



First Instalment of CONAN DOYLE'S Great Sporting Story,
"RODNEY STONE."



Also a Long Complete Story of Rookwood School.

The BOYS' FRIEND

TWELVE PAGES!

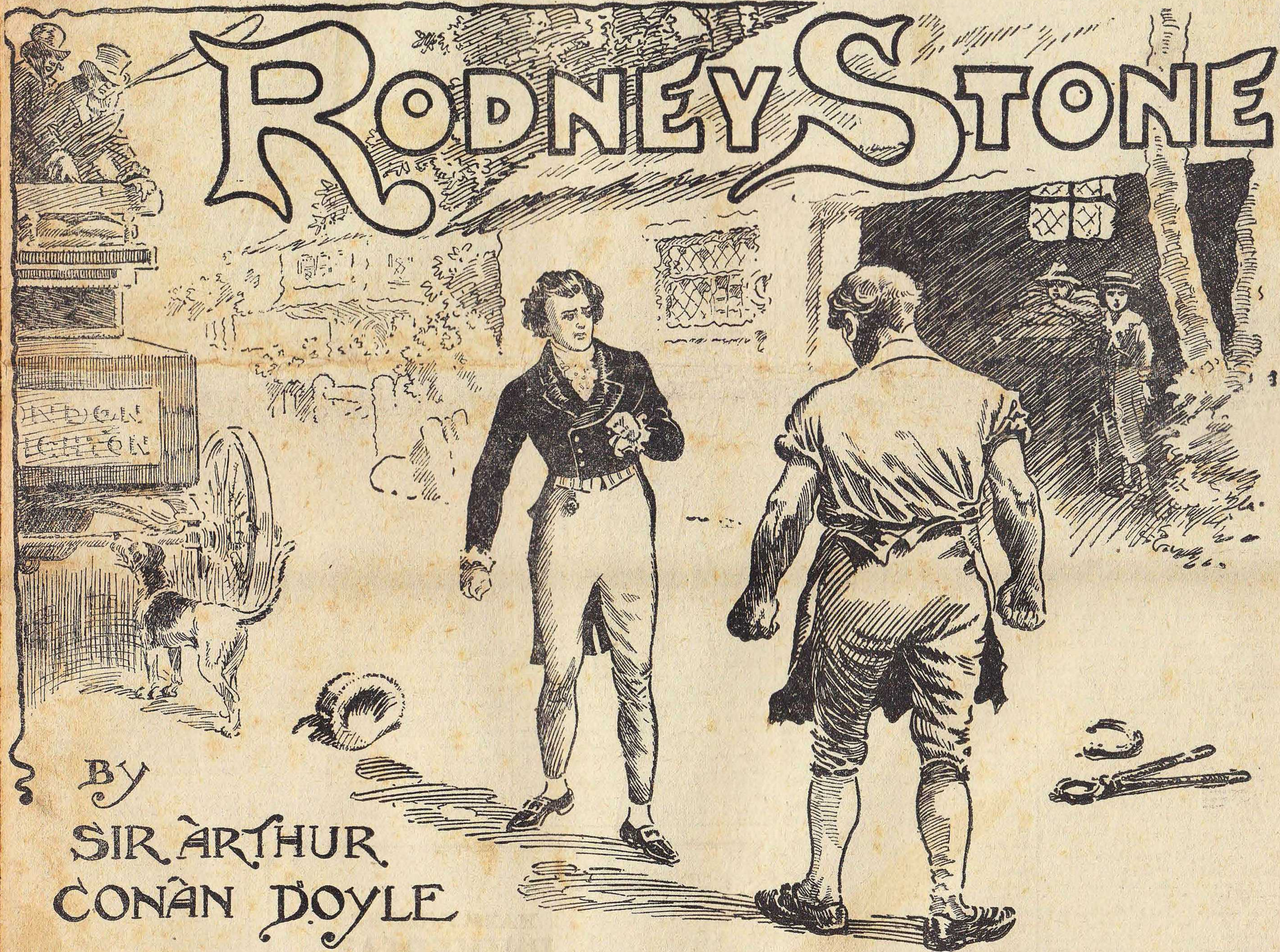
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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending January 31st, 1920.



By
SIR ARTHUR
CONAN DOYLE

CATCHING A TARTAR!

Encouraged by his friends on the coach, the young Corinthian advanced upon his man. The smith never moved, but his mouth set grim and hard, while his tufted brows came down upon his keen, grey eyes. "Have a care, master," said he, "you'll get pepper if you don't!"

The 1st Chapter. Friar's Oak.

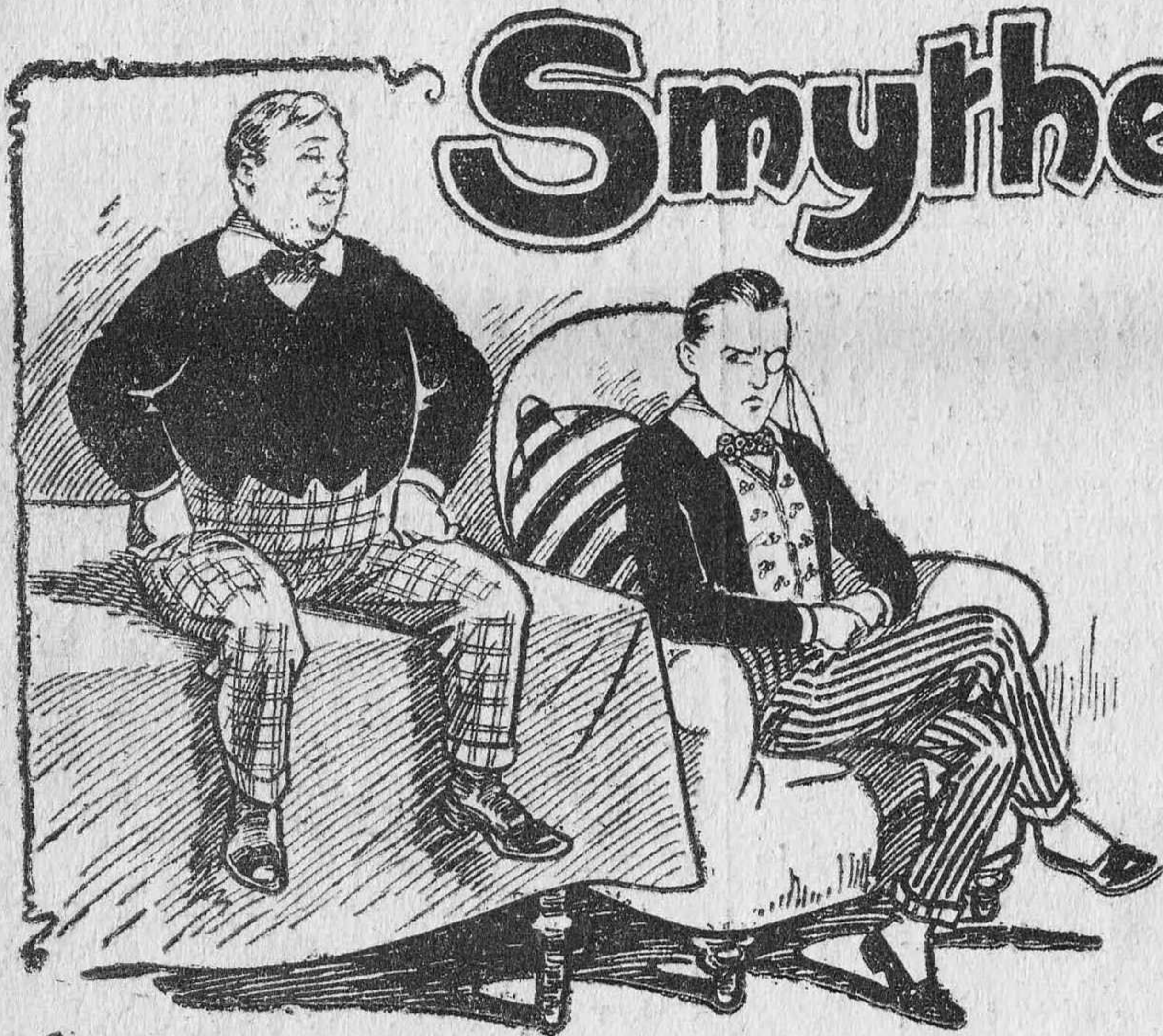
On this, the first of January of the year 1851, the nineteenth century has reached its midway term, and many of us who shared its youth have already warnings which tell us that it has outworn us. We put our grizzled heads together, we older ones, and we talk of the great days that we have known; but we find that when it is with our children that we talk it is a hard

matter to make them understand. We and our fathers before us lived much the same life, but they, with their railway-trains and their steam-boats, belong to a different age. It is true that we can put history-books into their hands, and they can read from them of our weary struggle of two-and-twenty years with that great and evil man. They can learn how Freedom fled from the whole broad continent, and how Nelson's blood was shed, and

Pitt's noble heart was broken in striving that she should not pass us for ever to take refuge with our brothers across the Atlantic. All this they can read, with the date of this treaty or that battle, but I do not know where they are to read of ourselves, of the folk we were, and the lives we led, and how the world seemed to our eyes when they were young as theirs are now. If I take up my pen to tell you about this, you must not look for any

story at my hands, for I was only in my earliest manhood when these things befell; and although I saw something of the stories of other lives, I could scarce claim one of my own. It is the love of a woman that makes the story of a man, and many a year was to pass before I first looked into the eyes of the mother of my children. To us it seems but an affair of yesterday, and yet those children can now reach the plums in the garden

whilst we are seeking for a ladder, and where we once walked with their little hands in ours, we are glad now to lean upon their arms. But I shall speak of a time when the love of a mother was the only love I knew, and if you seek for something more, then it is not for you that I write. But if you would come out with me into that forgotten world; if you would know Boy Jim and Champion Harrison; if you would meet my father,



Smythe's New Pal!

A Grand, Complete
Story of the Chums of
: Rookwood School. :

By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter.

Lovell's Luck.

"Carker?"
"No."
"Chivers?"
"No."
"Chinkins?"
"No."
"Chumgum?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter in the end study in the Fourth Form passage at Rookwood. It interrupted Arthur Edward Lovell. The string of questions came to a stop.

"Chuck it, old chap!" said Jimmy Silver, in a tone of patient remonstrance, as Lovell glared at the laughing juniors. "You're making the Kid tired, and the study tired. Give us a rest!"

"Yes, leave the list till to-morrow," suggested Raby.

"To be continued in our next!" remarked Newcome.

And the Kid grinned.

The "Kid" was the new fellow in the Rookwood Fourth; he was called the Kid because there was nothing else to call him. The lost youth, whom Jimmy Silver & Co. had found wandering on Coombe Heath, had picked up wonderfully during the week he had now spent at Rookwood.

He looked well and cheerful and bright, and he was quite at home in the end study, and on the best of terms with the Fistical Four. Only the one shadow still hung over him—his lost memory had not returned.

