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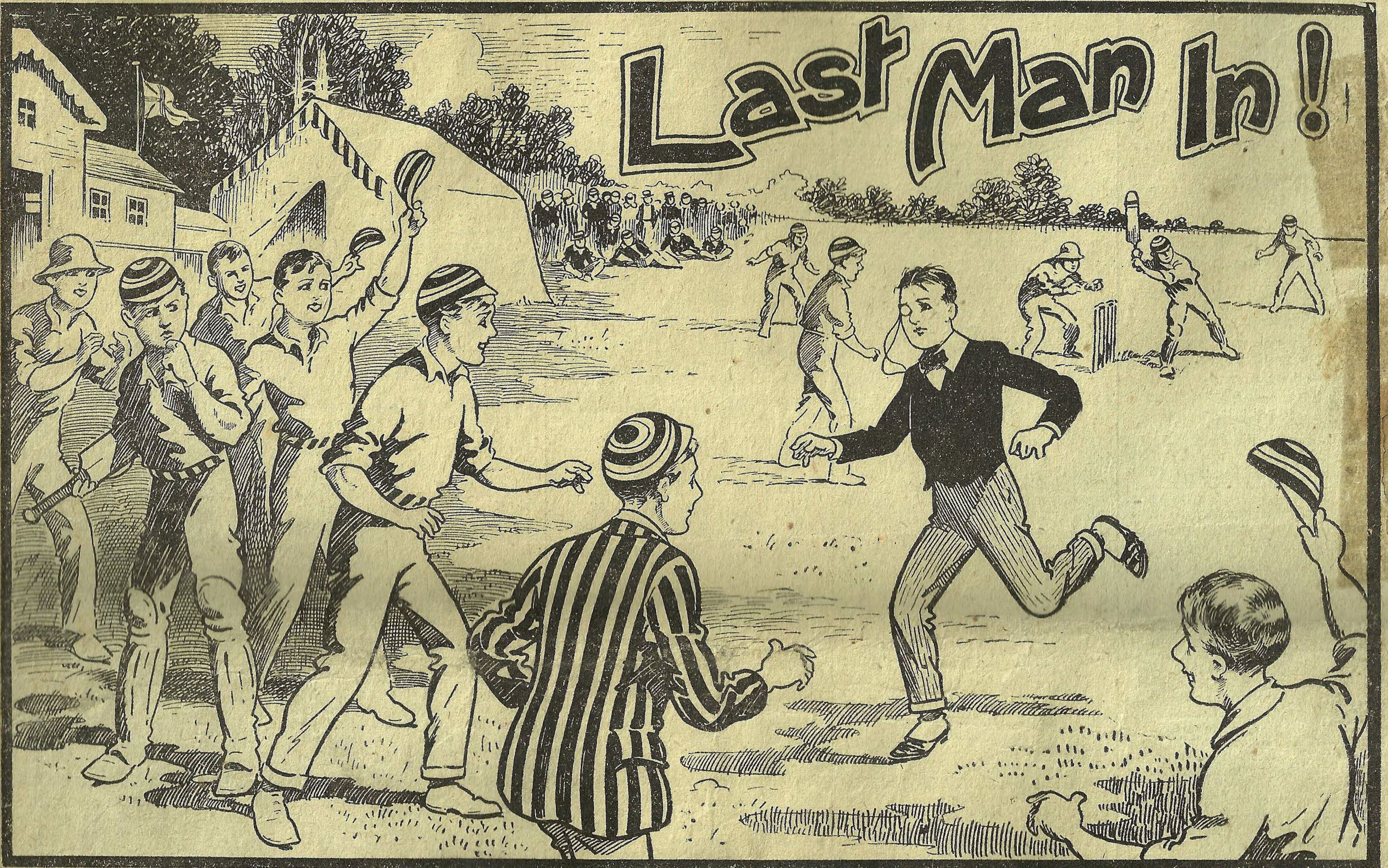
The BOYS' FRIEND

TWELVE PAGES! TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR!

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending June 19th, 1920.



A LATE ARRIVAL!

"Hallo, look there!" exclaimed Lovell. A nimble figure was running at top speed towards the cricket ground. There was a shout from the Rookwooders, "Mornny!" "Mornnington!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Oh, what a little bit of luck!" Valentine Mornnington came up breathlessly. "In time?" he asked. "Just!" replied Jimmy. "One of you fellows cut away and see the taxi-man. I didn't stop to pay him—I dare say he thinks he's got a bilk!" said Mornny breathlessly.

The 1st Chapter.

The Rookwooders at Greyfriars.
"We bat," said Jimmy Silver.
"And where do I come in?" inquired Arthur Newcome.

"Las!"
Newcome made a grimace.
Jimmy Silver & Co., of Rookwood School, were on the Greyfriars ground, in the sunny June morning. Jimmy, having won the toss, had elected to bat, and Harry Wharton's team were going into the field. Jimmy gave the Greyfriars cricketers a very keen glance, and then looked away towards the school gates.
"I wish Mornny were here," he remarked.

"Well, he isn't," remarked Lovell.
"Oh, give Mornny a rest!" said Newcome, with just a touch of impatience. "We can manage without Mornny."
"Mornny may come along yet," said Erroll hopefully. "He was going to ask for leave."
Jimmy Silver nodded.
"I hope so," he said. "If Mornny does come along in time for the innings, it's understood that he plays. Sorry, Newcome, old chap, but cricket comes first, you know."
"Oh, all right!" said Newcome resignedly. "I know you only put me in as a stop-gap, Jimmy. I'm awfully obliged to you. It's so complimentary, and I feel no-end bucked."

"You see, old man——"
"My dear man, I see!" interrupted Newcome. "Mornny cared so much about this match that he got himself detained for the day, and couldn't come, so his place is to be kept open for him, in case Mr. Bootles lets him off, and I'm to hang around in case Mornnington doesn't come, as I shall be wanted if his lordship doesn't turn up. I understand."
"Mornny will come if he can," said Erroll.
"He could have come, anyway, if he hadn't checked Mr. Bootles, and got himself detained," answered Newcome tartly. "I think it's all rot to make this fuss about Mornnington. Other fellows can handle a bat as well as Mornnington, I suppose."
"Yes; but——" said Jimmy.
"Greyfriars are waiting for us," observed Tommy Dodd. "Is this a cricket-match or a conversation?"
"I'm sorry, Newcome," said Jimmy Silver. "But I'm bound to play Mornnington if he comes in time. You can see that Wharton's lot are in topping form, and they won't be easy to beat, anyway."
"Oh, if Mornny comes, he will walk all over them!" said Newcome sarcastically. "It will be the win of the season—if Mornny comes. We shall have an innings to spare, and a thousand runs or so to the good. The wonder is that Mornny isn't

bagged for the county. He's wasted on school matches!"
Jimmy Silver judiciously made no reply to that. His chum was a little "edge-wise," which was perhaps not to be wondered at. Jimmy signed to Lovell, and they went in to open the innings for Rookwood.
Newcome stood with the waiting batsmen outside the pavilion, with a rather glum countenance.
His position in the Rookwood team was not a wholly gratifying one.
Certainly it was Valentine Mornnington's own fault that he had not come over to Greyfriars with the cricketers. He was under detention at Rookwood, and it was very doubtful indeed whether his Form-master would relent, and give him leave to follow the team.
Newcome had been put in his place pro tem, as it were.
If Mornny was not able to get away, Newcome was to play; but if Mornny turned up in time to bat, Newcome had to remain a spectator.
It was the best arrangement that could be made in the circumstances, as there was a chance, at least, that Mornnington might come.
But, naturally, Newcome did not see quite eye to eye with his skipper in the matter.
Mornny was one of the best junior bats, at Rookwood, and that fact weighed more with Jimmy Silver, as cricket captain, than his personal

friendship for Newcome. That was just as it should be, of course; but it was natural that Newcome failed to see the great superiority of Mornnington to himself as a cricketer.
Mornny had lost his place in the eleven by sheer wilful perversity; and as he was out of it, Newcome's idea was that he ought to be left out, and the match played without regard to Mornnington at all.
"Never mind, old chap," said Raby consolingly. Raby had come over with the Rookwood cricketers, though he was not in the eleven.
"Ten to one Mornny won't turn up."
Newcome grunted.
"I wouldn't play him, if he did, if I were skipper," he said. "If Mornny wanted to play, he shouldn't have got himself detained."
"It isn't what Mornny wants, you see," remarked Raby. "Jimmy wants to beat Greyfriars; that's the point."
"Can't I bat?" demanded Newcome.
"Ahem! Yes; but——"
"You're not up to Mornny's form, old chap," observed Conroy.
"Bosh!" said Newcome.
"Jimmy thinks so."
"Jimmy's an ass, and you're another!"
Conroy laughed.
"Mr. Bootles won't let Mornny off," continued Newcome. "If he comes over here to-day, it will mean that

he's cleared off without leave, and that means a row."
"Jimmy won't play him in that case," said Raby; "he couldn't."
"How will he know?" grunted Newcome. "Mornnington won't tell him he's broken detention."
"Jimmy will ask him."
"And Mornny will stuff him up with a yarn, if he thinks it's needed!" growled Newcome.
"Rubbish!" broke in Erroll sharply. "If you mean that Mornny would tell lies about it, Newcome, you——"
"You know he would, rather than be left out of the match," retorted Newcome.
"I don't know anything of the kind!" exclaimed Erroll angrily. "And you don't, either. I think that——"
"Order!" murmured Raby. "Don't begin ragging, you fellows. Ten to one Mornny won't come, anyhow. Look at Jimmy! That will be a three, at least!"
Newcome did not look at the batsman. He was feeling very sore.
"It's rot!" he said. "Hanging around in case a chap doesn't turn up, when he could have come if he'd liked. I've a jolly good mind to borrow a bike and go for a spin!"
"Well, if you want to, do; it's all right," said Raby, with a thoughtful look. "I can take your place in the team, if you're wanted."



Continued
from
the
previous
pages

LAST MAN - IN! -

"Rats!"
"Well, I was only offering—"
"B-r-r-r!"

Raby grinned. His kind offer was evidently not acceptable. Newcome was very keen on playing in the Greyfriars match, if only the obnoxious Mornington failed to arrive.

"Hallo! There goes Lovell!" exclaimed Tommy Dodd.

Arthur Edward Lovell carried out his bat for three. Tommy Dodd, who was next on the list, was quite ready.

"Hard luck, old top!" he said, as he passed Lovell. "But you Classical chaps really can't bat, you know."

And Tommy Dodd went to the wicket before Lovell could think of a suitably emphatic reply.

The 2nd Chapter. A Late Arrival.

Jimmy Silver was batting in great style. It was as a bowler that Jimmy chiefly shone, but he was a good and reliable batsman, and he was doing his best now. Jimmy was rather worried by the loss of Mornington, one of his best men; so much so, that he hadn't much time to think about Newcome's grievance.

Jimmy was very exasperated with Mornington, who was to blame for the unfortunate state of affairs; but at the same time he would have been very glad to see the dandy of Rookwood arrive.

