enough to stand it if we come a mucker."  
 "The fact is, old scout, we haven't come along to fall down and roll," explained Bob Lawless. "We're going to skate."

"I dare say I could give you some tips in skatin'," said Vere Beauclerc, smiling.

"I want two to help—these chaps," said Algernon. "They're stronger than you are, Vere. Strength may be needed."

Vere Beauclerc looked rather comically at his chums. Frank and Bob exchanged a glance, and nodded.

"Oh, all right! We'll give Algy a run before we begin," said Bob Lawless. "Try not to bring us down too hard, Algernon!"  
 "I'll try, old top!"  
 "Put your skates on, then."

Algernon glanced round.  
 "What am I to sit on?" he asked.  
 "The bank!"  
 "Oh, my hat! That will soil my bags, you know!"

"Awful!" said Bob Lawless. "Would you like me to ride over to Thompson town and tote along an easy-chair?"  
 "Yaas!"

"Fathead!" exclaimed Beauclerc. "Sit down and put your skates on, and don't be an ass, Algy!"  
 "And look sry!" grinned Chunky Todgers. "We want to see you at it, Algernon. It will be funny!"

"Make a knee for me, then, some of you!" said Algernon.  
 "Here you are!" said Bob.

Bob Lawless made a knee for the dandy of Cedar Creek, and Algernon sat on it, to put on his skates. As soon as he was comfortably seated, Bob jerked his knee away.

Bump!  
 "Oh, gad! Wha-a-at—!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Algernon sprawled on the bank, roaring. There was a howl of laughter from the Cedar Creek fellows.  
 "You silly ass!" shouted Algernon, sitting up. "What are you playing the goat for? Yow-ow-ow!"

"You can sit on the bank now, old scout!" chuckled Bob Lawless. "You won't gather up more dust than you've gathered already."

And Frank Richards & Co. sat down to don their skates; and the Honourable Algernon, with a frown, followed their example. Most of the fellows were on the ice now, but they were not skating away. They kept near at hand to watch the performances of the "tenderfoot." There was a general expectation that the dandy of Cedar Creek would cut an extraordinary figure on the ice.

"Ready?" asked Bob Lawless.  
 "Yaas!"  
 "Why don't you get up, then?"  
 "I've got my skates on!"  
 "Well, come on!"  
 "How can I get up without help?"  
 "Oh, Jerusalem! Take his other ear, Franky!"

"I'm holdin' on, ain't I?" gasped Algy.  
 "I mean, leggo!"  
 "Can't! I'm slippin'."  
 Algernon certainly was slipping. His skates were beating a sort of tattoo on the ice. The Cedar Creek fellows crowded round and yelled with merriment. Algernon was providing great entertainment for his schoolfellows.

"Oh, my hat!" gasped Frank Richards. "If I'd known this was coming—oh dear! Let me breathe, you howling ass!"  
 "Can't!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"  
 "Go easy!" shrieked Bob Lawless.  
 "Can't!"  
 "Oh crumbs!" howled Chunky Todgers. "Ain't he a sight for sore eyes? Go it, tenderfoot! Ha, ha, ha!"

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 "Go easy!" shrieked Bob Lawless.  
 "Can't!"  
 "Oh crumbs!" howled Chunky Todgers. "Ain't he a sight for sore eyes? Go it, tenderfoot! Ha, ha, ha!"



**ALGY ON THE ICE!** Algy's right arm wound round Bob's neck, and his left clutched Frank Richards affectionately. Bob Lawless was nearly dragged over, and he roared. "Yah! Go easy! Hold on!" "I'm holdin' on, ain't I?" gasped Algy. "I'm slippin'!" Algernon certainly was slipping. His skates were beating a sort of tattoo on the ice. The Cedar Creek fellows crowded round and yelled with merriment.

"Yaroooooh!"  
 Frank Richards, laughing, grasped Algernon by his arm, not by his ear as the playful Bob suggested. The new fellow was helped on to the ice.

"Now look out for fireworks!" chuckled Tom Lawrence.  
 "Go it, tenderfoot!"  
 "Let him slide, Lawless! Give him a start!"

But now that Algernon was on the ice, Bob Lawless loyally supported him on one side, with Frank Richards on the other. Vere Beauclerc hovered near, looking rather anxious.

Algernon proved even more helpless on the smooth ice than the chums of Cedar Creek had anticipated. His feet persisted in travelling in different directions, and he clung frantically to his helpers.

"D-d-don't I-leggo!" he gasped.  
 "Hold to me!" said Frank encouragingly. "We'll soon get you going. Oh, my hat! Don't throttle me, you ass!"

Algy flung his left arm round Frank Richards' neck, and held on as if for his life. It seemed to be his object to get Frank's head into chancery.

"Here, give a grip, and don't quite kill Franky!" exclaimed Bob Lawless.  
 "Oh! Ah! Yaas! Oh!"  
 Algy's right arm wound round Bob's neck. The rancher's son was dragged nearly over, and he roared.

"Yah! Go easy! Stoppit! Hold on!"

"Keep on your skates, you idiot!" gurgled Bob Lawless. "Don't put your silly feet in the air and hang on me! I'm not a derrick!"  
 "Oh begad! The—the—the ice seems slippery!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

"Get him going somehow!" spluttered Frank Richards. "Oh dear!"  
 Frank was bent half-double with Algy's arm round his neck, and Algy's weight on him, and he tried in vain to get his head up. It was with difficulty that he kept his balance. Algy's feet were going like lightning, as if he intended to act as a human ice-breaker.

Crash, clatter, crash!  
 All of a sudden he started. He shot across the ice, and Frank and Bob were fairly dragged after him by their necks. Naturally enough, they pitched forward and sprawled on the ice, with loud and furious yells. Algy shot away from them, fairly across the creek.

"Oh, my hat!"  
 "Yah! Oh! Ah! Ow!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Richards and his Canadian cousin were sprawling and gasping; but all eyes were fixed upon Algernon. He was shooting across the creek like an arrow, and everyone expected to see him crash into the opposite bank with a terrific concussion.

But he didn't!  
 Within a yard of the steeply-rising

bank Algy whirled round on his skates just escaping a collision and came whizzing back. And there was a yell.

"Look out!"  
 And the skaters scattered to avoid the charge.

### The 2nd Chapter. Algy's Little Joke.

"Look out!"  
 "Stand clear!"  
 "Oh Jerusalem!"

Whiz! Algy's arms were waving wildly in the air, his brows were corrugated over his eyeglass. His expression was fixed. At any moment he was expected to go sprawling and spinning—but he did not. His skates were apparently running away with him, but he kept on them.

"Look out!"  
 With yells of laughter, the skaters scattered. Frank Richards and Bob were dragging themselves to their feet, when Algernon came charging down on them. They had no time to get out of the way like the others, and it looked as if a terrific collision was inevitable.

"Algy!" yelled Beauclerc.  
 "Help!" shrieked Algernon.  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

At the last moment, when he was almost upon the two scrambling schoolboys, Algy's direction changed, and he swerved round them. He made a clutch at Frank Richards as he passed, as if to catch on and stop himself; but he only caught Frank's hat, which he dragged off and carried away with him.

"There he goes into the bank!" roared Eben Hacke. "Serve him right! I guess he's going to get smashed!"

Honourable Algernon was really as helpless on the skates as he appeared to be, it was marvellous that he had kept his footing so long. It was, in fact, a little too marvellous—and it dawned upon Beauclerc that Algernon was not quite so helpless as he was supposed to be.

But that fact had not yet dawned upon his comrades, and they rushed to the rescue.  
 "Now then, Algy—"  
 "Help!"  
 "Collar him, Franky!"

It was not easy to collar a skater going at full whiz; but the chums essayed the task. One of Algy's wildly waving arms smote Bob Lawless across the chest, and Bob sat down with a bump. Frank Richards just dodged the other arm, and then Algernon was past him. But, to Frank's amazement, he found his hat jammed back on his head as Algy passed. Algernon had replaced it there while he was going in full career.

