



Master Nobody, from Nowhere!



Jimmy Silver's Latest Recruit!

The BOYS' FRIEND ^{1d}/₂

TWELVE PAGES!

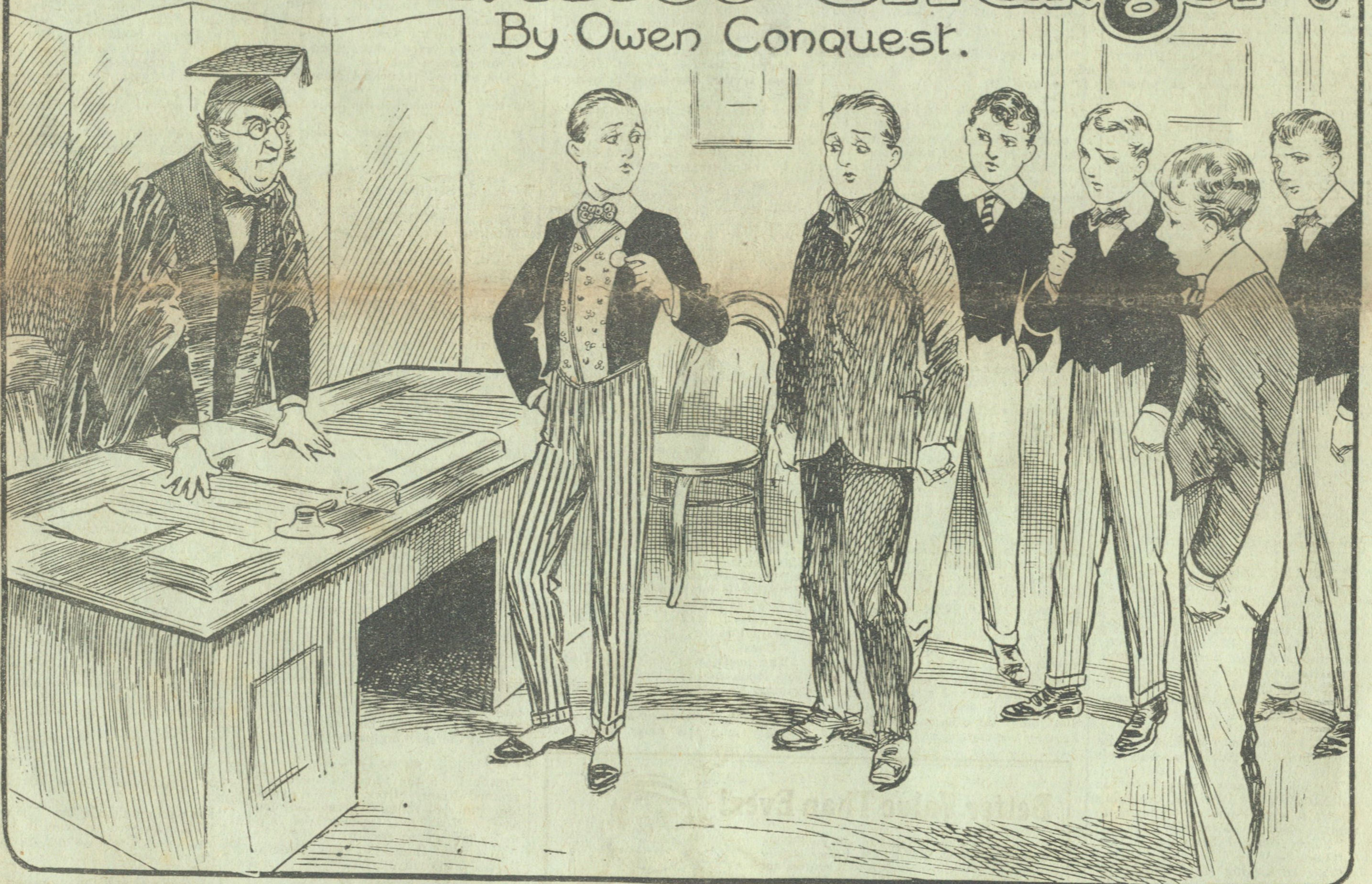
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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending January 17th, 1920.

The Nameless Stranger!

By Owen Conquest.



A STRANGE LIKENESS!

"My dear Smythe," said Mr. Bootles, "I have sent for you to see this lad—the sort! I have never seen him before!" growled Adolphus. "Perhaps he's a cousin?" suggested Mr. Bootles. "I've got six or seven cousins, but none of them look like that frowsy tramp!" snorted Smythe. The nameless boy flushed, and the Fistical Four gave Adolphus very expressive looks.

The 1st Chapter. Taken in Hand.

There was a knock at the door of Smythe's study at Rookwood, and Adolphus Smythe hastily removed a cigarette from his mouth. Smythe of the Shell was enjoying—more or less—an after-dinner cigarette, when the knock startled him.

He pitched the cigarette hastily into the fire, and waved a newspaper

round his head with the rather hopeless idea of clearing off the smoke before the door was opened. For if it happened to be his Form-master at the door, or a prefect of the Sixth, the cigarette would have had painful results for the sportive Adolphus.

The door opened. Fortunately for Adolphus, it was not Mr. Mooney; and it was not a prefect. Adolphus, caught in the act of frantically waving the newspaper,

in the midst of a little cloud of smoke, blinked at his visitor.

It was Jimmy Silver of the Fourth Form.

Jimmy came in cheerfully, grinning at the sight of Adolphus and the waving newspaper.

