

The BOYS' FRIEND

TWELVE PAGES!

TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR!

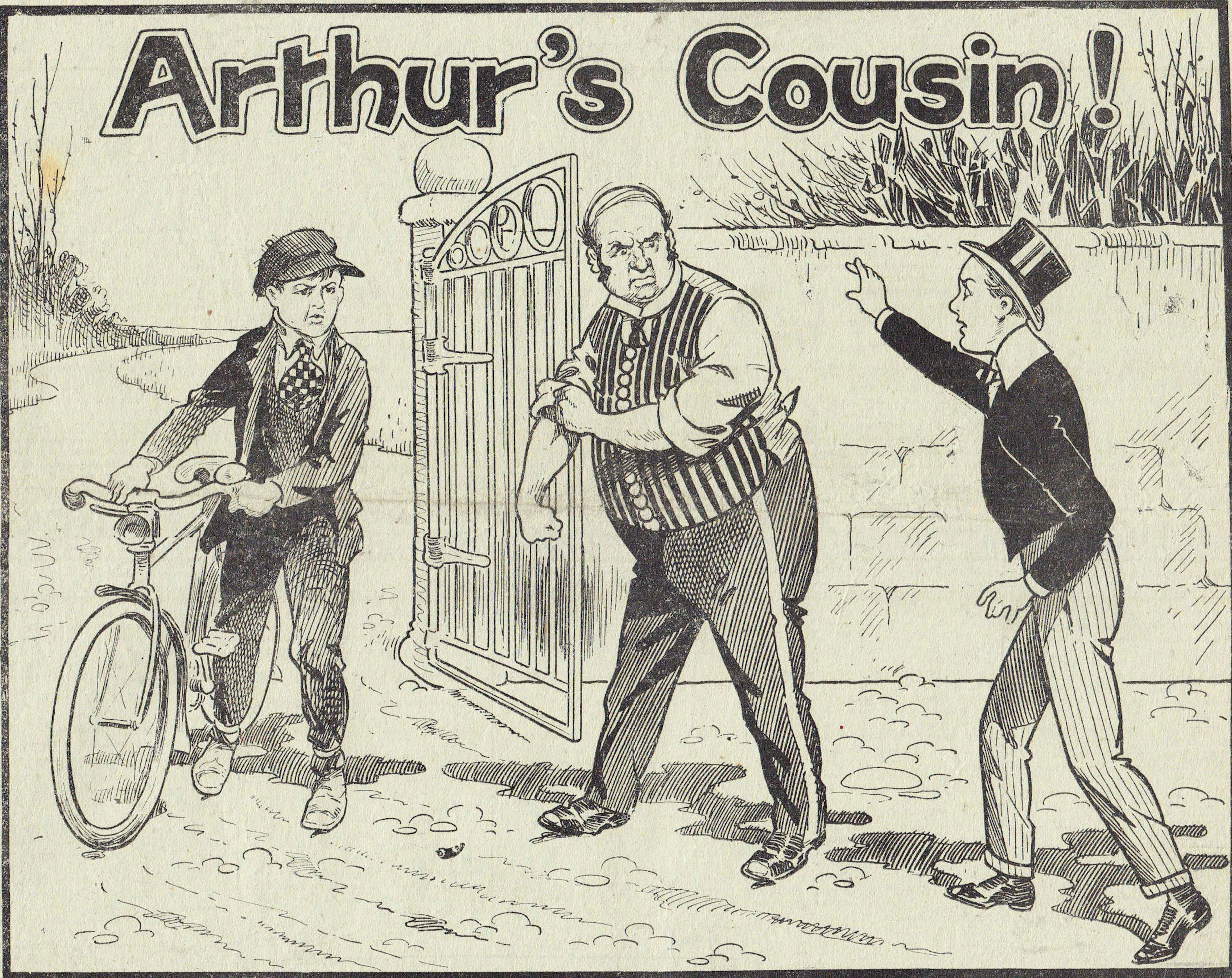
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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending April 24th, 1920.

Arthur's Cousin!



COUSIN 'ERB!

"The likes of you ain't allowed in 'ere!" said old Mack to a pimply looking youth of about sixteen. "Go and fry your face!" was the disrespectful reply. And the newcomer wheeled in his bike. Old Mack, flushed with wrath, made a stride towards the stranger. There was a patter of footsteps as Arthur Beresford-Baggs came panting up to the gates. "Hold on, Mack!" he gasped. "Do you know this pusson, sir?" inquired the porter. "Yes—yes—he's a friend of mine," stammered Arthur.

The 1st Chapter.

The Letter.

"Letter for you, Beresford-Baggs!"
"Here you are, Arthur!"
"Beggin' letter, I should say!" remarked Smythe of the Shell. "Looks like it, begad! Look at the fist!"
"And the spellin'!" smiled Townsend.
"Ha, ha, ha!"
Arthur Beresford-Baggs, the new junior in the Rookwood Fourth, was coming along the passage with Jimmy Silver & Co., when his friends called to him.
It was Smythe who handed him the letter from the rack.
That letter had been on view as it

were, for some minutes, and it had excited a good deal of comment already.
Smythe's opinion that it was a begging letter seemed probably right. At all events, it did not look like the kind of letter a Rookwood fellow would receive from home.
The superscription was in a scratchy hand, and it ran:
Mister Arthur Beresford-Baggs,
Eskquire,
Forth Forme,
Rookwood Skool,
Coombe.
The "Mister," in addition to the "Esquire," rather tickled the Rookwooders.
It did not seem to tickle Arthur

Beresford-Baggs as he glanced at the grubby envelope.
His face became very grave.
"Only a beggin' letter, what?" asked Adolphus Smythe. "Some bounder has found out that your pater's a millionaire, and he's writing to you for money, dear boy."
"That's it!" said Townsend. "I really wonder Mr. Bootles let the letter pass."
Arthur started.
He had not opened the letter. He stood with it in his hand, and was apparently in no hurry to open it.
"Our Form-master keeps an eye on the letters, of course," said Townsend. "He must have noticed that—at least, he ought to have noticed it. I wonder he didn't stop a beggin' letter."

"I—I don't think it's a begging letter."
"Must be, in that fist! Not from a relation of yours, I suppose?" smiled Townsend.
"Why not?" struck in Peele of the Fourth. "Baggs has got such a queer lot of relations—"
"Shut up, Peele—"
"Give us a rest, Peele!" said Adolphus Smythe severely. "We're fed with your talkin' about Baggs' relations. Dry up!"
Cyril Peele sneered.
"Well, you know he had a weird uncle here a week or two ago—"
"That was only Muffin's yarn."
"And the terrific aunt that came along last week—"
"That was you, got up like

Charley's Aunt, to pull our leg," said Smythe.
"It wasn't—"
"It was! If I were Beresford-Baggs," said Smythe severely, "I'd pull your nose, Peele."
"Not a bad idea!" remarked Jimmy Silver. "Peele is always shoving his nose in where it isn't concerned. A pull would do it good."
"Hear, hear!" said Lovell.
Beresford-Baggs did not seem to hear. He was regarding the letter in his hand with a troubled look.
Peele watched him with a malicious grin. Cyril Peele had been prepared to become the schoolboy millionaire's most devoted admirer—for a consideration. But the consideration had not been forthcoming; with the



ARTHUR'S COUSIN!

(Continued from previous page.)

result that the milk of human kindness in Cyril Peele's breast had turned decidedly sour.

"He doesn't think it's a beggin' letter," grinned Peele. "Of course, it might be from a poor relation."

"Oh, dry up!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. Jimmy was not at all sure that Peele was wrong; but his view was that that was Arthur's business, and nobody else's.

"Let Baggs tell us whether it's from a giddy relation," persisted Peele. "Can't you speak, Baggs?"

"Eh, what?" exclaimed Beresford-Baggs, seeming to come suddenly out of a reverie. "What's that?"

"Is that letter from a relation of yours?"

"I don't see that it matters to you," answered Arthur.

"That's as good as yes," grinned Peele.

"Not at all!" said Smythe of the Shell. "Beresford-Baggs is simply puttin' you in your place, Peele. I'd pull your nose!"

"So I will!" said Arthur promptly. He made a sudden movement, and Peele gave a yell as his somewhat prominent nose was gripped between a finger and thumb.

"Yooooooooooooch!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Peele jerked his nose away, crimson. He clasped it with both hands in anguish.

"Ow, oh! You rotter—Grooooooh!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"You asked for it, Peele!" said Raby, laughing. "You've only got what you asked for. Why can't you let Baggy's relations alone?"

"Ow, ow!"

Arthur had slipped the letter into his pocket now, and he stood with his hands ready, expecting a rush from Peele. But the cad of the Fourth, with a black brow, backed away among the crowd of juniors. He was not looking for a "scrap" with the new junior, who had already proved himself a "good man of his hands."

Tubby Muffin came along the passage and called to Arthur.

"Mr. Bootles wants you, Baggy!"

"What the thump does he want me for?"

"He says you're to take your letter with you," said Muffin.

"Oh!"

"It's all right, kid!" said Adolphus Smythe, reassuringly. "Bootles only wants to know who's been writin' to you. It's his duty, you know. Nothin' to be afraid of."

Arthur Beresford-Baggs nodded, and walked away to his Form-master's study. Jimmy Silver cast a rather curious glance after him. Jimmy was aware—though most of the other fellows were not—of the facts regarding the extraordinary uncle, and the amazing aunt, that had come along to Rookwood to visit the new junior. He could not help wondering if that queer letter portended the arrival of another astounding relation. But that surmise the captain of the Fourth kept to himself.

The path of a new-made millionaire was sometimes a little thorny. It was not a case of roses, roses all the way! Arthur Beresford-Baggs was certainly experiencing the thorns as well as the roses.

The 2nd Chapter. A Treat in Store.

Mr. Bootles glanced at Arthur as the junior presented himself in the study. The Form-master's glance was inquiring, and rather curious. Probably Mr. Bootles was aware that the antecedents of the millionaire's son were of a kind that Rookwood would have described as "weird."

"Ah! I sent for you, my boy," said the little gentleman kindly. "You are doubtless aware that it is my duty to keep—ah!—an eye upon

the—hem!—correspondence of boys in my Form—what, what?"

"Yes, sir!" said Arthur.

"A letter was delivered for you by the midday post—"

"I have it here, sir."

"The superscription was—hem!—of a somewhat unusual nature," said Mr. Bootles.

"Ye-e-es, sir."

"Probably it was from some—ahem!—person who has no right to—"

hum!—communicate with you at all," said Mr. Bootles. "If so, you will hand the letter to me, Baggs. If, however, the handwriting should be known to you—"

"It is known to me, sir."

"Oh! Ah! Hem! Indeed! You are familiar with that—ahem!—some-what extraordinary hand?"

"Yes, sir."

"Then from whom is the letter, Baggs?"

"From—from a relation, sir," stammered Arthur, colouring.

Mr. Bootles coughed.

"You are sure upon that point, Baggs?"

"Quite, sir."

"In that case, you may retain the letter, Baggs. You had better, perhaps, give me the name of the relative in question."

"My cousin 'Erb, sir."

"Wha-a-at?"

"I—I mean, my cousin Herbert."

"Oh, I see! Very well, Baggs, you may keep the letter. That is all."

And Mr. Bootles waved his fat little hand in dismissal.

Arthur left the study with a thoughtful brow. He did not rejoin the crowd of juniors in the passage, but seudded out into the quadrangle by himself. The millionaire's son wanted to be alone just then.

He cut across the quadrangle, and through the archway into Little Quad, where he stopped and sat on a bench and opened the letter.