The Rookwood fellows, very curious and interested at first, had got used to him—the schoolboy without a memory had fallen into his place in the Fourth Form, and was taken for granted, as it were. It was hoped that his memory would come back in time, as he recovered his health after his rough experiences, and then he would be able to tell his name and his identity.

But Arthur Lovell had his own ideas on that subject. He was assured that if the nameless junior heard his name mentioned he would recognise it—and the trick would be done.

And Arthur Edward had been compiling a tremendous list of names, in alphabetical order. He had arrived at C—having taken the Kid through all the A's and B's that he could possibly think of.

Ordinary names, extraordinary names figured in Lovell's list. And at any moment Lovell was liable to turn upon his new chum, and shoot a question at him, in class or in the quad, in the study or on the football field.

Sooner or later, Lovell was convinced, he would hit on the right name, and all would be calm and bright, so to speak.

The Kid was grateful for Lovell's kind efforts—though it is possible that he found his friend a little bit of a bore at times. He was too polite to say so, but Lovell's older friends weren't. They often said so.

But Lovell was a stickler. After bestowing a crushing glare upon his irreverent chums, he went on regardless:

"Is your name Chumpey?"
"Oh gad!" Mornington of the Fourth looked in at the doorway of the study. "Is that a game, Lovell?"

"No, it isn't!" snapped Lovell. "Don't interrupt! Is your name Choodles, Kid?"

The new junior chuckled. "I hope not!" was his reply.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Sooner or later," said Lovell, with a glare at the grinning Mornington, "we shall hit on it. Then the Kid will know it, and we shall be all

serene. When he knows his name his memory will come back all right, I believe. If you're going to cackle, Morny—"

"Not at all," answered Mornington, with a grin. "I say, Kid, is your name Rumpelstilchen?"

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Shut up!" roared Lovell. "I tell you I'm on the right track, and I'm going to find out the chap's name!"

"Suppose his name happens to be Zeno or Zadkiel?" suggested Morny. "At this rate you'll have worn him out before you get to it!"

"Rats!"
"About time we got down to footer," remarked Jimmy Silver. "It's still light enough to punt the ball about a bit."

"That's what I came to tell you," said Mornington.

"Rot!" said Lovell. "You fellows can go and punt the ball; I'm going to work through this list."

"But the Kid is coming, too!"
"Bosh! It's more important for him to recover his memory than to play footer!"

"Aren't you tired, Kid?" asked Raby.

The new junior hesitated. As a matter of fact, obliged as he felt to Lovell, he was rather tired of the examination which bade fair to have no end. Certainly he wanted to recover his lost memory—and he believed that if he heard his name spoken it would be familiar to him at once, and the cloud upon his mind would roll away.

But there were limits. Lovell had taken him through some hundreds of names already: and there were thousands yet to come. And the chance of hitting on the right name seemed slight.

"Is your name Chuckster?" continued Lovell, before the waif of Rookwood could answer Raby.

"I—I think not."
"Is it Christian?"
"No."
"Or Cecil?"
"No."
"Or Ching-gach-gook?" asked Mornington.

"Ha, ha, ha!"
"Or Ching-Ching?" pursued Mornington.

"Shut up!" roared Lovell. "How could his name be Ching-Ching? Don't you be a funny ass, Morny—this is a serious matter. Kid, is your name Cavanagh?"

"No."
"Or Casanova?" chuckled Mornington. "Or Casabianca?"
"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you dry up, Morny? Go and play footer or marbles or something. Is your name Cecil—no, I've done Cecil. Is it Charley?"

"Oh!"
It was a sudden startled exclamation from the Kid.

He started to his feet. All eyes in the study were upon him at once.

"Charley!" shouted Lovell triumphantly. "Is it Charley?"

"Yes!"
"Oh, my hat!"
"Hurrah!"

"Well, wonders will never cease!" remarked Newcome. "Fancy that ass Lovell scoring a bulls-eye like that!"

"Charley!" said Arthur Edward with great satisfaction; and the Kid smiled and nodded.

Lovell beamed with triumph. There was a buzz in the end study—even Mornington was impressed with seriousness at last.

Lovell's wonderful method, which had been a standing joke in the Form for a week, had succeeded—so far as the Christian name was concerned, at least.

The new junior was quite pale for the moment. There was conviction in his face. His first name, at least, was found.

"Well, my hat!" said Mornington. "Lovell isn't such an ass, after all. Is your name Charley, Kid, really?"

"I am sure of it," said the new junior breathlessly. "I—I was sure I should know it if it was spoken to me. It's the same in other things. I had forgotten Julius Caesar and all the school work, but the moment I saw the Gallic War again I remembered all I knew of it. It's as clear as anything—now I hear it. My name's Charles!"

"Charles what?" asked Lovell eagerly.

The new junior shook his head. "I don't know!"

"Doesn't the first name suggest the second?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"No."
"Never mind!" said Lovell complacently. "We'll have it sooner or later. We've got the front name, anyhow."

"Good egg!"
"I think I've pretty nearly got through C," added Lovell. "I'm beginning on D now. Now, then—Dale—Dunkley—Dinwiddle—Dixon—Dodd—"

Jimmy Silver & Co. left Lovell to it. And "Charley" bore it with great patience, giving Lovell his head, as it were. But Lovell got through his list of D's by tea-time without any further discovery being made.

The 2nd Chapter.

Smythe's Pal.

"Tubby!"
Putty Grace of the Fourth stood in the doorway of No. 2, and shouted.

It was tea-time, and, wonderful to relate, Tubby Muffin had not turned up in Study No. 2.

Tubby Muffin was seldom punctual in other matters, but he could always be depended upon at meal-times. But on this occasion Tubby Muffin was conspicuous by his absence.

Grace of the Fourth was naturally exasperated. When Tubby Muffin wasn't wanted—which was nearly always—he was there! Now that he was wanted, he wasn't there!

Jimmy Silver & Co., coming in from the footer, passed along the passage, and Grace called to them.

"Seen Muffin?"
"Tubby?" said Jimmy Silver.

"Yes, he's downstairs with Smythe of the Shell. Tubby seems quite chummy with Smythe lately."

"Bother Smythe! We've got kippers for tea, and it's Tubby's job to cook them!" growled Putty Grace. "I thought he'd scented out those kippers long ago. I'll give him chumming with Smythe, the fat bouncer!"

And Grace headed for the stairs wrathfully.

Tubby Muffin's abilities as a cook were some compensation in Study No. 2 for Tubby's voracious appetite, and for the fact that he seldom, or never, stood his "whack" in the study tea. Indeed, when Higgs or Jones minor complained on that score, Tubby was wont to point out that he was chef, and did most of the cooking, and to remind his study-mates that they should not muzzle the ox that trod out the corn, as it were.

As there was little doubt that Reginald Muffin would drop in in time to annex the lion's share of the kippers, Putty naturally did not see any reason why he should not cook them. So he started in search of Tubby.

Muffin was not to be seen below, and Putty headed for the Shell passage, to look in Smythe's study.

Of late Tubby Muffin had been seen a good deal with Adolphus Smythe of the Shell.

They seemed to have struck up a friendship, which was rather remarkable, for there was little in common between Adolphus, the elegant dandy of the Shell, and Tubby Muffin, the glutton of the Fourth.

Adolphus had never concealed his lofty contempt for the fat and grubby Muffin—till of late! Now he was frequently seen walking with him, and Tubby sometimes dropped into his study.

And there Putty Grace found him now.

Adolphus Smythe was reclining in his armchair, with a dark and moody expression upon his face. Tubby Muffin was seated on the corner of the table, with his fat little legs dangling.

"If you don't want me to tea, I—" he was saying, as Grace arrived at the door.

"You know I don't!" muttered Smythe.

"Oh, very well! I'll drop in and see Jimmy Silver."

"You can stay if you like."

"That's not good enough!" answered Tubby Muffin independently. "I hope I'm not the kind of fellow to go round the studies cadging for a tea."

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Grace, staring in at the open doorway in astonishment.

Tubby's hope, as he stated it, was certainly ill-founded; for he was, in point of fact, celebrated for his little way of going round the studies cadging for a tea.

"If you want me here," went on Tubby, "you can put it politely and hospitably, and I may decide to stay. Most certainly I shall not remain where I am not welcome."

Adolphus Smythe bit his lip hard. "You can stay!" he mumbled. "I—I mean, I hope you'll stay to tea, Muffin, old chap!"

Tubby smiled sweetly. "As you're so pressing, I don't mind!" he said.

Grace strode into the study. "You're wanted, Fatty!" he announced.

"Eh?"
"Kippers to cook!" explained Grace.

Tubby Muffin glanced at his study-mate over his shoulder with an expression of lofty contempt.

"Kippers!" he repeated derisively. "Yes—kippers!"

"Do you think I'm going to cook kippers for you?" demanded Tubby Muffin scornfully.

Grace stared. "What do you mean, you fat idiot?" he inquired politely. "If you don't come and cook them, you jolly well won't eat them!"

"Sniff!"
"Are you coming?" demanded Grace.

"Certainly not!"
"Well, you fat rotter!" exclaimed Grace. "I don't like cooking kippers. I shouldn't have got them, only you can handle them. Don't you want to come to tea?"

"No."
"Not come to tea!" said Putty dazedly. "You!"

"I'm having tea with Smythe," answered Muffin. "I'm rather fed with your measly teas in No. 2, Grace. I don't care for 'em! Keep your mouldy old kippers! The fact is, I've been too obliging to you fellows in No. 2. I've never received proper thanks. I'm not going to do any more cooking for you!"

"Then you won't have any more free feeds in the study!" hooted Grace, in great wrath.

Tubby sniffed again. "Keep your mouldy old feeds!" he answered.

"You're sticking Smythe for a tea to-day!" said Putty. "I suppose Smythe isn't going to have you to tea every day, is he?"

"Oh, Smythe's my pal now!" answered Muffin airily. "Smythe's always glad to have me here, ain't you, Smythe?"

"Yes!" gasped Adolphus. "Well, my hat!" said Grace. "I always thought you were a silly ass, Smythe; but you're a sillier ass than I ever thought, if you stand that fat clam when you're not bound to. We wouldn't have him in our study a minute if we could help it!"

"Look here, don't you be cheeky, Putty Grace!" roared Tubby Muffin. "You buzz off, and don't worry! I tell you I'm fed up with your mouldy Fourth Form feeds!"

Grace looked from one to the other. That Adolphus Smythe was not really yearning for Tubby's society was pretty clear from the expression on his face.

Why he should endure Tubby's company when he didn't want to was a deep mystery.

"Well," said Grace, at last, "you can please yourself, Tubby!"

"I should jolly well think so!" said Tubby Muffin loftily.

"But you can be civil about it."
"Eh?"

"Otherwise, you're liable to be

mopped off that table and bumped on the carpet!"

"Look here—"
"Like this!" explained Putty. "Yaroooooh!" roared Tubby Muffin, as Putty Grace demonstrated what was likely to happen in case of incivility.

Tubby landed on the carpet with a bump.