"Mum-mum-my hat!" stuttered Frank. "Why, the rotter, he's spoofing us all the time. He can skate!"

"I—I—I guess he can skate!" gasped Bob Lawless. "Pulling our leg, the cheeky jay! Why, I'll skin him!"

It was pretty evident now that Algernon could skate. He had ceased waving his arms and yelling for help. And he was cutting figures of eight on the ice, with a good deal of grace.

"Why, he—he—he's skating!" ejaculated Chunky Todgers. "Here, I say, look out! Keep off!"

Algernon circled round the fat Chunky, and picked off his hat. He circled round again, and replaced it backwards. Chunky's expression was extraordinary during that performance.

"Collar him!" roared Bob Lawless. "He's been fooling us! We'll give him fooling! Collar him!"  
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

Algernon kissed his hand gracefully to the incensed Bob, and whizzed away down the creek in the direction Eben Hacke had taken ten minutes before. In a twinkling, almost, he was out of sight round the bend.

"After him!" roared Bob.  
 "Hold on!" exclaimed Beauclerc, wiping his eyes. "Hold on, Bob! Ha, ha! We really asked for this, you know. We took it for granted that he couldn't skate!"  
 "The cheeky jay! I guess I'll— I'll—"

"Go easy!" said Frank Richards, laughing. "After all, we did ask for it, in a way. Let him rip! Come on, Bob, Molly's waiting for us!"

And Bob Lawless turned back. Meanwhile, Algernon was speeding down the creek, enjoying his rapid run on the smooth ice, with a contented smile on his face.

### The 3rd Chapter. In Deadly Peril!

"By gum, here he is!"  
 Eben Hacke started, and his eyes glittered under his bushy brows.

He had had a run down the creek as far as the ice was safe. As the stream approached the rapids, the ice was thinner, and broken in places, and at that point Hacke turned back. And as he came gliding up the creek, he caught sight of the Honourable Algernon.

Algernon was coming down the centre of the stream at a good pace, his eyeglass glinting in his eye.

"I guess this is my chance!" muttered the bully of the lumber school, setting his teeth.

Hacke had been far out of sight during the scene on the ice, and he was not aware that Algy's clumsiness on the skates had been a joke on his schoolfellows. He was surprised, indeed, to see Algy keeping his balance as he came whizzing along.

There had been trouble between the bully of the backwoods school and the new boy; and only the intervention of Miss Meadows had prevented Hacke from "hammering" the elegant Algy. Eben was debarred from that method of wreaking his vengeance. He thought he saw another way now.

He placed himself directly in Algy's path, as the new boy came skating merrily along. Algernon looked at him.

"Stand clear!" he called out.  
 "I guess not!" grinned Hacke.

He intended to avoid the rush as Algy came closer, and to clutch at him and drag him over as he passed. But it did not "pan out" quite like that. Algy came closer and closer; but, at the last moment, he swerved, and went round the burly Hacke. As he passed, he jerked off the bully's hat, and went on his way waving it in the air.



"Oh Jerusalem!" spluttered Hacke, whirling round after him in amazement and rage. "Give me my hat, you jay!"

"Come and fetch it!" called back Algy.

"I guess I'll smash you!" roared Hacke.

He sped after the new boy, not doubting for a moment that he would run him down with ease. But it did not prove to be easy. Algy looked back over his shoulder, and smiled at the exasperated Eben, as he kept easily ahead. But the cracks in the ice warned him to go no farther, at last, and he circled back, and Hacke rushed at him as he came.

Algernon smiled cheerily, and dodged the rush of the lumber-school bully, eluding him with ease. He glided on, and Hacke, unable to stop himself, went whizzing past the spot where he had stood.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Algernon looked back again, laughing. But the laugh died on his lips the next moment. Hacke had rushed right on, and as he whirled round, there was a loud and threatening crack of the ice under his feet. In his rage and excitement, he had not observed how close he was to the thin ice, and now he was in danger.

The rage died out of Hacke's face suddenly as he realised his peril. Algy turned back in alarm.

"Look out!" he shouted.

But the warning was useless. Eben Hacke saw his danger, but it was too late to escape it. He came tearing desperately back, with the ice cracking under his feet. The catastrophe came suddenly. A spurt of dark water came through the cracking ice, as Eben Hacke's skates went through, and in the twinkling of an eye the burly American schoolboy was waist-deep. His hands clutched at the ice about him, but it cracked in his grasp, and he went down.

Algernon stared at the black, widening pool in the ice in horror.

Hacke's head reappeared in a moment, his face deadly white. His hands, already half-frozen through his thick gloves, clutched at the ice.

"Help!" he shouted hoarsely.

"Oh gad!"

Algernon tore at his skates. They came off quickly enough, and he left them on the ice, and ran towards the hole. Under his feet came ominous cracks from the ice.

"Help!"

"I'm comin'!"

The current under the ice was tugging at Hacke, as he clung on desperately, the thin edges crumbling in his grasp. His face was white and despairing. Already the bitter cold of the water had penetrated to his very bones, and he was chilled to the marrow. His teeth were chattering.

Algernon dropped softly on his knees, and crept to the edge of the black, swirling pool.

Hacke's eyes were fixed on him wildly. He was almost fainting with the bitter cold and the fear that was in his heart. But he knew that in venturing thus on the thin ice Algernon was taking the risk of sharing his fate. And there was no help in sight. The Cedar Creek crowd were more than a mile away, out of sight, and the nearest building was the Hopkins' homestead, hidden from sight by the timber along the bank.

But Algy did not seem to be thinking of his danger.

"Give me your fist!" he said.

"Help!"

"Give me your fist, you ass!"

Algernon grasped Hacke's hand firmly. It was only in time, for the frozen fingers were losing their grip on the broken, crumbling ice.

Algy's grasp pulled Eben Hacke up, and his shoulders came well out of the swirling water.

Under Algy the ice creaked ominously.

"Oh, I'm done!" moaned Eben Hacke.

"You're not done yet, old top!" said Algy, between his teeth. "I'm goin' to get you out, somehow."

He cast an almost wild glance round.

He could support Hacke so long as his strength lasted; but he could not drag him on the already cracking ice. And at any moment his frail support might give way, and plunge him headlong in. And then it was death—death for both of them in the black depths of the stream. Over the timber on the bank rose the smoke from the chimney of the Hopkins' farmhouse. But there was no one to be seen on the bank or in the leafless timber.

"Help!" shouted Algernon, with all the strength of his lungs. "Help!"

Hacke was past shouting now. He was numbed and blue with cold, and but for Algy's grasp he would have

gone down like a stone. He was fast losing his consciousness.

"Help, help!"

Algy's voice rang through the frozen timber.

"Help!"

"Hallo!"

A voice answered from the bank at last. The frenzied shouts had reached Mr. Hopkins, at work on his clearing near the creek. There were heavy footsteps in the timber, and the farmer came out on the bank, staring round him. He started as his eyes fell on the kneeling figure by the gap in the ice, holding up the almost unconscious Hacke.

"Old on!" shouted the Cockney emigrant. "I'm comin'!"

He ran back, and reappeared again in a few moments with a hurdle in his grasp. A few moments more and the hurdle was laid on the ice, and Mr. Hopkins and Algy, between them, dragged Hacke upon it. Eben Hacke sank into insensibility as he was pulled from the water.

"Thank you, sir!" gasped Algy.

"Only just in time!"

Hacke was lifted in the farmer's strong arms, and carried to the bank, and straight on to the Hopkins' homestead. He was laid, still unconscious, in the bed that belonged to Harold Hopkins of Cedar Creek, and the farmer and his wife attended to him kindly enough. Algy warmed himself by the kitchen fire till Mr. Hopkins rejoined him.

"How is he, sir?" asked Algy.

"Oh, he'll pull round all right!" said Mr. Hopkins, with a rather curious glance at Algernon's eyeglass.

"I'm going into Thompson, and I'll ask Doc Jones to call and see him. But he'll be all right—only a chill! I guess he won't get out of Arold's bed to-day, though. You belong to Cedar Creek?"

"Oh, yaas!"