His brow was gloomy as he read it through. It was a letter that would have excited smiles among his nutty friends at Rookwood, if they could have seen it.

"Dear Art,—I seen Aunt Sarah since she came ome arter seeing you at school. She says you ain't put on no side since you been at a gentleman's school, with lots of dibs in your pokket. She says as you was glad to see er, like Uncle Bill said. Praps I been ard on you, for I own up I thort you'd want to give your folks the go-by now you was so grand. But, seeing as you ain't so, I'm thinking of givin you a look-in meself. I been mending the ole bike, and I ope to ave a run down to see you this week, and praps I can come along on Toosday arternoon. I'll be glad to see you among all the swells, if you ain't ashamed for them to see your cousin.

"Yours trooly,

"'ERB."

"Oh crikey!" murmured Arthur, as he came to the end of that remarkable epistle.

He sat staring at the letter in dismay.

He remembered his cousin 'Erb very well indeed. There had been a certain amount of bitterness in that young gentleman's breast on account of Arthur's great good fortune. 'Erb didn't think that it was merited, and he made caustic remarks on folks that made fortunes out of the war. Certainly, Sir Japhet Beresford-Baggs owed his wonderful rise in the world to the war. He was one of those acute gentlemen who know how to fish successfully in troubled waters. But Arthur knew little about that. He only knew that he had once been as poor as 'Erb, and was now as rich as Cræsus, and he found the change very agreeable indeed.

'Erb—at Rookwood! Arthur had learned many things during his three years with an expensive tutor, and his few weeks at Rookwood School. He was conscious that 'Erb, the companion of earlier days, would not show to advantage at Rookwood. 'Erb's clothes and 'Erb's manners, and his only half-suppressed bitterness towards his fortunate cousin! How was 'Erb to be explained away to lofty, nutty fellows like Smythe, Townsend and Topham and the rest? Arthur almost groaned.

Certainly he was not ashamed of his people, or he would not have

written them affectionate letters from Rookwood, thus giving away his whereabouts, which, he realised now, his father had had good reasons for not communicating to all the family.

Uncle Bill had been warded off, Aunt Sarah had been explained away, more or less, and now cousin 'Erb was coming. Without being a snob, Arthur trembled at the prospect.

But his clouded brows cleared a little as he glanced over the letter a second time.

"Tuesday!" he murmured. "After all, the fellows will be in class. Lucky it ain't a 'arf-oliday." In speaking to himself Arthur often dropped the Beresford for the Baggs.

"Arter all, it may turn out all right. I'll get leave from Mr. Bootles to cut classes and see 'im, and nobody else need see 'im. Poor old 'Erb! I'll be glad to see 'im, if it comes to that. But—but the others fellers needn't. I can show 'im over Rookwood to-morrow, while all the blokes are in class, and he can't say I'm ashamed of him."

Arthur felt considerably relieved when he had come to that decision.

After some little reflection, he repaired to Mr. Bootles' study.

There he preferred his request to his Form-master for leave from lessons on Tuesday afternoon, for the purpose of seeing a relation who was to be "in the neighbourhood."

Arthur did not deem it wise to be more explicit than that.

Mr. Bootles looked at him very curiously, but he gave the required permission.

Arthur left the study very relieved in his mind.

Cousin 'Erb could come, and go, on Tuesday, and nobody would be the wiser. That was better for Arthur and better for 'Erb. 'Erb was suspicious and touchy, and if he met fellows like Smythe or Townsend it was quite certain that his sensitive feelings would be hurt. With a single curl of the lip Adolphus Smythe could have made poor 'Erb feel superlatively wretched, and there was no doubt that the lofty Adolphus would have done it. In fact, Adolphus prided himself upon his gift for keeping bounders in their place, and most assuredly he would have regarded 'Erb as a bounder of the first water.

"Toosday!" murmured Arthur, as he walked out into the quad with a clear brow. "Toosday's all right."

"What's going to happen on Tuesday, old top?" asked Tubby Muffin's fat voice at his elbow.

Arthur bit his lip. He had not observed the fat Classical.

Tubby eyed him inquisitively.

"Eh? Oh, nuthin'!" stammered Arthur.

"Somebody coming to see you?" asked Tubby.

"Oh, rats!"

"Your uncle?" grinned Muffin.

Tubby Muffin had seen Uncle Bill, and he did not allow that fact to be forgotten.

"Oh, cheese it!" snapped Arthur; and he walked on, frowning.

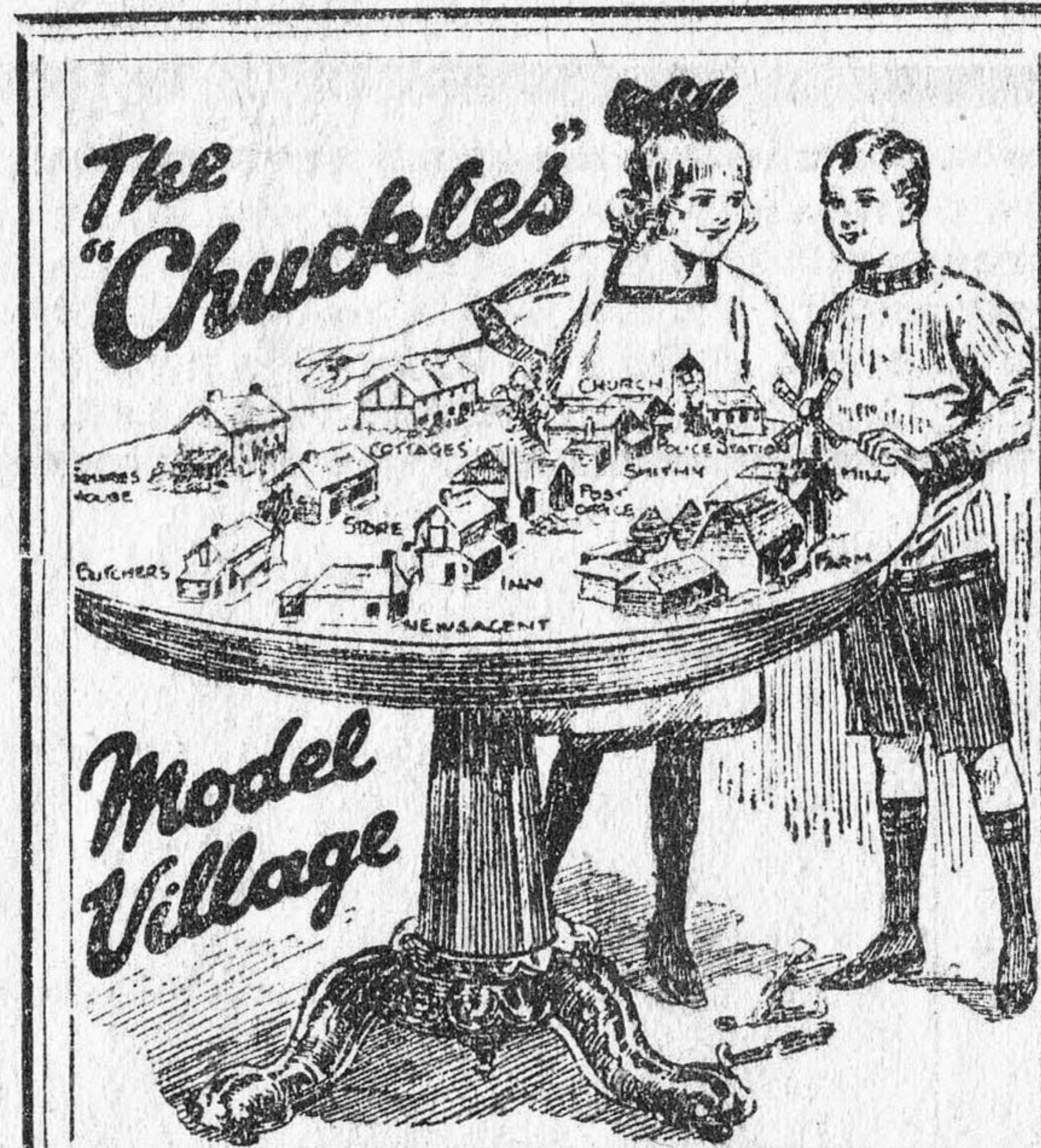
Tubby Muffin chuckled.

"I wonder what's going to happen on Tuesday?" he murmured. "I'm going to keep an eye open on Tuesday. He, he, he!"

The 3rd Chapter. Waiting for 'Erb.

"Bell's gone, Baggy!"

Jimmy Silver called to Arthur Beresford-Baggs, on the following afternoon, in the quad.



To make sure of all these models you must give your newsagent a regular order to deliver a copy of "CHUCKLES" every Friday.

Chuckles
The Famous COLOURED Comic. 1 1/2 D.

The Fourth-Formers were heading for their class-room; but Arthur Beresford-Baggs, sauntering under the beeches, did not seem to have observed it.

He glanced round as the captain of the Fourth called to him.

"All serene!" he answered.

"Well, aren't you coming in?" asked Jimmy Silver, in surprise.

"No."

"My dear chap, you can't cut classes," said Newcome. "Even giddy billionaires can't do that!"

"I've got leave from classes," explained Arthur.

"Oh, I see! Ta-ta, then."

The Fistical Four ran on towards the School House. But Tubby Muffin, who was close behind them, stopped, to turn a very inquisitive blink upon Beresford-Baggs.

Reginald Muffin had not forgotten what he had overheard the previous day. He had determined to "keep an eye" on Beresford-Baggs that Tuesday; but it looked now as if the millionaire's son was to escape Tubby's watchful eye.

"You've got leave from classes, Baggy?" he exclaimed.

"Yes," answered Arthur shortly.

"Did you ask Bootles?" demanded Tubby.

"Of course I did, ass!"

"And I never knew!" ejaculated Tubby Muffin wrathfully.

Arthur grinned.

"I don't see that you need worry about it," he remarked. "I suppose it breaks your record, though. It's the first time you haven't had your ear to a keyhole, what?"

"I say, old chap," said Tubby, unheeding that insinuation. "What's on for this afternoon?"

"Find out!" answered Arthur politely.

"What did Bootles give you leave for?"

"For the afternoon," answered Arthur humorously.

"I mean, why did he give you leave?" exclaimed Tubby peevishly.

"Find out!"

"Well, that's what I'm trying to do, old fellow," urged Tubby. "Of course, I'm not inquisitive. I'm just asking you a question. What have you got on for this afternoon?"

"A straw hat."

"You silly ass!" howled Tubby. "I don't mean that. I mean, what are you up to?"

"Snuff!"

"What?"

"Snuff!" replied Arthur cheerily.

"Too up to snuff to satisfy your silly curiosity, old top."

"There's something going on," said Muffin suspiciously. "Something underhand. Is your uncle coming again?"

"Better ask him."

"Or your aunt?"

"Better ask her."

"I say, Baggy, old fellow, I don't think you ought to keep secrets from an old pal," urged Tubby Muffin, almost burning with curiosity. "I say, I won't give you away. If it's some of your shady relations coming to—"

"What?"

"I won't tell the fellows! After all, you needn't keep it dark from me. I've seen your uncle, you know, and I know that your relations are a set of awful corkers—"

Arthur made a stride towards the fat Classical. Reginald Muffin promptly backed away.

"Don't you get waxy!" he admonished. "I'm only asking a civil

question, ain't I? Look here, Baggy, if—"

Bulkeley of the Sixth came along from the gates, and he paused as he saw the two juniors under the beeches.

"Now then, why aren't you in your class-room?" he inquired.