Then Putty strolled out of the study. Tubby sat on the carpet and gasped for breath.

"Yow-ow-ow! Grooogh! Why didn't you pitch into him, Smythe?" he howled.

Smythe was grinning. Apparently the bumping of Tubby Muffin afforded him some satisfaction.

The fat Classical scrambled up, still gasping, and shook a fat fist at the Shell fellow's nose.

"You rotter! You think it's funny!" he gasped. "I've a jolly good mind to go to Jimmy Silver at once, and tell him—"

"Shut up!" panted Smythe hastily.

Howard and Tracy came into the study. Both of them looked rather grimly at Reginald Muffin of the Fourth.

"That fat slug here again!" growled Tracy.

"He—he—he's staying to tea!" said Adolphus feebly.

"Is he?" said Howard. "You've had that fat cad twice to tea in a week, Smythe. That's twice too often. We're not standin' it."

"No jolly fear!" said Tracy.

Tubby Muffin eyed Smythe's study-mates uneasily. Adolphus had his own reasons for conciliating the fat junior, but Tracy and Howard did not share them, or even know of them. They were astonished at the elegant Adolphus having taken up Tubby Muffin at all, and they certainly did not intend to allow Tubby to make himself at home in their quarters.

Howard threw the door wide open. "Travel!" he said curtly.

"Look here, Smythe's asked me to tea!" said Muffin.

"Smythe can come to tea in your study if he likes. He's not goin' to have you here."

"I—I say—" began Smythe weakly.

"What do you want him to tea for?" demanded Howard.

"I—I—"

"Because I'm his pal, you know," said Tubby.

"Well, Smythe can pal with you somewhere else, not here. Are you goin'?" snapped Howard.

"N-n-n-no!"

"Then you'll be put!"

Howard grasped the fat Classical, and spun him towards the doorway. Tracy landed a kick behind the hapless Tubby as he went. Tubby rolled into the passage with a roar.

"Come back, and we'll shove your head in the coal-locker," said Howard warningly, as he closed the door.

Tubby Muffin did not come back.

The 3rd Chapter.

Adolphus Puts His Foot Down.

"Dangle, Dunkle, Dinkle?"
Arthur Edward Lovell was at it again.

There was a tea-party in the end study. The Fistical Four, and their new study-mate, and Putty Grace, and Jones minor. There was no tea in Study No. 2 that evening. Higgs had gone down to tea in hall, and Grace and Jones dropped in at the end study as guests. Lovell was furnishing a little entertainment at the tea-table with his list of D's for the benefit of the new boy, when Tubby Muffin's fat face looked in at the door.

"Scat!" said Jimmy Silver, as the fat Classical looked in with his most ingratiating smile.

"I—I've been looking for Grace!" said Tubby.

"Buzz off!" was Putty's reply.

"I—I'm ready to cook the kippers, you know," said Tubby. "I—I was—was only joking, you know, old chap."

"Smythe booted you out, after all?" grinned Putty.

"I'd like to see Smythe boot me out!" said Tubby Muffin truculently. "No fear! Smythe wouldn't jolly well dare."

"I don't see why he shouldn't, if he doesn't want you in his study," said Jimmy Silver.

Tubby winked mysteriously. "That's all you know," he answered. "Smythe won't quarrel with me; he knows better."

"What the thump do you mean, you fat duffer?"

"Oh, nothing! Smythe was jolly keen to have me, of course, but those cads, Howard and Tracy, cut up rusty. I—I say, Putty, about those kippers—"

"Too late!" chuckled Putty. "I've traded off those kippers to Rawson, and I'm having tea here. So you can travel!"

"Oh, I don't mind having tea here, too!" said Tubby.

"There are a good many others who mind, though," remarked George Raby. "Every chap in the study, I think."

"Hear, hear!" "Where will you have it?" continued Raby, picking up a loaf, and taking aim.

Tubby Muffin hastily retired from the end study.

He rolled away disconsolately down the passage, and looked in at No. 4, where he found Mornington and Erroll at tea. Mornington made a dive for the poker as Muffin looked in, and once more Reginald Muffin retired hastily. He gave a snort as he rolled away to the stairs. There was nothing for it but tea in the Hall, unless he ventured back into Smythe's quarters. And that he did not care to do, while Smythe's study-mates were at home.

Tea in Hall was not worth much to Tubby Muffin. It was plain but good, and there was plenty of it, such as it was. But it was not what Tubby Muffin wanted. Tubby liked living on the fat of the land, and since he had chummed with Smythe of the Shell, he had succeeded fairly well in doing so. The plain school fare was exceedingly unpalatable to Reginald Muffin, after what he had grown accustomed to of late.

He rolled out of Hall with a frowning fat face. He was labouring under a sense of injury. The sight of Tracy and Howard going into the Common-room relieved his mind, and he made his way to Smythe's study once more. He found the great Adolphus alone there.

Smythe of the Shell did not give him a welcoming look. The look that he gave him was a very dark one, but Reginald Muffin did not mind. He rolled cheerfully into the study.

"Anything left for me?" he inquired.

"Nothin'!" answered Smythe shortly.

Tubby's eyes gleamed.

"I'm afraid this won't do, Smythe!" he said. "I've made friends with you, but it was understood that I was to be treated decently in your study. I've been chucked out by your study-mates."

"I can't help what Howard and Tracy do," muttered Smythe.

"You'll have to help it, somehow," said Tubby Muffin in a bullying tone. "I'm not going to stand it, Smythe."

Adolphus' eyes glittered, but he did not reply.

"You'll have to manage Tracy and Howard somehow," said Tubby. "If I'm not treated civilly in this study I shall have to drop your friendship."

"You sneakin', blackmailin' cad!" said Smythe, between his teeth. "Don't talk about friendship to me. You've practically given the thing away already. A dozen fellows have noticed it. Tracy's just asked me whether I'm under your rotten thumb in any way. What do you expect them to think, when you plant yourself on me as you do?"

"Look here—"

"You've been hauntin' me like a shadow for a week," said Smythe, with a malevolent look. "You've had four pounds out of me already."

"You have made me some small loans," said Tubby Muffin, with dignity. "I suppose it was of your own accord."

"I'm not goin' to stand it any longer," said Smythe. "What you're doin' is blackmailin'."

"And what you're doing—what's that?" asked Tubby Muffin. "If Jimmy Silver knew about your missing cousin—"

"I'm comin' to that!" said Smythe, between his teeth. "You've made up a yarn that that nameless cad is a relation of mine. I don't want that yarn spread about Rookwood—"

"Because it's true, and because there's a fortune at stake!" grinned Tubby Muffin.

"Never mind that! I've paid you to hold your tongue," said Smythe, his eyes glittering. "I've thought it out! If you say a word about that yarn now, you'll have to let it out that you've been blackmailin' me. I can prove that you had the currency notes from me—it don't want much provin', as all the fellows have noticed that you've been in funds lately. Now, you fat rotter, I'm not handin' out any more. Not a shillin', and you're not comin' to my study to tea again! If you speak to me in the quad, I'll cuff you."

"Will you?" said Tubby defiantly.

"Yes, I will, hard. Go and spin Jimmy Silver the yarn, if you like,

and when it comes before the Head, I'll spin mine!" said Smythe venomously. "What do you think the Head will do with a blackmailer—a fellow extortin' money to keep a secret? You'll be kicked out of Rookwood."

Tubby Muffin started.

That view of the matter had not presented itself to his fat mind before, indeed, Tubby had hardly realised that he was extorting money from Smythe of the Shell. Tubby was a good deal more fool than rascal. He had simply considered that he was on a "good thing," and decided to make the most of it, without reflecting further.

There was something like dismay in his fat face, and Adolphus Smythe grinned as he noticed it.

"You say one word about my cousin that's missin' from Lynton School," he went on, "just one word, and see what happens! You wouldn't know anythin' about it but for your sneakin' eavesdroppin'! Just one word, and I'm down on you, and the Head will know what you've been doin'."

"You—you wouldn't be rotter enough to make out to the Head that—that I've been extorting money from you!" gasped Tubby.

"What do you call it, then?"

"You—you've made me some small loans—"

"Oh, cheese it!"

"You're an awful cad, Smythe!" said Tubby Muffin indignantly.

"Making out that I've extorted money, just because I've had a small loan or two from you! Low, I call it! I shall refuse to accept another loan from you, I can tell you that! If you offered me a pound note at this moment, I should refuse to touch it!"

"You won't have the chance, I know that!" grunted Smythe.

"Of—of course, I don't want to quarrel with you," said Tubby, on further reflection. "I happen to be hard up at present, and if you like to hand over ten bob, and call it square, I—"

Smythe of the Shell picked up a cricket-stump.

"I give you one second to get out!" he said.

Tubby Muffin gave him one blink—and departed. Smythe kicked the door shut after him, with a smile of satisfaction.

"I've bottled up that spyin' cad, at any rate!" he murmured.

But Adolphus of the Shell congratulated himself a little too early. He had not quite bottled up Reginald Muffin yet.

The 4th Chapter. For Sale!

"Working! What's the matter?" Putty Grace made that genial remark, as he came into Study No. 2 after tea.

Tubby Muffin was seated at the study table, with a sheet of impot paper before him, a pen in his fat fingers, and a very thoughtful expression on his face.

He jumped as his study-mate came in, and hastily caught up the sheet upon which he had been scribbling.

"Prep already?" asked Putty.

"Nunno!"

"Lincs?"

"N-no!"

Grace looked curiously at his fat study-mate. Tubby Muffin's face was crimson and confused. He looked as if he had been caught in some guilty act. Perhaps he had.

"What have you got there?" asked Grace.

"N-n-nothing."

"You've been writing something."

"Only a-a-an exercise."

Tubby Muffin hastily crammed the paper into his pocket, and rolled to the door. Grace stared after him blankly. It was evident that Tubby did not want him to see what he had written on that paper, though what his reason for secrecy could be, was a puzzle.

"What on earth is he up to now?" murmured Grace. "Tubby, you duffer, what silly game are you playing now?"

Muffin was deaf to that question; he rolled hurriedly down the passage. He stopped at the head of the stairs, and took the paper from his pocket—after a hasty glance back to make sure that Grace was not following him. In the gaslight, Tubby read over the paper he had written, and gave a nod of satisfaction.

"That's all right!" he murmured. "That'll do the trick! Awful rotter! Accusing me of extorting money! I'll show him!"

"Hallo! What are you mumbling about, Fatty?" asked Jimmy Silver's cheery voice, as he came along to the stairs.

Tubby Muffin jumped, and again

the mysterious document was hastily thrust out of sight.

"N-n-nothing!" he stammered.

"What have you got there?"

"N-n-nothing—I mean, an exercise. I—I was just mugging up some—er—deponent verbs!" stammered Muffin.

"Oh, my hat!"

Jimmy Silver stared at Tubby. That podgy youth was about the last fellow at Rookwood to be mugging up deponent verbs if he could possibly help it.