"Startled you, old top?" he inquired.

"Oh, you rotter!" stuttered Adolphus.

He threw aside the newspaper.

Certainly he had been startled; but it was not necessary to attempt to deceive the captain of the Fourth. Jimmy Silver could see as much smoke as he liked in Smythe's study.

"What the thunder do you want?" growled Adolphus. "I don't remember askin' you here, Jimmy Silver."

"I want you, old chap."

Adolphus frowned, and extracted another cigarette from his case, and used it to point to the door.

"Hook it!" he said. Jimmy Silver did not hook it. Adolphus lighted the cigarette, with a scowl of defiance.

"Come in, you fellows!" called out Jimmy.

Lovell and Raby and Newcome, of the Fourth, followed their leader into the study. Adolphus eyed the Fistical Four uneasily through the haze of blue smoke. He was not on friendly terms with the chums of the



THE NAMELESS STRANGER!

(Continued from previous page.)

Fourth—far from it. And he was not pleased to see the cheery quartette in his study.

"Here we are, old scout!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, with a grin. "Is Smythe ready?"

"Are you ready, Smythe?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"I'm ready to see the last of you," growled Adolphus. "What the merry dickens do you mean by shovin' into a fellow's quarters like this? Shut the door after you."

"We've come to speak to you about the footer," explained Jimmy. Adolphus raised his eyebrows.

"Oh!" he said, a little more amicably. "If you've decided to do the right thing, Silver—"

"I have!"

"Good! I'm prepared to play in the Bagshot match on Saturday," said Adolphus graciously.

Jimmy Silver & Co. chuckled. "It isn't exactly that," said Jimmy. "This morning I put up the list for the Bagshot match, as at present constituted—"

"I know that!"

"And somebody had the cheek to scribble on my paper—"

Adolphus grinned. "It was your list!" said Jimmy. "You wrote 'Rotten!' across my list."

"I thought it rotten!" explained Adolphus calmly. "Your selections always are rotten, Silver. You don't know how to pick out footballers. Not one of my friends in the team—and not me! You know I'm open to play for Rookwood Juniors. You left me out. I thought I'd let Rookwood see what I thought of your dashed list."

"Cheeky ass!" said Lovell wrathfully.

Adolphus shrugged his shoulders. "Well," said Jimmy Silver, "you've put forward your claims often enough, Smythe. You played for Rookwood before I was skipper, and you played the goat. But I'm going to give you a chance."

"I'm ready."

"Good. Come on,"

Smythe of the Shell stared. "Come on! What do you mean? There's no match this afternoon," he said.

"I shouldn't ask you to come on if there were," smiled Jimmy Silver. "I'm going to give you a chance, as I said. Not a chance to muck up a match for Rookwood, of course; but a chance to get fit to play. See? Slacking about in a study, smoking cigarettes, isn't the way to get fit for footer. We're going for a tramp this afternoon—a ten-mile tramp across the heath. You're coming with us."

"Wha-a-at?"

The Fistical Four chuckled at the expression on Adolphus Smythe's face.

Ten-mile tramps were not in Adolphus' line. Indeed, Adolphus found it quite exertion enough to saunter elegantly across the quad.

"Savvy?" asked Jimmy. "Look here—"

"You're kicking up a shindy because you don't get a look in in the footer. Well, the first step is to make yourself fit for footer! You see that?"

"Go an' eat coke!" was Adolphus' reply.

"After a ten-mile tramp, you'll feel quite a new man."

"I'm not goin' for a tramp!" roared Adolphus. "I've got some chaps comin' to see me here this afternoon!"

"Banker and smokes—what?"

"That's my bizney!" said Adolphus loftily.

"My business, too, when you write 'Rotten' across my footer list, because your name isn't in it," answered Jimmy Silver coolly. "You're coming out for training."

"I'm not!"

"Your mistake! You are! Come on!"

"I won't!" yelled Adolphus.

"Tired?" asked Jimmy Silver sympathetically. "Never mind; we'll help you. Lend him a hand, you chaps."

"You bet!" grinned Raby. "Ha, ha, ha!"

"You—you rotters!" gasped Adolphus Smythe, repenting him—rather too late—that he had inscribed his lofty opinion on the junior footer list. "I tell you I won't come!"

"And I tell you you will!" said Jimmy Silver.

The Fistical Four closed round the nut of the Shell.

Four pairs of hands were laid upon him at once, to assist him out of his comfortable and luxurious armchair. Luxurious armchairs and cigarettes certainly were not a proper preparative for strenuous football; and Adolphus had asked for it.

The Shell fellow clung desperately to the arms of the chair. "Leggo!" he shrieked.

"All together!" said Jimmy Silver. "Ha, ha, ha!"

The Fistical Four pulled, and Adolphus still clung. The armchair shrieked on its castors towards the door. At the door it jammed, and Adolphus was plucked out of it into the passage. He landed in the passage in a sitting position, with a loud bump.

"Ow!"

"Come on, old top!" said Jimmy affably.

"Leggo!"

"This way!"

Adolphus was lifted to his feet, with Jimmy Silver and Lovell grasping his arms. Raby and Newcome walked behind, as he was led away down the passage, and when he hung back, Raby put in an application of his boot which quite bucked Adolphus.

And the great chief of the Giddy Goats of Rookwood was marched out into the quadrangle in a frame of mind that would have done credit to a Prussian Hun.

The 2nd Chapter. Rough on Adolphus.