"Then you'd better tell Miss Meadows wot's appened, and tell her the boy is safe and sound 'ere," said Mr. Hopkins.

"Right ho!" said Algernon.

And the dandy of Cedar Creek returned to the ice, where he put on his skates, and glided away cheerfully to the school.

#### The 4th Chapter. Condemned!

Frank Richards & Co. had gone off the ice, and were returning to the lumber school for dinner, when Algernon came speeding up. Algy removed his skates, and followed them to Cedar Creek School, where he immediately proceeded to Miss Meadows' sitting-room, to take her the message from Mr. Hopkins. When he came away, after delivering his information to the Canadian schoolmistress, he was joined in the passage by Frank Richards & Co. Algy adjusted his eyeglass, which he had removed before entering Miss Meadows' presence, and glanced at the three chums with a sweet smile.

"Enjoyed your skatin', dear boys?" he asked.

"Oh, yes!" said Frank, laughing.

"I've a jolly good mind to punch your head for spoofing us, though."

"You spoofed yourself, old top! What made you suppose I couldn't skate?" demanded the Honourable Algernon. "Naturally, I pulled your leg. The fact is, dear boys, you go around askin' to have your legs pulled!"

Algernon strolled into the dining-room before the Co. could think of any reply to that statement. They looked at one another. The tenderfoot of Cedar Creek was surprising his schoolfellows in a good many ways of late.

"My word!" said Bob, at last. "Of all the cheeky jays—Cherub, old man, I took your cousin at first for the biggest jay that ever moseyed out of Jaysville. I'm beginning to think he's the cheekiest monkey—"

Beauclerc laughed.

"There is more in Algy than meets the eye!" he remarked.

"I guess there is," assented Bob.

The Cedar Creek fellows went in to dinner, and Miss Meadows came in to take the head of the table. Eben Hacke's absence was not remarked upon. Hacke did not always have his midday meal at the school. Miss Meadows, of course, knew where he was, Algy having told her that Hacke had fallen through the ice, and had been taken in by Mr. Hopkins, and sent to bed for the Thompson doctor to see him. Of the fact that Algy had saved Hacke from going to the bottom, Miss Meadows knew nothing. It had not occurred to the Honourable Algernon to give her that detail.

But after dinner, when the school-bell rang for afternoon classes, Chunky Todgers remarked that Hacke was not in the crowd that headed for the lumber schoolhouse.

"Hacke's late!" Chunky remarked.

"Gone home, I guess, and started back late. He will get a chinwag from Miss Meadows."

Algy glanced at Todgers.

"Hacke isn't comin' this afternoon," he said.

"Why not?" asked Frank Richards.

"He can't, you know."

"Nothing happened to him, is there?" asked Bob Lawless.

"Yaas."

"What's happened to Hacke?" asked a dozen voices.

"Ice busted, you know. Hacke was rather too heavy for it," said Algernon.

"I say, the bell's stopped. We'd better be gettin' in."

"Hold on!" exclaimed Bob Lawless, catching Algernon by the arm. "Tell us what's happened, you goat!"

"But I've told you, dear boy."

"I remember you went up the river after Hacke," said Bob. "Did you have a row with him along there?"

"Yaas."

"And what happened, Algy?" exclaimed Beauclerc anxiously.

"Don't I keep on tellin' you?" said Algernon, in surprise. "Hacke chased me for some reason, an' ran on thin ice, and went through. That's all."

"He fell in the water?"

"Yaas."

"You saw him?" exclaimed Frank Richards, aghast.

"Oh, yaas!"

"And what did you do?" roared Bob Lawless.

"What could I do, dear boy?" answered Algernon, raising his eyebrows.

The Cedar Creek fellows stared at Algy blankly. They had forgotten, for the moment, that it was time for afternoon lessons. Miss Meadows had taken out her horse, to ride over to the Hopkins' homestead, being a little anxious about Hacke's condition, leaving her class to Mr. Slimmey for the afternoon. Mr. Slimmey looked out of the doorway, wondering why the pupils did not come in, now that the bell had ceased to ring. But the Cedar Creek fellows were too excited even to see Mr. Slimmey.

Bob Lawless compressed his grasp on Algy's arm, and shook him, in his excitement. His eyes were gleaming.

"You didn't do anything, then?" he exclaimed.

"My dear chap—!"

"Do you mean to say that you stood by and saw a fellow drown without lending him a hand?" shouted Bob.

Algy jammed his eyeglass a little more tightly into his eye.

"I don't mean to say anythin'," he answered.

"Algy—" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Time we were goin' in, I think," remarked Algernon. "There's dear old Slimmey blinkin' at us. Comin', sir."

"Answer me, you fool!" shouted Bob. "Is Hacke drowned?"

"My dear fellow—"

"Oh, you awful rotter!" exclaimed Chunky Todgers. "You stood by and let a fellow drown."

"Algy!"

"Funk!"

"You mean coyote!"

"Begad, you seem awfully excited about somethin'," said Algernon calmly. "Hacke was goin' for me, you know—"

"That's no reason why you should let him drown," roared Lawrence.

"Isn't it?"

"No, you rotter, it isn't."

"Algy!" exclaimed Beauclerc, in great distress. "You didn't do that—you couldn't! You went in for him, at least—"

"His clothes ain't wet," said Chunky Todgers. "He's not been in the water."

Beauclerc was stricken silent. It was evident enough that his cousin had not been in the water.

"P'raps the poor rotter can't swim, though—?" said Dawson.

"Are you alludin' to me, dear boy?"

"Yep. Can you swim?"

"Oh, yaas. Toppin'."

"You can swim, and you never went in for Hacke, after he'd gone through the ice," exclaimed Frank Richards incredulously.

"Just so."

"Algy, is this some idiotic joke?" exclaimed Beauclerc.

"Not at all."

"Well, my hat!" said Frank Richards. "I—I—" Words failed Frank.

"It's not a joke," said Chunky Todgers. "Hacke hasn't come back, has he? And I noticed the dude went in to speak to Miss Meadows as soon as he came in. Miss Meadows has gone out now. She's gone to see poor old Hacke, of course—to see if the body's got out of the creek."

"Did you tell Miss Meadows what had happened, Algy?"

"Yaas."

Mr. Slimmey came out to the excited crowd.

"My boys!" he said mildly. "It is past school-time. Go into the school-room at once, please."

"Certainly, sir," said Algernon cheerfully.

The dandy of Cedar Creek walked into the school-room.

He was quite calm and cheerful.

Bob Lawless drew further away from him than usual, on one side, and Frank Richards on the other. Algernon glanced at them alternately.

"Anythin' up with you fellows?" murmured. "What's bitin' you, Lawless?"

"Don't speak to me," growled Bob, in angry disgust.

"Why not?"

"Oh, shut up!"

"Certainly, old top, if my conversation bores you," replied Algernon politely. "Richards, old scout—"

"Dry up!"

"You got your back up, too, dear boy?"

"I'd rather you didn't speak to me," muttered Frank.

"Oh gad!"

"Coward!" came in a fierce whisper from several desks.

"Well, my hat!" said Algy. "I wonder what they are callin' me names for? Do you know, Lawless?"

"Silence in class, please," said Mr. Slimmey. "Boys, you must give your attention to your lessons. This whispering must cease."

And there was silence in class. But the look of the Cedar Creek fellows were eloquent, though their tongues were silent; and it was amazing that Algy bore them with so much equanimity. But he did.

#### The 5th Chapter. Light at Last.

There was a good deal of restlessness in the schoolroom that afternoon. Mr. Slimmey found it no easy task to keep Miss Meadows' class at work. Mr. Shepherd was taking the other two classes together, and he found them whispering and buzzing almost as much as the senior class. The two masters were aware that there was something unusual "on," though they could not guess what it was.

The decorum of the schoolroom was suddenly broken by the Honourable Algernon Beauclerc. He gave a sudden, fiendish yell, and leaped up in his place.

"Yooooop!"

Mr. Slimmey spun round.

"What—what is that, boy? What do you mean by—"

"Ow, ow! Sorry, sir! Somebody ran a pin into me!" moaned Algy.