But even if Morny succeeded in softening the heart of Mr. Bootles, and getting away to follow the team, it was a matter of trains, and Morny couldn't possibly arrive till an hour after the rest.

It was necessary for the first innings to hang out an hour, therefore, if Morny was to come in even as last man—if he came at all.

Lovell had lost his wicket in the first five minutes, which was not a good augury.

Tommy Dodd took Lovell's place, with rather a flourish. Tommy Dodd, being on the Modern side at Rookwood, he intended to show all the universe, as it were, that what was wanted was a Modern chap at the wicket; his innings was going to contrast very favourably with Lovell's.

But it didn't.
Lovell had been dismissed for three; and, much to Tommy Dodd's chagrin and astonishment, he was turned out for two.

It really was hard luck for Tommy, and very painful, considering there had been just a touch of swank in his manner when he replaced Lovell. His face was pink when he came to the pavilion.

"Who can't bat now?" inquired Arthur Edward Lovell, caustically.

And Tommy Dodd made no reply.

"Man in!"
Erroll was next man in.

He joined Jimmy Silver at the wickets, and then things looked up for Rookwood.

Erroll's wicket proved to be an impregnable rock, and Harry Wharton put on his best bowlers in turn without damaging it. Squiff and Nugent, and Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, of Greyfriars, tackled Erroll in turn, only succeeding in swelling his score.

Jimmy Silver smiled with satisfaction, well pleased to play second fiddle to Erroll, so long as the runs piled up.

Erroll was still going strong when Jimmy Silver was caught out by Harry Wharton, and he was still going strong while the other batsmen came and went.

Even Conroy, the Australian, had bad luck, and was dismissed for seven. Towle scored a duck's egg, and Rawson scored ten. Fortunately, Jimmy had put on a good number, and Erroll was piling up runs. There was a shade of thought-

fulness on Jimmy Silver's brow, as the wickets went down.

Newcome regarded him rather sarcastically.

He knew that Jimmy was thinking of Mornington, and wondering whether Morny would turn up after all, and hoping that he would.

But time was getting close now, and it looked as if Newcome would have to come in at the tail-end of the innings, to keep Erroll company; for it was pretty clear that Erroll would not be shifted.

Newcome was quite ready, and keen to play. But he would have been better pleased if Jimmy Silver had been keen about it, too.

"Man in!"
Eight wickets were down, and Cook went in. There was a wrinkle in Jimmy Silver's brow.

"Well, shall I be wanted, Jimmy?" asked Newcome, gruffly.

"I'm afraid so, old chap," answered Jimmy Silver.

"What are you afraid of?"

"I'm! Play up to Erroll, if you join him," said Jimmy. "So long as you can keep the innings open for him, it will be all right. Cook ought to be stone-walling now, the fat-head! Can't he understand that he's only got to keep Erroll going?"

Apparently Cook did not understand that, for he was hitting out in great style, with the unhappy result of landing the ball in the ready palm of Bob Cherry of Greyfriars.

"Just like a Modern ass!" growled Lovell.

"Anyhow, Cook's bagged four to your three!" growled Tommy Dodd.

"Shut up, for goodness' sake!" said Jimmy Silver crossly. "Now, then, Newcome, you'll have to play."

"I'll do my best, though I'm not Morny!" said Newcome.

"Do, old fellow."

"Hallo! Look there!" shouted Lovell.

A nimble figure was running at top-speed towards the cricket-ground. There was a shout from the Rookwooders.

"Morny!"

Newcome's face fell.
"Mornington!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "Oh, what a little bit of luck! Morny—Morny! Buck up—just in time!"

Valentine Mornington came up breathlessly.

"In time?" he asked.

"Just!"

"One of you fellows cut away and see the taxi-man, then," said Mornington. "I didn't stop to pay him. I dare say he thinks he's got a bilk. I say, I hadn't time to bring my clobber—"

"Newcome—"

"Well?" said Newcome bitterly. Jimmy's heart smote him as he saw the expression on his chum's face. What was a joyous relief to him was something quite different to the disappointed cricketer.

"Old chap, you know I'm sorry," he said. "But we're nine down for eighty-six. Morny must play—Morny and Erroll together will make the fur fly. Lend Morny your clobber. You can have my bat, Morny."

"Come on, Morny," said Newcome, with an effort.

He led the way into the pavilion, and Mornington followed him.

There was a little delay before "last man in" appeared at the wicket, and the field waited, wondering.

But Mornington changed in record time.

He came quickly out of the pavilion in Newcome's flannels, and took Jimmy Silver's bat and pads.

Then he strolled down to the wicket, receiving a joyful smile of welcome from his chum at the other end.

Newcome came out of the pavilion in Etons, with a glum face. But his gloom lightened a little as he watched the game.

There was no doubt that Mornington and Erroll together were, as Jimmy Silver expressed it, making the fur fly.

Morny seemed at the top of his

form, and Erroll had already proved himself a tower of strength.

The two batsmen seemed to bid defiance to the bowlers and to the field.

Even Hurree Jamset Ram Singh, the best junior bowler at Greyfriars, seemed unable to make any impression on them.

Jimmy Silver's face was full of delight as he watched. The group of Rookwooders cheered every big hit vociferously, and there were cheers from the Greyfriars crowd, too.

It was a wonderful innings. Harry Wharton & Co. were given an amount of leather-hunting that they were very unaccustomed to.

The Rookwood score quickly passed the hundred, and the batsmen were still going strong.

"Isn't this ripping?" exclaimed Jimmy Silver, addressing the fellow standing next to him, without looking at him.

"Oh, gorgeous!" answered Newcome, with a shrug of the shoulders. Jimmy glanced at him.

"You see for yourself, old chap—"

"Oh, quite!" answered Newcome. "I couldn't bat like that, and I don't make out I could. All the same—"

"Well, you see—"

"I suppose it's worth a row at Rookwood, if we beat Greyfriars?"

"I don't see why there should be a row at Rookwood over it, Newcome."

"Do you think Mr. Bootles let Morny off, then?"

Jimmy started.

"I suppose so, as he's here. I meant to ask him, but there wasn't a second to waste, and I forgot; but—"

"Well, I don't believe he's got leave," answered Newcome. "He's taken French-leave, and I shouldn't be surprised if Mr. Bootles sends a prefect to fetch him back when he misses him. In fact, he's pretty certain to. I shall be surprised if Mornington bats in our second innings."

Which was a rather unpleasant consideration for Jimmy Silver.

"He—he wouldn't be such a fool!" he muttered.

"You know he would."

"It can't be helped now, if it's the case. I—I ought to have asked him, of course—"

"He would have stuffed you up, if you had."

"Perhaps. But— Dash it all, if we lose a batsman in the second innings—"

"You will, and it's your own fault," said Newcome.

Jimmy made no reply, but his brow was troubled now as he looked on at the game. It was Erroll who, at last, fell to a smart throw-in from Harry Wharton, in a gallant attempt at four. Mornington was "not out" at the finish; and the Rookwood score for the innings stood at a hundred and seventy—a figure which it was pretty certain Greyfriars would never beat. But—if Newcome's suspicion was well grounded, and Morny were taken out of the eleven before the second innings was played—Jimmy Silver was thinking of that when the cricketers went to lunch.

The 3rd Chapter. Morny's Escapade!

Valentine Mornington contrived to avoid speech with Jimmy Silver during lunch, and after lunch he disappeared with Erroll, till the time for the Greyfriars innings to open. Jimmy, who was anxious to ascertain

under what circumstances Morny had left Rookwood, looked for him, but did not find him. In a quiet corner of the old Cloisters of Greyfriars, Mornington was chatting cheerily with Erroll, who looked a good deal graver than his chum.

"Then you didn't get leave, Morny?" said Kit Erroll, with a troubled look.

"Did you think I should?" smiled Mornington.

"No; but I hoped so."

"Bootles was adamant," said Mornington coolly. "I tried it on with him, but he wasn't taking any. The dear old boy had his back up, and it was no good tryin' to smooth his ruffled plumes. I really tried; but, dash it all, I'm not a good hand at kow-towin'. He took it for cheek, and caned me. So I bolted."

"But how—"

"Bootles was called into the passage to speak to the Head, and I slid by way of the window," explained Mornington. "I got out my bike, and fairly flew."

"There'll be an awful row over this."

"I suppose so."

"But," went on Erroll, with a worried look, "I can't imagine Mr. Bootles taking such a defiance tamely. I should have thought he would send a prefect after you."

"He did. He sent Carthew of the Sixth, to collar me before I could get the express at Latham."

"But you got away?"

"I managed to wreck Carthew's bike," grinned Mornington. "He had to wheel it home from Rookwood. I dare say he landed there later than I landed here."

Erroll looked at his chum almost aghast.

"There'll be an awful row," he said.

"What's the good of thinkin' about that now?" drawled Mornington. "No good meetin' troubles half-way."

"I wonder you've got the nerve to play cricket, and play it so well, with that prospect hanging over you."

"I've got nerve enough for anythin', dear boy."

"I believe you have—too much," said Erroll. "I wish you hadn't done it, Morny. It can't be less than a flogging when you get back. But—but that isn't all. You're sure Carthew went back to Rookwood?"

"Pretty certain. I ripped his tyres for him."

"But Mr. Bootles will know that you came on here."

"Naturally."

"Isn't he likely to send a prefect here for you?"

Mornington shook his head.

"I don't think so. It's too jolly far. After Carthew got back, if a prefect started then, he couldn't get here till well on in the afternoon. Bootles is pretty certain to let it stand over till we come back to Rookwood."

"Mr. Bootles might; but I suppose the Head knows?"

"Bootles would tell him, naturally."

"If the Head knows, he will send for you," said Erroll decidedly. "Dr. Chisholm isn't the man to allow you to play in a cricket-match in defiance of your Form-master. He will send Bulkeley or Neville for you, if not a master."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders.

"Well, I don't think it's likely; but if he did, a prefect couldn't get here till pretty late, and if our second innings is over by that time, it won't matter. I'll ask Silver to send me on early, so that my innings will be over

in any case. Then Bulkeley can blow in if he likes, and I'll go home with him like a good little boy."

And Morny chuckled.

"Greyfriars may take a good time over their innings—"

"My dear man, why meet troubles half-way?" yawned Mornington. "Silver was jolly glad to have me in the first innings, anyhow."

"But he doesn't know—"

"He's not going to know. I'm dodgin' the dear boy now," grinned Mornington. "Explanations can be left till later. If I have to leave after our second innings, he can play a substitute in the field for me after I'm gone—Newcome would do. Newcome looked rather down in the month when I turned up. It will be a consolation prize for him."

"But—"

"Dear boy, you're full of buts," said Mornington. "Let's take a squint at the field. We've got to turn up in time, but I don't want to give Jimmy Silver time to wag his chin at me. He is so crammed with righteousness and integrity that probably he wouldn't play me if he knew I'd taken French leave at Rookwood; and I'd rather not tell him any whoppers if it can be helped."

Mornington strolled along the Cloisters, to get a view of the cricket-ground, without stepping into view himself, however. He was very anxious to avoid an explanation with Jimmy Silver.

The cricketers were gathering for the Greyfriars innings, and Morny could see Jimmy Silver looking about.