"Bulkeley!" howled Smythe. Bulkeley of the Sixth was in the quad talking to Neville, when Adolphus came out with his escort.

The two Sixth-Formers glanced round.

"Hullo, what's this game?" asked Bulkeley.

"Yow! Make 'em lemme go, Bulkeley!"

"Now, Silver—"

"Only taking Smythe for a walk, Bulkeley," explained Jimmy Silver, with great meekness. "Smythe claims a place in the junior eleven and won't be happy till he gets it. So we're going to give him some exercise."

Bulkeley laughed. "Slacking in your study, as usual, Smythe!" he exclaimed. "I've routed you out about a dozen times, myself. What do you want to stick indoors for on a fine, frosty afternoon?"

"It's—it's c-c-cold!" stammered Smythe.

Adolphus did not care to explain that he had invited a little smoking-party to his study that afternoon. Such an explanation would not have done for the captain of Rookwood.

"Cold, is it?" said Bulkeley. "You'll get colder crouching indoors. Go out and get some exercise!"

"Look here, Bulkeley—"

"Rubbish!"

Bulkeley walked away with Neville, and Adolphus was left to the tender mercies of the Fistical Four.

"Come on, old sport!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Leggo, you beast! Bulkeley ought to interfere—he's a prefect!" howled Adolphus. "Leggo!"

"Bulkeley knows the kind of slacking worm you are, you know," said Jimmy. "This way! March! Your boot handy, Raby?"

"What ho!"

"I—I—I'm coming!" gasped Adolphus.

And he came. With feelings too deep for words, Adolphus marched down to the gates with the playful Fourth-Formers. His chums, Howard and Tracy, stared at them in the quad, but they did not intervene. In the gateway, Mornington of the Fourth was found, with Erroll, and they both looked very curiously at Smythe and his companions.

"Hallo! Are you kidnappin' our prize nut?" asked Mornington. "Taking him for a walk! We're going to make him fit for footer."

"Oh, gad! You've got all your work cut out, then."

"Lend me a hand, Morny, you rotter!" howled Smythe.

Morny laughed. "What a polite an' graceful way of askin'!" he remarked. "I won't lend you a hand, Smythe; I'll lend you a foot. There!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Any more assistance required?" asked Morny.

"Ow! You beast!"

Adolphus Smythe got out of gates without further assistance, in quite a hurry.

The Fistical Four took the road towards Coombe, and Smythe of the Shell reluctantly took it with them.

"Cheer up, old chap," said Jimmy Silver comfortingly. "We're only going to do ten miles—"

"Oh, dear!" moaned Adolphus. "You'll feel better after the first five or six—"

"Ow!"

"Right across the heath, you know," chuckled Lovell. "It's rather rough going, but you'll get used to it."

"Yow! You awful rotters!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Adolphus had to walk as Jimmy and Lovell kept a grip on his arms. He was feeling quite tired by the time the village of Coombe came in sight.

The juniors did not enter Coombe, but struck off by a footpath through the wood for the open heath.

Adolphus' steps lagged on the footpath. He was breathing heavily. By the time the walkers came out on the heath he was gasping.

"How do you feel after the first mile?" inquired Newcome.

"Ow!"

"Feel up to the other nine?" chortled Raby.

"Oh, you rotters!"

"Stick it out, Adolphus! This is the way to get into the junior eleven, you know," said Jimmy Silver encouragingly.

"Beast!"

The heath was under the feet of the Rookwood juniors now. The ground was rough, and the "going" was heavy. Adolphus felt that life was hardly worth living as he tramped wearily on. His natty boots were

soon thick with mud, and did not look at all like the elegant boots of the greatest nut at Rookwood. Perspiration was streaming down his face, and his eyeglass hung unregarded at the end of its cord. His beautiful white collar was growing damp. His look was that of a suffering martyr. All the woes of the universe seemed to have settled upon the shoulders of the Giddy Goat of Rookwood, to judge by his expression.

And still he tramped on. The second mile landed the party out in the midst of the lonely heath among the old deserted quarries. Adolphus lagged more and more, and even George Raby's boot failed to keep him up to time.

And the thought of doing another three miles out, and then five whole miles back, made Adolphus almost hysterical.

Jimmy Silver closed one eye to Lovell, and Adolphus' arms were released at last.

"You can manage without help now, old fellow," said Jimmy. "You're sticking it really well."

"Yow-ow!"

"Perhaps you'd like to run for a change?"

"Yah! Beast!"

Adolphus Smythe sank breathlessly on a big stone by the footpath. He sat and pumped in breath.

The Fistical Four halted. Four grinning faces looked at the exhausted Adolphus.

"And that's the chap who claims a place in the junior eleven!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. "What would he be like after the first half against St. Jim's, for instance?"

"Oh, dear!" moaned Adolphus. "You rotters! I've got to get back. I can never do it! Ow!"

"And you haven't done more than two miles and a half yet."

"Out of ten!" chuckled Newcome.

"Ain't you ready to go on, Smythe?" demanded Jimmy Silver. "Ow! No!"

"We can't hang about waiting for you, you know."

"Rotter!"

"Look here, if you don't get a move on, Smythe, we shall go on without you, and sha'n't take you for a walk at all!" said Jimmy.

Adolphus started. The hopeful expression that came on his face was too much for the Fistical Four. They yelled.

It dawned upon Adolphus that the cheery Co. had been pulling his leg, and that that dreaded ten-mile tramp was not to be a reality, after all.