Tubby eyed him nervously. He realised that the captain of the Fourth was suspicious; as, indeed, Jimmy Silver could not very well help being.

"I—I say, Jimmy—" he stammered.

"Well?"

"I—I—it's deponent verbs, you know," stammered Tubby. "I—I wasn't going to take it to Smythe—I mean—"

"Look here, you inquisitive worm!" said Jimmy. "You've been kicked up and down the passage lots of times for spying into fellows' letters. Is that somebody's letter you've got there?"

"Nunno!"

"What is it, then?"

"It—it— Look here, Jimmy

"Well," he said at last, "it's possible. But there's no need for you to tell whoppers, if that's the case. I'll ask the fellows whether anybody's missed a letter, and, if there's one missing, I shall know where to look for it. Then you'll get warmed!"

"All right!" gasped Tubby, in evident relief.

And he scuttled away, Jimmy Silver making no further move to detain him. But he followed Tubby with his glance, and saw him disappear into the Shell passage. Tubby Muffin was calling on Smythe again, apparently. It looked as if the mysterious document was connected, in some way, with Tubby's new and inexplicable friendship with Adolphus. Jimmy Silver went on his way in a very puzzled mood.

Tubby Muffin, in great relief at his escape, rolled into Smythe's study, where he found Adolphus smoking a cigarette. The dandy of the Shell gave him a savage look.

"I've told you not to come here!" he said.

"I've called on business!" said Muffin loftily.

"You've got no business with me, you fat cad!"

like to buy it, it's your look-out. The price is ten shillings."

Smythe gritted his teeth. "Young Nobody would give me more than ten shillings for it, and you know it," said Tubby Muffin. "I'm really making you this offer out of friendship. You needn't chuck it in the fire, Smythe—I can easily write it out again, and if I do I shall offer it to Jimmy Silver first."

Smythe of the Shell seemed to breathe with difficulty.

"Mind, I'm not asking you to buy that paper!" said Tubby Muffin impressively. "You're not going to have any excuse for pretending that I'm asking you for money! Not the slightest! You can buy that paper or not for ten shillings, just as you choose. I dare say I can find another market if you don't."

Smythe looked silently at Reginald Muffin. If looks could have slain, there would have been a sudden casualty in Smythe's study then. Fortunately for Reginald Muffin, they couldn't.

Tubby rose briskly to his feet.

"Is it a bargain?" he asked.

Without a word the dandy of the Shell placed a ten-shilling note in Tubby's podgy hand.

"Mind, I'm not urging you!" said Tubby. "Buy or not, just as you like! Well, as you're determined, I'll accept the offer. The paper's yours."

Tubby Muffin rolled out of the study with a smiling countenance; and Adolphus threw the telltale document into the fire. Then he sat, with a dark and sombre brow, staring at the fire—a prey to troubled thought.

Tubby Muffin's essay as a merchant was likely to be followed by more; and Smythe of the Shell was beginning to wonder whether the game was worth the candle.

The 5th Chapter.

At the Judgment Bar.

"What the dickens—"

"Leggo!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. rose to their feet in amazement as Tubby Muffin was propelled into the end study. Arthur Edward Lovell uttered an amazed exclamation. It was a couple of days since the discovery that the new junior's Christian name was Charles, by Lovell's elaborate method. With all Lovell's untiring efforts, the surname had not yet been discovered. He had advanced as far as K now, and the chums of the end study were listening, with grinning faces, to the interrogatory, when the study door was pitched open and Tubby Muffin was propelled in, with Putty Grace's grip on his collar.

It was, perhaps, a welcome relief, as well as a surprise, to the occupants of the study—excepting Arthur Edward Lovell. It could not be denied that Lovell had made a discovery by his method already; but it was equally not to be denied that it was possible to have too much of a good thing. Even the Kid was growing a little restive as Lovell ran through his almost unending list of K's.

"Is your name Kenyon, Kent, Kingsley, Klondyke, Kummel, Klincker, Koch—"

Then came the interruption. "Sorry to intrude," said Putty Grace cheerfully. "I've brought this malefactor to you, Jimmy, as captain of the Form."

"Lemme go!" roared Tubby Muffin. "I ain't a malefactor! I'll jolly well punch your nose, Teddy Grace!"

"Look here, you clear off!" said Lovell. "I'm nearly at the end of the K's now—"

"Oh, there is an end?" asked Raby, as if relieved.

"Just going to begin the L's," said Lovell.

"Help!"

"Look here, Raby—" "What's the matter with Tubby?" asked Jimmy Silver. "Has he been raiding anybody's grub, or reading somebody's letters?"

"No!" howled Muffin.

"Worse than that!" said Grace. "Look here, you'd better look into it, Jimmy; it may be serious. You know what an idiot Muffin is—"

"I'm not an idiot!" roared Muffin. "Of course, he's a little fat rascal," continued Putty. "But he's mere fool than rascal. Ain't you, Tubby?"

"No, I'm not!" yelled Tubby.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Whether he's been robbing a bank, or robbing somebody in the studies, I don't know," said Grace. "But it ought to be looked into."

Jimmy Silver became grave. "Suppose you explain!" he suggested. "Give the K's a rest for a bit, Lovell, old chap."

"That's all very well—" began Lovell.

"Of course it is. Go ahead, Putty!"



TUBBY'S MYSTERIOUS DOCUMENT! "I've called on business!" said Tubby Muffin. "You'd better look at this paper, Smythe. If you don't buy it, I'm going to ask young Nobody to make me an offer for it!"

Silver, you mind your own business!" gasped Tubby Muffin.

"This is my business, I think!" said Jimmy. "Haven't I promised you a stumping next time you meddle with another fellow's letters?"

"I haven't!" roared Tubby. "It—it's deponent verbs—I mean, it's a letter from home! There!"

"Not much difference between deponent verbs and a letter from home, is there?" remarked Jimmy Silver sarcastically.

"Nunno! Exactly!" gasped Muffin.

"I—I say, lemme pass!"

"Not just yet, old top! If you've not got hold of somebody else's letter, what are you telling lies for?"

"I—I say, Jimmy—I—I'm not, you know! The—the fact is—"

"Well, what is the fact?" inquired the captain of the Fourth grimly.

"The—the fact, you know—" stammered Tubby.

Tubby's brain worked rather slowly, and he could not, for the life of him, invent the required fact on the spur of the moment.

"Well, I'm waiting to hear the fact!"

"It—it's a letter home!" gasped Tubby at last. "I'm writing to my pater, you know, and—and I was just reading it over, to—to see that the spelling was all right, you know. Look here, Jimmy, you're not going to see my letter to my pater! It's private!"

Jimmy Silver looked long and hard at Tubby's confused face. He did not believe a word of the fat Classical's explanation; but he was puzzled. If the mysterious document was, by any chance, a private letter of Tubby's own, Jimmy, of course, did not want to see it.

"I—I want to sell you something."

"Rats! Clear off!" "You'd better look at it, Smythe. If you don't buy it, I'm going to ask young Nobody to make me an offer for it."

"Wha-a-at?"

"Will you look at it?" grinned Tubby.

Smythe eyed him in silence, as he drew the mysterious document from his pocket. Tubby spread it on the table, and Smythe glanced at it. It was quite an interesting document.

"THIS IS TO CERTIFY that young Nobody, who has lost his memory, is really Smythe's cousin, Charles Clare, who has been missing from Lynton School. Smythe is keeping it a secret because the money will cum to him if his cousin doesn't turn up."

Smythe's cigarette dropped from his lips as he blinked at that precious paper. Reginald Muffin looked at him with a bland grin.

"You've accused me of extorting money from you for keeping your rotten secrets, Smythe," said Tubby Muffin, with crushing dignity. "Any fellow who knows me knows that I would scorn the action. I shall refuse to accept a loan from you on any occasion after this; and I utterly decline to come to tea in your study any more, even if you ask me on your bended knees. I may say that I despise you!"

"What have you written this down for?" hissed Smythe.

"I suppose I can write what I like!" said Tubby Muffin cheerily. "If I choose to write down something on paper, why shouldn't I? If you

"Lemme gerrout!" howled Muffin. "I'm not going to stay here. It's mine!"

"What's yours?" asked Newcome. "My money!" snorted Tubby Muffin. "I'm jolly well not going to lend Putty any. I know that! That's what he wants! Yah! If you don't leave off shaking me, Putty, you rotter—Groooococh!"

"Tubby's got another ten-shilling note," said Putty quietly. "He's had a ten-shilling note every day for the last few days. Before then he was sporting pound-notes. You fellows must have noticed how flush of money he's been lately."

There was a general nodding of heads in the end study. The Fistical Four had noticed that—indeed, it would have been difficult not to notice it. Tubby Muffin was generally so impetuous that it was quite a surprising state of affairs for him to be in funds. Undoubtedly he had been in funds of late; he had been, for a week past, the best customer at the school shop, the old sergeant who kept the shop having been astounded by the extent of his purchases, and still more by the fact that Tubby was prepared to pay ready cash for them.

Tubby in funds was quite a remarkable Tubby, and fellows outside the Fourth Form had observed his unusual wealth.

"Now he's got another note," said Putty. "I've been thinking about it for days—"

"None of your business!" sniffed Muffin.

"I don't want to see my study-mate expelled for stealing," retorted Grace. Tubby Muffin breathed wrath.

"You—you awful rotter! Do you think I would steal?" he spluttered.

"Well, I hope you wouldn't! But you can explain to Jimmy Silver, as captain of the Form, where you get your money from."

Every eye in the study was fixed upon Reginald Muffin curiously. His sudden access of wealth really did need some explaining.

"You see, I've taken notice of the matter," continued Grace. "I've made certain that Muffin doesn't get it by post. It's not tips from his relations. I thought I ought to look into it, as Tubby's just the idiot to land himself into trouble without knowing what he's doing."

"Quite so!" assented Jimmy Silver.

"He hasn't had any letters for two days. Yet he had a ten-shilling note yesterday, and spent it in the tuck-shop; and he's got another this afternoon. It's in his fist now."

Muffin's fat fist was closed tight.

"It can't be his own money!" said Grace. "It ought to be explained, I think. But I leave it to you as skipper, Jimmy! That's why I ran him in here when I found he had a new note."

Jimmy Silver nodded. His face was very serious now. He had won-

dered a little about Tubby's surprising wealth; but not being the fat Classical's study-mate, he had not known quite how extensive that wealth was.

"Tubby—" he began.

"Look here, anybody would think I was a thief!" said Tubby Muffin, in an injured tone, blinking round the study. "Can't you fellows mind your own business? You don't jaw Townsend when he swanks about with a five!"

"Towny's people are rich, and they send him fivers sometimes," said Jimmy.

"Well, my people are rich!" said Tubby. "I've told you so often and often!"

"Gammon!" grunted Lovell.

"If anybody here doubts my word," said Reginald Muffin, with dignity. "I prefer to retire from the study."

"I dare say you do," remarked Putty, putting his back to the door. "But you're jolly well not going to, all the same!"

"Not till you've explained, Tubby," said Jimmy Silver. "Where have you got all those currency-notes from?"