"May as well be getting along in a few minutes, Erroll."

"Let's get along now," said Erroll.

"No hurry; wait till they're goin' into the field. At present I should not enjoy Silver's delightful conversation; and I know he's got a lot of questions ready for me."

And Mornington deliberately refrained from rejoining the cricketers till his name was being impatiently called on all sides.

He came into the field with Erroll, to meet a frowning glance from Jimmy Silver.

"Where the thump have you been, Morny? I wanted to speak to you!" exclaimed the Rookwood skipper.

"Strollin' round the delightful old Cloisters," said Mornington. "They're awfully interestin' to a chap with tastes for antiquity."

"I wanted to ask you—"

"So sorry I've kept you waitin', Silver. Hallo! Here comes Wharton to open the innings."

Jimmy Silver waved Morny to his place.

Jimmy was no fool, and he had guessed by this time that Mornington had deliberately dodged an explanation with him. But there was no help for the matter now. Mornington was in the team, and whether he had run away from Rookwood or not, that could not be altered. It was not difficult to see that Newcome was right, and that Morny had run away—

Morny's avoidance of an explanation was as good as an admission. Jimmy hardly knew whether to be glad or sorry that he had played Mornington without thinking of questioning him.

Wharton and Vernon-Smith opened the innings for Greyfriars, and Jimmy soon had more important matters than Morny's reckless escapade to think about. The major part of the bowling fell upon him—that was his own particular line, and he did not spare himself. He soon forgot even the worrying possibility that a prefect from Rookwood might dawn suddenly and disastrously upon the scene and interrupt the match.

Harry Wharton & Co. put in a good innings, but they never looked like beating the Rookwood score. After a gallant struggle, Greyfriars were all down for a hundred and twenty-seven. There were a good number of Greyfriars fellows looking on at the game, and Newcome looked on with them, not feeling very contented with himself or things generally. Poor Newcome had to acknowledge that Morny had done more for the side than ever he could have done, but that was not a complete consolation, by any means. And he reflected, too, that if Morny was taken away by a prefect before the end of the match, Jimmy Silver might have done better to play his own chum after all.

Before the Rookwood second innings started, Jimmy Silver succeeded in speaking to Mornington, giving that rather wily youth no chance to dodge him this time.

"Did Mr. Bootles give you leave to come here?" he asked abruptly.

Mornington looked at him with a grin.

"If I say 'no,' what are you goin' to do?" he asked. "You can't drop me out of the team without chuckin' away the game now."

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TO-DAY!

"I know that. If I'd known you bolted, I wouldn't have played you," said Jimmy. "Now you've played, you're bound to finish out the match. So you can tell me the truth."

"Willingly, dear boy. Bootles never gave me leave, and I've no doubt he's tearin' his scanty hair about my boltin', and takin' it out of the other fellows with the pointer."

"You utter reckless ass!" exclaimed Jimmy Silver. "If I'd known—"

"If you'd known, you'd have left your best man out and played a dud," said Mornington. "For the sake of our cricket record, you can thank goodness you didn't know."

"Do you think it's likely a prefect will be sent after you as far as Greyfriars?"

"No, I don't."

"If the match were interrupted, it would make us look awful asses before the Greyfriars fellows," said Jimmy Silver. "And—and we might get licked, after all."

"Put me on to open the innings, in case of accidents," suggested Mornington. "If the Head himself sailed in after I'm done, it wouldn't hurt anybody."

"I'll do that," said Jimmy.

And Mornington went on with Jimmy Silver when the second innings opened for Rookwood.

Newcome stood looking on for a little time, but he walked away at last, and left the cricket-field. He was "fed" with looking on at a game in which he had hoped to distinguish himself. As he strolled out of the gates of Greyfriars, he heard a shout from the distance.

"Well hit, Morny!"

"Good old Morny!"

Evidently Mornington was still doing well for his side. Newcome gave a grunt, and walked away down the road.

The 4th Chapter. Newcome Does His Bit.

"Newcome!"

Arthur Newcome gave a jump. In a morose and discontented mood—all the more morose because he was rather ashamed of it—he had walked a good distance from Greyfriars School, on the road to Courtfield.

Newcome had been very keen on playing in the match; but he was still keener on his school beating Greyfriars, and, in actual fact, he was not at all sorry that Mornington was there to put up a big game for his side. At the same time, he was annoyed by it, and disappointed—rather an inconsistent frame of mind, but natural enough in the circumstances. The real trouble was that he couldn't have put up such a game as Morny was doing, and nobody was to blame for that. So Newcome did not blame anybody, but he felt disappointed and annoyed and morose generally. He was walking along with his hands in his pockets and a frown on his brow, when his name was called in a familiar voice. His walk had taken him all the way to Courtfield, and he found that he was just opposite the station, as he looked up and saw George Bulkeley, of the Sixth Form at Rookwood, coming out of the building.

"Hallo, Bulkeley!" ejaculated Newcome in surprise.

But his surprise was only momentary. The next instant he knew why the head prefect of Rookwood was there.

Evidently he had come after Mornington, to take the truant home.

For just a second Newcome was conscious of something very like a malicious satisfaction. This was to be the sudden end of Mornington's triumph; he was to be collared on the Greyfriars ground, walked off by the prefect under a hundred staring eyes, his game unfinished—walked off with Bulkeley's grasp on his collar, like a disobedient fag.

That feeling in Newcome's breast was gone the next moment, and he flushed, ashamed of his brief satisfaction.

Bulkeley was coming towards him, and he waited for the captain of Rookwood to come up. He saw that the prefect was going to question him.

Bulkeley was not looking very pleasant. It was a long journey from Rookwood, and he did not like wasting the best part of a day pursuing a cheeky junior from one county to another.

"Have you seen Mornington, Newcome?" the Sixth-Former asked, as he joined the junior.

Newcome hesitated before he replied.

"Yes, Bulkeley," he said at last.

"Is he at Greyfriars?"

"Yes."

"Playing cricket?"

"Yes," said Newcome, for the third time.

Bulkeley's lips set grimly.

"He came after all, then? I hardly thought he would have the nerve. But Silver ought not to have played him, if he knew—"

"Jimmy didn't know Mornington had bolted," exclaimed Newcome hastily. "It was arranged that Morny should beg off if he could, and follow us."

"You seem to know."

"Well, I guessed," said Newcome. "I knew Mr. Bootles wouldn't let Morny off. You see, Jimmy's busy with the cricket, and I'm not, and I've thought it over. I had to stand out for Morny when he came."

"Silver ought—"

"Morny came just in time to play—last man in for the innings," said Newcome. "Jimmy was too flustered to think about it then. He had to rush Morny into the game. The Greyfriars chaps were waiting."

Bulkeley smiled slightly. It was plain that the junior was not feeling pleased about his own exclusion from the game, and yet he was thinking first of all of exonerating his chum from blame.

"Well, well! Never mind that!" said the Rookwood captain. "I have orders from the Head to take Mornington back immediately, and Silver will have to suffer for acting thoughtlessly; he will lose his man. You know this place better than I do. Can I get a taxi anywhere to carry

regard; and although, as a sportsman, he would not like interrupting a cricket match, he had no choice in the matter.

But if he could be kept away. "Well, Newcome?" exclaimed Bulkeley impatiently.

"I—I don't think you'll get a taxi here, Bulkeley," said Newcome. "But I could show you a short cut to—"

"That's the next best thing. Come on!"

"Right-ho!"

The senior and the junior walked away quickly together.

There was a half-formed thought in Newcome's mind, which was quite formed and decided before the two were clear of Courtfield.

Putting his own private grievance aside, Newcome was only thinking of saving the match for Jimmy Silver & Co.

Somehow or other, he was going to contrive matters so that Mornington should have ample time to finish his innings, however long it was.

In that rather peculiar way, at least, he would be having a hand in helping Rookwood to win, though he had not been able to do so as a cricketer.

The senior and junior came out of the town on the long white road that led to Greyfriars.

perfect farther and farther away from Greyfriars at every step.

What would happen to him when Bulkeley discovered the facts, he did not know; and he did not care very much. He expected to have to pay a penalty for tricking a prefect; but, so long as he succeeded, he was prepared to "face the music." All the while Bulkeley was tramping across the common, Mornington was batting for Rookwood and piling up the runs. That was Newcome's consolation.

A mile across the gorsy common had been covered, when Bulkeley spoke again, after a long look round him:

"We ought to see the school by this time, surely?"

"I don't think you'll see it just yet," answered Newcome.

"You're sure you haven't missed the way?"

"Couldn't miss this path," said Newcome. "It's marked plainly enough."

"Well, put on speed a little, then."

"Right-ho!"

Bulkeley was taking very long strides, evidently anxious to get to Greyfriars and capture the truant, and get his unpleasant mission over. Newcome had to trot faster to keep pace. But he had no objection to putting on speed. Every step was

going to have him stopped before he'd finished. You won't get to Greyfriars in time to stop him now. And—and now you can lick me, if you like!"

Bulkeley stared at him. For a moment his face was very dark, and he came near to taking the junior at his word and giving him a tremendous licking there and then.

But he refrained. Bulkeley was a sportsman, and he comprehended the junior's motives; and, probably, he was conscious that, in Newcome's place, he would have done as the junior had done.

"You cheeky little sweep!" he said, at last. "You—you've given me a long tramp for nothing—and now I've got four miles to walk—"

It said very much for Bulkeley's good-temper and self-restraint that he did not collar the Fourth-Former and give him the licking of his life. Fortunately, he didn't. He turned away, and started along the lane for Greyfriars, going at almost a run.

Newcome drew a deep breath.

"Good old Bulkeley—always a sport!" he murmured.

Newcome had fully expected a record licking; but he was glad to have escaped it.

He sauntered along the lane after the Rookwood captain, his hands in his pockets, and a cheery expression on his face. Although he had been left out of the cricket, he felt that he had "done his bit," and there was satisfaction in that.

The 5th Chapter. Bulkeley Arrives.

"Out at last!"

"Thank goodness!"

Harry Wharton and Bob Cherry made those remarks simultaneously, in great relief, on the junior cricket-ground at Greyfriars.

Mornington was out to a very tricky ball from Hurree Singh, after a tremendous innings.

Morny had knocked up sixty runs off his own bat—a score that made his comrades roar with delighted approval.

Five batsmen had come and gone while Mornington was at the wicket, and Morny had really seemed set for the day; but his fate had overtaken him at last. As he tucked his bat under his arm and lounged away to the pavilion, the Rookwooders greeted him with a cheer.

"Well done, Morny!"

"Good man!"

"Bravo!"

Jimmy Silver clapped him on the shoulder in exuberant delight.

"I'm glad you came," he said. "I—I'm almost glad you broke bounds, Morny! It's ripping!"

"Topping!" said Lovell heartily.

"You've done splendidly, old chap, and it doesn't matter now if the Head comes along and ropes you in!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Man in!" said Jimmy Silver.

Erroll went in to join Rawson at the wickets. Mornington stood in an easy attitude, apparently not much fatigued by his efforts. He was feeling very elated. Jimmy Silver had already batted, being out for a dozen. All the Rookwood bats had found the Greyfriars bowling very searching, except Mornington, though it had even found him out at last.