"Bless my soul! Who did that?" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey.

Silence.

"I demand to know at once who did this," he exclaimed sharply.

"Otherwise I will request Miss Meadows to punish the whole class."

"I guess I did it, sir," said Dick Dawson, standing up.

"How dare you play such a trick, Dawson—such a cruel trick, too—?"

"Serve him right, sir!" came from Harold Hopkins.

"Wha-a-at?"

"He's a rotten coward, and we're all down on him," said Dawson undauntedly. "If he stays at Cedar Creek after this, he will get lynched."

"Hear, hear!" murmured several voices.

"Hacke's been drowned, sir," said Chunky Todgers. "That sneaking gopher saw him in the creek, and never went in for him, though he says he can swim."

"Bless my soul! What absurd mistake is this?" exclaimed Mr. Slimmey. "Hacke is not drowned."

"Not drowned?" ejaculated Bob Lawless.

"Certainly not. Miss Meadows has gone to see him now. He had fallen into the creek, and lies now at the Hopkins' farmhouse."

"At my 'ome!" exclaimed Harold Hopkins.

"Mr. Hopkins, I understand, took him from the creek," said Mr. Slimmey. "He is in no danger. What has Algernon Beauclerc to do with the matter?"

"It wasn't his fault Hacke wasn't drowned," said Dawson. "He's told us himself that he saw Hacke in the water, and never went in for him."

"Is that the case, Beauclerc?"

"Yaas, sir."

"And he can swim, too," hooted Chunky Todgers. "He says he's a topping swimmer, too!"

"Yaas, that's so," assented Algy.

"Bless my soul!" said Mr. Slimmey, "I—I was not aware of this. However, that is no excuse for disorder in the class. If there is any further disturbance I shall punish the offender severely."

And lessons were resumed and not interrupted again till hoofbeats were heard outside, announcing the return of Miss Meadows. The Canadian schoolmistress came in, and Mr. Slimmey willingly relinquished the class to her.

But Miss Meadows did not proceed to business at once.

"Algernon Beauclerc!" she said quietly.

"Yaas, madam?"

Algernon stood up.

"When you informed me, Beauclerc, that Hacke had fallen into the creek, and had been taken to Mr. Hopkins' cabin, you did not acquaint me with all that had happened."

"Not likely to, I guess!" growled Dawson in disgust.

"Silence in the class, please! Beauclerc, you should have told me!"

"But I did tell you, Miss Meadows," said Algernon.

"You did not tell me all," said Miss Meadows. "I have seen Hacke now. He has told me all that occurred."

"Oh!" murmured Vere Beauclerc.

The Cherub sat in a state of dismay as he listened for the vials of wrath to be poured out on the head of his cousin from the old country. Algy had coloured a little now.

"There was nothin' to tell you, Miss Meadows," murmured Algernon.

"Nonsense! Hacke has told me that he was trying to run you down on the ice, and he has expressed his regret for doing so," said Miss Meadows. "He has also told me that you saved his life."

"Oh gad!"

"Mr. Hopkins has told me the same."

"Oh dear!"

"S-s-s-saved his life!" murmured Bob Lawless.

The whole class blinked at Miss Meadows. That was about the last statement they had expected to hear from the schoolmistress.

"Saved his life!" stuttered Dawson.

Vere Beauclerc's face lighted up.

"Oh Algy," he stammered. "You ass—you silly ass! Why couldn't you—"

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# JACK DRAKE'S RESOLVE!

THE FIRST LONG COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY OF A GRAND NEW SERIES,  
SPECIALLY CONTRIBUTED BY  
OWEN CONQUEST.

## The 1st Chapter.

### The Last Day at Home.

"Jack!"  
Jack Drake did not seem to hear. He was standing at the window, with his hands in his pockets, looking out, with a rather eager expression upon his handsome, sunny face. The dining-room window commanded a view of the drive, and Jack Drake was evidently expecting an arrival. Mr. Drake was seated in a deep armchair by the fire, which was burning low. For a long time his gaze had been fixed on the handsome, sturdy figure at the window, though Jack Drake was quite unconscious of it. The boy had, indeed, forgotten that his father was in the room. Several times the father's lips had opened, as if to call to his son, but he had closed them again. When he spoke at last, his voice was low, and almost tremulous, and it did not reach the ears of the schoolboy at the window.

"Jack!"  
There was the hoot of a motor-car in the distance, and Jack Drake uttered an exclamation. "That's old Daub at last, I suppose. Time he was here, too! He's jolly late."

"Jack!"  
"Hallo! Did you speak, dad?"  
"Come here, Jack!" said Mr. Drake quietly.

Jack reluctantly left the window. He started a little as he came towards his father, and observed the old gentleman's face. Mr. Drake was a little pale, and there was a deep wrinkle in his brow.

"Anything up, dad?" asked the schoolboy.

"Yes, I have to speak to you, Jack—very seriously."

"Oh!"  
A slight worried, and somewhat obstinate, look came over the schoolboy's face. His look showed plainly that he expected a parental lecture, and that the prospect did not please him.

"I'm expectin' old Daub every minute, father. If—if you're going to keep me a long time—" Jack hesitated.

"I'm afraid I shall have to keep you some time, Jack."

"I—I say, the Head hasn't been grousing, has he, father?" asked Jack. "You haven't said anything about it during the vac. I don't see why the Head should worry about me specially—"

"Your headmaster's report last term was not a very favourable one, my boy," said Mr. Drake, with a sigh.

"I'm goin' to do better this term," said Jack Drake. "I mean it! Last term there was the cricket, and—and lots of things. Perhaps I slacked a bit. But I can tell you, dad, old Daub used to call me a sap."

"A—what?"  
"Sap—chap who works too hard, you know," said Jack, with a grin.

"Who is old Daub, Jack?" asked Mr. Drake quietly.

"Daubeny, you know—Daubeny of the Shell," explained Jack. "A wfully good sort, old Daub—in his way, of course. The biggest buck at St. Winifred's—no end of tin. We get on no end, though I'm only in the Fourth. That's the chap who's calling for me to-day, in his pater's car. I—I believe I can hear the car outside now."

The St. Winifred's junior stole a look at his father as he made this remark. It was a hint to the old gentleman to cut the lecture short. Drake of the Fourth was quite prepared to face lectures from his father, as he faced wiggings from his Form-master, and an occasional "jaw" from the Head, but he considered that they ought to be short. As for the lectures, wiggings, or "jaws" making any difference to his conduct, that idea had not crossed his mind, so far.

But Mr. Drake evidently did not intend to take the hint. He motioned to Jack to sit down, and the junior reluctantly sank into a chair. He groaned inwardly, realising that he was in for it.

"It's school again to-morrow, Jack," said Mr. Drake, after a pause.

"Yes, dad. That's why we were going to make the most of to-day," said the junior rather dismally.

"My poor boy!"  
There was a brief silence. Jack Drake's eyes wandered to the door.

He was expecting an announcement that Daub & Co. were waiting for him. But there was something in his father's look and manner that struck him, in spite of himself, with a sense of uneasiness.

"Is it—is it about the money?" he asked, at last.

"Money—yes!"

"I—I know I did get rid of some last term," said the junior remorsefully. "I don't quite know how it went. I'm going to be more careful this term, and keep inside my allowance—well inside. In fact, I'm thinking of saving something."

"You don't understand, Jack, and it is a bitter task to me to explain," said his father. "But you must know—before you return to St. Winifred's. You must know how—how matters stand. I—I am afraid it will be painful to you, my boy, after what you have been accustomed to. But—but—I haven't told you before, because I would not spoil your holiday. But—"

There was a tap at the door, and it opened.

A youth in very elegant Etons glanced into the room through an eyeglass.

"Jack, you boulder—oh! Excuse me, Mr. Drake," said Daubeny of the Shell, colouring a little. "I didn't know you were here, sir. Please excuse me for showin' myself in. I've called for Jack—"

Mr. Drake rose to his feet.