"My people—"

"You haven't had any letters for two days!" snapped Putty.

"My pater sends me remittances by special messenger, sometimes," said Tubby Muffin.

"Oh, my hat!"

Jimmy Silver & Co. fairly blinked at the fat Classical. Tubby was celebrated for the size and frequency of his "whoppers," but this special "whopper" was beyond Tubby's usual limit.

"You silly ass!" roared Lovell. "Do you think anybody is going to believe that?"

"If you can't take my word, Lovell—"

"Your word!" snorted Lovell.

"Look here, I'm not going to be insulted in this study! You let me pass, Grace, you cheeky rotter!"

"Where did you get the money, Tubby?" said Jimmy Silver quietly. "If it's your own you needn't mind explaining."

"Of course I don't mind explaining!" said Tubbygenially. "Nothing secretive about me, I hope. The fact is, my uncle's died in South Africa, and left me ten thousand pounds!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"And they given you ten bob on account?" booted Putty.

"Exactly!"

"Oh dear!" said Jimmy Silver, almost overcome.

"Now, you let me pass, Grace—now I've explained."

"You thumpin' ass!" exclaimed Lovell. "You'll have to think of a better explanation than that! That one won't wash!"

"If you can't believe the exact truth, Lovell—"

"The truth!" said Raby. "Oh, my hat!"

"Better take him to Mr. Bootles, I think," said Jimmy Silver. "If he'd come by the money honestly he wouldn't be lying like this. The fat idiot must have been burgling some fellow's desk!"

"I haven't!" shrieked Muffin.

"Then where did you get the money?"

"I—I—I—"

There was a chuckle in the end study. Reginald Muffin was evidently cudgelling his brains for a new explanation which would "go down." Apparently, he was prepared to furnish explanation after explanation till he hit upon one that would satisfy his questioners.

"I—I won it!" gasped Tubby at last.

"Oh, you won it!" said Jimmy Silver grimly. "How did you win it?"

"I—I bought a Lottery Bond—"

"You whatted a which?" yelled Lovell.

"One of those French Lottery Bonds, you know, that you read about in the newspapers," said Tubby, blinking at them. "That was it! I—I won the first prize, you know."

"Don't he take the cake!" said Newcome admiringly.

"I hope you're satisfied now!" said Muffin, with an air of dignity. "You can let me pass now, Putty, you rotter!"

"You haven't quite satisfied us yet!" gasped Jimmy Silver. "In the first place, nobody ever wins a prize in a lottery; and in the second place, boys ain't allowed to enter them; and in the third place—"

"Oh, I didn't know that!" stammered Tubby. "What I mean is that I won the money on a horse."

"You spotted the winner—what?" chuckled Raby.

"Yes, exactly!"

"What winner?"

"I—I—I forget!"

"Hallo, here's another chap that's lost his memory!" grinned Lovell.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Will you tell the truth?" demanded Jimmy Silver. "Can't you see that this is a serious matter?"

"Well, I don't mind telling you the exact facts, Jimmy, as I know you'll take my word. I won the money at banker!"

"Not at roulette?" inquired Lovell sarcastically. "You didn't buzz off to Monte Carlo last half-holiday?"

"Nunno!"

"And where did you win the money at banker?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"I—I was playing with—with Mornington—"

"Morny doesn't play banker now!" said Jimmy angrily. "Anyhow, we'll soon settle that. Cut off, somebody, and ask Morny to step in here!"

Tubby Muffin spluttered.

"I—I say, my mistake. Now I come to think of it, it wasn't Morny. You—you needn't trouble to call in Morny."

"I thought not! Try again, you awful Ananias!"

"I—I played banker with Carthew of the Sixth—"

"And won?"

"Yes. Fairly cleaned him out, you know!"

"We'll ask Carthew—"

"I—I say, Carthew would be wild if you spoke to him about it!"

"I'll risk that," said Jimmy Silver, rising from his chair. "Keep him here while I ask Carthew—"

"Don't you do anything of the kind!" spluttered Muffin. "I—I forgot. It wasn't Carthew, now I come to think of it. Not Carthew."

"Next lie!" said Lovell. "Keep it up!"

"It—it was Smythe, of the Shell!" said Tubby Muffin desperately. "Now you know!"

"Oh! You've been playing banker with Smythe of the Shell, and you've won money from him?" asked Jimmy Silver.

"Ye-es!" gasped Tubby.

"What an awful whopper!" said Putty. "Smythe plays banker, but he wouldn't lose to a silly dummy like Muffin."

"I—I say, I'm awfully clever at banker, you know! I'm really a dab at it, as—as at most things, you know!"

"If you're a dab at banker as you are at most things you must be a regular corker!" remarked Jimmy Silver. "But I'll cut along and ask Smythe."

"I'll come with you."

"Oh, you don't mind my asking Smythe?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver in surprise.

"No."

The juniors stared at Tubby Muffin. Surprising as it was, it seemed that they had tracked out the truth at last.

"Keep him here till I've spoken to Smythe," said Jimmy Silver briefly; and he quitted the study.

Tubby Muffin made a movement to follow, but Putty raised his boot, and Tubby changed his mind. He sat down in Jimmy Silver's chair to wait. The chums of the Fourth waited rather eagerly for Jimmy's return. Lovell even forgot to finish his list of K's.

In five minutes the captain of the Fourth came back into the end study. There was quite a peculiar expression on his face.

"Well, Jimmy?"

"It beats me!" said Jimmy Silver.

"Tubby's told the truth! Smythe owned up when I asked him whether Tubby had been winning money from him at banker."

"My hat!"

Tubby Muffin grinned in great relief. He had wondered very uneasily whether Adolphus would have sense enough to take his cue. Evidently Smythe had guessed how matters stood when Jimmy Silver questioned him, and he had supported Tubby's version. There was general astonishment in the end study. That Tubby had won money at banker was surprising enough but that he had told the truth was more surprising still.

"So that's it?" said Lovell.

"I told you so, didn't I?" gasped Tubby.

"Why couldn't you tell the truth at first, then?"

"Well, you see, I—I—"

"I told Smythe what Tubby said, and he admitted it," said Jimmy Silver. "I thumped him for playing cards with a Fourth-Form chap. I've barked my knuckles on his nose, blow him! As for you, Muffin—"

"You jolly well let me get out of this study!" said Tubby Muffin in alarm.

"You've been gambling with Smythe—"

"I—I haven't—"

"What!"

"I—I mean, I—I have—"

"One dozen with the fives' bat!" said Jimmy Silver. "And if you ever do it again, two dozen!"

"Look here— Leggo! Yoooop!"

The following five minutes were painful to Tubby Muffin. Lovell laid on the dozen with the fives' bat, and he put his beef into it. Tubby Muffin was roaring as Putty led him from the study by one fat ear.

Jimmy Silver had a very thoughtful expression when he was gone. Lovell restarted after the interval, as it were, with his list of K's, but Jimmy did not heed him. Smythe of the Shell had corroborated Tubby's statements, but Jimmy was not wholly satisfied. He felt that there was something more—something that had not been revealed—though he could not guess what it was. And it was long before he could dismiss the matter from his mind.

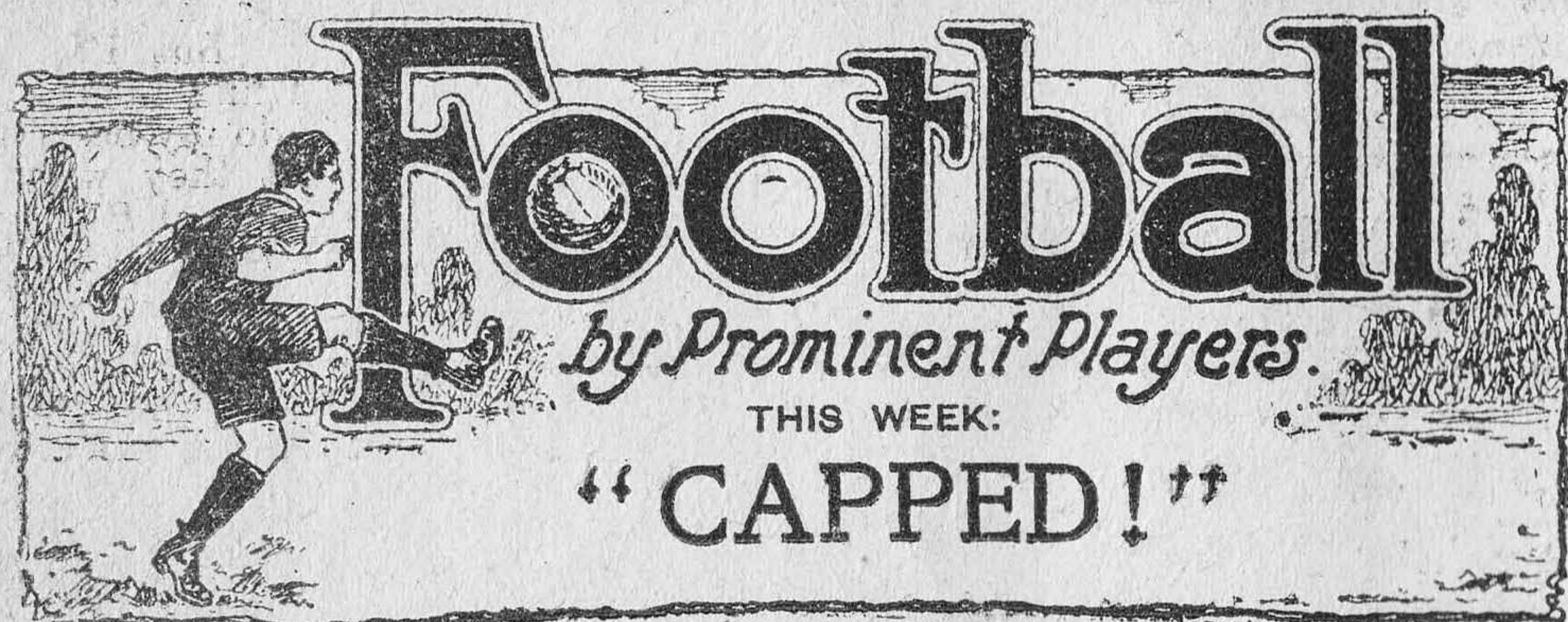
THE END.

"Charley of Rookwood!"

By OWEN CONQUEST,

Is the title of next Monday's long, complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co.

DON'T MISS IT.



A Chatty Article about International Matches and Players,
By GEORGE WALL,
The Oldham Athletic and English International Player.

Very soon now we shall be in the midst of what might be called the International part of the football season, and the hopes of the players who are doing well with their clubs will run high. There are many honours, to be won on the football-field, but of them all I expect most players will agree with me when I say that the greatest is the honour of being chosen to play for one's country.

In fact, it would not be going too far to say that practically every player who rises to the height of first-class football entertains hopes that one day he will be considered by the Selection Committee as the best man in his position.