"Come on, you chaps," said Jimmy Silver, laughing. "You can crawl home, Smythe. We're not going to take you ten miles. We don't want to have to carry your body home to Rookwood."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"But next time you meddle with the footer list," added Jimmy severely, "we'll really make you walk ten miles. That's a tip! Scat!"

Adolphus laboured to his feet. He was only too glad of the chance to "scat." Fearful lest the Fourth-Formers should change their minds, he started on the homeward way, limping wearily along the rough track. He turned once, to shake a fist at the juniors, and then limped on.

Jimmy Silver & Co. went on their way chuckling.

Adolphus of the Shell had had his lesson; it was likely to be a wrecked and doleful Adolphus that crawled into Rookwood again, and certainly he was not likely to be cheerful company at the smoking-party that afternoon.

"I fancy Smythe won't write 'rotten' on the footer list again," grinned Jimmy Silver. "We'll make him walk all round the heath if he does. Now, you fellows, hoof it; we've got a long way to go!"

And the chums of the Fourth hoofed it cheerily.

The 3rd Chapter. Nobody, from Nowhere!

"My hat! Smythe!"

Jimmy Silver jumped.

It was an hour or so since Adolphus had departed, and the chums of the Fourth had tramped a good distance. They had stopped now in a hollow of the heath, near one of the old disused quarries, for tea—tea consisting of bread and cheese, eaten with a keen appetite after their tramp on the heath.

Jimmy Silver glanced up at the sound of footsteps, and uttered an ejaculation as a figure appeared in the hollow.

"Smythe!"

At the first glance it looked like Smythe of the Shell.

But if it was Smythe, he had changed his clothes since the Fistical

Four had seen him last, for the new-comer was clad in a tattered and soiled old suit of cheap tweeds—quite a contrast to Adolphus' elegant Etous.

The Fistical Four stared at him. The new-comer was a fellow of Smythe's age, and of the same build, and his features were remarkably like Smythe's, though they lacked the somewhat lackadaisical expression of the great Adolphus.

"Smythe, or his twin brother!" said Lovell in amazement.

"It's Smythe!" said Raby, with a grunt. "I've heard of his dodge before, changing his clothes when he's going pub-haunting!"

"There's no pubs here!" said Newcome.

"It's jolly queer!" said Jimmy Silver, his eyes fixed curiously on the new-comer.

The latter's movements were curious enough.

He did not see the Fistical Four seated on the stony bank in the hollow; he did not once glance towards them.

As he came on into the hollow, tramping wearily, he was constantly glancing behind him, over his shoulder, as if in fear of pursuit.

The Rookwood juniors watched him with growing astonishment.

"Somebody's after him!" murmured Lovell.

"Looks like it!"

"Perfect!" said Raby. "He's been pub-haunting in that clobber, and a prefect has been stalking him, you bet!"

"If it's Smythe!" said Jimmy. "It's Smythe right enough!"

The new-comer continued to advance into the hollow, still without looking in the direction of the Fistical Four. Suddenly he stopped, and spun round, his face going white, and the Rookwooders followed the direction of his gaze. Where the path from the open heath dipped into the hollow, a second figure appeared in sight.

It was that of a short, thick-set man with a stubby chin and a broken nose. His voice came to the ears of the Fistical Four as he strode quickly towards the tattered youth.

"Found you again, hang you!"

"What the merry thunder—" murmured Lovell in blank amazement.

Jimmy Silver rose quickly to his feet.

"I rather think we chip in here," he said in a low voice.

The tattered youth broke into a sudden run, and in a moment more, with the ruffian close behind him, he had run into the Fistical Four.

Jimmy Silver caught him by the arm and stopped him.

"Let me go! Let me go!"

"Hold on, Smythe!"

"Let me go!"

The broken-nosed man stopped abruptly at the sight of the Fistical Four. There was a thick cudgel in his hand, and he grasped it and came on again, more slowly.

Jimmy Silver stepped between him and the fugitive, with a gleam in his eyes.

"Stop!" he said curtly.

The tattered youth ran on up the hollow, but he was evidently at the end of his strength, for he stumbled and fell. Lovell and Raby and Newcome drew quickly to Jimmy Silver's side. They were utterly puzzled by the strange affair, but it was clear enough that the tattered youth, whether he was Smythe or not, was in need of protection.

The ruffian eyed the four school-boys surlily.

"Out of the way!" he snapped. "You'll let Smythe alone!" said Jimmy Silver quietly.

The broken-nosed man stared at him.

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THE NAMELESS STRANGER!

(Continued from previous page.)



least two score of fellows were collected, all in a state of considerable excitement.

The arrival of the boy without a name, had caused a sensation, all the more because his remarkable likeness to Smythe of the Shell had been observed by all. That Smythe must know something about him was the general idea; the resemblance was too strong to be anything but a family likeness, in the opinion of the Rookwood fellows.

And there was much chuckling among the juniors at that idea. For the tattered stranger was not—so far as appearances went a credit to the lofty and aristocratic Adolphus, and it looked as if some poor relation of the Smythes had turned up by a curious chance. If the noble Adolphus had any poor relations, he was careful to keep them strictly dark; they had not been heard of at Rookwood before. Now one, at least, was heard of, and was attracting general attention—if indeed the boy from nowhere was a relation of Smythe's.

Smythe glanced at the tattered lad as he entered the study, and could not help being struck by a familiarity in his look. The likeness, naturally, was not so obvious to Adolphus as to other fellows, but even Adolphus could see, in the tattered youth's features, a resemblance to the countenance he was accustomed to see in the glass.