"Come in, my boy!" he said. "Jack, I will speak to you later. Enjoy the last day of your holiday, my dear boy. You may go!"

"Just as you like, dad."

And Jack Drake followed his friend. His father stepped to the door, and looked out. A big Rolls-Royce was halted on the drive, with two youths seated in it. Daubeny and Jack Drake came out to join them. Jack's face was bright and sunny now; he looked like a fellow who had not a care in the world—as, indeed, he had not at that moment. His father's brow clouded darker and darker, as he watched him take his seat in the big car, and glide away with his laughing companions.

Long after the car had disappeared Mr. Drake stood staring from the door, with a sombre brow. He turned at the sound of a quiet step.

"You have told him?" It was Mrs. Drake. "You have told him, John?"

Mr. Drake shook his head.

"His friends called for him, poor boy—let him enjoy his last day," he said. "It's never too late to tell ill news. Let him enjoy to-day—tonight will be soon enough for him to learn that his father is a ruined man."

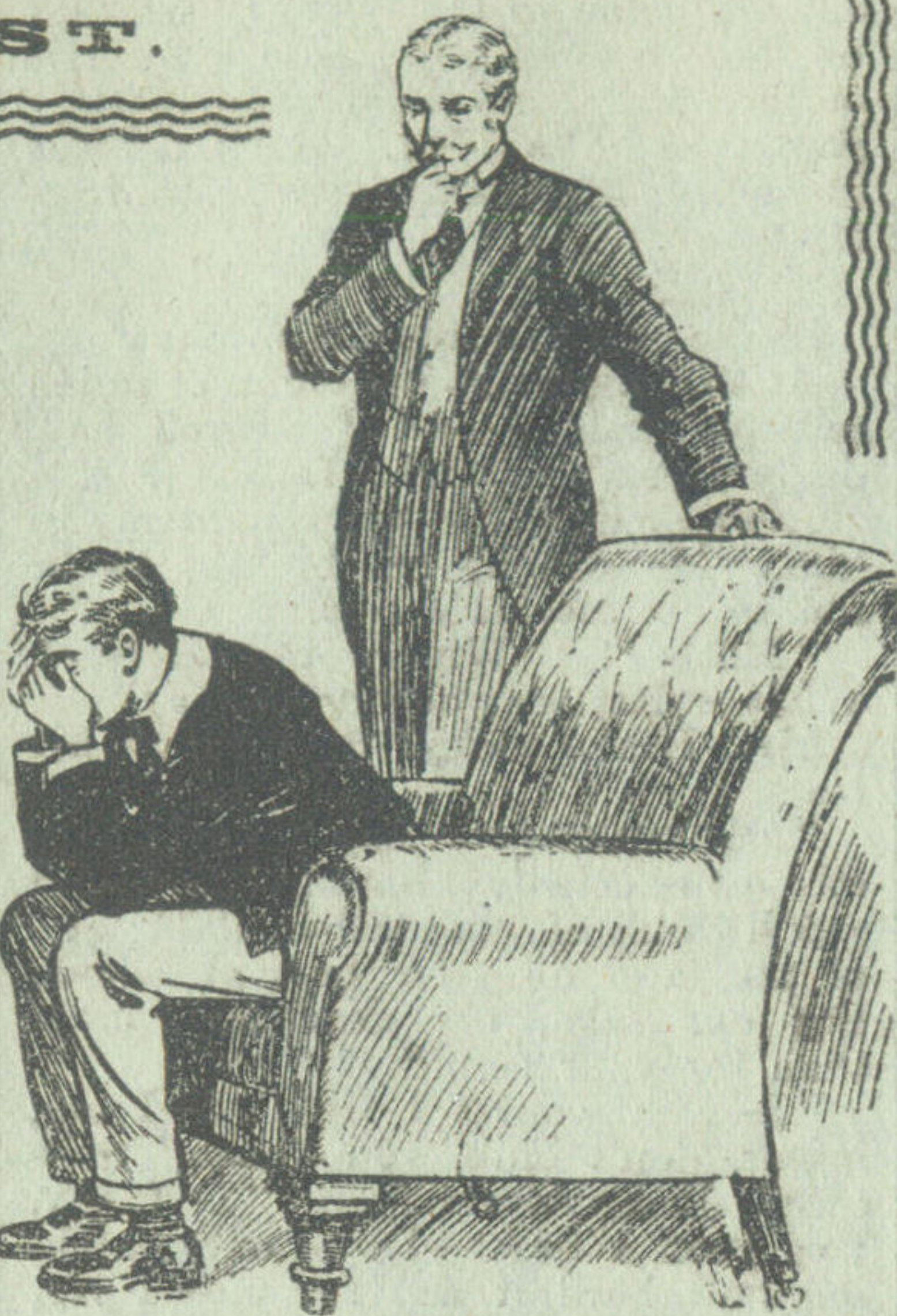
## The 2nd Chapter.

### The Last Flutter.

"Let her rip, Rawlings!"  
"Yes, sir."

The big car was out on the road now, and the chauffeur proceeded to let her rip.

Vernon Daubeny of the Shell at St. Winifred's was in great spirits. His two companions, Egan and Torrence, were equally merry and bright. The three "Bucks" of St. Winifred's were evidently bent on making the most of the last day of the vacation; and Jack Drake was quite prepared to help them in that noble object. Drake was not looking quite so cheery as his companions, however. Something of unusual seriousness in his father's manner had penetrated through his happy carelessness, and



he was in a rather more thoughtful mood than usual.

As the big car rushed on, Drake was thinking, haunted somehow by that sombre, troubled look on his father's face. His companions exchanged glances, and smiled.

"You haven't thanked me yet," said Daubeny, with a grin.

"Thanked you?"

"Yaas; for rescuin' you from the griffin."

"The—the griffin!" stammered Drake.

"I was in the nick of time, you fellows," Daubeny explained. "The griffin had Drake cornered, and was spinnin' a lecture at him. I could see what was on, an' my heart bled for him—it did really! I can't say how glad I am that I dropped in. Our pal—our sufferin' pal—was rescued from the griffin's claws—"

"Oh, chuck it, Daub!" muttered Drake, with a flush. "If you're speakin' of my father—"

"No disrespect to the old gent, I'm sure," said Daubeny negligently. "Tell the truth now; weren't you landed for a sermon?"

"I—I—"

"The Head's been pitchin' a tale!" said Daubeny. "I guessed it, because he pitched a tale about me. I've been through it. The pater had me on the carpet. Lookin' me through an' through, you know. He asked questions—no end of questions. But I had a good yarn for him, fortunately."

"What yarn did you spin, then?" asked Egan curiously.

Daubeny laughed. "Owin' to the change of quarters of the school, it was difficult to settle down to work," he explained. "After all, it was a change. They found out that the foundations at St. Winifred's were rocky, and the whole school had to clear out—dash it all, it was a sudden change!"

"I was countin' on a long holiday!" said Torrence ruefully. "But the Head blocked that—trust him!"

"The Head's a grim old bird," said Daubeny. "Nobody could guess what he would do; for everybody knew there wasn't a building to be had in the country for love or money where the school could be carried on—and the diggin' and delvin' at St. Winny's may last for years before we can go back. But who'd have thought of the old boy transferrin' the school to a giddy old ship anchored in a river? He was downy, the Head was. I dare say he knew we were all expectin' an extra

holiday, and was glad to nip it in the bud. Not that the new quarters made any difference to me—I like them, in fact. But it was a good yarn for the pater. Sea-sick at first—"

"Sea-sick!" yelled Torrence.

"That's it!"

"But the old barge doesn't move an inch!"

"The pater doesn't know that."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Jack Drake did not join in the roar of laughter. His brow clouded a little.

"Dash it all, Daub, you oughtn't to have told your pater that!" he exclaimed.

"Why not? It dried him up."

"Well, it wasn't true."

"Eh?"

"It wasn't true, was it?" grunted Drake.

"My only sainted aunt!" ejaculated Daubeny. "Is that our old pal Drake speakin', or have we landed Good Little Georgie in the car by mistake?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Torrence and Egan.

Drake flushed uncomfortably.