"We're safe for a win now," Jimmy Silver remarked. "We shall jolly nearly equal our first innings, and Greyfriars won't come near it, I fancy. They didn't in their first. Thank goodness you came, Morny! I only hope you won't get into a jolly row at Rookwood. But I suppose you will."

"No doubt about that," answered Mornington. "What surprises me is that I haven't been fetched. Thinkin' it over, it seemed very likely that the Head would send a prefect after me. But he hasn't."

"Well, he would be here before this if he was coming at all," agreed Jimmy. "I'm jolly glad. We don't want a scene here. Though, of course, it wouldn't matter if a prefect came now; you could go away quietly, without the fellows noticing anything."

Mornington shrugged his shoulders. "If you're so jolly particular about a scene, let's hope a merry old prefect won't come," he said. "I certainly should refuse to be marched back to Rookwood with a prefect's paw on my shoulder."

"I don't suppose Bulkeley would take much notice of your refusing, old top!" grinned Arthur Edward Lovell. "I fancy he would carry you off if you wouldn't go when you were told."

Mornington's eyes gleamed.

"Well, you'll see, if Bulkeley comes!" he retorted.

"Talk of angels!" broke in Tommy



NEWCOME'S SHORT CUT! Bulkeley and Newcome covered another mile, when the former caught sight of a finger-post. "Greyfriars, four miles!" he exclaimed. "What the thump! It's not four miles from Courtfield itself! What does this mean, Newcome?" "Oh, my hat!" murmured Newcome. It was pretty evident that the Rookwood captain could not be misled any further. "You young rascal, have you been pulling my leg?" asked Bulkeley grimly. "Yes!" "What?" gasped Bulkeley.

me to Greyfriars? It's a long walk, I believe."

"Pretty long," said Newcome.

He paused.

The taxi which had taken Mornington to Greyfriars some hours before was not to be seen; doubtless it was off on another journey, and there was no vehicle at the station, excepting an ancient hack with an equally ancient horse, which certainly could not have saved Bulkeley any time.

Newcome thought rapidly. His annoyance at giving up his place to Mornington was by no means gone, but he was thinking of Jimmy Silver and Rookwood's prospects in the match.

If Morny was still batting—as doubtless he was—Bulkeley's arrival would be disastrous for the Rookwood side.

Morny's interrupted innings might very easily mean defeat.

He was probably good for forty or fifty runs, and if he was stopped when he had taken only a dozen or so, it would probably make all the difference.

Bulkeley had strict instructions from the Head, which he could not dis-

"Where's that short cut?" asked Bulkeley, when they had followed the road for about a quarter of a mile. Newcome was trotting to keep pace with Bulkeley's long, vigorous strides.

"Turn off here," said Newcome.

He kept his face away from Bulkeley as he spoke, afraid that the Rookwood captain would see the flush he felt rising in his cheeks.

But the Sixth-Former had no suspicion.

He turned off the road with Newcome, following a track that led away among the gorse across Courtfield Common.

Where the track led, Newcome did not know; but he knew that it did not lead to Greyfriars.

He had spoken the exact truth when he told Bulkeley that he could show him a short cut. He could have done so, certainly. But it wasn't his intention to do so.

What he was really showing Bulkeley was a remarkably long cut.

He trotted on by the side of the big Sixth-Former, happy in the knowledge that he was taking the

making it more probable that Mornington would be left to finish his innings undisturbed.

Another mile was covered, and they came out into a lane, where Bulkeley caught sight of a finger-post.

"Greyfriars, four miles!" he exclaimed. "What the thump! It's not four miles from Courtfield itself! What does this mean, Newcome?"

"Oh, my hat!" murmured Newcome.

He stopped. It was pretty evident that the Rookwood captain could not be misled any further.

Bulkeley turned upon him angrily.

"You crass little idiot, you've mistaken the way!" he exclaimed.

Then, as Newcome's flushed face brought a fresh suspicion into his mind, he grasped the junior by the shoulder.

"You young rascal, have you been pulling my leg?"

Newcome looked at him fearlessly.

"Yes," he answered.

"Wha-at?"

"Morny's batting for Rookwood," said Newcome sturdily. "I wasn't

Dodd. "Here comes cheery old Bulkeley, as large as life!"

"Phew!"
"Hook it, Morny!" breathed Conroy.

Mornington shrugged his shoulders and stood where he was. His lofty pride would not allow him to scud away.

Bulkeley came striding on the field, looking very dusty and rather tired, and considerably cross.

"So here you are, Mornington!" he exclaimed angrily.

"Here I am, old top!"

"Come with me at once!"

"Morny's played a jolly good game for Rookwood, Bulkeley," ventured Jimmy Silver.

"He had no right to be playing here at all; and you had no right to play him, if you knew—"

"Silver didn't know," said Mornington. "Lay it all on my shoulders, old man; I can stand it!"

"Shut up, Morny!" muttered Jimmy Silver. "I say, Bulkeley, you—you couldn't wait a bit, and give Morny time to finish? We want him in the field in the next innings."

"No!" snapped Bulkeley. "I have the Head's orders to obey. I've lost enough time already, owing to Newcome's tricks—"

"Newcome!" repeated Jimmy.

"I met Newcome in Courtfield, and I should have been here an hour ago, but the young sweep led me out of my way."

"Oh!" ejaculated Jimmy.

His eyes danced.

"Good old Newcome!" exclaimed Lovell heartily. "I shouldn't have thought old Newcome had so much sense. Why, Morny would never have put in anything like an innings for us if you'd got here an hour ago, Bulkeley!"

"I'm waiting for you, Mornington!" said the Rookwood captain grimly. "Do you want me to take you away by the ear?"

"Thanks, no. I've got Newcome's clobber on. Can I change into my own things?" asked Mornington meekly.

"Be quick, then! There's a train

from Courtfield we've just got time to catch."

"I'll buck up!"

Mornington ran into the pavilion. He disappeared into the Rookwood dressing-room; and Bulkeley watched the cricket while he waited for him to emerge.

Rawson was out, and Towle joined Erroll, and the innings went on. Erroll was still in great form, though he was not equal to his brilliant chum. The result of the match was a foregone conclusion in the eyes of the Rookwooders, though Harry Wharton & Co. were still hoping great things from their innings to come. The loss of Mornington did not matter now. He was not wanted to bowl, and Newcome or Raby could be put into the field as a substitute.

Bulkeley turned round impatiently at last.

"Mornington!" he called out.

"He's a jolly long time," said Lovell, exchanging a glance with Jimmy Silver. Both of them were wondering what was in Morny's mind; they had not forgotten his remarks.

"Go and tell him to come at once, Lovell!" snapped Bulkeley.

Arthur Edward Lovell went to the Rookwood dressing-room. He came back in a couple of minutes, with a rather peculiar expression on his face.

"Well, where's Mornington?" demanded Bulkeley.

"I don't know!"

"Isn't he in there?"

"No."

"He hasn't come out—"

"The window's open," answered Lovell.

"By Jove!" Bulkeley breathed hard. "I'll—I'll—" He broke off and ran into the pavilion.

It needed only a glance to assure him that Valentine Mornington was gone, and that he had escaped by the window.

Bulkeley came out again with a knitted brow and looked round. But nothing was to be seen of Mornington.

He had had plenty of time to make his escape, after changing his clothes, and undoubtedly he had slipped

quietly away, and was already outside the precincts of Greyfriars.

The Rookwood captain was at a loss.

To search for the elusive junior was not of much use, and to return to Rookwood without him was out of the question. If he left Greyfriars before the match was over it was very probable that Morny would turn up again to field for Rookwood in the last innings. There was nothing for George Bulkeley to do but to wait. He could not leave till the junior cricketers left. He took a seat outside the pavilion, with feelings that were almost too deep for words.

The Rookwood juniors exchanged grinning glances; but Jimmy Silver was looking serious enough; and so was Erroll, when he came off the pitch and learned what had happened.

This last act of reckless defiance filled to the brim the cup of Mornington's offences, and added to the heavy reckoning that was awaiting him at Rookwood on his return. Jimmy Silver could not help feeling worried about it, and it detracted from his satisfaction, otherwise complete, when Rookwood were all down in the second innings for 115.

The 6th Chapter. Rookwood Wins.

Jimmy Silver & Co. went into the field when Greyfriars batted again, Bulkeley looking on, with a grim brow. Newcome had come in, tired and dusty, and he grinned as he saw Bulkeley at the pavilion. And he learned with great satisfaction that his device had enabled Morny to put up a record innings, and that the match was safe.

Greyfriars were putting up a gallant fight in their last innings, and it was a long one. The sun was sinking behind the grey old tower, and the shadows were lengthening as the batsmen came and went.

For a long time Bulkeley remained watching the cricket, but at last he rose and walked away.

Mornington had not been seen again, and it was probable that he had gone back to Rookwood. Bulkeley

had waited till the game was close on its finish. Jimmy Silver glanced after him from the field as he went. He understood how angry Bulkeley was, and did not wonder at it. And he understood, too, how angry the Head would be when he received the prefect's report. The reckless Mornington had put a rod in pickle for his own back, and Jimmy wondered whether it would mean the sack for the defiant junior.

It was Jimmy Silver who took Greyfriars' last wicket. Greyfriars had knocked up 109 runs in their second innings, but a wide margin of victory was left to Rookwood. Jimmy Silver & Co. were elated, and they did not forget that it was to Mornington that they owed the quota of runs that made the difference between victory and defeat.

Harry Wharton & Co. took their defeat cheerfully; they had enough successes in their record to be able to afford a defeat with a good grace. And Jimmy Silver & Co., fired but very cheery, started for Courtfield for a rather late train, most of them discussing Mornington, and what could have become of him.

Their surmises on the latter point were soon set at rest. While the cricketers were waiting for their train, Valentine Mornington strolled on the platform and joined them.

"Oh, you're not gone home, then?" Jimmy Silver exclaimed.

Mornington shook his head, with a smile.

"No; I hoped that Bulkeley would clear, and I'd have come back," he said. "He seems to have waited, to dish me. I saw him come along and go into the station half an hour ago. He was lookin' quite cross."

"Jolly savage, you mean!" said Lovell.

"As you so elegantly and graphically express it, jolly savage," assented Mornington. "He seemed to think that I ought to have let him lead me home, like a naughty little truant. Bulkeley always was rather an ass. I needn't ask you how the match went—you won?"

"Hands down!" said Lovell, with great satisfaction.

"Good! Would you have done it if I hadn't come, Silver?"

Jimmy shook his head.

"No; Newcome couldn't have knocked up so many, by half, as you did—eh, Newcome?"

Newcome laughed.

"Admitted!" he said. "Morny's won the match, and so have I—by keeping Bulkeley off the grass."

"That was a bright idea!" grinned Mornington. "Well, perhaps dear old Bootles, and the magnificent old Head, will forgive me everything when they hear what a toppin' victory we've won. What?"

"Not likely!" said Raby.