But that resemblance weighed nothing with Smythe. Not for the worlds would he have admitted that this tattered and muddy youth could possibly be a relative of his.

"My dear Smythe," said Mr. Bootles, in his mild tones, "I have sent for you to see this lad—"

"Well, sir?" grunted Adolphus, as Mr. Bootles paused.

"Look at him, Smythe!"

"I'm looking at him," answered Adolphus, as disrespectfully as he dared.

"The circumstances are most remarkable, Smythe," pursued Mr. Bootles. "I have questioned this unhappy lad, and it appears that he has suffered from some shock that has deprived him of his memory. Evidently he has been ill. Now, the boy bears a most remarkable resemblance to you, Smythe, in personal appearance—"

"I don't see it, sir!" growled Adolphus.

Mr. Bootles peered at him over his spectacles.

"It is very plain—in fact, striking, Smythe," he said mildly. "You are both apparently of the same age, and extremely alike in feature. Indeed, if this lad were dressed as you are dressed, I think it would be difficult to tell one from the other."

Smythe set his lips. "Even if the fellow happens to be like me, I don't see that it concerns me, sir," he answered. "I don't know anythin' about him."

"That is what I wish to ascertain, Smythe. The likeness is perhaps a family likeness—"

"Nothin' of the sort."

"You speak very positively, Smythe," said Mr. Bootles, with another blink at the dandy of the Shell.

"I'm quite positive that that ragged outsider isn't any relation of mine," answered Smythe savagely. "Jimmy Silver's started this up against me, to make the fellows talk—"

"Kindly do not talk nonsense, Smythe," said Mr. Bootles severely. "I noticed the resemblance at once, and that is why I sent for you. This lad is quite a respectable lad, though his clothes are so old and tattered. He speaks quite nicely, and evidently belongs to respectable people. He has lost his memory, and has, doubtless, wandered from home. If you could tell me anything about the lad, Smythe, it might enable me to get into touch with his parents and—"

"I can't!"

"You have never seen him before?"

"Never!"

"Have you any relation—a cousin or a brother—about the age of this boy?"

"My brother's five years older than I am," grunted Smythe.

"But a cousin—"

"I've got six or seven cousins, but none of them like that frowsy tramp," snorted Adolphus.

The nameless boy flushed, and Jimmy Silver gave Smythe an expressive look. But for the presence of Mr. Bootles, Jimmy would have given him something more emphatic than a look.

"You cannot help me in the matter, then, Smythe?" asked Mr. Bootles, with a glance of strong disapproval at the angry Adolphus. The Form-master was plainly disappointed.

"No, sir!"

Mr. Bootles turned to the nameless boy again.

"My dear lad," he said kindly. "Have you ever seen Smythe before? Do you recognise him?"

"How could he recognise me, sir?" broke in Adolphus passionately. "I tell you I've got nothin' to do with the fellow."

"Kindly be silent, Smythe, and allow the lad to answer."

Adolphus set his lips. The name-

less boy looked at him long and earnestly and shook his head at last.

"I do not know him, sir," he said quietly.

"Is the name of Smythe familiar to you, my poor boy?" asked Mr. Bootles.

"I—I think I have heard it, but—I do not remember."

"Of course he doesn't know me," muttered Adolphus, much relieved, however, that the tattered stranger did not claim him as a relation. "How could he know me? He's never seen me before, an' I've never seen him."

"That is all I wished to know, Smythe," said the Fourth Form-master coldly. "You may go."

Smythe of the Shell quitted the study, glad to be dismissed. His face was dark as he tramped away through a grinning crowd in the corridor. Whether he knew the nameless boy or not he could see that the juniors meant to take the view that the boy from nowhere was a relation of his.

"His brother, right enough," Tubby Muffin remarked, as Smythe passed him. "I dare say he's been in the workhouse, you know; looks like it. Have you got any more relations in the workhouse, Smythe? He, he, he!"

Smythe stamped on savagely and disappeared into his own study in a Hunnish frame of mind. It was like the nameless fellow's cheek to resemble him, from the lofty Adolphus' point of view, and Smythe was not at all disposed to admit that the resemblance was so close as it appeared to others.

And there was a lurking fear in Adolphus' breast that the tattered stranger might, in very truth, turn out to be a relative of his. The Smythes had not always flourished in wealth, and Adolphus was aware that he had relations whom he had never seen, and whom he never mentioned at Rookwood. There were Smythes "in trade"—an awful thought to Adolphus; there were even Smythes who worked—still more awful thought; wretched Smythes who did not even spell their name with a "y," and yet who were indubitably related to the Smythes of Smythe Lodge. Such horrors Adolphus had always carefully kept out of his thoughts, and now—

Suppose this tattered wretch was a relation, after all? Suppose it came out, and all Rookwood knew! Adolphus groaned in anguish of spirit at the thought.

Luckily, the fellow would soon be gone. Tracy came back to the study with the news that Mr. Bootles had taken "Master Nobody from Nowhere" to the Head. Dr. Chisholm was to decide what was to be done with him.

"He oughtn't to have been brought to Rookwood at all!" exclaimed

Adolphus savagely. "Jimmy Silver only did it to worry me, the cad! It's all rot about losing his memory—spool all along the line!"

"Bootles believes him!" remarked Tracy.

"Bootles is an old fool!"

Tracy gave his chum a very curious look.

"You're sure you don't know the chap?" he asked.

"You silly ass!" roared Adolphus.