"I've got leave, Bulkeley," answered Arthur.

"And what about you, Muffin?" inquired the prefect.

"I—I was just talking to Baggs," stammered Tubby.

Bulkeley took Muffin by one fat ear.

"You're late already!" he said.

"Come along!"

"Yow-ow!"

Tubby Muffin went along. He had no choice about that. Bulkeley kept hold of his fat ear, and Tubby had to break into a breathless trot to keep pace with the long strides of the Sixth-Former.

Arthur Beresford-Baggs chuckled as they disappeared in the direction of the School House.

He was feeling quite easy in his mind now.

The quadrangle was deserted. All the fellows were in the Form-rooms, excepting the Modern juniors, who were in the "Lab" with Mr. Manders. The whole of Rookwood was busy with the afternoon's work, and there was no one to keep an eye on Beresford-Baggs. Cousin 'Erb might have arrived, and walked all round Big Quad without any Rookwooder being the wiser, excepting old Mack at the gate, and old Mack did not matter. Old Mack had been the recipient of many liberal tips from the schoolboy millionaire, and was in a perpetual state of expecting more. If the Kaiser himself had dropped in to see Beresford-Baggs, old Mack would have looked on with a lenient eye.

"Poor old 'Erb!" murmured Arthur, as he sauntered down to the gates. "I'll jest take him for a trot round the school, and then get my bike out and we'll ave a spin, and I'll see 'im off. He can't complain of that, though he's touchy. Thank goodness Towny and Topsy are in the Form-room, and Smythe, too! I—I—I wonder what they would think of 'Erb?"

Fortunately, the nuts of Rookwood were not likely to see 'Erb, and so what they would have thought of him was not a pressing question.

As for Reginald Muffin, Arthur did not give him another thought. The fat Classical was safe in the Form-room till four, and by four o'clock Arthur intended Cousin 'Erb to be far out of the range of Tubby's inquisitiveness. But, as a matter of fact, if he had only known it, in reckoning without Tubby, he was reckoning without his host. He had not done with Tubby Muffin yet.

The 4th Chapter.

Muffin Keeps an Eye Open.

"Muffin!"

Mr. Bootles rapped out the name, as the fat Classical rolled into the Form-room, nearly five minutes late.

"Yes, sir?" gasped Tubby.

"You are late!" said Mr. Bootles sternly. "I believe I have told you before, Muffin, that procrastination is the thief of time. I have warned you, Muffin, to be more punctual. I am sorry, Muffin, that it will be necessary for me to cane you. Come here, Muffin! Bless my soul! What is the matter with the boy?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, staring at him.

All the Fourth were staring at Tubby, too.

Master Muffin was doubled up, as if with an inward pain, and he had given utterance to a deep groan.

"Bless my soul! Are you ill, Muffin?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles, all his wrath evaporating at once.

"Ow! Oh! Yes, sir!" gasped Muffin. "I—I—I've got a pain, sir—"

"Dear me! What sort of a pain, Muffin?"

"Like—like burning daggers, sir."

Tubby had a vivid imagination when he let it go. "Like—like red-hot carving-knives, sir—"

"Muffin, where do you feel this pain?"

"In—in— Under my waistcoat, sir!"

"I am afraid you have been over-eating yourself, Muffin. I have had occasion to speak to you on this topic before."

"Oh, no, sir! I—I hardly ate anything at dinner, sir!" gasped Tubby. "I—I—I only had three helpings of beefsteak pudding, sir, and—and two of pie, sir. I—I was hungry when I left the table, sir."

"Nonsense! Do you still feel this pain?"

"Ow! It's awful, sir!" said Tubby Muffin pathetically. "I—I think I'm going to die, sir!"

"Absurd! Go to the matron at once, and tell her your symptoms," said Mr. Bootles. "She will give you something for it."

"Ye-e-es, sir. Shall—shall I go and lie down if she tells me, sir?"

"Certainly, if she tells you! Not otherwise."

"Ow! Yes, sir. Yah!"

"Muffin—"

"Yaroooh!"

"Bless my soul! The boy really appears to be ill!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "Lovell, how dare you laugh? Silver, you are laughing, also! This is very unfeeling! Have you no sympathy with the sufferings of your schoolfellow? Muffin, go to the matron at once!"

"Yes, sir," groaned Muffin.

He tottered to the door, and tottered out.

The big door closed behind him, and Mr. Bootles looked quite concerned as he turned to his class again.

The class did not look very concerned, however. They knew Reginald Muffin better than his Form-master did, and they had no doubt whatever that Tubby's sudden illness was simply a "stunt" for eluding lessons that afternoon.

If Mr. Bootles could have seen Reginald Muffin after the door closed on him, no doubt he would have been of the same opinion as his class.

As soon as he was out of sight Muffin's sufferings ceased instantly. He straightened up, and ceased to groan, and even indulged in a fat wink at space.

"All serene!" he murmured. "Silly old duffer!"

With that grateful remark Reginald Muffin rolled away, but his steps did not lead him towards the matron's room.

He rolled out into the quadrangle. There, like Moses of old, he looked this way and that way; but the quad was deserted, and there was no eye to see him.

Finding that the coast was clear, Reginald Muffin proceeded on his way with a fat grin on his face. Having "spoofed" Mr. Bootles, and escaped from the Form-room, he was at liberty to carry out his intention of "keeping an eye" on Arthur Beresford-Baggs. Tubby Muffin more than suspected that another relation of Beresford-Baggs was turning up, and if a relation of the gilded youth did turn up, Tubby meant to know all about it. Beresford-Baggs was not to be seen within the walls of Rookwood. But the fat Classical guessed where he would find him. He rolled down to the gates.

The gate was partly open, and in the opening he discerned the very well-dressed figure of the millionaire's son.

Arthur had his eyes on the road, looking out for an old, patched bicycle and a loudly-dressed youth, and he did not see Tubby Muffin, or hear him, till Tubby tapped him on the shoulder from behind.

Then he spun round with an exclamation, to stare into Muffin's fat and grinning face.

"You!" he ejaculated.

"Little me, dear old top!" answered Muffin, with a friendly nod. "I thought I'd come and see how you were getting on."

"What are you doing out of the class-room?" demanded Arthur.

"I've got leave, too."

"More likely you're playing truant," said Arthur suspiciously.

"How could I, ass, when Bulkeley took me to the Form-room?" said Tubby Muffin. "I've got leave. I asked Mr. Bootles. Do you think you're the only chap in the Fourth who can get leave? I've got a lot of influence with Bootles, I can tell you. If I asked for an exeat for the whole day he'd give it to me."

"Rats!"

"Hasn't he come yet?" asked Muffin.

"He! Who?"

"The relation you're expecting."

"How do you know I'm expecting a relation, you fat fraud?"

"He, he, he!"

Arthur's hand flew to his pocket. For a moment he feared that cousin 'Erb's letter had fallen into Muffin's hands. Tubby was not supposed to be above looking at another fellow's correspondence when his inquisitive instincts were aroused.

But the letter was safe. Arthur withdrew his hand from his pocket; but the gesture had given him away. Tubby Muffin's suspicion was quite confirmed now.

He grinned expansively.

"Is it Uncle Bill, the fishmonger?" he asked.

"No, blow you!" growled Arthur.

"Or Aunt Sarah, the greengrocer? He, he, he!"

Arthur regarded him with lowering brows. Tubby Muffin already knew too much of his family affairs—too much for Arthur's comfort at Rookwood. If he saw cousin 'Erb—perhaps talked to him—

Arthur cast an uneasy glance along the white high road. In the distance a cyclist appeared, coming along in a cloud of dust. The rider was too far off to be recognised, if it was cousin 'Erb. Tubby peered out of the gate inquisitively.

"Is that the chap?" he asked, with a nod towards the distant cyclist.

"Mind your own business!"

"Look here, Baggs—"

"You prying cad!" broke out Arthur hotly. "What does it concern you, anyhow? You've pulled Mr. Bootles' leg somehow, to make him let you off lessons. I've a jolly good mind to—"

He made a stride towards Tubby Muffin with his fists clenched, and a glitter in his eyes that made the fat Classical jump back in alarm.

"I—I say, keep your wool on!" stammered Tubby. "I—I—"

"Will you clear off, you prying rotter?"

"Oh, if you don't want my company, I'm sure I don't want yours!" said Muffin, with dignity.

And he retired about six yards, where he took up his standing, grinning and watchful.

Arthur's eyes gleamed at him, but he controlled his temper. It was not much use thrashing Muffin; it certainly would not have made him less

watchful. The dusty cyclist was drawing nearer on the white road, and if it was cousin 'Erb—

Evidently there was no time to be lost if cousin 'Erb was not to make the acquaintance of the chatterbox of Rookwood!

Arthur calmed his wrath with an effort, and walked across to the fat Classical. Tubby watched him warily as he came up.

"The tuckshop's open, I believe, Muffin," said Arthur.

"I believe so!" grinned Tubby.

"Could you do with five bob?"

"Yes, rather!" said Reginald Muffin promptly.

"Here you are, then! Now cut off!"

Tubby Muffin counted the five shillings that were slipped into his fat hand, and transferred them to his pocket. But he did not cut off. He disposed himself a little more comfortably against a stone buttress of the old grey wall.

"Well, why don't you go?" snapped Arthur.

"No hurry, old top!"

"Why, you—you—you fat fraud!" shouted Arthur, in great wrath.

Evidently Reginald Muffin, having pocketed the bribe, intended to remain and pry on the visitor just the same!

"I say, don't you call me names, Baggs!" said Tubby, in an injured tone. "The—the fact is, I'm tired, and I'm taking a rest. I suppose a chap can lean on the wall if he wants to!"

Arthur breathed hard.

"Will you go?" he exclaimed.

"No, I won't!"

"You prying rotter—"

"Who's prying?" demanded Muffin warmly. "What is there to pry into, if you come to that? Other fellows don't mind their relations being seen when they come to Rookwood."

Arthur turned away without replying, his lips compressed. He looked out at the gates. The dusty cyclist was nearer now, and he discerned a large necktie of red, barred with green—the most prominent feature of the cyclist at that distance. He could still not recognise the rider; but that necktie warned him that it was probably cousin 'Erb. And Tubby Muffin, within a few paces, was watching with all his eyes!

The 5th Chapter. Trapping Tubby!

Jimmy Silver & Co., in the Fourth Form-room, found early Roman history a little soporific on that warm spring afternoon. They envied Beresford-Baggs, who had the afternoon free, and wasn't being worried about any boring ancient Romans. But, as a matter of fact, Beresford-Baggs would willingly have changed circumstances just then, with any fellow in the Fourth.

He was sure now that the approaching cyclist was cousin 'Erb. Never could he have had a better opportunity of receiving such a visit—but for Tubby Muffin.

Everybody was in the Form-rooms or the lab. There was not an eye to

After him Tubby Muffin came, panting.

Arthur grinned as he stepped into his study in the Fourth Form passage. Tubby was still labouring breathlessly behind, as Arthur took the key from the door and slipped it into his pocket.

A minute later Tubby's fat face grinned in at the open doorway.

"Hallo, Baggs, old chap!" he said cheerily. "Here we are again!"

Arthur nodded amicably, rather to Tubby's surprise. The fat Classical was prepared to dodge a boot.

"Come in, Tubby!"

"Certainly, old bean!"

Reginald Muffin rolled in—still keeping a wary eye on the millionaire's son. If Arthur had produced a cricket-stump or a fives-bat, Tubby was ready to flee. But that did not seem to be Beresford-Baggs' intention.

"Like some toffee?" he asked.

"What-ho!" said Tubby.