Especially does the Englishman covet the honour of playing for England against Scotland, and I don't mind confessing that I was a very proud man the day when I turned out in one of these big contests. There is always a great crowd, the excitement is tremendous, and although this is a minor consideration, there is a little "bonus" for the player who appears in one of these International games.

Frankly, I always feel a bit sorry for the members of International Selection Committees. They have a pretty thankless task, and no matter which men are chosen there is always somebody ready to jump up and declare that the team could have been improved by the introduction of this or that player, and by the dropping of some other fellow.

The task of the English Selection Committee during this season, for instance, is going to be even more difficult than it was for some years before the war. Some of the men who played for England year in and year out have grown older, and new players must be found to take their places.

For some years before the war, England's defence chose itself, so to speak. There was Sam Hardy, the Aston Villa man, for goal, and he is still available and playing well. As full-backs there were Crompton, the Blackburn Rover, and Pennington, of West Bromwich Albion. They were as near an ideal pair of full-backs as one could possibly hope to secure. Crompton, however, has not been playing at all regularly this season,

and it is doubtful if he would now be able to stand the strain of an International match. That means that a new right full-back has to be found.

Pennington, also, is not so young as he used to be, and although he can still be considered a great full-back, in the natural order of things he cannot hope to continue for ever. It is in the finding of successors for such fine players as these that difficulties will arise for England's Selection Committee.

Incidentally, while the consistency of some of the International players is a big relief to the Selection Committee, it comes rather hard on good players who never get a chance of a cap while the consistent Internationals are at their best.

Think for a moment, for instance, how many good full-backs have had to go without International recognition while Crompton and Pennington have been getting the honours. Or, to take a more striking case, there is that of William Meredith, the wizard outside-right of Manchester United. Meredith has played in over forty International matches for Wales, and that has meant that for nearly twenty years other good outside-rights who were born in Wales have had to be passed over, because, fine players as they were, they were not so good as Meredith.

I have referred above to the new difficulty which awaits the English Selection Committee this season because of the necessity of finding new full-backs. When all is said and done, however, the real head-scratching for these people who choose International teams comes in when they start on the forwards.

Goalkeepers, full-backs, and, in a lesser degree, half-backs, play on their own, but the forwards must play together if the side is to be successful. Hence, the Selection Committee has to consider very carefully whether the

play of certain brilliant forwards will fit in with the play of other fine men. It would be quite possible to take five forwards stars from five different

GEORGE WALL,



The popular forward who has played many times for England.

teams who would make practically a hopeless forward line because their various styles would not fit in. In the past this difficulty has been got over more than once by the playing of club wing men—that is, two men on the wings who know each other's play because of association in club matches. Personally, I think this is a good idea, for two moderate players who know each other perfectly will very often yield better results on the field of play than two brilliant players who are strangers to each other's methods.

Then there is the centre-forward

problem, and during the past few years, so far as England has been concerned, this has been the toughest proposition of all. Many men have been tried as leaders of the attack, but few seem to have satisfied the Selection Committee, judging by the frequent changes made.

The centre-forward of an International side who plays with strange men on either side of him has, of course, about the worst position on the field. Hence, I suppose, the difficulty of filling the position satisfactorily.

There is another thing, too, which has to be borne in mind continually by the International Selection Committee, and that is whether the men chosen have the big-match temperament. Many a fine club player who has been promoted to the giddy heights of International fame, has been voted a failure, and many people have not understood why. Often the reason has just been the lack of the big-match temperament, and the unfortunate part of it is that the question of whether a certain player will produce his best form in these big matches can only be tested by experiment.

In conclusion, I can assure my readers of this—that the various International Selection Committees do their work very thoroughly, and a player who is showing consistently good form with his club is sure to have his claims for a cap considered. That being so, it is obviously to the interests of every young player to bend all his efforts to the steady improvement of his game, so that the day may come when he is considered good enough to play for his country. Here's luck to you all!

George Wall

FRANK RICHARDS' GHOST!



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

The 1st Chapter.
Run to Earth!

"Somebody waiting for you, Franky?"
 "Eh? Who?"
 "Penrose!" grinned Bob Lawless. Frank Richards uttered an exasperated exclamation; and Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc chuckled, and Algernon Beauclerc grinned.
 The Cedar Creek fellows had just come out of the lumber school after lessons. Frank Richards and his chums were crossing towards the corral for their horses, when Bob's eyes fell upon a figure lounging in the school gateway.
 The rubicund cheeks and crimson-tipped nose announced afar that it was Mr. Penrose, of Thompson, the editor, proprietor, and printer of the only newspaper in the Thompson Valley.

Evidently the crimson-nosed gentleman was waiting there for someone, and it was equally evident that the person he was waiting for was Frank Richards, the schoolboy author.

But Frank was not anxious for the meeting.
 During the past week he had received three letters from Mr. Penrose: two by post at the ranch, and one by the hand of Injun Dick, delivered at Cedar Creek School.

To none of them had he vouchsafed a reply.
 Frank's earliest efforts at authorship had been published in the "Thompson Press," and, very unexpectedly on Frank's part, had proved exceedingly popular in Thompson town. So popular, in fact, that when Frank was laid up with a cold, and could not produce his "copy" on one occasion, the enterprising Mr. Penrose had manufactured a story himself to appear under his name, which had exasperated the schoolboy author to such an extent that his connection with the "Thompson Press" had suddenly ceased.

Mr. Penrose wished to recommence it, hence his insistent communications, to which the enraged author did not reply. As his letters had produced no effect, here was Mr. Penrose in person, waiting at the school gates for the Cedar Creek author to emerge.

"Bother him!" said Frank, as he followed his chum's glance. "I suppose he is waiting for me."
 "Sure!" chuckled Bob. "Won't you see him?"

"No, I won't!" said Frank. "Let's get out the other way. He can wait there as long as he likes."
 "Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of Cedar Creek led their horses from the corral, but did not head for the gate on the trail as usual. They led the horses away to the side gate that opened towards the creek. Some of the fellows were going out at the big gate, and Mr. Penrose watched them as they went, waiting for Frank Richards to appear.

But Frank did not appear.
 The four schoolboys led their horses round by the path near the creek, and did not enter the forest trail till they were well out of sight of Cedar Creek School.

Then they trotted off cheerfully homeward, still leaving Mr. Penrose waiting at the school gate.
 Frank Richards' chums were grinning, greatly amused by this pursuit of the schoolboy author, and by Frank's determination to dodge the enterprising editor.

Frank was a little amused himself, but he was more exasperated than amused. He was still feeling very sore over the treatment of his "copy," and he did not want to figure again in the columns of the "Thompson Press."

"Safe now!" said Vere Beauclerc, laughing, as the chums parted at the fork of the trail.
 "Safe for to-day!" chuckled Bob Lawless. "But I shouldn't be surprised to find Penrose at the gate tomorrow morning."
 "By gad! It's really a compliment to you, Franky," remarked Algernon. "It shows that your stuff is worth readin', you know—or Penrose thinks it is."
 "These great geniuses," said Bob Lawless, in an oracular tone, "are touchy. Franky has got his back up."
 "Oh, it isn't such a thumping com-

"He's after you," chortled Bob. "The game's up, Franky—you've got to scribble for him!"
 "Bother him! Put it on!" said Frank.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 The two chums rode harder, and the pursuing horseman vanished in the dusk behind.
 "He'll follow us to the ranch!" grinned Bob. "He's found out that you gave him the slip at the school, and he means business."
 "Bless him!" growled Frank.
 There was no sign of Mr. Penrose on the plain when the chums arrived at the ranch. The editorial gentle-

The rubicund visage of Mr. Penrose appeared in the doorway as the Chinese servant showed him in.

The 2nd Chapter.
Editor and Author!

Mr. Penrose bowed gracefully over his hat to Mrs. Lawless. The editorial gentleman was quite sober, which was not customary with him. Mr. Penrose was devoted to the cup that cheers—temporarily. Mr. Penrose was his own compositor and printer, and when the whisky advertisements in the "Thompson Press" were mixed up with the poetry, it was always an indication that Mr. Penrose had been sampling the potent fire-water not wisely but too well. A paper run on such lines was not likely to enjoy a very extensive circulation, and probably the "Press" owed its continued existence chiefly to the fact that there was no competition in the Thompson Valley, there being no other paper published nearer than Kamloops.
 "Good-evening, madam!" said Mr. Penrose. "May I beg you to excuse this intrusion—"
 "Pray come in, Mr. Penrose!" said Mrs. Lawless. "Bob, hand Mr. Penrose a chair."

Bob politely handed Mr. Penrose a chair with great gravity, and the gentleman from Thompson sat down.
 "Ah, I see your nephew is here, madam," said Mr. Penrose. "I am glad to see you, Richards. I looked in at Cedar Creek for you; but, somehow, I missed you there."
 Frank coloured a little as Bob suppressed a chuckle.
 "The fact is, Mrs. Lawless, I

"Never mind that," said Frank. "Look here, Mr. Penrose, what's it all about?"
 "I've written you several letters, and I guess I haven't had any answer, Richards."
 "There was nothing to say. I gave you my answer last time I saw you, at your office."
 "Now, the fact is, Richards, I want you to write for my paper," said Mr. Penrose impressively. "I wouldn't be so candid to everybody, but you're a youngster with a level head, and I guess you're not likely to get puffed up."
 "I hope not!" grunted Frank.
 "Exactly. I can be quite candid with you. You did some stories for my paper that went down first-rate. I guess I was surprised myself," said Mr. Penrose. "You're only a kid, but you've got a way of scribbling that's rather uncommon—very uncommon, I guess. Now, there was a misunderstanding—"
 "Not exactly a misunderstanding," said Frank acidly. "You shoved a lot of rubbish in your paper under my name—"
 "You were late with your copy, you know. I guess next time you'll be more careful. But see here," said Mr. Penrose, "as you make such a point of it, I guess I'll agree not to let it happen again. If you fail me with your copy, I'll miss your contribution out. I can't say fairer than that."
 "But—"
 "Bless it all, it's a chance for you—you only a pesky schoolboy, too!" said Mr. Penrose warmly. "Don't you like scribbling?"
 "Yes, very much," said Frank.
 "But—"
 "I calculate I'll raise the rates, too," said Mr. Penrose. "What about a dollar a column?"
 "I wasn't thinking of that."
 "Well, that's business. Look here, Richards, at the risk of giving you a swelled head, I don't mind saying that your stuff is good—remarkably good. It got no end of new readers for the paper. Galoots used to drop into the office and speak to me about it. I've had to depend on bagging copy from the American magazines—poor stuff, and not suitable to this region, either. And it's happened that galoots have seen the magazines at Gunten's circulating library, too, and they don't like it."
 Frank grinned.
 It was very probable that Mr. Penrose's method of supplying himself with copy free of charge, sometimes led to difficulties.
 "Good, original stuff is what I want," said Mr. Penrose. "Of course, authors don't grow much in the Thompson Valley. When I landed on you, and found you could write, it was really a bonanza."
 Frank smiled. This was really very flattering; and, youthful author as Frank was, he was, naturally, not wholly without a touch of author's vanity.
 "How you do it beats me," continued Mr. Penrose. "But I'm a business man. When I find that the public wants a thing, I do my best to supply them with what they want. That's business with a capital B. So long as they want it, let 'em have it, and plenty of it. See?"
 Frank admitted that he saw.
 "I'll give you a free hand," continued Mr. Penrose generously. "Choose your own subject. Write as you like. Fill as many columns as you please, at a dollar a time."
 "Oh, bother the dollars!" said Frank.