"How could I know a ragged tramp?"

"Well, the fellows think—"

"Hang the fellows!"

"After all, everybody's got relations he don't want to trot out into the limelight!" said Tracy comfortably.

Smythe gritted his teeth.

"I tell you he's not my relation!" he hissed.

"All serene, old top, don't get excited," said Tracey soothingly. "He's not your relation, then, if you like—quer about the likeness, though, ain't it?"

"Oh, shut up!"

Smythe strode out of the study and slammed the door, leaving Tracy grinning. The dandy of the Shell tramped out into the growing dusk of the quad, affecting not to see the smiling glances turned upon him by the juniors he passed.

In an unenviable frame of mind, the snob of Rookwood paced under the old beeches. After all, the fellow would go soon—that was his only comfort. He would be sent to the workhouse or the police-station. Rookwood, at least, would see the last of him. But he had not gone by the time the gates were locked, and Smythe came back into the house in an apprehensive frame of mind. He met Jimmy Silver in the hall.

"Has he gone?" he asked.

"That chap? Oh, no," answered Jimmy. "He's not going."

Smythe almost staggered.

"N-n-not going!" he ejaculated.

"No; the Head says he's to stay at Rookwood, and be looked after till his people are found."

"Oh gad!"

Adolphus turned away without another word. The Head had decided, quite oblivious of Adolphus' view on the matter, and that night the nameless boy from nowhere slept under the old roof of Rookwood.

THE END.

DON'T MISS
Next Monday's long complete
story of the Nameless Stranger
entitled
**"The Boy Without
a Memory."**
By OWEN CONQUEST.



By GEORGE HOLLEY,

The famous ex-Sunderland International, who now plays for Brighton and Hove Albion.

Only the footballer has a proper appreciation of the many different kinds of pitches upon which he has to play in the course of a season. I am now referring specially, of course, to the first-class player, because my boy readers will have their own ideas of the different pitches they play upon.

If boys of to-day are anything like the boys of my day they won't care so much about what kind of pitch they've got. What will really worry them is whether they have any pitch at all.

I have played some games in my youth when I was just as likely to find my toe in contact with a brick as with the ball, while others—well, a ploughed field would have been a fine pitch as compared with them.

However, we will assume that you have a decent sort of ground, and that the opponents you meet have decent grounds. Even then it is surprising how many varied sorts of pitches are hit on in the average season.

It may surprise some people to know that even among the First-League clubs there is a considerable difference

in the length and breadth of the various football-grounds, amounting to several yards between the maximum and the minimum. And, believe me, it affects the forward line of a first-class side quite a lot to be called upon to operate on a pitch which is considerably narrower than that upon which they usually play.

Passes from the centre-forward which are meant for the outside wing man go whizzing past him and over the touch-line, because the ground is narrower than the centre-forward is used to; and, moreover, a narrow ground gives the forwards a feeling that they are "on top of each other" all the time.

Then we come to the state of the turf, and here the variety is very marked, indeed. It ranges from the bone-dry, but usually grass-covered pitch, met with at the commencement of the season, to the bare mud-heap which you get, say, in January and February, when a quick thaw has followed a long spell of frost or snow.

The nicely-covered ground, which is not too hard, is the best of all for the footballer, and on it he ought to

be able to play the game as it should be played—real scientific football. Every pass goes true, and the ball is not too lively.

At the beginning of the present season I played on one or two pitches on which football was a real delight, but, alas! in the wear and tear which the grounds get during the first few months, most of the grass disappears—generally by Christmas, if not before—and we get the bare ground instead.

It is a big mistake to imagine, as many people do, that a hard ground coupled with a light ball, should produce good football. On such a surface it is terribly difficult even for the finished player to keep the ball in control, and I generally find that the object is too much in the air; and football, as a well-known manager once remarked, "is a game which ought to be played on the carpet."

However, it is no part of my business in these notes to tell my readers what sort of football they should play on a ground when the best football is possible. The real business I am concerned with is the sort of play most likely to bring success when the pitch is far removed from perfect.

On a greasy, treacherous surface, on which the players slip and skid in a manner which amuses the spectators but doesn't amuse the players overmuch, it is no use any team trying fancy work.

On such a pitch the ball skids when you expect it to travel slowly, and stops dead in a pool when, in the ordinary way, it has been kicked with enough strength to reach a mate perfectly. Perhaps the best summing-up of the style of play on such a ground is "kick the ball and run after it." By that I mean that every pass must be a forward pass, and that it is absolutely useless to attempt fancy twists and turns.

Moreover, it should always be remembered that on such a pitch it is just as difficult for the defenders to keep their feet as it is for the attackers, hence the value of the quick-rush-forward policy. I have seen many a side win matches on such a pitch simply because the forwards have given the defenders no peace. They have hustled and hustled them

GEORGE HOLLEY



Who has written the accompanying article specially for the BOYS' FRIEND.

all the time, and the treacherous nature of the going has led to those defenders making no end of blunders. When they have kicked the ball it has skidded off their boots, while sometimes they have slipped and missed the leather entirely.

If the forwards are playing right up to the defenders on such a day they are able to make full use of the

mistakes which are bound to happen, and that is why, on a treacherous surface, I advocate the policy of play well up all the time.

Personally, I would much rather play on a really muddy ground than on a merely slippery one. On a muddy surface you can control the ball, but these heavy grounds, with a mud-covered, heavy ball, take a lot out of the player, and when these sort of pitches are encountered with anything like frequency, it is absolutely necessary for every player on the side to be right up to concert pitch as regards physical fitness.