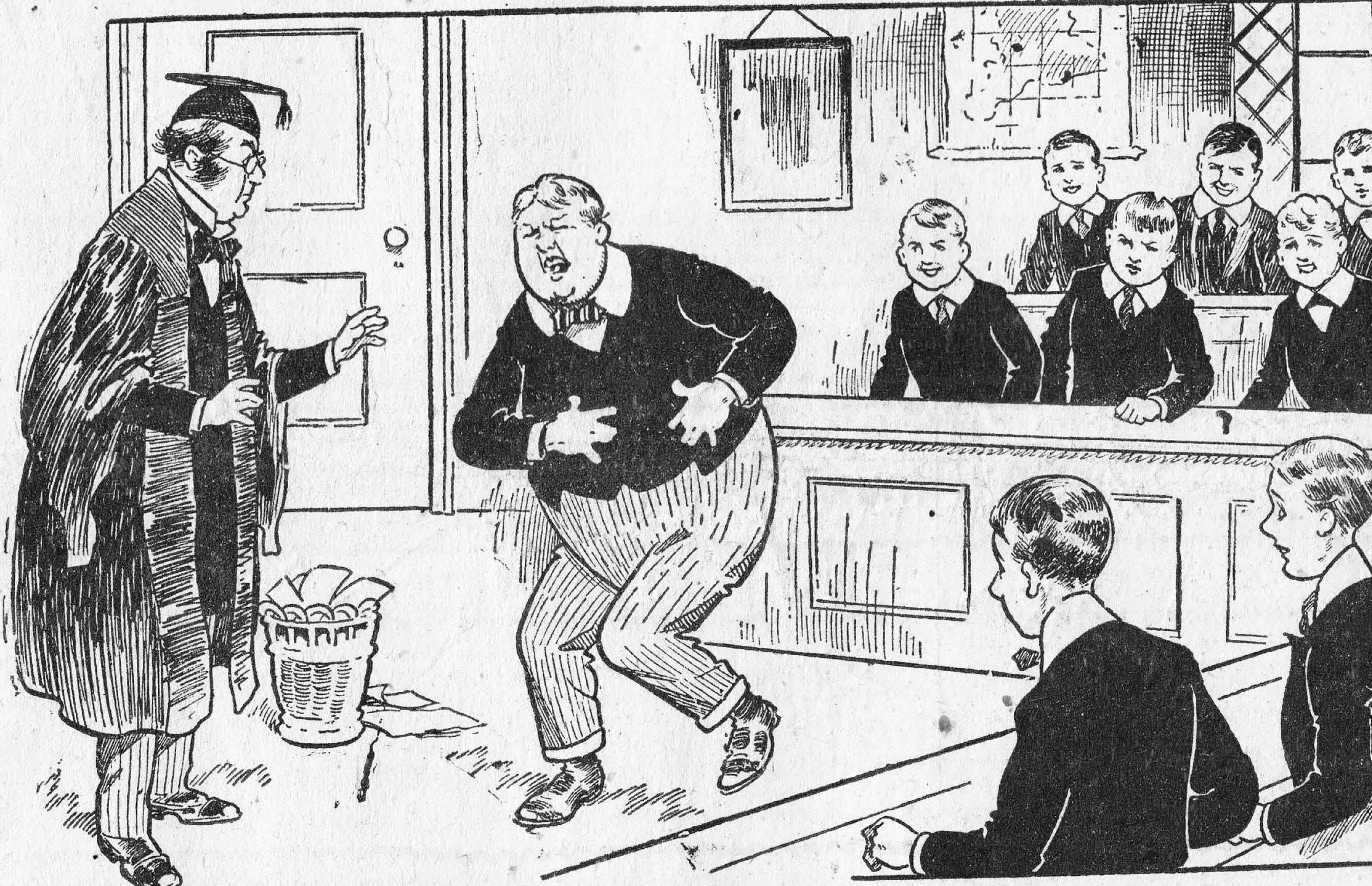
"Try this!"

Arthur opened the table-drawer, and took out a packet of toffee. More and more surprised, Tubby Muffin sampled it. He came to the conclusion that Beresford-Baggs, having realised that he could not get rid of him, was planning to get into his good graces. At that thought, Reginald Muffin became very lofty and patronising indeed.

"Sit down, kid," said Arthur, pointing to the study armchair.

"I don't mind if I do, old top," said Tubby Muffin, sinking into the big chair. "I say, this is good toffee! I don't mind if I have some more."

"Help yourself, Tubby."



A SUDDEN ILLNESS! Tubby Muffin was doubled up, as if with an inward pain and he gave utterance to a deep groan. "Bless my soul! Are you ill, Muffin?" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "Ow! Oh! yes, sir!" gasped Tubby. "I—I—I've got a pain—" "Dear me! What sort of pain?" "Like—like burning daggers, sir!" replied Muffin. "Go to the matron at once, and tell her your symptoms," said the Form-master. "Ow—yes sir! Yow!" gasped Muffin.

fall on cousin 'Erb's flaming necktie—if only the spy of the Fourth had not been there. If an earthquake had suddenly happened, and Reginald Muffin had been swallowed up from all human ken, probably Beresford-Baggs would not have shed any tears over the catastrophe.

But he was not likely to be relieved of the spy by any such heroic happening. Even kicking Muffin across the quad was no use; he would come back. And a lurid description of cousin 'Erb would be waiting for the Rookwooders when they came out of class!

Arthur reflected rapidly, as the dusty cyclist drew nearer and nearer on the road. He came back towards Tubby Muffin at last. Tubby watched him with a grin. But Arthur did not stop; he walked on towards the School House.

"I say, Baggs!" called out Tubby, in surprise.

Arthur did not turn his head; he walked on quickly. Tubby Muffin promptly detached himself from the buttress and followed. What Arthur's object was he did not know; but he knew that he did not mean to lose sight of the schoolboy millionaire.

Apparently unaware that Muffin was close on his track, Arthur entered the house. Muffin followed him in, panting a little from the quick walk.

He saw that Beresford-Baggs was hesitating, and stopped to watch him. If Arthur had intended to slip through and escape at the back of the house, he changed his intention, and ran lightly up the big staircase.

"Thanks; I will!"

Arthur strolled carelessly towards the door. Tubby Muffin's eye was on him at once.

"Hold on, I'm coming!" he exclaimed.

"Oh, sit where you are," said Arthur, with his hand on the door.

Tubby chuckled.

"No fear; I'm coming!"

He jumped up, and rolled doorward as Arthur stepped out into the passage. Before the junior could draw the door shut after him, Tubby's fat paw was on it.

What happened next was like an earthquake to Tubby Muffin.

Arthur made a quick stride towards him, and his fist smote Tubby on the chest with a terrific smite.

"Yarooop!" gasped Muffin.

Bump!

He sat down on the carpet with a concussion that made the study shake.

"Ow! Ow! Ow! wow!" spluttered Muffin. "Why, you beast—you awful rotter—yow-ow-ow—I'll—I'll—ow! wow!"

Slam! Click!

The door was shut, and the key turned in the lock. Tubby Muffin struggled frantically to his feet.

He clutched at the door-handle, and dragged. But the door did not come open. Outside, Arthur slipped the key into his pocket. Tubby rattled furiously at the door-handle.

"Yah! Lemme out!" he roared. "Baggs, you rotter—lemme out of this room. Do you hear, you cad?"

"Caught!" came Arthur's chuck-

ling voice through the keyhole. "You can finish the toffee, if you like, Muffin. Ha, ha!"

"Blow the toffee! Lemme out of this!" roared Reginald Muffin.

"Good-by-eee!"

"Yah! Lemme out—I'll yell—"

Arthur Beresford-Baggs walked away down the passage, grinning. Tubby Muffin was safely disposed of; for the present, at least. In the study, the fat Classical rattled the door-handle, and thumped furiously on the panels.

He understood now why Arthur had returned to the house; that the junior had been leading him into a trap all the time. And the thought of how he had walked, quite unsuspectingly, right into the trap, made Tubby Muffin splutter with rage.

Arthur's footsteps died away down the passage, and Tubby Muffin ceased to thump on the door. It was pretty clear that Beresford-Baggs would not come back to release him, and Tubby had his own reasons for not wanting to attract the attention of anyone else. Mr. Bootles supposed that he was ill, and was under the care of the matron, and a discovery of the facts would have led to painful results for Muffin. He was a prisoner in Study No. 5 until Arthur chose to release him, or until the juniors came out of the Form-rooms after lessons.

"Oh, the awful rotter!" gasped Tubby Muffin. "Fancy shutting a chap up like this for a whole blessed afternoon, too! Oh dear! Just because he's got some beastly shady relation coming! Oh crumbs! And—and I ought to go back to the Form-room before four. If Mr. Bootles finds out—oh dear!"

Tubby Muffin's only consolation was in finishing the toffee. But the toffee was soon finished. Then the fat Classical roamed to and fro in the study, a great deal like a caged lion, or, to be more exact, like a caged guinea-pig.

The 6th Chapter.

'Erb!

"This 'ere Rookwood?"

Old Mack started.

The old Rookwood porter was sunning himself outside his lodge, when a somewhat untidy head, surmounted by a rather greasy cap, was inserted in the opening of the gates.

Old Mack fixed a stern look upon the inquirer.

Besides the head and the cap, he had a view of a soiled collar and a necktie that would have attracted attention anywhere within a radius of a quarter of a mile of its owner. And old Mack was not pleased with the view.

"This here is Rookwood!" he answered curtly.

"Oh, all right."

"Don't you shove that there gate," snapped old Mack. "The likes of you ain't allowed in 'ere!"

A round, rather pimply face looked at him in reddening wrath. The newcomer was a youth of about sixteen, very dusty from a long ride. He eyed old Mack as if he could have bitten him.

"The likes of me!" he ejaculated.

"That's wot I said!" answered old Mack stolidly. "The likes of you young man! You get off with yer, and don't you lean that bike up agin them gates. Now, then!"

Instead of heeding the porter's injunction, the newcomer gave the gate an angry shove, and it flew open. Then he wheeled a dusty bike in.

Mack watched that proceeding with wide-eyed astonishment and gathering wrath.

"My eye!" exclaimed old Mack. "Of all the neck! Get out of 'ere, you young raskil, afore I come to yer."

"So this is 'ow a bloke is treated when he calls on his relation 'ere," said the stranger bitterly.

"You ain't got no relations 'ere, young man," said Mr. Mack. "If you're a relation of Tupper, the boot-boy, this ain't the gate for you to come in, and you knows it!"

"Blow your boot-boy!" retorted the youth. "Do I look as if I was a relation of a boot-boy?"

"You don't look 'arf respectable enough!" said Mr. Mack. "Now, then, are you goin' out, or are you asking to be put?"

"Go and fry your features!" was the disrespectful reply of the youth with the necktie.

Old Mack flushed with wrath and made a stride towards the newcomer. There was a patter of footsteps as Arthur Beresford-Baggs came panting up to the gates.

"Hold on, Mack!" he gasped.

Mr. Mack looked round at him.

ARTHUR'S COUSIN!

(Continued from previous page.)



"You know this young pusson, sir?" he inquired.

"Yes—yes; he's a—a friend of mine," stammered Arthur.

Cousin 'Erb burst into a laugh—a bitter, socialistic laugh.

"Friend o' yorn!" he ejaculated. "That's right; don't you let on to your blooming flunkeys that I'm your cousin."

"Oh!" murmured old Mack, comprehending. And Mr. Mack beat a discreet retreat to his lodge. Mr. Mack could really have kicked himself for his mistake. He wondered whether that little unpleasantness would make any difference to his next munificent tip from the schoolboy millionaire.