MR. PENROSE GIVES CHASE! Behind the chums of Cedar Creek, in the dusk of the trail, a horseman was galloping in pursuit. "Mr. Penrose is after you!" chortled Bob. "The game's up, Franky—you've got to scribble for him." "Bother him! Put it on!" said Frank.

pliment," said Frank. "There's nothing in the paper to compete with my stuff, excepting whisky advertisements and Penrose's editorials. Everything else that Penrose publishes is bagged from the American papers, and it's all rot. Good-night, kids!"
 Beauclerc and his cousin trotted off by the branch trail, and Frank and Bob rode on towards the Lawless Ranch.
 Ten minutes later there was a clatter of hoofbeats behind them on the trail.
 "Hallo! Here's the Cherub after us again!" Bob Lawless looked back. "Jerusalem! It isn't Beau—it's Penrose!"
 "What?"
 Frank Richards glanced over his shoulder.
 Behind the chums of Cedar Creek, in the dusk of the trail, a horseman was galloping in pursuit, and the rubicund nose of the Thompson editor was recognisable through the dusk.
 "Well, my hat!" ejaculated Frank.

man was not quite so active a rider as the schoolboys.
 But soon after the chums had put up their horses and were warming their toes at the log-fire indoors, there was a summons at the ranch-house door.
 Bob closed one eye at his English cousin.
 "Penrose!" he said.
 "My hat! I think I'll go to bed!" said Frank.
 "You can't go to bed before supper; besides, Penrose would come up after you, I guess!" roared Bob. "Then you'd have to jump out of the window!"
 "My dear boys, what does all this mean?" asked Mrs. Lawless, looking up from her knitting.
 "It's Franky being such a blessed genius," explained Bob. "Editors are searching for him right and left—at least, one editor is. And you can guess how keen Penrose is after him; he's usually wasting whisky in the bar at the Occidental about this time."
 "Shush!" murmured Frank.

wanted to see your nephew, with regard to contributions for my paper," said Mr. Penrose.
 "Really?" said Mrs. Lawless. "That is very flattering to you, Frank."
 "Um!" said Frank.
 "Have I your permission to proceed, madam?" asked Mr. Penrose.
 "Certainly," said Mrs. Lawless, with a smile. "If you are going to talk business, you had better step into the office. Mr. Lawless is out."
 "Thank you, madam!"
 Frank Richards hesitated.
 He did not want to talk business with Mr. Penrose; in fact, he had a strong repugnance to doing so. But a certain amount of civility was due to a visitor under the Lawless roof; and so Frank yielded the point, and accompanied Mr. Penrose into the rancher's business-room.
 There Mr. Penrose sat down at Mr. Lawless' roll-top desk, turning round on the swivel chair to face Frank, who remained standing.
 "Sit down, my boy," said Mr. Penrose.

"At that early stage of his literary career, Frank Richards had not learned to give much attention to financial considerations. Indeed, he never did learn to give such considerations much attention."
 "Business is business," said Mr. Penrose. "Now, what do you say?"
 Frank hesitated.
 He always found it difficult to say "No" to anyone; but his experience with Mr. Penrose and his paper had been exasperating, and he did not want to accept the offer.
 "Yep—eh?" asked Mr. Penrose.
 "I—I'd rather not."
 "Now, you see here," said Mr. Penrose, "I'm going to tackle you on another ground. I've had some news. There's going to be a rival paper in the valley."
 "Oh!" said Frank.
 "I've had the news lately," said Mr. Penrose. "A galoot named Hullett—Cyrus Hullett—is coming along to wipe me out—if he can. He runs papers at some of the towns along the railway, and he reckons it would be worth his while to mop up the circulation in the Thompson Valley. He's had the nerve to offer to buy up my paper—offering me two hundred dollars, the galoot!" Mr. Penrose snuffed with indignation.
 "Two hundred dollars! If he'd

made it ten thousand it might have been a trade. I don't deny that the circulation has gone down, owing to—to circumstances. Perhaps it's rather small at present."

Frank Richards was silent. "Now, this galoot, Hultett, is coming along in a week or two, as I've found out, and he's going to wipe out the 'Thompson Press'—if he can," said Penrose. "I've got to pile in. And if you begin your stuff again for my paper, I don't deny that it will give me a leg up. I put it to your patriotism. You don't want this American galoot to come along and mop up a Canadian paper?"

"But surely my stuff wouldn't make much difference?"

"All the difference in the world," said Mr. Penrose. "I tell you it was popular. Say the word!"

"Well, if you put it like that—"

hesitated Frank.

"I do."

"Well, I agree, then. But no more of your blessed split infinitives under my name!"

"Nary a one," said Mr. Penrose. "All O.K. Now, can I depend on you for four columns weekly?"

"Ye-es."

"You were at school in England before you came out here?" asked Mr. Penrose suddenly.

Frank Richards nodded, rather surprised by this sudden change of topic.

"I thought so! Now, I guess some stuff on that subject would be interesting to Canadian readers," said Mr. Penrose. "What school were you at?"

"St. Kit's."

"Big show?"

"Fairly big," said Frank, with a smile.

"Something in it you could write about?"

"I—I suppose so."

"That's the stunt, then. A series of stories. Call 'em 'St. Kit's Fellows,' or something like that—see?"

"I'll try," said Frank. "I'll do my best, Mr. Penrose."

Mr. Penrose jumped up, and shook the schoolboy author's hand heartily. "That's the thing!" he said. "I rely on you. Send the stuff along as quick as you can. The more the merrier!"

And Mr. Penrose, in a state of great satisfaction, took his leave.

Frank Richards was left in a doubtful frame of mind. He could not help feeling pleased and flattered; but in Frank's nature there was more modesty than self-esteem, and he was surprised that the editorial gentleman should attach so much importance to his work. However, Mr. Penrose knew his own business best; and that evening Frank Richards was busily engaged upon his first story of public school life—"St. Kit's Fellows"—and he could not help feeling elated when it appeared prominently in the "Thompson Press" the following week.

The 3rd Chapter.

Ghostly!

"It beats me!" said Chunky Todgers.

Chunky Todgers, of Cedar Creek, was astonished, and he was puzzled.

It was two or three weeks since the interview at the ranch, and during that time Frank Richards' leisure hours had been pretty well filled.

From his earliest years Frank had found pleasure in "scribbling"—indeed, at the early age of eight he had scribbled—early works in which both the syntax and the orthography had left much to be desired.

And ever since that early age Frank had always scribbled more or less, finding pleasure in the occupation. He had never been without a pile of manuscripts—which grew and grew—though he occasionally made a raid upon them, and consigned them to a bonfire.

Now he found that he quite enjoyed his new work. Indeed, he was in danger of spending too much time indoors with his pen, but his Canadian cousin saw that that did not happen.

When Bob Lawless considered that Frank was "sticking in" too much, he would drag him out, without listening to objections, to ride or skate, which was perhaps all the better for the youthful author.

Frank was sometimes interrupted in the midst of a thrilling episode, but as Bob would take no denials, there was no help for it.

But, in spite of interruptions, his work progressed, and he delighted Mr. Penrose with a regular four columns weekly; and, taking warning by what had happened on a previous occasion, Frank was always careful to keep well ahead with his "copy," in case of accidents. That was a habit which he never lost in later days.

"St. Kit's Fellows," was a great success.

It was a new kind of stuff for the Thompson Valley, and the readers of the "Thompson Press" found it interesting. More especially, the youthful inhabitants of the valley took a great fancy to it, and Mr. Penrose's circulation extended among the rising generation, much to Mr. Penrose's delight.

All was grist that came to the editorial mill, and a schoolboy's ten cents was as good as anybody else's ten cents, in Mr. Penrose's opinion.

Naturally, every boy and girl at Cedar Creek was a "constant reader," and Frank Richards received compliments enough to turn a head less steady and modest than his own.

But Frank was in no danger of developing conceit. He never ceased to be surprised at his success, and he thought it very "jolly" of fellows to like reading his stuff.

He certainly liked writing it. Mr. Penrose's dollars did not weigh very much with him, though, of course, they came in useful.

There was one fellow at Cedar Creek who simply couldn't understand it. That was Chunky Todgers.

Chunky had literary ambitions himself.

He knew—he did not think; he knew—that he could write ever so much better than Frank Richards. Yet Mr. Penrose had only snorted when Chunky offered him literary contributions.

Chunky was driven to the conclusion that Mr. Penrose was a "jay," who did not know his own interests.

It was too bad, as Chunky often remarked, that the only publication in the valley should be run by a "jay" who did not know good literary work when he saw it.

"It beats me!" Chunky remarked, looking up from Frank Richards' page in the "Thompson Press" one day at Cedar Creek, after dinner, by the school-room fire.

Frank Richards & Co. were round the log-fire, arguing. The next day was Saturday—a free day at Cedar Creek. Bob Lawless was urging an expedition into the foothills for that day, a suggestion that was backed up by Vere Beaulere and Algernon. But Frank Richards demurred. He had "copy" to produce, and Saturday was a good day for hard work at it.

"It beats me!" repeated Chunky Todgers. "I've just been reading your stuff, Richards."

"Well, I guess it does beat you!" said Bob Lawless. "That's no news, Chunky!"

Chunky sniffed.

"I mean, it beats me what old Penrose sees in it!" he explained. "No offence, you know, Richards. You don't mind my speaking plainly?"

"Not at all!" said Frank, laughing.

"It isn't bad—not what you'd call bad—"

"Not what I'd call bad, certainly!" assented Frank.

"But compared with what I can do, you know—"

"Of course, that would rather put it into the shade!" remarked Frank, with great gravity.

"Exactly! I'm glad you can see that, Richards."

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob Lawless.

"Penrose can't see it," continued Chunky. "He's an awful jay. Of course, if my stuff was once in print, he'd see."

"How's that?" asked Beaulere.

"By the circulation jumping up," explained Chunky. "Why, the circulation has risen even on Frank Richards' stuff. So it stands to reason that it would fairly jump on mine."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I'm not joking, Bob Lawless, and there's nothing to gurgle at. I've got an idea, Richards. I'm going to make you an offer—what I think is a rather generous offer," said Chunky Todgers impressively.

"Go ahead, old scout!"

"Penrose is such a jay that he thinks anything with your name on it is good enough to publish. Well, I'm willing to write under your name—"

"Eh?"

"Bob wants you to ride to-morrow instead of scribbling. Well, you can go riding, and I'll do your copy for you."

"My only hat!"