"Well, there's a limit, you know," he muttered, "I wouldn't have spun my pater a yarn like that."

"I don't think!" grinned Daubeny. His comrades chuckled, and the big Rolls-Royce sped on its way, eating up the miles, till Vernon Daubeny announced at length:

"Here we are!"

## The 3rd Chapter.

### Black News.

"Jack is very late!"

It was Mr. Drake who spoke.

The hour was certainly very late. Twelve o'clock had struck, and the servants had long gone to bed. Mr. Drake stirred the fire, and threw on a fresh log, his brow grim and sombre.

"You had better not wait up, Mary!" he said quietly.

"I—I think I will wait until Jack comes. Where can he be, all this time?" said Mrs. Drake uneasily.

"I had no idea he intended to remain out this evening. It is possible that the car may have broken down—at a distance—" Mr. Drake set his lips. "If he has remained out, till this hour, without any reasonable excuse—"

"It is his last day at home, John, you will remember that."

"I remember that, and other things, Mary; you need not fear that I shall be unkind to our boy. But—you had better go to bed."

Mrs. Drake sighed softly, and rose. When she had left him, her husband walked to the window, drew aside the blind, and looked out into the night. The stars were glimmering in the cloudy sky.

"Where can he be—at this hour?" The man paced restlessly to and fro. The communication he had intended to make to his son that morning, and which had not been made, weighed heavily upon his mind.

The minutes ticked away as he restlessly paced the library. Half-past twelve! The thought of an accident was in his mind now; and yet—what accident could have happened?

The sudden hoot of a motor-horn broke the silence, and Mr. Drake started. There was a sound of footsteps, and low voices, mingled with suppressed laughter, without. Jack Drake had returned, and apparently his friends were with him.

Mr. Drake hastily left the library, and hurried to the door. He did not want the bell to ring at that hour. He threw the big door wide open, and looked out. In the dim starlight three figures were visible on the broad stone steps.

"Hallo, the door's open!" It was Vernon Daubeny's voice, rather thick in utterance. "Buck up, Drake—your pater's in bed long ago, and you can tip the man not to mention how late you got in!"

"Jack's father is here," said a quiet voice in the doorway.

"Oh, by gad! It's your pater, Jack!"

Mr. Drake switched on the electric light. Jack Drake came in with a flushed face, and Daubeny and Egan raised their caps politely to the stern-looking old gentleman.

"Good-evenin', sir—sorry to disturb you so late, but we thought we'd better bring Jack home in the car—no trains runnin' now," said Daubeny cheerfully. "We won't come in, thanks—the car's waitin', and we've got miles to go. Good-night, sir!"

"Good-night!" said Mr. Drake grimly.

The "Bucks" of St. Winifred's disappeared in the gloom, and the buzz of the starting car was heard a few minutes later. Mr. Drake closed the big door, and fixed his eyes upon his son. The schoolboy's face was

flushed, but it looked very tired, and his flush deepened under his father's searching glance.

"I—I'm sorry, dad," he stammered. "I never meant to be so late. We—we had a jolly long run in the car."

"Where have you been?"  
"We—we wound up in London at a theatre. No harm in that, dad. Last day of the vac, you know. I—I never supposed you'd sit up for me. I say, dad, I'm really sorry!"

The schoolboy stammered out his explanation, and then stood with his head a little bowed, waiting for the storm to burst. But the storm did not burst.

"Go into the library, Jack," said Mr. Drake, very quietly.

"Yes, dad."

Mr. Drake switched off the light in the hall and followed his son. He closed the library door, and stood for some moments regarding the sheepish-looking junior of St. Winifred's.

"You have been smoking, Jack," he said abruptly.

"I—I—"

"Your clothes reek with tobacco."

"I may have had a cigarette or two, father."

"Have you been drinking, too?"

"Oh, no!"

"Your companions had."

"That silly ass Daubeny—he would stand champagne," said Drake. "I just sipped it—rotten stuff. I say, pater—his face broke into a frank smile—"you don't think I'm squiffy, do you?"

"I am very glad to see that you are not squiffy, as you call it," said his father. "I did not know you were in the habit of smoking, Jack."

"Oh, not in the habit—dash it all! But—but a chap didn't want to look soft before those other fellows—it's not done me any harm, father. And—and Daub said he'd run me home in the car, and I never thought we'd get back so late. It's a shame to have kept you up."

"I am afraid you have fallen among bad companions at St. Winifred's, Jack."

The junior shifted uncomfortably. "They're all right, dad—jolly good fellows! There isn't much harm in any of them."

"They are rich, I suppose?"  
"Oh, rollin' in it," said Drake, with a smile. "Daub's the wealthiest fellow in the school. Some of the Sixth are jolly civil to old Daub."

"Then I imagine you are not likely to see so much of their society in the future."

"Why not, dad?" asked the schoolboy in wonder.

"They probably do not consort much with the poorer juniors."

"Well, no—the fellows are split up into sets at St. Winny's—Daub's lot are the rich set. But—we're not poor, dad."

"We are poor, Jack."

"What?"  
"This is what I was about to tell you this morning, my boy, when your friend called for you."

Jack Drake stared at his father blankly. He could not take in the sense of the words all at once.

"Poor?" he repeated. "Us poor? What do you mean, father?"

"I mean what I say," answered his father quietly. "We have been rich, Jack, but we are poor now."

"Oh, gad!"  
"I have had heavy losses owing to the war," said his father. "While you have been at school, Jack, I have not been happy. I have been struggling with adversity—and I have failed. Even this house will not remain to us, and it is only with the greatest difficulty that I have been able to pay your fees for another term at St. Winifred's."

"Oh," muttered the junior. "Oh, gad!"

He rose to his feet and stood looking at his father. There were lines of suffering in the man's face, but the boy did not notice them then. He was thinking of himself—of his changed prospects. The blow had almost dazed him.

"Us poor!" he muttered. "I've always held my head up at St. Winny's. I've been in the best set there. I—I—I'm going to be a poor rotter like Toodles, or Sawyer! I couldn't stand it, father! I couldn't! What will the fellows say? I sha'n't be able to look Daub in the face—oh, it's too rotten! It's a shame—a shame—a rotten shame!"

The junior sank back in his chair and covered his face with his hands. The long and reckless escapade of the day had tired him out, and the blow was too much for him. Still, it was himself he was thinking of—himself, and the difference it made to him, Mr. Drake's face grew more sombre as he saw the passionate tears trickling through the fingers that covered the junior's face.