"Well, I suppose it isn't likely," assented Mornington. "I shall have to face the music. Terrific, isn't it? Hallo, here's the train!"

The cricketers piled into the train. All of them were thinking of the reception that awaited Mornington at Rookwood School; but certainly the scapegrace of Rookwood seemed the most careless about the prospect. He chatted and joked cheerily on the way home, and his gaiety was evidently not forced. He had enjoyed his day out, and he was in a merry mood. Yet the matter was very serious.

"Here we are again!" said Mornington airily, as the returning cricketers were admitted by old Mack at the gates of Rookwood. "Quite late home for once. Hallo, here's Bulkeley! I hope you got home all right, Bulkeley, without my care, and that you didn't pine too much for my fascinat' company."

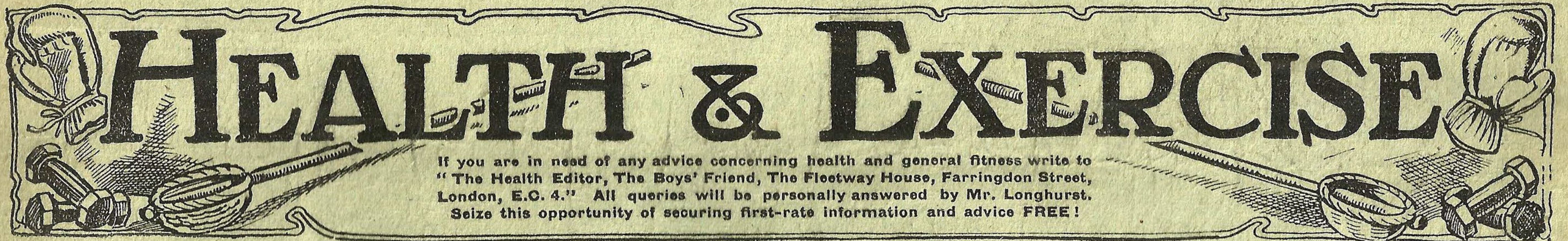
Bulkeley came through the shadows with a grim brow.

"You're to come to the Head at once, Mornington!" he said grimly.

And Morny, with a wink at the cricketers, which made some of them chuckle, in spite of the seriousness of the situation, walked away with Bulkeley to the School House, followed more slowly by Jimmy Silver & Co.

THE END

(Another long, complete story of Jimmy Silver & Co. next Monday, entitled "The Rookwood Rebel!" By Owen Conquest. Be sure and read it!)



If you are in need of any advice concerning health and general fitness write to "The Health Editor, The Boys' Friend, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4." All queries will be personally answered by Mr. Longhurst. Seize this opportunity of securing first-rate information and advice FREE!

(A Splendid Series of Articles on the All-Important Subject of Muscular Development.)
By PERCY LONGHURST.

Ground Tumbling.

I wonder how many of my readers have ever considered tumbling as an exercise? Not many, I dare say; so that to the majority these hints and suggestions will come as a novelty.

As an exercise for the promotion of health and strength you'll have to travel a long way before finding one that in its combination of usefulness and interest can beat tumbling. The worst of a goodly number of exercises is that they're apt to be dull and flat. Dumb-bells, for instance, are all very well, but dumb-bell work can become most frightfully monotonous. It's just work. That's where tumbling scores. It is work and play combined. Oh, yes; there's any amount of amusement to be got out of tumbling, and although the exercise is one that isn't going to develop those big, knotted muscles such as you see on the professional strong man—and which aren't of much good, except for the performance of a few "heavy" feats—it will do a tremendous lot of good to you in other ways.

It is an exercise remarkably good for the internal organs—and you know that unless these are kept in first-class working order there isn't any health to brag about—and it's simply splendid for the joints and tendons, which are the long, gristly strings in which the muscles end. If these are not elastic the muscles won't expand and contract quickly and easily. Tumbling is just the kind of thing to make them supple and elastic. Therefore, tumbling is an exercise which anyone who takes up boxing seriously can't afford to neglect, because the boxer wants to be able to use his muscles quickly—the quicker the better.

There's another advantage about tumbling which no other kind of exercise possesses. It teaches one how to fall. We all of us do a lot of falling and slipping about, and sometimes

these falls lead to nasty accidents. But the chap who has learned tumbling will be able to fall without running any of these risks. He'll have learned to fall in such a way that no damage is likely to result.

And it's a cheap exercise—no small advantage in itself. There's no need to spend a penny on outfit. No special clothes, no appliances. You can tumble in your shirt, trousers, and socks, on any square of thick grass when it is dry; on a mattress, or thick rug; on sand, or on sawdust.



A simple exercise for the feet.
Figure 1.

You can tumble by yourself, and you can do it with the help of others. And if you'll follow the directions I give you and use ordinary care there's no more risk of injury than in walking upstairs.

Next week I'll describe some preliminary tumbles, with drawings, to make the way to perform them quite clear to you.

Feet.

We all of us walk, more or less, though some of us a good deal less than is good for us, being too ready to take the first 'bus or tramcar, even for a short distance; but it is not until something goes wrong with them that we are able to believe how important a part of our make-up our feet are.

Feet that are all they ought to be—without corns, that is, not getting blistered if we happen to walk a couple of miles at a decent pace; naturally shaped, and without toes crossed or doubled up; that haven't fallen flat; or the ankles of which aren't weak—are by no means common. The war proved to us that even a strong and healthy man often has weak feet. Any number of men were rejected because of defective feet.

Well, our feet are largely what we choose to make them. That's another way of saying that most foot troubles can be prevented and prevented a lot more easily and cheaply than they can be cured. It certainly pays to take care of our feet, and the younger we are when we begin the better.

The first care is scrupulous cleanliness. None of us can help getting dirty, but it is possible for all to get clean. Water is cheap. The feet should be washed every day—certainly every day during the summer. Whether you use hot or cold water doesn't matter. To some people putting the feet into cold water is a bit of a shock; but cold water is better, because it doesn't make the skin soft. Salt in the water helps to toughen the skin, and so reduce blistering, and of course, there are several tips the runner has for preventing this nuisance. As good a one as any is soaping the inside of the socks at toe and heel. Powdered starch inside the socks is good, also. So is the melted wax of a candle, melted into one's

palm and worked soft with a tiny drop of spirits of wine.

The nails are often a trouble; but they wouldn't be if they were attended to regularly, cut once a week; cut squarely across, not following the outline of the toe. The latter is likely to cause ingrowing—one of the most troublesome nuisances. Should this develop, try cutting a small V-shaped nick in the middle of the nail.

There are two tip-top, very simple exercises that help to keep the foot



Figure 2.

a good shape and prevent weaknesses developing. They ought to be performed at night, on going to bed, and they needn't take more than two or three minutes. The first is, I dare say, an old friend, for it is nothing more than raising on the toes as high as possible and slowly sinking back. But don't let the weight rest on the heels as they touch the ground. This exercise helps to get

rid of the cramping effect of the boots or shoes; it makes the whole foot expand. And it's a grand exercise for the legs. Lift yourself thus twenty-five times—increasing to fifty—every night of your life, and you'll get a pair of calves you'll be proud of.

The second exercise is to sit on a chair, knees bent, feet flat. Keep heels firmly on the ground and raise toes towards the shin. Lower toes, press them firmly into the ground while raising heels, arching the instep as much as possible.

A Pair of Strong Hands.

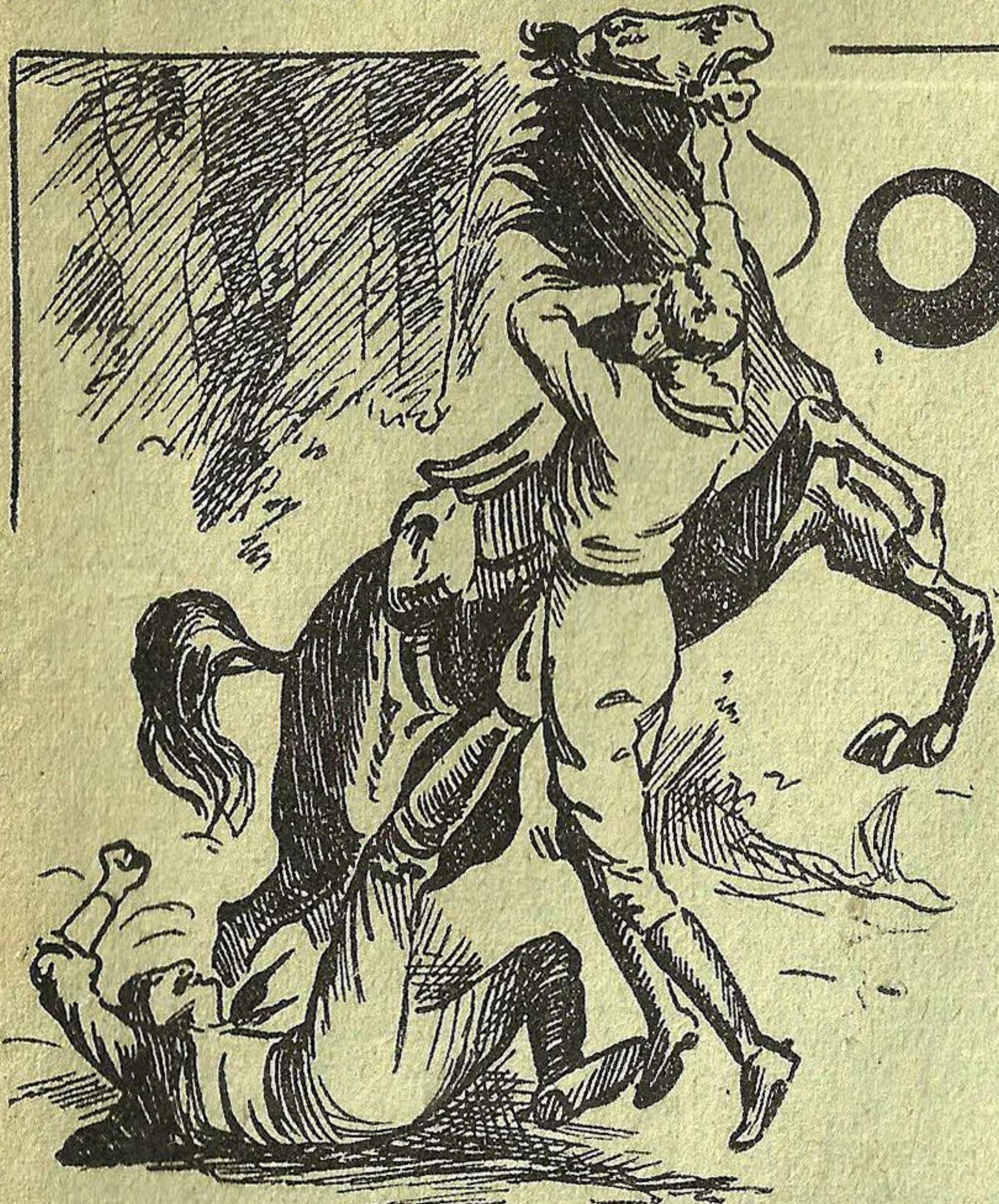
No need to spend time telling you how useful it is to possess a pair of strong, well-developed hands; you'll have found out for yourselves what an advantage a powerful grip is to you. And it isn't necessary to own a No. 10 hand, either, to have a strong grip; small hands may be strong.