Arthur's face was crimson. He held out his hand to his dusty cousin, and 'Erb shook it in rather a gingerly fashion. 'Erb's touchy feelings had evidently been wounded.

"Passin' me orf as a friend o' yorn!" he ejaculated. "I'm s'prised at you, Art!"

"I—I never meant—"

"Course, we ain't all rolling in oof," said 'Erb satirically. "We can't all make fortunes out of the war."

"I say, old chap—"

"Some of us wouldn't if we could!" said 'Erb.

"Come on, old fellow," said Arthur. "I'll trot your bike in. This way!"

"Don't you be in too big a 'urry," admonished 'Erb. "P'raps I ain't good enough to come to this 'ere plice."

Mack had vanished into his lodge, for which Arthur was duly thankful. And he was deeply, deeply thankful that Tubby Muffin was safely locked up in a study, and that it was not a half-holiday. If the old Quad had been crowded with Rookwood fellows just then—

Fortunately, it wasn't! For it could not be denied that Cousin 'Erb's voice and manners left very much to be desired.

"If I ain't good enough," said Cousin 'Erb independently, "I'll go! I come 'ere quite friendly, but if I ain't good enough—"

"Of—of course, you're good enough, old fellow!" said Arthur soothingly. "Never mind the porter—"

"A bloated menial!" said 'Erb bitterly.

"N-n-not at all. He—you—"

"Liveried flunkey!" said 'Erb, with increasing bitterness. "The kind the bloke torks about on the stool at the street corners. You a-settin' of bloated menials on to your own relations, Art—I'm ashamed of yer!"

"But I—I didn't—"

"You've growed into a snob, Art!" said 'Erb, pointing an accusing and rather grubby forefinger at his dismayed cousin. "That's what's the matter with you, Art! You've growed into a snob, 'ere among swells and such."

"I—I haven't—not really—"

"Taking me for a relation of a blooming boot-boy!" exclaimed 'Erb, with breathless indignation—which seemed to hint that 'Erb himself was not quite free from snobbery.

"Won't you come in, old chap?" urged Arthur. "I'll leave your bike here—we'll go for a spin presently."

"I didn't come 'ere to go for a spin," said 'Erb. "I came to see you. You want to get me out of sight of the swells—what?"

"Oh, 'Erb!"

"Well, I ain't goin' for any old spin," said 'Erb. "I've done enough for a bit. I wouldn't mind settin' down, and p'raps havin' a cup o' tea—"

"Come along!" said Arthur brightly. "The tuck shop's open, and we can get what we want in there."

'Erb hesitated; but he followed Arthur in, leaving his dusty bike leaning against the wall. Arthur led the way to Sergeant Kettle's little shop behind the beeches. Then 'Erb stopped.

"Ain't we going into the 'ouse?" he asked.

"We can't get any tea there," explained Arthur. "It isn't tea-time yet."

"I don't mind waiting till tea-time," said 'Erb. "I thought you'd show me the plice. You got a study or something, ain't you?"

"Y-e-s—"

"And friends 'ere, I s'pose?" said 'Erb.

"Oh, yes! But—but it's lesson time," explained Arthur, "the fellows are all in class. I've got leave

to see you, or I should be in class with the rest."

"I see. I sha'n't see your friends till they come outer class, is that it?" inquired 'Erb, watching him narrowly.

Poor Arthur looked troubled. He could not explain to 'Erb that he was to go before the fellows came out of class.

"P'raps you'd rather they didn't see me?" said 'Erb, quick to take offence.

"You—you see—"

"Aunt Sarah said you wasn't growed snobbish, like your father," said 'Erb. "I didn't quite swaller it then. Now I know."

"Never mind my father—"

"I don't mind 'im," said 'Erb loftily. "I don't mind Sir Japhet Beresford-Baggs, I can tell you! I'd like 'im to tell me where he found the Beresfords; there ain't any in our branch of the family, I know that. P'raps he picked 'em up along of the war profits. P'raps he won't always be rolling in oof, neither. I've read in the pipers that the blokes in Parlyment are getting arter the profiteers 'ot!"

This agreeable remark elicited no reply from Arthur. The hapless youth was looking very distressed. Uncle Bill and Aunt Sarah were nothing like cousin 'Erb. It was clear that 'Erb had come in a suspicious mood, and that he would have been rather disappointed than otherwise if his suspicions had not been confirmed. But they were confirmed; so he was saved from that disappointment. He was quite anxious to find his wealthy cousin a snob; and he was satisfied that he had found him one.

"Where's your 'eadmaster?" asked 'Erb suddenly.

"He—he's busy. He takes the Sixth Form, you know."

"I don't know," answered 'Erb.

He turned his back on the tuck-shop and came through the beeches again. He stared up with some interest at the great facade of Rookwood.

"So the 'eadmaster's busy, and all the blokes are busy," he remarked. "There ain't nobody for me to see. I dessey the 'eadmaster won't be busy all day, though. Are you goin' to interdooce me to your 'eadmaster?"

"There—there's no need—"

"Ain't there?" said 'Erb, with mocking sarcasm. "No, I s'pose there ain't, Art! And Aunt Sarah said you wasn't growed a snob! You pulled the wool over 'er eyes proper."

"I say, 'Erb—"

Arthur.

"There's a bloke there a-watchin' of us!" said 'Erb, indicating a distant study window with a dirty thumb. Arthur started, and glanced in the indicated direction. The fat

face of Tubby Muffin was framed in the window of Study No. 5 in the Fourth.

"Let's get into the shop and have some tea!" gasped Arthur.

"You don't want that bloke even to see me?" sneered 'Erb. "I was a fool to come 'ere. I knowed what to expect, and you're jest as I expected to find you, Art. Well, I ain't goin' to disgrace you afore your swell friends. I'm goin'!"

"'Erb!" exclaimed Arthur in great distress.

But cousin 'Erb did not heed. He strode away towards the gates, with settled determination in his lowering brow.

Arthur hurried after him.

"'Erb, old chap, you'll stay a bit and—"

"No, I won't!" answered 'Erb, dragging his bicycle away from the wall. "I ain't wanted 'ere, and I know it!"

"I'm glad to see you, 'Erb—"

"Are you goin' to interdooce me to your 'eadmaster?" demanded 'Erb, with the air of a fellow propounding a "poser."

"There's no need; Dr. Chisholm won't expect to see you. Do be reasonable, 'Erb, old fellow—"

"I ain't reasonable now, ain't I?" said 'Erb. "Well, I'm goin'—if you'll horder your pampered menial to hopen that there gate."

"I'll open it—but—"

Cousin 'Erb wheeled his bike out into the road. Arthur watched him, hardly knowing whether to be more pleased at his departure, or distressed by his perversity. 'Erb stood holding his bike for a minute, while he addressed a gracious farewell to his cousin.

"Good-bye, Art!" he said. "I knowed what to expect, and it's 'appened. I don't bear no malice; and I only 'ope that you won't 'ave to go back to the fish shop when the blokes in Parlyment make your father 'and over the war profits. That's all!"

And with that, cousin 'Erb threw a leg over his bike, mounted, and pedalled away.

Arthur Beresford-Baggs stood gazing after him till a turn of the road hid him from sight.

Then he sighed, as he turned back into the gateway of Rookwood School. Cousin 'Erb's visit had not added to his happiness.

Jimmy Silver clapped Arthur on the shoulder cheerily "when the Fourth came out of their class-room. He found the gilded youth "mooching" rather aimlessly in the quad, with a clouded, thoughtful brow.

"Had a good time this afternoon?" asked Jimmy cheerily.

"Oh, ripping!" said Arthur glumly.

"Seen anything of Muffin?"

"Muffin! Oh, my hat!"

Arthur ran into the house. Jimmy Silver's question had recalled Tubby to his mind, whom he had completely forgotten. He ran up to the Fourth-form passage to release the fat Classical.

"You—you—you rotter!" spluttered Tubby Muffin, as the door opened. "I saw him—I saw the boulder from the window! I'll tell Torny and Topy and Smythe and—yaroooop!"

Tubby Muffin fled from the study with the exasperated Arthur's boot behind him. Arthur slammed the door after the fat Classical as he fled. Then he threw himself into a chair glumly. He was thinking of cousin 'Erb and his satirical bitterness; and wondering, too, what effect Tubby's description of the visitor would have upon his nutty friends. Undoubtedly there were thorns in the path of the son of a millionaire whose relatives had not become millionaires also!

THE END.

(Next Monday's long, complete story of Rookwood is entitled "Exit Arthur!" By Owen Conquest. Don't miss it!)

GOOD STORIES!

"I want you to understand," he said, addressing his seventeen-year-old son, "that I am still boss of this house."

"All right, dad," the boy replied; "but you're a coward to make the boast behind mother's back."

"We won't discharge you, Mr. Perkins," said the manager. "We shall allow you to tender your resignation."

"Tendering it won't make it any the less rough," gloomily returned Perkins.

"Yes, my son is going to spend a few days in London."

"He'll get swindled, for a certainty."

"Well, he'll be sure to come home. He's wearing a pound note underneath a porous plaster on his chest."

"You are charged with permitting your horse to stand unattended for over an hour!" chanted the magistrate.

"Well, I defy anybody to teach the brute to sit down!" protested the prisoner, before being dragged away.

"I told Uncle Simon that he was getting too old and feeble to attend to business."

"Did he take it kindly?"

"He threw me out of the office!"

OUR SPECIAL FOOTBALL ARTICLE.



By STANLEY FAZACKERLEY.

The Famous Forward of Sheffield United, who scored one of the goals by which that team won the cup in 1915.

OF all the days in the football calendar, Cup Final day stands out as the most important. The International matches—especially those between England and Scotland—are great occasions, and every footballer hopes at some time in his career to be included in the side which represents the country in which he was born.

Yet I guarantee that if a census were taken, and footballers generally were asked whether they would prefer an International cap or a Cup-winning medal, the great majority of them would vote for the latter. No, there is nothing quite like the Cup Final in the old world of sport.

This season the interest taken in the encounter will no doubt be as great, and probably greater, than ever before in the history of the game.

Unfortunately, there is no ground in the country which is capable of holding the mighty number of people who will want to see the match on Saturday. As you are no doubt aware, Cup Finals were for many

years played at the Crystal Palace, and as many as a hundred and twenty thousand people have gathered there to see the last keen struggle for the silver bauble which is known as the English Cup.

This season, though, the Palace enclosure was not available, so the ground of the Chelsea Club at Stamford Bridge was chosen many months ago. And many months ago, too, every available seat was snatched up.

I understand that eighty thousand people is about the limit which the Chelsea ground will hold, so that the Cup Final attendance record will not be broken this time round. It is quite likely, though, that the takings will create a new record, for the minimum charge for admission has been sent up to three shillings.

There is one other strange feature about this season's final, too, so far as those who attend are concerned. There will be no cheap trips from the provinces like there used to be in the old days.

Well do I remember, when I was

quite a boy, taking a trip to London to see a Cup Final. That was indeed a red-letter day for me, and I little dreamt then that the time would come when I should be a member of a Cup Final team, as I was in 1915. Moreover, I was lucky enough to score one of the goals which helped my team to win against Chelsea in 1915, and you can take it from me that I was a happy man that night. So long as I have any memory left shall I remember my Cup Final experience.

If the players who take the field at Stamford Bridge next Saturday are anything like I was, they will be excited about it, too. How can it be otherwise? For weeks the sporting pages of the various newspapers have been largely given up to discussing the chances of the two teams concerned.