Again, of course, the wind has quite a lot to do with some games of football. When a side is playing with the wind at their backs, I like to see them taking shots at goal on every conceivable occasion. The wind gives added power to the kicks, and although a goalkeeper may stop some of the shots some of the time, even the best goalkeeper in the world won't stop all the shots all the time.

Moreover, the wind plays funny tricks with the ball, and very often the goalkeeper will find that a shot for which he has set himself in perfect position will be turned by the wind sufficiently out of its course to render the saving of it a very difficult, if not absolutely impossible task.

So when you are playing in a match with the wind at your backs, shoot hard and shoot often. And when you are playing with the wind in your face, keep the ball low. That is the only way to make it travel.

Geo Holley



The TODGERS TOUCH!

A Grand, Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS & Co., and Chunky Todgers, of Cedar Creek School. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter

Chunky Takes It Seriously.

"Chunky!" "Where's Chunky?" "News for you, Chunky!" Chunky Todgers glanced up impatiently. It was after dinner at Cedar Creek, and Chunky Todgers had withdrawn to the deserted school-room, where he was lying on a rug before the big log fire. The fat youth was resting on his elbows, his fat chin supported in his podgy hands, and his round eyes were glued upon an open volume on the rug. Chunky Todgers was reading—or, rather, devouring—that volume, and the interruption irritated him.

For the volume was an entrancing one—the latest addition to Gunten's Circulating Library at Thompson. It was entitled "Lost Sir Charles, or the Mystery of the Missing Baronet." And Chunky was enjoying it. Missing baronets and lost marquises and rightful heirs delighted Chunky Todgers, whose romantic thoughts wandered far from the surroundings of a backwoods school.

Chunky was in the last chapter, where Lost Sir Charles had turned up and claimed the old estate and the baronial hall, and ejected the wicked Sir Felix, and was about to clasp Lady Gwendolina to his manly breast. It was no wonder that Chunky gave an impatient snort, as Frank Richards & Co. came into the school-room and called to him.

Chunky waved a fat hand at the three schoolboys.

"Git!" he said laconically. "Birt look here—" began Bob Lawless.

"Vamoose the ranch." "News for you, old chap," said Vere Beauclerc persuasively. "Absquatulate!" howled Chunky Todgers.

"It's something to your advantage, Chunky!" urged Frank Richards.

"I say git, and I mean git!" snorted Chunky. "Can't you see I'm reading? This book has got to go back to-night, or I have to pay an extra five cents. Leave a galoot in peace, gurl-darn you! Git!"

But the chums of Cedar Creek did not "git." They came up to the fire, and Bob Lawless waved a newspaper at the exasperated Chunky.

"Look at this, Chunky—" "Git!"

"It's the Kamloops paper—" "Blow the Kamloops paper!"

"You're wanted—" "Eh?"

"Advertised for!" said Bob Lawless.

"What?"

"Something to your advantage—" "Oh!"

Chunky Todgers sat up on the rug. He was interested at last, and even Lost Sir Charles had to wait, and the Lady Gwendolina remained unclasped, as it were, so far as Chunky Todgers was concerned.

"Let's look at it," said Todgers. Bob Lawless handed him the paper, and indicated the advertisement with his forefinger. Chunky Todgers scanned it with great curiosity.

Frank Richards & Co. stood round him, grinning.

Their expression was sufficient to tell that they had come into the school-room to pull Chunky's fat leg. Pulling Chunky's leg was a not uncommon entertainment at Cedar Creek. Chunky's romantic dreams made him an easy victim. But Chunky did not even observe the three merry grins that surrounded him. He was reading the advertisement in the Kamloops paper with breathless seriousness.

It was a rather interesting advertisement, though it did not specially con-

cern anybody at Cedar Creek School. It ran:

"If Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington will communicate with Messrs. Have & Hookit, Montreal, he will hear of something to his advantage."

"Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington!" murmured Chunky Todgers, rolling the name upon his tongue, as it were, with relish.

It was such a name as Chunky Todgers loved.

The heroes of the novels that Chunky enjoyed always had names like that; and often had Chunky, as he read of a Howard, a Courtenay, a Plantagenet, a De Courcy, or a De Vere, bemoaned the fact that he

did not confide any of those romantic dreams to the old folks at home.

Mr. Todgers would probably not have been pleased at the idea of turning out to be a faithful retainer, Mr. Todgers not being in the least romantic.

But Chunky had sometimes pictured quite a touching scene—Mr. Todgers in tears as he parted with his adopted son, all the Todgerses standing round wet-eyed, Chunky himself affected by the parting, but feeling it his duty to accompany the marquis back to the ancestral estate.

When Chunky had allowed that extraordinary vision to escape his fat lips, it had been received with such howls of laughter that he had re-



HOMAGE FOR CHUNKY!

"All hail!" chortled Bob Lawless. "Bow down, you common persons—bow down." "Ha, ha, ha!" Chunky's fat cheeks flushed. For a moment he had taken this greeting as an appropriate tribute to his high-born importance, but he realised now that the Cedar Creek fellows were making fun of him. "Look here you silly jays—" began Chunky.

was doomed to struggle through existence under the name of Todgers.

Todgers, certainly, answered all the usual purposes of a name, but it did not in the least satisfy Chunky's romantic fancy.