There are plenty of ways of developing a powerful grip, such as clenching the fingers strongly on a paper wad, or a small indiarubber ball. Don't forget, however, after each closing of the hands to stretch the fingers well backward, and as far apart as possible. I do, however, warn you against spring-grip dumb-bells. They're bad. Even if you happen to have a pair, leave the gripping alone when using as dumb-bells. They cramp the fingers, and are likely to make them permanently crooked.

One of the best of all exercises for strengthening the grip and at the same time thoroughly well developing the muscles of the forearm, is the following. The apparatus is very simple; you can make it for yourselves at a merely trifling cost.

Get a broom-handle, or similar stick—but not thinner or thicker than a broom-handle—two lengths of stout

A RIPPING STORY OF THE BACKWOODS—INTRODUCING FIVE-HUNDRED-DOLLAR JONES!



ON THE TRACK OF THE OUTLAW

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

The 1st Chapter. A Hot Chase.

Crack, crack, crack!
"Guns!" exclaimed Bob Lawless. The bell was ringing for morning lessons at Cedar Creek School, and boys and girls were trooping towards the lumber schoolhouse, when the sudden fierce outburst of rifle-fire rang on the trail by the gates. Mingled with the sharp crack of the rifles was a wild trampling of hoofs and jingling of bridles. Everyone in the playground turned at once to stare towards the open gateway.

On the trail without, a horseman appeared in sight for a moment, dashing by at top-speed.

His hat was off, his hair blown out in the wind; a streak of red showed on his cheek where a bullet had torn the skin.

It was only for a moment that the horseman was seen; but it was long enough for recognition.

"Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!" exclaimed Frank Richards.

The name was repeated on all sides. "And the sheriff's men after him," said Vere Beauclerc.

Five or six horsemen, in a galloping bunch, showed up outside the gates, hot on the trail of the outlaw.

Two or three of them were firing as they galloped.

The chase swept past the gates of Cedar Creek, and disappeared from sight; but the crashing hoofs and the ringing rifles could still be heard by the startled crowd in the playground.

Frank Richards & Co. made a rush towards the gates.

Some of the other fellows followed them, eager to watch the chase of the outlaw; while others, headed by Chunky Todgers, dodged into the schoolhouse to get out of the way of flying bullets.

"Indoors at once!" exclaimed Miss Meadows, coming into the porch. "All of you—into the school-room at once!"

But the fellows who were heading for the gates were deaf to the voice of the Canadian schoolmistress.

Frank Richards was the first at the gateway, and he looked eagerly along the trail towards the creek, along which the outlaw and his pursuers had vanished.

The horsemen were out of sight beyond the timber, but the trampling hoofs still echoed back.

"It was Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!" breathed Bob Lawless. "They're hot on his track this time! I wonder if he's hit?"

"Somebody's hit!" muttered Beauclerc, as a loud and terrible cry rang beyond the cedar-trees.

Tramp, tramp!
A horse was coming back along the trail, galloping furiously, and the chums of Cedar Creek watched breathlessly for its re-appearance.

The frightened animal came tearing round the timber, into the open space before the school gates, with a wounded rider clinging feebly to its back, unable to control his steed.

It was Big Dave, the sheriff's man, of Thompson, and his ghastly face showed that he was hard hit. The fleeing outlaw had returned the fire with effect.

Close by the gates the wounded man dropped from his horse, but his foot was still in the stirrup, and the scared animal, rushing on, dragged him along through the grass.

Frank Richards made a spring into the trail.

It was no light matter to spring into the path of the frantic horse, but Frank did not stop to think. He caught at the flying reins, and dragged with all his strength, and the horse, drawn aside by the pull, tramped round him in a circle, snorting and foaming.

Bob Lawless and Vere Beauclerc were on the spot in a moment.

Bob lent Frank Richards help with the struggling horse, while Beauclerc seized the fallen man, and dragged him clear.

The horse was rearing and snorting wildly, but the two schoolboys succeeded in quietening it at last.

severely; but the sight of Big Dave's rescue had quite changed her intentions.

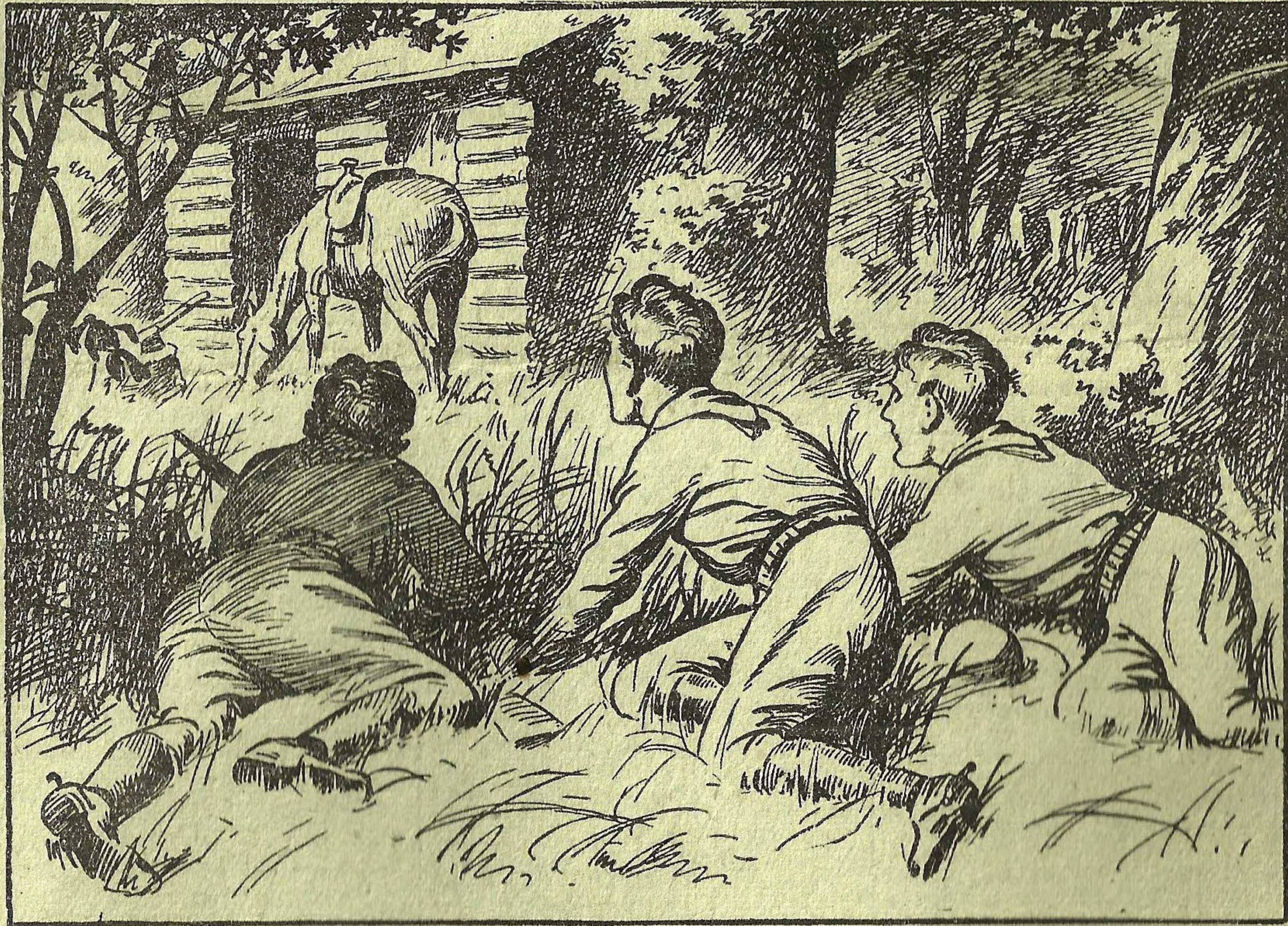
Her face was pale as she hurried out.

"Richards!" she exclaimed. "My dear, brave boy, are you hurt?"

"No, ma'am!" gasped Frank. He was shaking from head to foot; but it was only the reaction after the excitement. "I—I'm all right."

"Dave must be taken in," said Miss Meadows. "You are wounded, my poor fellow!"

"I guess so, marm," said Big Dave faintly. "But don't you trouble your purty head—"



HOT ON THE TRAIL! It was full five minutes before Bob Lawless ventured to raise his head a little and peer through the waving grass towards the stockman's cabin. Outside the cabin the hitched horse belonging to the outlaw was still nibbling the grass. Not a sign was to be seen of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones. "I guess we'll wriggle round the cabin a bit," said Bob in a low voice. "Keep your eyes peeled!"

and Bob tethered it to a tree by the reins.

Beauclerc was kneeling by the side of the fallen man in the grass.

Big Dave was still conscious, and he grinned feebly at the schoolboys as they gathered round him.

"I guess that was slick, young Richards," he muttered. "By gosh! I reckoned I was a gone coon!"

Frank Richards shuddered.

The vision of the wounded man dragged along by the stirrup was still before his eyes, and it made him feel sick with horror. It seemed almost a miracle that Big Dave had been rescued from a fearful death.

"You're wounded, Dave!" muttered Bob Lawless huskily.

"I've guess I've got it," answered the sheriff's man. "In my shoulder. That cuss can shoot, you bet—slick as lightning on the trigger, I guess. But I don't care if they rope him in. I guess Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones is riding on his last trail!"

Miss Meadows appeared in the gateway.

The schoolmistress had hurried on the scene to rebuke the schoolboys

"Remain with him for a moment," said Miss Meadows; and she turned back to the gates. "Mr. Slimmey—Mr. Shepherd!"

The two masters hastened out.

In a few minutes Big Dave was carried into the schoolhouse and laid on a bed, and Mr. Shepherd was riding at top-speed to Thompson for the doctor.

Mr. Slimmey called the schoolboys in to class; and it was a wildly-excited crowd that gathered in the school-room.

Miss Meadows did not appear; she was attending to the wounded man. Mr. Slimmey had a hard task with Cedar Creek that morning.

Once or twice, from the distance, there was a sound of firing again, showing that the pursuit of the outlaw was still going on, and that Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was still evading the sheriff and his men among the timber.

Mr. Slimmey did his best with his pupils; but there was only the barest pretence of lessons that morning at Cedar Creek. The school-room was

in an almost incessant buzz of excited voices. Probably Mr. Slimmey was as glad as the rest when the time came for dismissal.

The 2nd Chapter. Still at Large.

Frank Richards & Co. crowded out of the schoolhouse, still in a state of considerable excitement.

They were intensely eager to know the result of the pursuit. For weeks past, Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones had been the only topic in the Thompson valley. That usually quiet and orderly settlement in the Canadian-West had been thrown into an uproar by the arrival and the exploits of the man from Frisco.