"Pull yourself together, Jack,

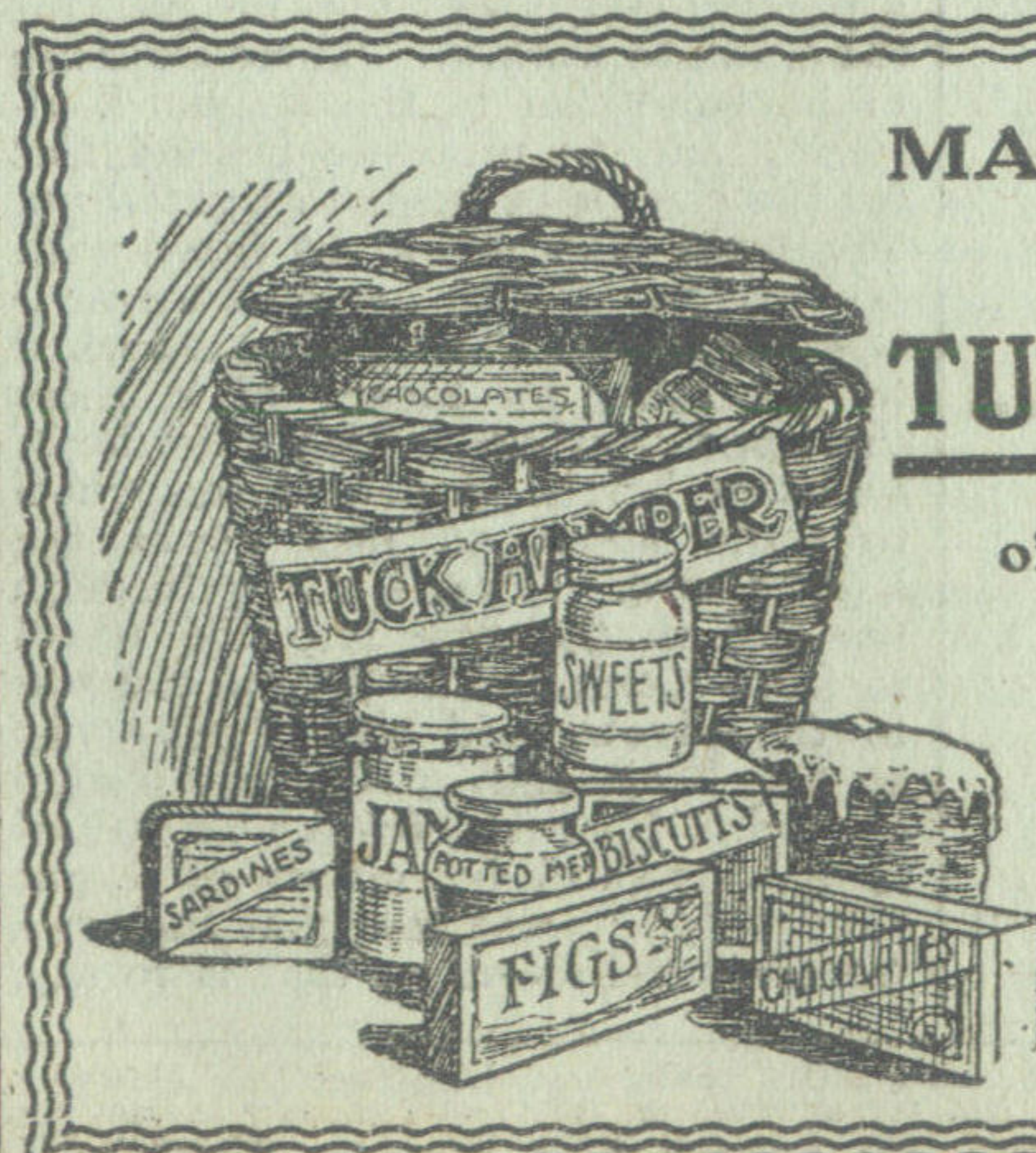
## MANY OF THESE DELICIOUS TUCK HAMPERS

offered to Readers of

No. 2

THE GREYFRIARS  
HERALD.

Out This Tuesday.





There is still a chance for you at St. Winifred's," he said quietly. "It depends on yourself. You have been idle and careless; but there is good stuff in you, I am assured of that. You must face the future seriously, my boy. You can remain at St. Winifred's only on one condition. Your name has already been put down for the Foundation Scholarship."

"My name?"

"Yes—and if you gain it, you will stay at St. Winifred's for three years longer. You must work, my boy—the days of idleness are past—"

"Get the Foundation." The junior looked at his father again, almost scoffingly. "That's a cert for Estcourt—"

"Who is Estcourt?"

"Oh, a swot—a sap!" said Drake, scornfully. "A fellow who lives to work, and enjoys it—the Foundation is his; everybody knows that. Lot of chance of my stayin' at St. Winifred's, if it depends on that."

"It depends on that, Jack—and upon yourself. You can work if you choose, and there is no reason—"

"It's a shame—a shame!" burst out the boy. "It's not fair to me—it's not fair! Oh, it's a shame!"

Mr. Drake drew a deep breath.

"You will go to bed now, Jack. I shall see you again in the morning—before you start for St. Winifred's."

### The 4th Chapter. Off to School.

Jack Drake's face was pale when he came down in the morning, and it had a worn look. He was still feeling the effects of his reckless day out, and the want of sleep. But it was the change in his prospects that weighed in his mind. He had always been reckless with money; he had held his own with the best fellows at the school. How was he going to stand the change? And he was beginning the term nearly "stony," too—Daubeny of the Shell had cleared him out the day before, at poker. What a fool he had been. Reflections upon his folly, however, did not afford him much comfort. He came down in a black and resentful mood, and didn't even notice his mother's look of affectionate concern. His own wrongs, his own grievances, filled his mind to the exclusion of all else.

He hardly touched his breakfast; and afterwards, he listened in dull silence to what his father had to say—hardly hearing what he said. He had heard enough; he knew that he was poor, that he was going back to St. Winifred's to be a disregarded bounder like Toodles, or a hanger-on of the fast set like Raik. That was more than enough.

Or a "sap" like Estcourt—to swot and slave for a scholarship. He laughed scoffingly at the thought. And that was his only chance! It was a shame—a rotten shame!

The cab came to take him to the station at last. His box was on the vehicle; he was ready to go. His father came into the hall. Mr. Drake's face was cold and severe.

"Your mother is in the library, Jack. You had better go in—"

Drake wondered why his mother did not come to the door, to see him off, but he went into the library. His mother was alone there; and the boy started as he saw her. Her head was bowed on her hands, and he heard a faint sob.

"Mother!"

Drake ran towards his mother.

At that moment, the cloud of sullen self-compassion seemed to roll suddenly from his mind. It was as if a glimpse of light had come suddenly to him. He caught his breath, as he ran to his mother's side.

"Mother! What's the matter? What—what are you crying for?"

Mrs. Drake looked up through her tears.

"My poor, poor boy! It is hard on you—cruelly hard! But—but you'll think of your father, Jack, and of me, and do your best at school. For our sake, my dear boy, more than for your own."

"I—I—of course I will! I—I say, mater, don't blub, you know," muttered Jack miserably. "I—I say, I've been a beast—I was only thinking how hard it was for me—I say, don't blub—"

Mrs. Drake smiled faintly.

The boy's arm was round her neck now.

"It will be awfully rotten for you—giving up the house, and all that—oh, mater! And I was only thinking—" Jack set his lips. "I say, mater, I've been an awful ass. But—but it's going to be a bit different this term. Don't you worry about me. That rotten schol—I mean, that schol. the pater was speaking of—I'm going to bag that. That will help, won't it?"

"I'm going to be successful. I'm going to slog," said Drake. "I can do it—I've always meant to, only somehow—but I mean it this time. I—I wish the pater had told me yesterday, when he started—I wouldn't have gone playing the fool with that silly crowd. I didn't really want to—I came jolly near telling Daub I was fed up. I say, mater, I'm really going to work hard, and play the game, and you will see that I shall bag the schol. I really mean business this time. If it will help you—and the pater—I'll do anything—anything—"

"Keep to that, my boy," said a deep voice, and Jack Drake turned, to see his father. "Keep to that, for your mother's sake."

"I'm going to, father. You believe me, don't you, mater?"

Mrs. Drake kissed her son, smiling through her tears.

"I believe you, Jack—I know you

will do your best. God bless you, my boy! Good-bye!"

"Good-bye, mother!"

The schoolboy turned away, his eyes heavy with tears. At the door he said good-bye to his father.

The cab rolled away from the door. "Oh, I've been a rotter!" Jack Drake was muttering savagely, as the cab whirled on towards the station—"a rotter! The poor old mater—and dad, too!"

Half an hour later Jack Drake was in the train, speeding away for St. Winifred's. He was glad that he had a carriage to himself, as the journey began. He was thinking—thinking hard—of his new prospects, and of his new determination—a determination that he meant nothing should shake. There would be difficulty—there would be temptation, but he would win through. With a troubled mind, but with a high heart, Jack Drake faced his new life at St. Winifred's.

THE END.

[No. 2 of this magnificent new series appears in this week's issue of the "Greyfriars Herald," out tomorrow (Tuesday). You must learn how Jack Drake gets on at St. Winifred's. The trials he has to endure before he can carry out the promises he has made to his parents. Ask your newsagent for No. 2 of the "Greyfriars Herald" at once. There is sure to be a very great demand for this wonderful new paper.]

# IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.

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.