Indeed, Chunky's fancy had wandered so far that he had sometimes had a half-formed idea that Todgers wasn't really his name, but that if the truth were known, it would turn out that he was a scion of the De Courcies or the De Veres.

Such things had happened—at all events, extensive novel-reading had led Chunky to believe so.

Sometimes, in a rosy day-dream, he had seen himself claimed by the white-haired old marquis, his true father, who, for mysterious reasons, had placed him in charge of Mr. William Todgers of the Thompson Valley, perhaps to save his life from the machinations of a wicked uncle.

He saw himself—in his mind's eye—handed over to the marquis by Mr. Todgers—the latter turning out to be simply a faithful old retainer of the family, and not his father at all.

gretted it; and it was now locked up in his own plump bosom, as a darling idea he dwelt on in secret thoughts.

But Frank Richards & Co. knew all about it; hence their visit to the school-room with the advertisement for Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington.

Who M. F. Arlington might be, they did not know, and did not care very much; probably some wastrel who was being inquired after by his relations.

But they felt that the advertisement was just the thing for Chunky Todgers; and the fat schoolboy's expression showed that they were right.

Chunky read it, and read it again, and murmured several times "Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington," as if he loved the sound, as indeed, he did.

Frank Richards & Co. were grinning; but they contrived to compose their faces as Chunky looked up at last from the rug before the fire.

Bob Lawless pointed an accusing finger at him.

"Revealed at last!" he exclaimed, in the best manner of the Cedar Creek Thespian Society.

Chunky started. "Wha-at?" he ejaculated. "Why didn't you tell us?" demanded Bob. "Eh? Tell you what?" "Your real name," said Bob, with the solemnity of an owl. "Mum-mum-my real name!" stut-tered Chunky.

"Yes, you galoot! So your name's Arlington after all—Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington—" "Wha-a-at?"

"And you're found out!" said Frank Richards solemnly. "Clean bowled out!" said Beauclerc.

Chunky Todgers blinked at them. As he read the advertisement of Messrs. Have & Hookit, the thought had passed through his mind, how delightful it would be if that advertisement in reality applied to his fat self.

But his thoughts had not, as yet, gone further than that.

Now they went further—considerably further.

Here were three fellows who believed that he was the very Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington who was being inquired after by lawyers.

After all, why not?

Stranger thing had happened—at least, in the novels which Chunky borrowed from Gunten's Circulating Library.

What if he were really—"Own up!" said Bob Lawless sternly.

"I—I—I guess—" "Now, then, the truth, Chunky Todgers—I mean, young Arlington!" gasped Frank Richards.

"I—I say, don't—" "Don't what?"

"Look here, you silly jays!" he exclaimed at last. "Where does the cackle come in? If this is rotten jealousy—" "Jealousy!" ejaculated Frank Richards.

"I guess that's what it looks like to me. As if it was my fault that my real name is Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington!" exclaimed Todgers indignantly.

"Oh, my hat!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

Chunky Todgers rose to his feet. His vivid imagination was in full swing now, and he was Marmaduke Fitzroy Arlington, or, rather, he hoped he was so fervently that he almost believed he was.

He drew his fat little figure up to its full height—which was not really very commanding—and surveyed the hilarious trio with a lofty look.

"Enough!" he exclaimed. "Wha-a-t?"

"Enough!" said Chunky Todgers, in the manner of Sir Charles in his novel. "Let this cease!"

"Cease!" murmured Frank Richards. "Do you mean chuck it?"

"I guess I mean what I say. You common fellows—" "Us which?"

"Common fellows ought to show more respect to your betters."

"Great gophers!" gasped Bob Lawless.

The chums stared at Todgers as if he had mesmerised them.

Chunky gave them a lofty, disdainful look, raised his fat little nose high in the air, and walked away.

"Lost Sir Charles" lay unheeded on the rug.

Even the fact that he had to pay an extra five cents on that volume if it was not returned to the Circulating Library that night had escaped Chunky's memory. He was no longer even curious to know what happened when Sir Charles clasped Lady Gwendolina. "Lost Sir Charles" was nothing to him now—for was he not lost Marmaduke—now happily found?

But he took the Kamloops paper with him. He did not mean to lose sight of that startling advertisement.

Frank Richards & Co. stared after him as he rolled out of the school-room.

"Well," ejaculated Bob Lawless, with a whistle, "we've done it now!"

"We have!" stutted Frank.

"The silly ass really thinks—" "But how can he think any such rot?" exclaimed Beauclerc in blank amazement. "I suppose he knows he's Joe Todgers of Todgers' Farm?"

Bob chuckled.

"My dear chap, Chunky's read about a thousand novels, and in every one there's a lost marquis or something, who's been supposed to be a cowboy, or a rancher, or a shopman, or a pirate. Chunky doesn't see why he shouldn't turn out a marquis like the rest. He doesn't know that these stunts only happen in print and not in real life."

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Oh, dear!" said Frank Richards, wiping his eyes. "I thought we were going to pull Chunky's leg, but that the howling ass should take it seriously—ha, ha, ha!"

And the Co. went off into a fresh roar.

They were still chortling when Beauclerc's cousin Algernon came into the school-room with a puzzled expression on his face.

"What's up with Todgers?" he asked. "Have his novels been getting into his silly head again? He's just told me his name is Arlington—"

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The Canadian schoolmistress

The 2nd Chapter. Chunky Arlington.

"Ha, ha, ha!" Frank Richards & Co. yelled. Chunky Todgers stared at them in surprise at first, and then in growing indignation. He did not see any reason for merriment.