Frank Richards & Co. took a more especial interest in the rascal, from the fact that they had come into close contact with him more than once. It was Frank who had discovered that the outlaw, whose hiding-place was a mystery to the whole valley, had found refuge at Cedar Creek School itself, having obtained a "job" there, Miss Meadows being, of course, in complete ignorance of his identity.

It was Frank who had unmasked the rascal, and compelled him to flee in such hot haste that he had abandoned his plunder. Since then, Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones had been at large, but the incessant pursuit by the sheriff of Thompson and his men gave him little rest. It was impossible for the outlaw, cunning as he was, to play the same trick again, for every stranger in the Thompson Valley was subjected to scrutiny and questioning now; and, indeed, more than one luckless "hobo," tramping up from the railway had been colared, and detained for days while his identity was established beyond doubt.

Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was driven to the woods, and even there the pursuit was often hot on his trail.

Todgers. "Just what I should have done in your place."

"Just!" said Frank, with a grin. "I wish I'd been out on the trail when that bulldozer came by!" said Chunky regretfully.

"What would you have done?" asked Frank.

"Stopped him, you bet!" said Chunky emphatically. "I should have made one spring—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"One spring at his horse's head," said Chunky firmly. "And then—"

There was a sound of hoofs up the trail.

"Then here's a chance for you, Chunky!" exclaimed Bob Lawless.

"Here he comes back!"

"Wha-a-at!"

Clatter, clatter, clatter!

A rapid rider was about to appear past the clump of timber up the trail. It was not very likely that it was Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, but the bare possibility was enough for Chunky Todgers. He made a bound back into the gateway.

"Hold on, Chunky!" roared Bob Lawless. "Aren't you going to stop him?"

Chunky Todgers did not reply. He had no breath for replying; he needed it all for the frantic sprint he was making towards the shelter of the schoolhouse.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The horseman came in sight a minute later. It was Mr. Henderson, the sheriff of Thompson. He looked dusty and tired, and his bronzed face was very grim as he drew rein at the school.

"Have you got him, sheriff?" exclaimed the three schoolboys in eager chorus.

The sheriff shook his head.

"He's got away, but he's hit," he said. "But—" He checked himself. "Did you see anything of my man, Dave? He was wounded, and his horse got away with him."

"He's here!"

"Oh, good!"

The sheriff dismounted, hitched his horse, and strode into the school.

Frank Richards & Co. exchanged glances.

"Got away!" said Bob Lawless in deep disappointment. "That bulldozer has no end of luck!"

"I shouldn't wonder if he clears out of the section after this," remarked Beauclerc. "He's had the narrowest shave of his life to-day."

"I guess he's got some reason for staying," said Bob. "He could have gone, if he'd liked, when he was cleared out of Cedar Creek. I wonder—" He paused uneasily.

"Well?" said Frank Richards.

"He was awfully vicious at your showing him up, Frank," said Bob Lawless. "I fancy it would be bad for you if you came across him again. He had a safe hiding-place here, and it's pretty plain he meant to stick here, passing himself off as a man-of-all-work, while he was playing his tricks up and down the Valley. He was howling out threats when he rode away that time."

Frank Richards smiled faintly.

"You don't think he's hanging on in this section on my account?" he asked.

"I shouldn't wonder; and out of bravado, too," said Bob. "Anyhow, you've got to be careful to keep clear of him."

"Not quite!" said Frank, laughing. "I was just thinking that as he's got away from the sheriff it wouldn't be a bad idea for us to take a hand. The Valley won't be safe till that villain is rounded up. Some of the kids are not coming to school now on his account. If he's not roped in by Saturday—we're free on Saturday—"

"You awful ass!" said Beauclerc. "If Miss Meadows heard of such a scheme—"

"Well, we're not going to tell Miss Meadows," said Frank, laughing. "We can get our horses on Saturday morning, if he's not roped in by that time, and try our luck. I'm game, if you fellows are."

Bob's eyes glistened.

"Old man, you've hit it!" he said.

"That's just what we're going to do. What do you say, Cherub?"

"Oh, I'm on!" said Beauclerc, with a smile. "We're three silly asses if we try it on; but I'm game."

"Only we shall have to keep it dark," said Frank. "We'll tell everybody when we bring Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones home, tied up like a turkey."

"When!" said Beauclerc, laughing. "Needless to say, Frank Richards & Co. were very keen for news of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones for the remainder of the week."

There was news, and plenty of it, but no news of the outlaw's capture. News came from Silver Creek, where he "held up" the hotel one day,

Many of the citizens of Thompson "opined" that the outlaw would vamoose from the section, after making it so hot for himself, while he had yet time. But that morning's happenings showed that the desperado had not vamoosed.

"They must have got him!" Bob Lawless remarked, as he looked out on the trail. "He was hit, anyhow. I saw it on his face as he passed the gates. I guess they've got him this time."

"I hope so," said Frank. "But I—"

Chunky Todgers came up breathlessly.

"The doc's coming to see Big Dave again this afternoon, you fellows," he said. "He can't be moved yet. Miss Meadows is going to nurse him till he's well enough. I say, the doc says he had a narrow escape; he was badly hit."

"Lucky it's no worse," said Beauclerc. "It might have been—it would have been but for you, Frank."

"That was rather a hefty thing, stopping the horse, Richards," said

after the fierce pursuit the schoolboys had witnessed, and carried off all the plunder he could lay his greedy hands upon. And there was news from White Pine, where the outlaw had stolen a horse, and left his own animal, which had fallen lame. And there was news in Thompson itself, where the sheriff had been awakened at midnight by a fusillade of bullets upon his windows, a reckless defiance from the hunted outlaw. But the news was all of the deeds of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, and his capture seemed as far off as ever when Saturday dawned.

The 3rd Chapter. The Outlaw's Track.

Frank Richards and Bob Lawless rode away from the Lawless Ranch at an early hour on Saturday morning and joined Vere Beauclerc on the trail. Not a word had been spoken outside their own select circle on the subject of the intended expedition, a very necessary precaution. Certainly they would not have been allowed to start had their intention been known. The three chums were, as a matter of fact, feeling a little uneasy in their consciences on that account as they rode over the green prairie in the early sunshine. But they felt that, much as they hoped to fall on the track of the outlaw, they had little chance of success, and that the expedition would probably end in nothing but a day on the plains, such an outing as they had often enjoyed before. And the fresh morning of an early Canadian summer was so enjoyable on the grasslands that they could not help feeling in high spirits as they rode away together with jingling bridles.

Bob Lawless had his lasso on his saddle, and a rifle, and Frank and Beauclerc both had their rifles. In any case, they needed them for shooting game for their dinner. Whether they would have a chance of a pot-shot at Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was a much more doubtful question. The outlaw had last been heard of, so far as the chums knew, in the neighbourhood of White Pine, beyond the border of the Thompson Valley settlement to the north-west. In that direction accordingly they turned their horses, proceeding at an easy gallop. It was a good many miles to White Pine, and the sun was high in the heavens when they sighted in the distance the thin column of smoke rising from the lonely stockman's cabin, the only building for a league or more.

"We may get some later news there," Frank Richards remarked, pointing with his riding-whip to the column of smoke from the as yet unseen chimney.

"It's two days since Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones bagged a horse from Smith, the stockman," said Beauclerc. "If you're looking for a trail, Bob, old man, you're trying your eyes for nothing."

Bob Lawless had been silent for some time while his comrades chatted. The rancher's son was riding with his eyes on the ground, apparently examining the rich grass, and now he drew rein and jumped from his horse, and dropped on his knees.

His comrades pulled in their horses and sat watching him, with rather amused smiles.

Bob Lawless' skill on the trail was great, but his chums did not expect him to learn anything from a track two days old, even if he found it. But Bob's expression was very earnest, and for some minutes he was examining a track in the grass, which to his chums' eyes was almost imperceptible.

He rose to his feet at last. "Well?" said Frank and Beauclerc together.

"It's him!" said Bob tersely and ungrammatically.

"Not the Jones man?" asked Beauclerc.

"I guess so."

Frank closed one eye at Beauclerc. "You've found Jones' trail, Bob?" he asked.

"Yep."

"How old?"

"Not more than an hour, I reckon."

"Go easy," said Frank, with a smile. "Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones changed his horse two or three days ago, and his new gee isn't likely to have the same track as the other."

But Bob's face was very serious.

"I know the track of the new one, Frank," he answered. "It was last Wednesday Jones held up the stockman's cabin, and robbed him of his best horse. On Thursday night he shot up the sheriff's house in Thompson, and he was on his new horse then. It rained Thursday night, and on Friday morning a lot of galoots

were out looking for Jones' trail. You remember Billy Cook brought us the news from Thompson early, and I rode over to Thompson before school yesterday morning."

Frank Richards nodded.

"But—" he began.

"You're as full of butts, Franky, as a Mexican goat. The Jones man left his tracks on the mud outside Thompson, and I saw them—"

"But they were mixed up with a lot of others, and you didn't know which was which," said Frank, with a grin. "That's how you told me, anyhow, old scout."

"Sure! Five or six galoots had ridden out of Thompson in the rain, and Jones was only one of them," said Bob.

"Then how can you tell—"

"I made a note of the tracks, though I didn't know which was the Jones man's. One of them is here."

"Oh!"

Frank and Beauclerc were interested by this time. They dismounted and examined the trail.

Here and there, in the rich grass, softened by recent rain, lay the prints of a horse's hoofs, though to Frank's eyes there was little that was distinctive about them. But he knew that his Canadian cousin read more in a trail than he could read.

"One of these horses that went out of Thompson the night Jones was there has come along here only an hour ahead of us," said Bob. "I'm quite certain of that—I'd swear to that track. Now, it isn't often galoots ride to Smith's cabin at White Pine—precious few galoots have business there. But this horse is heading for the cabin as plain as anything. We've been following the track from two miles back. I noticed it the first minute or two that we hit on it."

"But it might be any of the galoots—"

"Wait a minute. If it was a Thompson man it would naturally come from the direction of the town, wouldn't it?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, Thompson's east of here, as you know, I suppose. This track, when we fell in with it, came from the west."

"Oh!" said Frank.

"That is, it came from the unsettled districts, where a horseman doesn't ride once in a dog's age," said Bob. "Every now and then a cattleman rides out, that's all. Of course, it may be that very cattleman was in Thompson that night, and this is his track. But it ain't likely. It's about a hundred Canadian dollars to a Mexican peso that it was Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones on his new horse."

Instinctively the schoolboys swept the horizon with their eyes.

But there was no sign of a rider.

"My hat!" said Frank, with a deep breath. "If you're sure, Bob that—"

"Sure as can be," answered Bob quietly. "It's about ten to one, I reckon. But there's something more—this is the track of a big, heavy horse, and it was a big horse that was stolen from Stockman Smith."

"Then—but why should the outlaw come back here?" asked Frank. "He can't want another horse from Smith."

"He may want something. It's a lonely place, and he may think himself safe here," said Bob. "You see, he's got no shelter in the Valley; he's living rough in the woods, and I guess he's sometimes hard put to it for a meal. He robbed a store at Silver Creek last week, taking biscuits and bully beef and things, which shows that he's hard up for food. He may have come to Smith's place for a meal."

"It's possible."