The men have been photographed during training, have been interviewed by the reporters, and shoals of letters have reached the two captains, and the other players as well, wishing the team success in the great struggle.

Under such circumstances, and remembering the importance of the occasion, how can the players be expected to carry out the bit of advice which is so often given to the members of a Cup-team—"Keep cool?"

Keep cool, indeed, with all that electricity in the air which seems to arise from the presence of tens of thousands of spectators all wound up to the very highest pitch of excitement.

I have been told by lots of people who have made a practice of seeing the Cup Final every year that they have often been disappointed in the quality of the play. Well, so far as I am concerned, the surprising part of it is that the players can do anything right!

Some time back, when Aston Villa were playing Sunderland in a Cup Final, a penalty-kick was awarded to the Villa, and the man who took it shot the ball wide of the mark. He came in for a lot of criticism, but any player who has ever taken part in these games would, I am certain, feel very sorry for that player. Of all the nerve-racking experiences which

STANLEY FAZACKERLEY



Is the author of the accompanying footer article specially written for the BOYS' FRIEND.

can be imagined, I should think that to be asked to take a penalty-kick in a Cup Final would be about the limit.

On Saturday, too, I shall give a thought to the referee who has been appointed to control the match. I don't know whether he will be as excited as the players, but anyway, I can't imagine him keeping very cool, can you?

Controlling a match when so much may hang on his decisions is a thankless task, which I for one would not care to take on at any price.

In the history of Cup Finals there have been two or three occasions when the referee has given what the crowd thought were doubtful decisions, and I remember one instance when most of the critics present at the game were agreed that the goal by which the match was won should not have been allowed, because the scorer was said to have been offside. The one thing which the referee must hope for on Saturday is that everything will go off all right, and that he will not give any wrong decisions which will actually affect the result.

As to which side will win—well, this Cup Final will be like other Cup Finals—anything may happen. It is rather peculiar, though, how many times in the history of the competition the favourites have lost and the non-favourites won in the final.

A story is told, for instance, of how many years ago a side which reached the final was very sure of winning. A band was duly engaged to welcome home the conquering heroes, and ribbon was bought in abundance with which to decorate the Cup when it was brought home, while the M.P.'s of the town were asked to be in attendance to drink out of the Cup. Alas! the band never played, the ribbon was never used, and the champagne did not flow, so far as that club was concerned. They started favourites, but they lost!

And that really is the tragedy of the Cup—that there must be a loser as well as a winner; that eleven players who are now so full of hope are doomed to disappointment. They will have been so near, and yet will be just as far off winning as if they had been knocked out in the first round.

Give the losers a thought on Saturday night when you hear the result.

Stanley Fazackerley.



TODGERS THE SPECULATOR

A Splendid, Long, Complete Story of FRANK RICHARDS & Co., of CEDAR CREEK SCHOOL. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

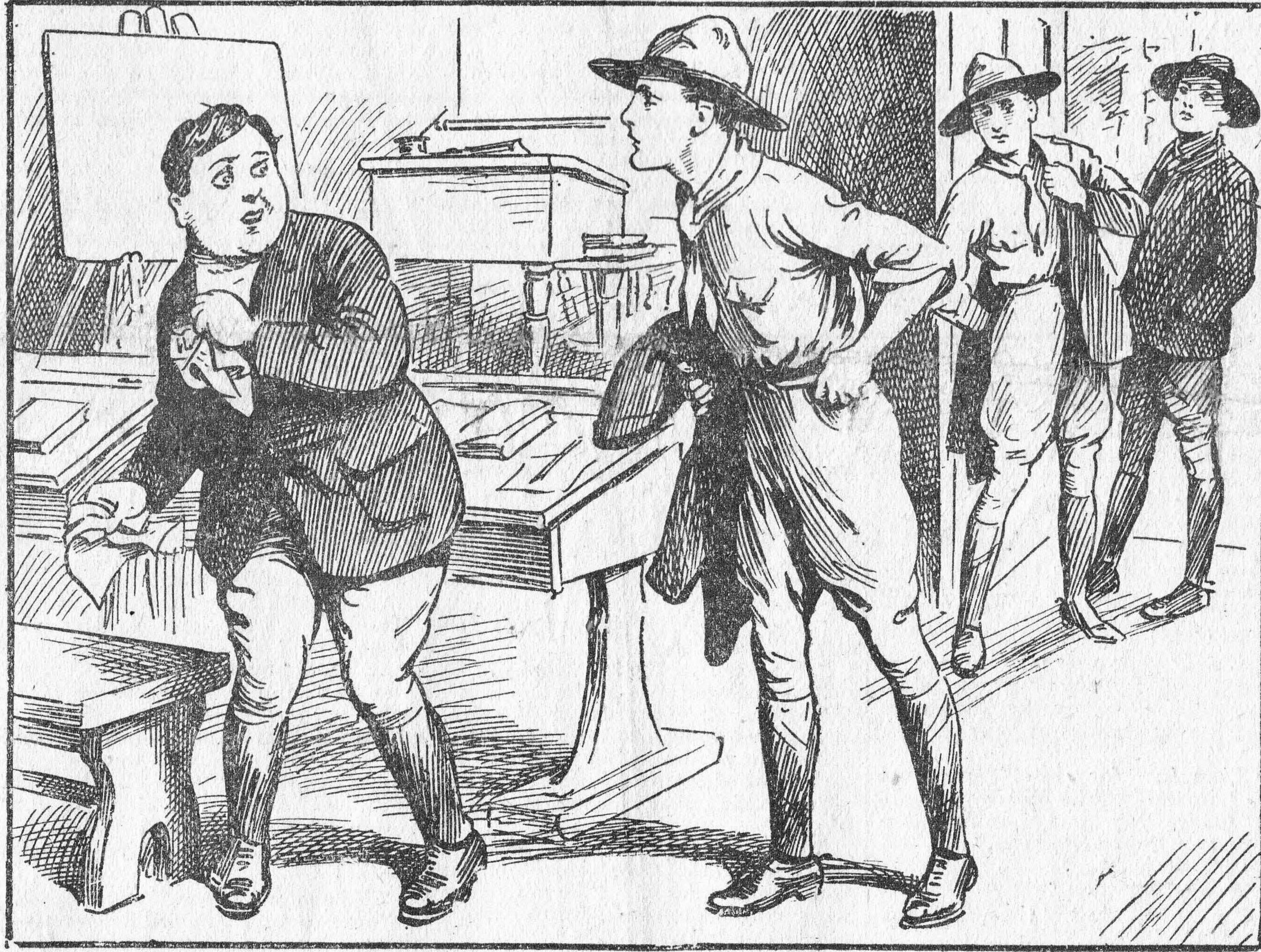
The 1st Chapter.

Capital Required!

"Franky, old scout!" Frank Richards grinned. When Chunky Todgers addressed him in that affectionate manner, it was pretty plain evidence that Master Todgers was "after" something. "You're looking jolly well after your holiday, Franky." "Thanks!" "I thought a good bit about you while you were off to California," continued Chunky Todgers. "I'd have come with you and looked after you, and all that, only you forgot to ask me." "D-d-did I?" murmured Frank, and Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclere smiled. It was not exactly due to forgetfulness that the fat Chunky had not been included in the holiday-party to Mount Shasta, over the "line." The plump youth would have been rather in the way on that perilous expedition. "You did," said Chunky; "otherwise I'd have come, and seen you through. In that case, I suppose I should have had a whack in the nuggets you found, old chap." "Oh!" "I'm jolly glad you were successful," said Todgers cordially. "Never more pleased in my life, Franky." "That's very good of you!" smiled Frank, feeling in his pocket. Fortune had been smiling on Frank Richards, and he was prepared to "stand" Chunky Todgers maple-sugar to a reasonable extent. "Will a dollar do?" Chunky blinked at him reproachfully. "I haven't come along to borrow a dollar, Frank." "Oh! My mistake!" "The fact is—" "He's going to make it ten dollars," murmured Bob Lawless. "Chunky believes in making hay while the sun shines!" Chunky Todgers did not heed. "You really found a lot of nuggets, Franky?" he said. "Certainly!" "And your share comes to hundreds of dollars, I've heard," said Chunky, eagerly. "More than that," said Frank, with a smile. "Five hundred pounds, in English." "How much is that in real money?" "In Canadian money, if you mean that, you ass, it's two thousand five hundred dollars, or thereabouts." Chunky's eyes glistened. "I say, Franky, that's an awful lot of money! I say, you'll never be able to spend it, you know. I'll tell you what! I'll help you." "Ha, ha, ha!" "I'm not joking!" persisted Chunky. "I will, you know. What are you going to do with it, Franky?" "I've handed it to my uncle—" "Oh, you jay!" "To take care of," explained Frank. "It's in the bank now." "But you're not going to leave it there? I say, it's an awful waste—leaving money in the bank." "Not for ever," agreed Frank. "I've written to my father and sister to tell them about it." "You seem to have forgotten your best pal, Franky!" said Chunky Todgers, sorrowfully. "Not at all! Bob and Beau have their own shares, you know." "I wasn't speaking of those two grinning jays. I was speaking of myself," said Chunky Todgers warmly. "Well, I've got ten dollars for you, Chunky, if you like," said Frank good-naturedly. "I don't like it!" snapped Chunky. "All serene, then." "I was thinking of a thousand dollars—" "Eh?"

"Merely as a loan," said Chunky Todgers hastily. "Better think again!" suggested Frank Richards, laughing. "Make it ten dollars, old chap, and there you are!" Frank Richards held up a ten-dollar bill. Chunky gave it a contemptuous glare and a sniff; but upon second thoughts he took it in his plump finger and thumb and stowed it away. But it was soon evident that Chunky looked upon the ten-dollar bill only as an instalment. "Now, Franky, about that thousand dollars—" "Nothing about that, Chunky." "Time we got a move on," remarked Bob Lawless, detaching himself from the stack of logs he was seated on, in the corner of the play-

say, old chap, listen to me a minute. I've had this stunt in my head a long time, only cash was short. Now there's plenty of money about there's a chance of getting on with it—see? I'm not asking you to hand me money for nothing. Simply a loan, and I'll hand it back to you increased. See? You galoots know that I'm a fellow with ideas; but I've always been handicapped by want of ready cash. "It all goes in maple-sugar, doesn't it?" said Bob sympathetically, and his chums chuckled. "Oh, rats! Look here, Franky, how would you like to turn a thousand dollars into ten thousand dollars—" "Like a bird! How's it to be done?" "Hand it to me—" "That would only turn it into



SUSPICIOUS! Chunky's face was crimson, and his manner confused. He looked like a fellow who had been caught in a guilty act. His desk was covered with papers; and as Bob Lawless stepped into the schoolroom, he gathered them hastily up, and crumpled them. "What are you up to?" asked Bob. "N-n-nothing," stammered Chunky. "You—you keep away, you know."

ground at Cedar Creek School. "The bell will be going soon." "Hold on!" exclaimed Chunky Todgers. "You can vamoose as soon as you like, Bob—and you, Cherub—but I want to speak to you, Franky. It's important!" "My dear ass—" "Look here, Frank, old scout—you galoots can clear, you know—" Bob Lawless chuckled. "I guess we're not going to clear and leave Franky to you, sonny," he answered. "Franky's too soft for you!" "Fathead!" said Frank politely. "I guess that's why Chunky's tackling you instead of me," chuckled Bob. "He knows how much chance he has of bagging a pile of dollars from me, don't you, Chunky?" "I know you're mean, Bob—Leggo my ear, you silly jay!" howled Chunky Todgers. "I mean, I'm speaking to Frank because he's my old chum. Didn't I stand by him when he first came out here, a green tenderfoot? Wasn't I a—a—a father to him?" "Ha, ha, ha!" "I wish you fellows would clear off, while I'm talking to Franky," said Chunky Todgers crossly. "I

maple-sugar and plum-cakes, at Gunten's store." "Ha, ha, ha!" "I tell you it's a business stunt—a dodge for getting rich quick!" howled Chunky Todgers. "Now there's plenty of money, I can try it on—see? You hand me a thousand dollars—" "I don't think!" "I turn it into ten thousand—" "I guess not!" "Then we share alike—five thousand each!" said Chunky Todgers. "I guess that's fair play!" "Fair as a die!" grinned Bob Lawless. "Go it, Franky; you don't often get an offer like that!" The chums of Cedar Creek chortled in chorus. Chunky Todgers eyed them with an exasperated expression. He did not see anything to chortle about. "Hallo, there's the bell!" exclaimed Beauclere. "I say—" But Frank Richards & Co. walked off towards the lumber school, and Chunky, with a snort, gave it up. Chunky's great "stunt" for getting rich quick had to be postponed, at least for the present.