### FAMOUS CINEMA STARS.

I have great pleasure in announcing to all my readers that our second magnificent art photogravure plate will be given away FREE with every copy of next Monday's BOYS' FRIEND. In size, it is exactly the same as the plate included in this issue of the B. F., and will portray in splendid design seven star performers of the picture world. I know that many thousands of my readers are interested in CINEMAS and FILM ACTORS, so I'm sure this beautiful plate will receive a hearty reception. Tell all your chums about this wonderful gift; at the same time persuade them to sample the ripping contents of the old "GREEN 'UN." Its attractions are legion, as you well know. Don't forget next Monday!

### NEXT MONDAY'S PROGRAMME.

A long, magnificent, complete school story of Jimmy Silver & Co. is on the programme for next Monday. Lovell minor has caused quite a sensation at Rookwood already with his spilt ways, and in this yarn he runs foul of Wegg & Co. of the Third. Lovell major, in the role of dutiful brother, has his hands full settling with Peele & Co., who seem to take a delight in leading Teddy Lovell on the downward path. None of my chums should miss

### "THE TRIALS OF TEDDY!"

By Owen Conquest.

Also, another splendid, complete yarn of Frank Richards & Co., the chums of the School in the Backwoods, which is full of exciting interest from first to last. This story is entitled

### "FOLLOW YOUR LEADER!"

By Martin Clifford.

Next on the list is a brilliant little article, specially written for the "Green 'Un" by Horace Barnes, the inside-left of Manchester City fame, for whom the above club paid the record transfer-fee of £2,500. All footer enthusiasts will enjoy

### "OFF-SIDE!"

Another long instalment of our serial school story, in which Tom Bates receives the worst sentence

a schoolboy can receive—expulsion. This instalment is very powerfully written, and I advise all my loyal chums to read

### "THE SPORTS OF ST. CLIVE'S!"

By Arthur S. Hardy.

In addition to the foregoing, there is a long instalment of our grand adventure serial, and Mr. Duncan Storm, in his own inimitable style, brings into play several Chinese characters of the pirate variety. Dick Dorrington and his chums pass through a rough time, but, thanks to Chu, they come up smiling in

### "SKULL ISLAND!"

Also, a splendid, complete boxing yarn, specially written for next Monday's bumper number, entitled

### "FIGHTING TO WIN!"

### OUR GRAND NOVEL COMPETITION.

At the request of a large number of my chums, I am instituting a new competition, from which readers will be able to extract a vast amount of interest and amusement, with the added attraction of the possibility of winning a nice prize. "The Rookwood Rhymester," whose poems gained such popularity in the BOYS' FRIEND, has persuaded some of the well-known characters at Rookwood School to write verses about themselves. Jimmy Silver was the first to take the idea up, and his effort is printed in the next column. Now, my idea is to get my readers to assist these amateur poets in their rhyming efforts, and so I have omitted the last line of each of Jimmy Silver's verses. What you have to do is to supply the "last line" of each verse—the best you can think of—and send your five "last lines" (one for each verse), written for preference on a postcard, to "Rhymester Competition No. 1," The BOYS' FRIEND, Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4. Competitors' efforts must reach the above address not later than first post Monday, November 10th. This is quite an easy, as well as a particularly interesting competition; there is no need to use long words or flowery language—just a simple little "last line" which rhymes with the sixth

line of each verse, and which "carries on" the theme of the verse. Anyone can do it, and it is great fun trying it.

Your Editor, assisted by "The Rookwood Rhymester," will be the judge, and he will award the prizes—twelve of them each week—to the readers who send in the best "last lines," in his opinion. By the act of entering this competition, every competitor binds himself, or herself, to accept your Editor's decision as final. Here is the first set of verses:

### "RHYMESTER" COMPETITION

No. 1.

### "MYSELF!"

By Jimmy Silver.

I'm quite an enterprising chap—  
The lesser lights adore me.  
I'm always eager for a scrap,  
Although the prospect's stormy.  
I simply burst, from morn till night,  
With energy and vigour;  
I know the way to run and fight,

In fact, my skill at work and play  
Would rival anybody's.  
The Moderns, though, across the way,  
Where that chump Tommy Dodd is,  
Profess to be the leading House  
And the most cunning japers;  
Yet I'm the cat, and Dodd's the mouse

I'm captain of the Classic Fourth—  
No rival can defeat me;  
And not a fellow, south or north,  
Or east or west, can beat me.  
I rule the roost in champion style—  
I burn with keen ambition;  
And none can come within a mile

Beneath my proud and kingly rule  
The rotters quake and shiver;  
The timid fellows in the school  
Implore me to deliver  
Their persons from the hands of those  
Who bully, brag, and bluster.  
I then cause many a swollen nose

You'll say it's very wrong of me  
To blow my trumpet, maybe;  
But I've obeyed the stern decree  
Of Lovell, Newcome, Raby,  
And other fellows in the Form  
(The dear, devoted daisies!)  
Who threaten they will make it warm

The last line of each verse is left for you to supply. You need not write out the poem in full in sending in your attempt; just send in a card with the five "last lines" written on it and your name and address. Now for the prizes. For the most meritorious effort—the one which I consider "rounds off" Jimmy Silver's poem the best—I shall award a

### CASH PRIZE OF FIFTY SHILLINGS.

For the five next best efforts

### FIVE PRIZES OF TEN SHILLINGS EACH.

and for the next six, consolation prizes of

### SIX SPLENDID POCKET KNIVES.

Enter for this splendid competition to-day and get your friends to. You will find the search for suitable "last lines" a most amusing pastime. For instance, the line, "To swim, and ride a 'jigger'!" would round off the first verse very well. I just give you this as a "sample" line; you can probably think of a better one. Try it!

### HOW TO MAKE A FRET-WORK MACHINE.

"First obtain the table and treadle of an old sewing-machine. On this erect a standard about 14in. high; it may be either hard wood or iron. Having done this, next make a pair of shaped arms—that is to say, they must taper—of thin ash or lancewood, 22in. long. In the bottom one, about 8in. from the front end, cut a parallel slot, about 6in. by 1/2in., for the crank to work in. These arms are to be bolted on to the standard, allowing 3in. to protrude beyond this for the clamps or cords to tighten up. The front ends are to be fitted with saw pivots. A 4in. grooved wheel is now required. This is to be attached to the table by means of a short shaft and bearings, which must be of sufficient height to permit the wheel to stand about an inch above the bottom arm. Pass a screw through the slot in the arm into the wheel to form a crank-pin. Attach the saw to the pivots, and then tighten up at the back ends with your clamp or cord. Now connect the 4in. wheel to the flywheel by means of a gut band, taking great care that the arms form a parallelogram—that is to say,

there should be an equal distance between the saw end and the clamp end when tightened, otherwise the saw will snap when working. Saw pivots are procurable from any fret-saw shop.—Sent in by E. C. Carr, jun., 2, Dutton St., Blackheath Hill, S.E. 10, to whom I am awarding the sum of 5s.

### A NOVEL CHIMNEY-SWEEP.

A friend of mine who lives in a rambling old house far away in the country had quite an exciting experience the other day. His home is really a farmhouse, but he has let the farm independently. The house is well-built, with walls several feet thick in many places, and there are secret rooms where smugglers and others hid themselves and their goods centuries ago. But that is not the point. My friend found that he could not get his main chimney swept. The village, three miles away, did not possess a sweep. The old house was the only one in the neighbourhood which possessed the ordinary type of chimney. Small chimneys can be raked out at any time. So at last it was decided to resort to drastic measures. My friend loaded his shotgun—it was one of the very old style pin-firers—and one morning just fired up the shaft. Well, from his own showing, the system is not one to be recommended. Oh, yes, the chimney was cleared. All kinds of things came down. There were bits of old nests, oddments of wood, all manner of lumber, and, most likely, the family ghost was among the litter, though in the mess and dust it would never have been recognised. The old gun had a rare kick, too, and knocked over my friend. When he got on his feet he saw that the farm bailiff, with a face as white as a sheet, had dashed in to know what had happened. The incident did give the village something to talk about. The report was heard for miles round. It is really better to send to the nearest town for a new broom.

Your Editor