"I guess it's possible enough to make us keep our eyes peeled," said Bob. "Suppose we'd ridden up to Smith's cabin, and found the Jones man there without expecting it. I guess he would have potted the three of us without saying a word. He hasn't forgotten how he was cleared out of Cedar Creek, you can bet."

Frank Richards whistled.

"We're not turning back, though," he said.

"Nope! We're going on—but we're going to be jolly careful. Look to your guns first."

The chums of Cedar Creek were feeling a thrill of excitement now.

They examined and loaded their rifles very carefully.

Frank was about to remount his horse, when Bob caught him by the arm.

"On foot," he said.

"It's a good mile to the cabin yet."

"I guess so; and better a mile on foot than a bullet through the head," answered Bob Lawless. "I guess Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, if he's

there, will have an eye open for horsemen on the plains. He's had more close shaves than any other rustler in the West, I reckon, and he hasn't pulled through by keeping his eyes shut."

"Right-ho!"

"We'll lead the horses, and hitch them in the next timber clump," said Bob. "We'll have to crawl the last bit. Come on."

With their hearts beating, the chums of Cedar Creek led their horses onward through the grass, following the trail that ran at their feet.

Here and there it was lost on a patch of hard or stony soil, but it always recurred, and evidently it led directly to the stockman's cabin.

Three or four cedars grew by the cabin, shutting it off from their view, but the sloping roof came into sight between the branches.

In the timber clump the chums tethered their horses, and then crept cautiously onward, rifle in hand.

It was with a thrill of excitement, though not of fear, that they crept closer and closer through the thick grass to the lonely log cabin.

More clearly it came into view between the cedars.

Bob Lawless uttered a low, sudden exclamation.

"Look—the horse!"

The door of the stockman's cabin was wide open. Outside it was tethered a big chestnut horse. The chums exchanged glances. Evidently it was the horse whose tracks they had followed so far, and it remained to be seen whether it had been ridden by the outlaw, and whether Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was within the cabin.

"Come on!" breathed Frank.

"Stop!"

Bob panted out the word, catching Frank's arm and dragging him deeper into the grass.

At the doorway of the cabin a figure had suddenly appeared, rifle in hand, sweeping the plain with a pair of keen, searching eyes—the eyes of a hunted man incessantly wary.

And Frank, as he crouched in the grass, muttered:

"Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones!"

The 4th Chapter. Sharp Shot.

Frank Richards & Co. lay throbbing in the grass, scarcely daring to move. They knew that the outlaw could not have seen them yet, but if a head had been raised, it would have been enough for the keen-eyed man from Frisco. A head raised above the grass would have fallen back with a bullet through it.

They waited, breathless.

The outlaw was in the lonely stockman's cabin, probably eating and drinking, and his accustomed caution had caused him to step to the door and scan the plains for a possible enemy.

Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was certain to "shoot at sight," and they had come very near to riding unsuspectingly right up to the cabin. Bob Lawless' discovery of the trail had undoubtedly saved their lives. But their task was only beginning.

It was full five minutes before Bob Lawless ventured to raise his head a little and peer through the waving grass towards the stockman's cabin. The doorway was wide and empty now, and he raised his head a little further. Outside the cabin the hitched horse was still nibbling at the grass. Not a sign was to be seen of Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones.

"I guess we'll wriggle round the cabin a bit," said Bob in a low voice. "We've got to keep our eyes peeled, I can tell you. Mind, you're to shoot straight. He will. And I'd rather wing that bulldozer than a prairie wolf any day."

The chums wormed their way onward through the grass slowly and cautiously. Slowness was necessary, for an unaccustomed motion in the grass would have been enough to warn the outlaw if he had observed it; and certainly Mr. Jones, though out of sight, had his eyes on the open doorway, and on the window, too.

It was towards the blank side of the cabin, where there was neither door nor window, that the chums were working their way, and once out of sight of possible observation, they made more speed. But they were very watchful as they crept on, and again Bob warned them in a whisper, and they dropped out of sight.

"What is it now?" muttered Frank.

"He's looking round the corner of the house. I saw his hat!"

The comrades waited again.

Another five minutes elapsed, and then they resumed their way. It was with great relief that, reaching the end of the long grass, they entered the clearing behind the cabin, and

trod on till they were close to the thick log wall.

Bob Lawless examined the wall closely, and made a sign to his chums. He had found a rift between two of the logs, where a winter gale had shaken them, and a narrow slit gave a view of part of the interior of the little building.

The chums of Cedar Creek peered in breathlessly.

The man they sought was within four feet of them, sitting with his back to the wall, facing the open door.

He was seated at a table, on which were the remains of a meal. A revolver lay on the table beside him, and his rifle was leaning on his knee.

There was one other occupant of the cabin—the stockman, Smith. He was waiting on the outlaw at his meal, evidently in a state of terror.

The outlaw was pouring whisky into a tin cup from a bottle, and the gurgling liquor reached the ears of the schoolboys without.

"I guess this is real good tangle-foot, pard!" The outlaw was speaking. "I guess you won't mind if I take the bottle away, eh?"

"You'll do as you like, Mr. Jones," was the stockman's reply.

"Sure!" he assented. "But I ain't moving yet. I guess I'm not moving till sundown, and you're going to have the pleasure of my company all day, pard. You don't get many visitors hyer, I reckon."

"Hardly any."

"Perhaps I'll drop in and see you again some day. You'll be always glad to see me, I know."

The stockman made no reply to Mr. Jones' ferocious banter. Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones gulped at the whisky.

"P'raps you reckon you'll have the sheriff's men hyer some day, ready for me," pursued Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones. "Don't try it on, pard. They will want a new stockman on this section if you do. I'd keep on your trail for a year, if it was necessary, if you played me a trick. There's a little cuss at Cedar Creek I haven't forgotten. I guess I'll make him feel that he made a mistake in going for Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones afore I quit this valley. You bet!"

Bob Lawless nudged Frank. The schoolboys heard every word, and they knew who was the "little cuss" Mr. Jones alluded to. Frank Richards' eyes gleamed.

The schoolboys drew back from the wall, so that they could whisper without danger of being overheard by the ruffian within.

"We've got him dead to-rights!" whispered Bob Lawless. "Mind, we've got to shoot. He would wing us at sight as soon as he would squash a mosquito. You heard what he said about you, Franky."

"I heard," muttered Frank between his set teeth; "and he would shoot down that stockman like a coyote if he tried to defend his belongings. We needn't stand on ceremony with such a beast!"

"We've got to get round to the door quietly. We show up suddenly with rifles at the level!" said Bob cautiously. "If he chooses to put up his hands at a word, good! But if he touches the revolver, let fly without wasting a second. It's his life or ours then!"

"Right!"

"We mayn't come out of this with whole skins," said Bob. "He's a wild-cat, and no mistake. But we're chancing it, and we're not taking on any extra chances for the sake of that villain. Let fly if he lays his finger on a gun. Ready?"

"We're ready!" muttered Beauclerc.

"Come on, then!"

In a few moments more the three rifles would have been levelled in at the doorway, and Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones would have been covered, and at the mercy of his foes.

But at that moment the figure of the outlaw suddenly emerged from the doorway.

He had no suspicion that foes were at hand. It was simply his accustomed caution that led him to step from the cabin at intervals and take a survey of the surrounding grassland. He stepped out quite easily and unsuspectingly, his eyes on the distance, and gave a violent start as he found three foes close at his elbow.

Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was seldom, if ever, taken by surprise, but undoubtedly he was taken by surprise now.

He spun round towards the schoolboys, the expression on his face almost ludicrous in its amazement.

The three chums were surprised too, for the moment; they had not looked for the sudden appearance of the outlaw.

But in a second their rifles were up, just as the outlaw was lifting the revolver he had in his right hand.

Crack!

There was no time for talk; it was a matter of life and death. Bob Lawless pulled trigger first, as the revolver swung up; and the bullet struck the weapon in the outlaw's hand, sending it spinning through the air. There was crimson on the butt of the revolver as it spun away and crashed to the ground.

Crack-ack!

Frank and Beauclerc fired a second after Bob, but they were in haste; the outlaw's sudden appearance had startled them. One bullet missed the ruffian entirely; the other grazed his cheek, drawing blood.

The outlaw sprang back, his eyes glittering, his expression that of a cornered wolf.

All that happened in the twinkling of an eye; yet it was evident that the outlaw's first thought was to rush into the cabin for his rifle, and that he realised that he would be clubbed down before he could reach it—the three schoolboys were springing at him with butt-ends up. His intention instantaneously changed, and he dragged at his horse. As he whirled the animal from the doorway, Frank's rifle-butt smote him on the shoulder, and he staggered; but the horse received Beauclerc's butt as it plunged, and saved its master. Bob Lawless was cramming in a fresh cartridge now.

The startled horse dashed off at a mad gallop, with the outlaw clinging to its back, striving to climb into the saddle as he went. Frank and Beauclerc rushed after it, but they were hopelessly outdistanced.

"Stand clear!"

It was Bob Lawless' voice, sharp and steady.

He had dropped on one knee, his rifle at the shoulder, his clear eye glancing through the sights.

The muzzle bore upon the fleeing outlaw.

Frank and Beauclerc stopped, and jumped aside, to give their chum a clear aim.

Crack!

Frank Richards gave a shout as the outlaw's horse plunged forward and fell on its knees. The outlaw was flung heavily over the horse's head, and he rolled in the grass.

Bob Lawless sprang up, gritting his teeth.

Once more Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones' luck had held good. A plunging leap of his horse had saved him, and the bullet intended for the rider was driven deep into the steed.

"Load—load!" shouted Bob. "He'll get away yet!"

The horse rolled over, kicked, and lay still. But Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was on his feet, springing away into the grass, bending low as he plunged into it. With hot haste, Frank Richards & Co. reloaded and fired, and the bullets splattered round the outlaw as he fled.

"The horses!" muttered Bob.

The outlaw was already at a distance, dodging away desperately in the long grass and the belts of thicket. To pursue him on foot was almost a hopeless task; and the chums of Cedar Creek dashed away to the timber clump where they had left their horses.

Ten minutes later they were in the saddle, and riding back to take up the quest. The trail was easy to follow—bent and trampled grass, and torn twigs, and spots of blood marked where he had run at desperate speed—a speed the schoolboys could never have equalled on foot.

They rode on the track as fast as they could ride without missing the trail, and for a mile or more they followed the track, till it ended in a deep hollow, at the bottom of which flowed a creek on its way to the Thompson River. There the outlaw had taken to the water, and there the track was lost. But it was not till sundown that the chums gave up the search and turned their horses' heads homeward.

Late that evening the sheriff of Thompson was surprised by three dusty and fatigued riders, who stopped at his house in Main Street with the news that Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, disarmed, dismounted, and wounded, was almost at the end of his tether in the White Pine wilderness.

And then Frank Richards & Co. rode home, not dissatisfied with the result of their day's work. They had failed to capture the outlaw; but they had come near to success, and Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones was reduced to extremities. Disarmed, and on foot in the wilderness, his chance of escape was slight, and they fully expected to hear of his capture the next day. But much was to happen before the man from Frisco was "roped" into the net of the law.

THE END.