The 2nd Chapter.
An Easy Way to Wealth.
Frank Richards received several reproachful glances in class that afternoon from Master Todgers. Like the respected parent of Hamlet in the play, Chunky had a countenance more of sorrow than of anger. Many and varied were the wonderful ideas that were hatched in the powerful brain of Joseph Todgers. Cedar Creek School had chortled many a time over his weird stunts. He had tried his fortune as an author, as a poet, and as several other things, and thereby added considerably to the gaiety of the school in the backwoods. Among other things, Chunky prided himself upon his abilities as a business man—if only he got a chance! Hitherto he had been handicapped by a shortage of cash—the most tremendous ability could scarcely get going, as it were, on an allowance of a quarter of a dollar a week. Even a Rockefeller, a Wanamaker, or a Marshall Field could hardly have started on the primrose path of money-making with so very limited a capital. Now that difficulty had vanished, there was, as Chunky said, money about. It was Frank Richards' money, but that was a trifle to which Chunky attached no importance. It did not matter whose money it was, so long as Todgers had command of it. In his hands, it was going to increase like a snowball rolling down a snowy hillside—if all went well! It was really exasperating to be stopped at the outset of a career of fortune by some absurd objections on the part of the owner of the necessary money. That was how Chunky looked at it. Never had he so deeply sympathised

do any harm. Give him five minutes." "All serene!" said Frank, taking out his watch. "Five minutes, Chunky. Make the most of it." "You silly jay—" "Ten seconds gone!" "Look here, you ass—" "Fifteen seconds!" Chunky Todgers breathed hard. The three chums waited, grinning. It was evident that they intended to give him only the five minutes, though Chunky was prepared with a scheme for getting rich quick and putting Rockefeller and Wanamakers into the shade. "Half a minute!" said Frank; Richards sententiously. "You're losing time, Chunky. Wag your chin while you've got a chance!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Well, look here!" said Chunky hurriedly. "Just listen to me. Now we've got the necessary capital—" "We?" ejaculated Frank. "Well, you've got it, but it comes to the same thing if you hand it to me," explained Chunky. "If!" murmured Frank Richards, and his chums chuckled. There was a bigger "if" in the matter than Master Todgers seemed to realise. "The cash is in the bank at Thompson, isn't it?" pursued Chunky. "Yes." "Then all you've got to do is to give me a written draft on the bank, and they will hand it over." "That's all!" chuckled Frank. "Well, that isn't much trouble. I'll get you some ink and paper. You'll simply have to sign your name, and there you are!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "I don't see anything to snigger at. With a draft for a thousand dollars, I mosey along to old Isaacs' office—you know old Isaacs in Thompson? He has an office in Kamloops, too, where they can send a wire along the railway to Montreal." "A wire to Montreal?" ejaculated Frank Richards. "Yep. That will be necessary, of course." "Necessary for what?" "To buy the shares," explained Chunky. "To buy the shares?" repeated Frank Richards blankly. "Of course. A stock operation, you know." "My only hat!" Frank Richards & Co. simply stared at the cheerful Chunky. He had succeeded in surprising them, at least. "That's the stunt," said Chunky, pleased at having made an impression. "It's as easy as falling off a log to a galoot with brains like me." "What do you know about stocks and shares, you fat chump?" howled Frank Richards. "Lots! Father has a paper from Kamloops, you know, and they give the prices, from the Montreal Exchange, you know. I've often read down the prices and wished I had some dust to speculate with—" "Speculate—you?" gasped Frank. "You bet! Of course, it's a dangerous game for a chap who isn't all there," said Chunky. "That doesn't apply to me. With my cool head—" "Cool cheek, you mean!" "And sagacity, and so on, I'm just the galoot to pull it off. It's easy. That's how the American millionaires make their huge fortunes, you know. Small beginnings like this—bigger things later on. I sha'n't always be speculating with a miserable thousand dollars or so," said Chunky disdainfully. "That's only a start. Later on, there will be deals involving millions of dollars." "Will there, by Jove?" "Sure." "And how do you get rich quick by buying shares on the Exchange at Montreal?" asked Bob. "You buy them cheap, and sell them dear," explained Chunky patiently, "same as old Gunten did. He bought Honks' Elevator shares at two dollars, and sold them at ten dollars. I heard him telling father about it. He made no end of money. Ever since then I've kept my eye on the quotation of Honks' shares—watched 'em go up and down. And—just as if it were a stroke of luck specially for me—they're down to two dollars again." "Oh!" "I buy at two dollars," said Chunky eagerly. "I sell at ten dollars—see? Same as Mr. Gunten did. I get five hundred shares for a thousand dollars. When I sell them at ten dollars each, that's a clear profit of four thousand dollars. You have to deduct broker's fees; that's not very much. Of course, I shall stand you a whack in the huge profits, Franky, as you provide the capital."

"Oh crumbs! And suppose the shares don't rise?"

"Oh, they will! They did before. Don't I keep on telling you that Mr. Gunten bought at two and sold at ten."

"Probably Mr. Gunten knew more about the game than you do, fathead! If the shares sell at two dollars, they can't be worth ten, and it was some wangle that pushed them up to ten for selling. And they didn't stay at ten."

"Oh, you don't know anything about stock exchanges, old chap!" said Chunky patronisingly. "You leave the brain work to me. That's my holt, you know. Just give me a draft on the Thompson bank for a thousand dollars, and I'll do the rest."

"You born idiot—"

"Eh?"

"You champion chump—"

"Look here—"

"Go and eat coke!"

"I say, Franky, you're not going to be a mean jay!" exclaimed Chunky Todgers. "Here, I'm offering to make you rich—"

"Fathead!"

"It's the chance of a lifetime! Honks' shares may rise to ten dollars again any day. It may be too late next week even—"

"Or they may go down to ten cents!" chuckled Bob Lawless.

"Don't I keep on telling you you don't understand these matters?" snorted Chunky Todgers. "I do. I've read the City news in the Kamloops paper every day for months, ever since I heard old Gunten tell my father about his deal in Honks. I can tell you I've wished like anything that I had some capital—"

"Why doesn't old Gunten buy them again?" asked Beauclerc.

"Pr'aps he don't know—"

"Ha, ha! More likely he does know," grinned Bob. "And this time he doesn't know there's a dodge on to push the shares and plant them on jays at ten dollars each."

"That's all rot! Now, Franky—"

"Time's up!" said Frank Richards, putting back his watch. "You've had six minutes, Chunky, instead of five."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Look here—"

"Good-bye!"

Frank Richards & Co. hurried on to the corral. They had heard enough of Chunky Todgers' wonderful stunt. Speculating on a stock exchange was likely to turn out more disastrously for Todgers than his essays as an author and a poet, if he had the capital! Fortunately, he hadn't the capital.

But Chunky was not to be shaken off easily. Frank Richards' good fortune was, as Chunky considered it, the chance of a lifetime. Never again would he have the chance of laying his fat hands on a sum of money sufficiently large for a stock operation. It was now or never!

The fat schoolboy rushed into the corral after the Co.

"Hold on! I say, Franky—"

"Bow-wow!"

The chums of Cedar Creek led out their horses for the homeward ride. Chunky Todgers dragged out his fat pony, and followed.

"I say, Franky!" he bawled, as they reached the trail.

"Good-night!"

"Just listen to me!"

"Fathead!"

Frank Richards & Co. rode off, chuckling. Chunky Todgers glared after them in great exasperation. Then, with a moody brow, he turned his fat pony homeward. Fortune was knocking at his door, so to speak, and he could not open it and let the goddess in, because Frank Richards, like Cassius, persisted in "locking rascal counters from his friends." It really was exasperating.

The 3rd Chapter.

Chunky is Mysterious!

During the following days Chunky Todgers kept up a persistent siege of Frank Richards & Co.

As this was the chance of a lifetime, Chunky naturally did not want to let it pass.

At every moment out of school the chums were haunted by Todgers, eager to explain the wonderful advantages of buying shares in Honks' Elevator Co. at two dollars, and selling them later to an unsuspecting public at ten.

The Co. persisted in turning up their noses at that golden chance of fortune.

Chunky haunted them in vain.

After a few days the chums found their patience running out, and Bob Lawless introduced a heavy boot into the discussion.

That had a deterring effect on

Chunky. He left the Co. alone, and looked for chances of catching Frank Richards by himself. Instinctively, Chunky had fastened on the good-natured Frank as the most probable victim, but Frank's good nature did not extend to handing over a slice of his little fortune to Chunky to speculate with. He would certainly not have done so, if he had supposed there was a chance of success; but he was too clear-headed to suppose that for a moment.

Frank had, in fact, asked his uncle, Mr. Lawless, a question or two on the subject of Honks' Elevator Co., and the rancher told him it was a worthless company, the shares in which were occasionally "run up" by astute riggers of the market, who had bought them cheap, and desired to sell them dear.

Frank had guessed as much for himself, but he explained it to Chunky in vain.

Chunky was in possession of superior knowledge on the subject. At all events, he was satisfied that he was.

He did not want reasoning. All he wanted was a thousand dollars, so that a buying order could be wired to Montreal. Chunky looked at the quotation of Honks' shares every time he saw the Kamloops paper, in fear lest they should already have risen. But he found comfort. The shares did not rise. There was still time!

Chunky's sorrowful countenance haunted Frank Richards in class and out of class. Frank was standing in his own light, as Chunky sorrowfully explained to him. It was too bad, when he was trying to make his friends rich, that they should "shoo" him off in this way. He had offered Frank a liberal "whack" in the huge profits, and it was no use. And the following week he came to Frank with a determined expression on his face. Bob Lawless made a motion with his boot, and Chunky backed off.

"Don't you be a beast, Bob Lawless! I guess I've come to give you my last word on the subject," said Chunky darkly.

"Well, we'll be glad to hear that, at all events," remarked Vere Beauclerc, with a smile.

"Chuck it off your chest, and absquatulate!" said Bob.

Chunky fixed accusing eyes on Frank Richards.

"I've offered to make you rich!" he said.

"Declined with thanks, old chap!"

"Honks' shares are still quoted at two dollars—"

"Go hon!"

"They may move up any day."

"Let 'em!"

"Will you give me a draft on the Thompson bank for a thousand dollars?"

"No!"

"It's for your own sake more than mine," said Chunky Todgers plaintively. "I'm placing my knowledge and my vast abilities at your service, really."

"Keep 'em for class!" suggested Bob Lawless. "Miss Meadows would like to see you put a little more ability into your arithmetic."