"Penrose won't know. He may notice that it's better than usual, but he will only think you've improved."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"As for the writing, that's all right. Now, Penrose has lent you his typewriter. You've got the typer in your room at the ranch, haven't you?"

"Yes," chuckled Frank. "Penrose has lent it to me till I've saved up enough dollars to buy one."

"That makes it all serene, then. I can type," said Todgers.

"And that's all that's necessary!" chuckled Bob.

"That's all," assented Chunky.

"Mind, I'm not asking for any of the dollars, Richards. It's simply literary glory I'm after. Penrose won't suspect anything when I hand it in. I've dropped in several times with your bundle of copy, you know, to save you the trouble of going to Thompson. I shall hand it in as usual. He will print it as usual. Afterwards, when he hears from his readers that the last number was surprisingly good—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Then you can tell him it was me," explained Chunky. "Then he'll ask me to be a regular contributor, as well as you. I don't want to bag your job, of course. There's room for us both."

"Oh dear!" said Frank Richards.

"Or, if you like, I'll save you all the trouble by keeping on as your ghost," said Chunky. "You know what I mean—a literary ghost. I've read about that. Authors sometimes have chaps to write for them, and they're called ghosts. See?"

Frank Richards frowned.

"Do you know that would be swindling?" he asked.

"Not in this case, because, you see, you'd be handing in a superior article."

"Oh crumbs!"

"You can go riding to-morrow," said Chunky. "Leave the whole thing to me. Is it a go?"

"Ha, ha! Not quite!"

"Now, have some sense, Richards, old chap!"

"Bow-wow!"

The school-bell rang, and interrupted Chunky's persuasions. The Cedar Creek fellows streamed into the school-room, and Miss Meadows came in to take her class.

But Chunky Todgers at least did not give much attention to Miss Meadows' instructions that afternoon. He was thinking of literary glory, and he could not help feeling indignant with Frank Richards. And though he did not like to think such things of a good fellow like Frank, Chunky could not help suspecting that Frank's refusal of his generous offer was due to literary jealousy.

After lessons Chunky Todgers joined the chums of Cedar Creek as they came out into the playground.

"Take this along to Thompson, Chunky, old chap!" said Frank, and he handed a roll of manuscript to the fat schoolboy as he led out his pony.

It was his weekly "copy," which Frank had finished during the dinner interval at the school.

"Sure you won't accept my offer about the ghost, Richards?" asked Chunky persuasively.

"Thanks, no!"

"Are you writing to-morrow?"

Frank shook his head.

"No. Bob's making me go up into the hills with him. Can't be helped."

"I say, then, do you mind if I go to your room at the ranch and use the typer for an hour or so?"

"What on earth for?"

"I want to type out a story."

Frank Richards laughed.

"Oh, all right! I'll speak to my aunt when I get home. Mind you don't damage the typer, though!"

"I can type all right, thanks!"

Chunky Todgers rode on his homeward way.

There was a deeply thoughtful expression on his fat face.

Frank Richards would have been surprised if he could have guessed what thoughts were working in Chunky's podgy brain.

"No harm in it," Chunky said to himself several times. "No harm at all! It's simply giving me a chance, and it will really be a leg-up for Richards. I guess it's a go!"

Chunky Todgers did not call in at the "Thompson Press" office that evening with Frank Richards' manuscript. That manuscript remained in his pocket, and Mr. Penrose concluded that it was delayed until Monday. He did not guess what manuscript he was to receive on Monday.

The 4th Chapter.

Laying the Ghost!

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless started early from the ranch the following morning. Bob had had his way, and Frank's literary work was left over. There was, after all, no hurry. His week's work was done, and it was the following week's contribution he had intended to tackle. Vere Beaulere joined them on the trail, with Algernon, and the four

schoolboys rode away cheerily in the frosty air for a day out in the hills.

A couple of hours later Chunky Todgers rode up to the Lawless Ranch.

Frank had mentioned the matter to Mrs. Lawless, and Chunky was given free admittance to the schoolboy author's room.

Then he planted himself at the borrowed typewriter.

For some hours afterwards Chunky Todgers was stationed at that typewriter, which clicked away incessantly under his fat fingers.

Sheet after sheet rolled from the typer, and the fat author was finished at last.

He collected the typed sheets together, and read them over with delight and satisfaction in his fat face.

Master Todgers had, at least, one fully appreciative reader—himself. And his admiration knew no bounds.

"Good!" he murmured. "Topping! First-rate! After all, Richards can't grumble, and Penrose ought to be pleased when he knows! If this isn't better than Richards' stuff I'll eat my Stetson!"

And Chunky beamed with satisfaction.

His next proceeding was rather curious. He produced from his pocket a sheet of wrapping-paper, which was addressed to Mr. Penrose in Frank Richards' handwriting. In that he proceeded to roll his own precious manuscript.

When it was sealed it looked exactly as it had looked when Frank handed his "copy" to Chunky the previous evening.

On Monday morning, on his way to school, Chunky Todgers stopped at the "Thompson Press" office.

Mr. Penrose was not yet up, but he put a rather shaggy head out of the window as Chunky thundered at the door.

"What the dickens—" began Mr. Penrose.

Chunky held up the packet.

"Hand it in!" grunted Mr. Penrose.

Chunky handed the packet in at the window, and rode away, smiling.

He found Frank Richards & Co. in the playground when he arrived at Cedar Creek. Frank called to him.

"You handed in my copy all right on Friday, Chunky?"

Chunky coloured a little.

"You d-d-don't think I've lost it, do you?" he said. "Your copy's safe enough." Chunky did not add that it was safe in his room at the Todgers' homestead.

"All serene!" said Frank. "How did you get on with the typer on Saturday, Chunky?"

"All O.K. I've done some jolly good stuff, you know."

"Glad to hear it," said Frank.

"I dare say you'll see it in print fairly soon!" said Chunky Todgers mysteriously.

"I hope so, old chap."

"You watch out!" said Chunky.

During morning lessons Chunky was so palpably brimming with satisfaction that the Co. could not help observing it, though they could not account for it.

Morning lessons were interrupted that Monday.

Shortly before the hour of dismissal there was a clatter of hoof-beats without, and the school-room door was flung open.

Miss Meadows looked round in amazement. In the doorway appeared Mr. Penrose, with a crimson face, evidently in a state of great wrath.

"Richards!" he gasped.

"Mr. Penrose, you are interrupting lessons! You cannot speak to Richards now!" said Miss Meadows severely. "Kindly retire from the school-room at once!"

"I—I—I guess I'll wait!" stammered Mr. Penrose.

And he withdrew.

Until the end of morning lessons the irate editor could be heard moving about in the porch, restlessly and impatiently.

The class was dismissed at last, and Frank Richards & Co. were the first out of the school-room. Mr. Penrose was striding excitedly to and fro outside the porch. As Frank Richards appeared, he came up with a rush.

"You—you—you—" he stammered.

"You—you scamp!"

"Wha-a-at?"

"You young rascal!" roared Mr. Penrose.

"What the dickens—" stammered Frank. "Here, hands off, you ass!"

But Mr. Penrose did not "hands off." He put his hands on—hard! But for the fact that Bob and Beaulere jumped to the rescue, the schoolboy author would certainly have been damaged. But two pairs of hands dragged the wrathful gentlemen back, and he sat down on the ground with a bump.

"Ow!" he gasped.

"What on earth's the row?" yelled Bob Lawless. "What have you been up to, Franky?"

"Nothing that I know of!" stammered the bewildered Frank. "I—I suppose he's been drinking—"

Mr. Penrose staggered up.

"That's your game, is it?" he roared. "Spooing me with a ghost story! Didn't I make you a fair offer? Didn't I give you your own terms? And now you palm off this on me!"

And Mr. Penrose waved a manuscript furiously in the air.

Chunky Todgers changed colour.

Evidently his little scheme, of supplying a superior article under Frank Richards' name, was not working out successfully!

Chunky understood; but Frank Richards did not. The schoolboy author could only stare in bewilderment at the enraged Mr. Penrose.

"What on earth do you mean?" he gasped. "Is that my manuscript?"

"Yep—you young rascal!"

"What's the matter with it?"

"The matter with it!" howled Mr. Penrose. "Utter rot from beginning to end—that's what's the matter—and you never wrote it! Do you think you can rope in my dollars by getting some born idiot to write stuff for you at a cent a yard? Starting an author's ghost, by Jove! You young scamp!"

Frank Richards' face was crimson.

"It's not true!" he exclaimed indignantly. "Not a word of it! Bad or good, it's as I wrote it!"

"As if Franky would play such a trick!" exclaimed Bob Lawless indignantly. "I guess you've been at the firewater, you jay!"

"Look at it!" shouted Mr. Penrose.

"Trying to take me in—spooing me with a ghost-story—"

"I haven't—"

"Look at it!"

Mr. Penrose thrust the offending manuscript fairly under Frank Richards' nose. Frank glanced at it, and then he gave a yell. The first line on the precious manuscript was:

"The sun was shining brightly on the anshent roofes of St. Kit's Kolidge."

There was more—much more. But that much was enough for Frank Richards.

"That's not my manuscript!" he howled.

"What? Look at it! There's your name typed on it—"

"My hat!"

"Chunky!" roared Bob Lawless.

"Wha-a-at?"

"Can't you see—that's what he wanted the typer for—"

"Oh!"

Frank Richards understood at last.

Chunky Todgers—much dismayed by this unexpected denouement—was retiring stealthily, but hastily, from the scene. A powerful grip on his collar dragged him back.

"You fat villain!" yelled Frank Richards. "You never handed my copy in; you handed this rubbish in instead—"

"Yaroooooh!"

"Own up, you fat rascal!"

"I—I—I guess I was only doing you both a good turn," gasped Chunky. "Leggo my collar! I—I was going to let Mr. Penrose have some really good stuff for once, and give you a leg-up at the same time, Richards. I—I don't know how he's spotted it and—"

"Where's my copy, you villain?"

"It's all right—safe at home!" spluttered Chunky. "I—I wouldn't throw it away, though, of course, it wasn't any good— Yow-ow-ow! Leave off shaking me, you rotter! Yooooop!"

Mr. Penrose calmed down now, as he comprehended the state of affairs.

"I—I—I guess I see now," he breathed. "I beg your pardon, Richards. I guess I couldn't think anything but what I did."

"You might have known—"

began Frank warmly.

"Well, I guess I'm sorry. As for that young rascal—" Mr. Penrose grasped Chunky Todgers with one hand, and his riding-whip with the other. And the voice of Master Todgers, for the next few minutes, was like unto the voice of the Bull of Bashan.

It was a very doleful Chunky that delivered up the genuine "copy" at the Thompson Press office that evening. No harm had been done, as it turned out; and, indeed, Chunky had not meant any harm—he had meant to benefit everybody, all round. But Chunky's good intentions had been nipped in the bud; and he had found Mr. Penrose's riding-whip so painful that it was not likely that he would seek again to play the part of Frank Richards' Ghost.

THE END.