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chunky snorted.

"For the last time, Frank Richards!" he said.

"Ass!"

"Then it's your own look-out!" said Chunky darkly and mysteriously.

"What is?"

"Never mind! I'm going to make us both rich. You'll thank me afterwards."

"What are you driving at, you fat duffer?" asked Frank, puzzled.

"You'll know later."

With that mysterious reply, Chunky Todgers rolled away.

"What on earth had the young duffer got in his silly head now?" said Frank Richards.

"Goodness knows!" yawned Bob Lawless. "Perhaps he's going to write another stunning poem, and sell it for a thousand dollars—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Whether Chunky Todgers was writing another poem or not he was very busy with his pen that day. After morning lessons he stayed in the school-room, busy at his desk. He came out to dinner with a smudge of ink on his fat little nose, and a bundle of papers in his pocket. After dinner, instead of going out into the playground, he returned to the school-room.

Frank Richards gave him a look-in just before afternoon lessons. He found Chunky scribbling away busily at his desk.

As Frank came up Chunky started, crimsoned, and hastily turned over the sheet he was scribbling on.

"Hollo! Is that a deadly secret?" asked Frank, smiling.

"N-n-no."

"Another giddy poem?" grinned Frank.

"Nunno."

"What are you doing with this?" asked Frank, catching sight of his school geography on Todgers' desk.

The book was open at the title-page, on which Frank's name was written in his own hand.

"N-n-nothing!"

"Studying geography out of lesson time!" said Frank, in wonder. "Well, go ahead, old chap! It's rather new for you, and may do you good."

And Frank strolled away, to Chunky's evident relief.

The 4th Chapter.

The Limit!

After lessons that day, Frank Richards & Co. stayed behind to split logs for the school, and Chunky Todgers stayed behind—in the school-room. He was busy scribbling at his desk, as before. Miss Meadows, who observed him, supposed that her most backward pupil was making an effort to improve, and she gave him a kindly smile as she went out.

Whatever the fat youth was doing, he kept very hard at his task, with an industry that was very unusual with him.

When Frank Richards & Co. had finished the logs, and came in for their coats, they saw Chunky, through the school-room door, still "going it."

"My hat! There's Todgers!" ejaculated Frank. "He will be shut in if he hangs on much longer."

"Chunky!" bawled Bob.

Todgers looked up with a start.

"Hollo! Ain't you fellows gone?" he exclaimed.

"Just going! You'll be late."

"Late! The bank don't close early to-day."

"The bank!" repeated Frank Richards. "What bank?"

Todgers crimsoned.

"I—I mean—I—I don't mean anything! It's all right."

"So you're going to the bank?" said Bob Lawless. "Has Franky given you that draft on the bank then?"

"No fear!" grinned Frank.

"I—did I say bank?" stammered Chunky Todgers. "I—I mean Gunten's store—that's what I really meant to say. You gits mosey off! You're bethering me!"

Bob Lawless eyed him very curiously.

Chunky's face was crimson, and his manner confused. He looked exactly like a fellow who had been caught in a guilty act. His desk was covered with scribbled paper, and as Bob Lawless stepped into the school-room, he gathered them hastily up, and crumpled them.

"You—you keep away, you know!" he gasped.

"What are you up to, Chunky?"

"N-n-nothing!"

Chunky ran towards the log-fire, which was dying out, and threw the crumpled papers on it. Then he rolled out of the school-room, and cut across to the corral with unaccustomed haste.

"What on earth is the fat idiot up to?" exclaimed Bob, in amazement and some alarm. "Here's your geography on his desk, Frank—that's your name in it."

"He had it there before," said Frank—"open at the same page, too."

"What has he been scribbling?"

"Blessed if I know!"

"He's jolly mysterious about it—and he's going to the bank, too. Sure it isn't possible that—that—"

Bob strode towards the hearth. The crumpled sheets Chunky had pitched into the dying embers were still smouldering. Bob caught up a sheet of paper, browned but not burnt, and looked at it, and gave a howl.

"Look!"

"Good heavens!"

Frank Richards & Co. gazed at the paper, aghast. For upon it was written, in a clumsy imitation of Frank's hand:

"Pay J. Todgers, Esq., the sum of one thousand dollars."

"F. RICHARDS."

For a few moments the three schoolboys were dumb. A vague suspicion had flashed into Bob's mind, but he was dumbfounded at seeing it confirmed in this way.

"The awful young rascal!" gasped Beauclerc at last.

"The mad young idiot!" exclaimed Frank. "He—he's going to the bank with a forged paper in my name! They wouldn't give him the money. This wouldn't impose on them."

"He thinks it would!" growled Bob. "He's more idiot than anything else. 'Tain't as if a sensible

chap did it! But—you fellows run out and stop him, while I get rid of this rubbish!"

Bob Lawless stirred the papers into flame, while his comrades ran out of the school-room. He was after them in a minute, and he found them shouting to Chunky Todgers, who had just ridden out of the gates of Cedar Creek on the Thompson trail.

"Chunky!"

"Todgers!"

"Stop!"

Instead of stopping, Chunky urged on his fat pony, and galloped away in the direction of Thompson Town.

"The hosses!" shouted Bob.

The chums dashed to the corral and dragged out their horses. In less than a minute they were mounted and riding after Chunky Todgers at full gallop.

Clatter, clatter, clatter!

Chunky Todgers glanced over his shoulder, at the ringing of hoof-beats on the trail behind him.

His fat face paled a little. In the looks of Frank Richards & Co. he could read what they knew.

"Stop, you fat villain!" roared Bob Lawless, brandishing his riding-whip. "Chunky, stop!" shouted Frank.

Todgers urged his pony desperately. "I guess we'll run him down!" panted Bob Lawless.

The chums rode their hardest.

Chunky Todgers drove on his fat little pony desperately, but the horses gained fast at every stride.

Before the fat youth was half-way to Thompson Frank Richards & Co. were riding round him.

Frank caught at his rein.

"Todgers—"

"Leggo!" howled-Chunky.

"Stop, you born idiot!"

"I—I won't— Yaroooooh!"

Bob Lawless had Chunky by the collar, and he stopped—bumping off his pony into the grass of the trail.

The chums dismounted and surrounded him. Chunky Todgers sat in the grass and roared.

"Now, you rascal—" panted Bob. "Yaroooooh!"

"Going to the bank, are you?" exclaimed Bob wrathfully. "You're going to the sheriff, my pippin, and you'll sleep in the calaboose to-night!"

"Ow!"

"You've got a paper about you, Chunky, that you've written in my name," said Frank Richards quietly. "Give it to me at once."

"I—I— Yaroooooh!"

Bob Lawless' riding-whip came across Chunky's fat shoulders; and then he handed over the paper in a great hurry.

"You fat idiot!" said Frank. "They wouldn't have paid out any money on this. You would have been detained, and the sheriff sent for!"

"It's all your fault!" gasped Chunky. "Don't you yowl at me, Bob; I was only doing it for Frank's sake. I wouldn't let him stand in his own light, I'm too generous—"

"Why, you—you—"

"Keep that paper, Franky," said Bob Lawless. "That's to go to the sheriff with Todgers. We'll take them together!"

Chunky Todgers uttered a howl.

"Yow-ow! I—I'm not going to the sheriff!"

"You jolly well are!"

"He—he would think I'd committed forgery if he saw that paper!" howled Chunky, in alarm.

"Well, what have you done, you rascal?"

"I—I was doing it for Frank's sake, you know—just using his name to do him a good turn—" gasped Chunky.

"You can go to the sheriff, or you can have a jolly good hiding!" said Bob Lawless grimly. "Take your choice. You'll have to learn not to do people these good turns, you young villain!"

"I—I say—"

"Which is it to be?" roared Bob, brandishing his whip.

"I—I'd rather have the hiding, but I—"

"Roll him over!"

"Whack, whack, whack, whack!"

"Yaroooooh! Yoop! Whooooop!"

Chunky Todgers' wild yells rang through the timber as Bob Lawless laid on the riding-whip with a vigorous hand. It was true that the hapless Chunky was too stupid to realise the wrong he had done; but Bob felt that a severe lesson was needed, as undoubtedly it was; and his chums agreed with him. For his own good, Chunky Todgers had to go through it; and he went through it, rather than go before the sheriff, but there was weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth as he received his lesson.

"There!" gasped Bob, when his arm was fatigued. "I guess that will do for you, Chunky!"

"Yaroooooh!"

"It's for your own good, you know," said Frank.

"Yow-ow-ow!" Chunky sat up and roared. "I won't make you rich now, Frank Richards— Yoop! Yah! I won't—yarooooh!—make you a millionaire! Yow-ow-ow! Wow!"

And Chunky Todgers shook a fat fist at Frank Richards ere he clambered on his fat pony and rode away.

The 5th Chapter.

Just as Well!

The next day Chunky Todgers was very morose.

As he had suffered for his sin the chums of Cedar Creek were inclined to let the matter pass and be kind to the hapless youth; but Chunky, to their astonishment, seemed to regard himself as the injured party.

He was morose and he was reproachful. He gave Frank Richards accusing looks and declined even to speak to him. That was not really a great loss, and Frank bore it with much fortitude.

But a day later Chunky came round. He was still reproachful, but it was with a gentler and more mournful reproach.

"See what you've done, you know!" he said.

"Well, what have I done?" asked Frank.

"Lost a fortune—"

"I sha'n't miss it!" grinned Frank Richards.

"And lost one for me, too. Just because I signed your name—"

"Do you want some more of my riding-whip?" asked Bob Lawless, in a sulphurous tone.

"Nunno!"

"I guess you're going the right way to get it!"

Chunky Todgers snorted.

"Oh, you're a jay, and Frank's a jay!" he said. "I sha'n't worry any more about making you rich, I can tell you! Yah!"

And Chunky sniffed contemptuously and walked off.

But he could not let the topic drop. Every day he referred to it in mournful tones; and at last he announced that Honks' Elevator shares were quoted two dollars and a quarter in the paper.

"Going up!" said Chunky. "Now you'll see what you've lost."

"Rats!"

"There's a Montreal paper at Gunten's store on Saturday," said Todgers. "The latest price will be in that. You'll see! Serve you right, too!"

On Saturday Frank Richards & Co. were in Thompson, and they dropped into Gunten's store, and there, sure enough, they found Chunky Todgers, with a chunk of maple sugar in one hand, and the Montreal paper in the other. There was rather a curious expression on Chunky's fat face. He gave a jump as Bob Lawless clapped him on the shoulder.

"Well, how are they to-day?" grinned Bob. "Honks, you know and—"

"They—they—they're not marked," murmured Chunky. "There—there's a paragraph about them. They—they—they've gone into liquidation, and—and the company's expected to—to—to pay the shareholders about ten cents back on the five dollar share, and—and—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Chunky Todgers grinned feebly.

"P-p-perhaps it's just as well I—I didn't put a thousand dollars into it!" he murmured.

And Frank Richards & Co. agreed that it was.

THE END.

CINEMA . . .
 SNAPSHOTS.

A famous American film producer has suggested that the cinema-theatres should assist the police by showing pictures of "wanted" persons at each performance. We have heard of criminals "screening their movements," but now it looks as though some of their movements will be "screened" for them!

By a wonderful combined X-ray and camera apparatus, the heart-beats of certain animals have been filmed in a Paris laboratory. When this process can be applied to human subjects it should prove of great value to the medical profession.

"Books and Crooks!" is the title of a new British comedy release. In manufacturing this smile-inducing episode for the screen some real neck-breaking risks were taken by members of the cast.