

MAGNIFICENT NEW ADVENTURE SERIAL STARTS TO-DAY!

By Sidney Drew.

The BOYS' FRIEND

TWELVE PAGES!

TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR!

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No. 994. Vol. XX. New Series.

THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending June 26th, 1920.]



A SURPRISE MEETING!

Dick and Jack Darby slid from their camels and ran forward. In the glow of the flames, well clear of the wrecked machine, stood two men. A third figure lay prone on the sand at their feet. The next moment, in the glow of the tossing flames and amid a stench of burning canvas and petrol, two people were staring in open-mouthed astonishment at each other. For there, in the heart of the desert, Richard Archgray and his cousin, Bennet Garvery, stood face to face, both equally astounded at this undreamed-of meeting!

The 1st Chapter.

John Garvery's Strange Will.

Old John Garvery was dead. Certain people in the City were not surprised at that. They remembered the slim, shabby gentleman with the thin, white beard. He was as dingy as his offices, and for a month or two he had been looking very frail. To the outside world, and even to many in the inside world, that portion of London known as the "City" is a place of mystery. And when it became known that John Garvery, who grudged a shilling for his lunch, and considered that to hire a taxicab was a wicked waste of money, had left something like a couple of millions behind him, there were some wise ones who pretended to be surprised that he had not left more, and others equally wise and just as astonished that he had left anything at all.

The will had been proved by the firm of Darkwell, Brayburn & Ressit, solicitors, of Chancery Lane. The Government, of course, had taken a huge slice out of the fortune. Chancery Lane can be a gloomy place, but for once the sun was shining

there, and even the dusty windows of the solicitors' office could not keep out some of it.

There was no Mr. Darkwell and no Mr. Ressit, though their names were engraved on the brass doorplate. Mr. Brayburn was the last representative of the firm. He sat at his desk, a withered little man with spectacles. Without turning round, he began to read John Garvery's will in a quiet, dry voice.

"To my faithful housekeeper, Jane Mullins, I bequeath a sum sufficient to provide her, free of income-tax, with an annuity of five pounds per week, as a reward for her goodness, honesty, and unflinching kindness."

"Oh, the dear, kind master!" said a woman, in a choked voice.

Mr. Brayburn read on. There was an annuity for his gardener, with an extra sovereign a week added for the keep of the testator's fox-terrier, Loftus; this weekly payment to cease at the death of the dog. The solicitor's voice droned on further, till he had come to the end of the smaller

legacies. Then he swung round in his chair.

"The rest of Mr. John Garvery's will is so extraordinary," he said, "that I have thought it my duty to ask for the highest expert advice. I am told on the greatest authority that the will is quite in order and perfectly legal. After paying out the charges on the estate I have read to you, and the charges for death duties, etc., the remainder of the money is left to the testator's nephew."

Mr. Brayburn paused. John Garvery had two nephews—Bennet Garvery and Richard Archgray. They were sitting with their backs to the window. Bennet was nearly eighteen. He was dark, lean, and pale, but much stronger than he looked. Archgray was three years younger, a clean-limbed, fair-haired boy. Bennet clenched his hands nervously, as well he might with such tremendous things at stake.

"Which nephew?" he asked, in a shaky voice. "Is it for me or for Archgray?"

"That has yet to be decided," said the lawyer. "To me, it does not seem quite fair, as you, Bennet, have an

advantage in age. I pointed this fact out to the two eminent counsel I consulted. Your uncle was an eccentric person, though a most capable man of business. He was a great traveller, as you may know. At one time he would be in Japan, buying silks, at another in the heart of Siberia, buying furs. His fortune is to go to the nephew who proves himself to be the most resourceful and capable. He has set you a task, and the spoils will belong to the victor. The task must be completed within eight months. Should you both fail, you will each receive only the sum of five thousand pounds, and the rest of your uncle's great fortune will go to various charities."

Mr. Brayburn took a couple of sealed envelopes from a drawer.

"I have to give you these," he went on. "I can only wish you luck in this very curious adventure. I have to warn you both that there must be no collusion. By the terms of the will you can come to no arrangement about dividing the money. It is extraordinary, as I have said before; the strangest and oddest will I have ever dealt with."

He handed one of the envelopes to Bennet Garvery, and the other to Richard Archgray. Dick Archgray was not a nervous youngster, but his hands were not too steady as he broke the seal. His uncle had been almost a stranger to him. But his hands were steadier than his cousin's as he pulled out the single strip of paper the envelope contained, and read:

"First clue. Siwah. Peter the Dervish. The Well of a Thousand Perils and the broken pillar. Where the eighth shadow falls at lark-rise. 6.6.6.—J. G."

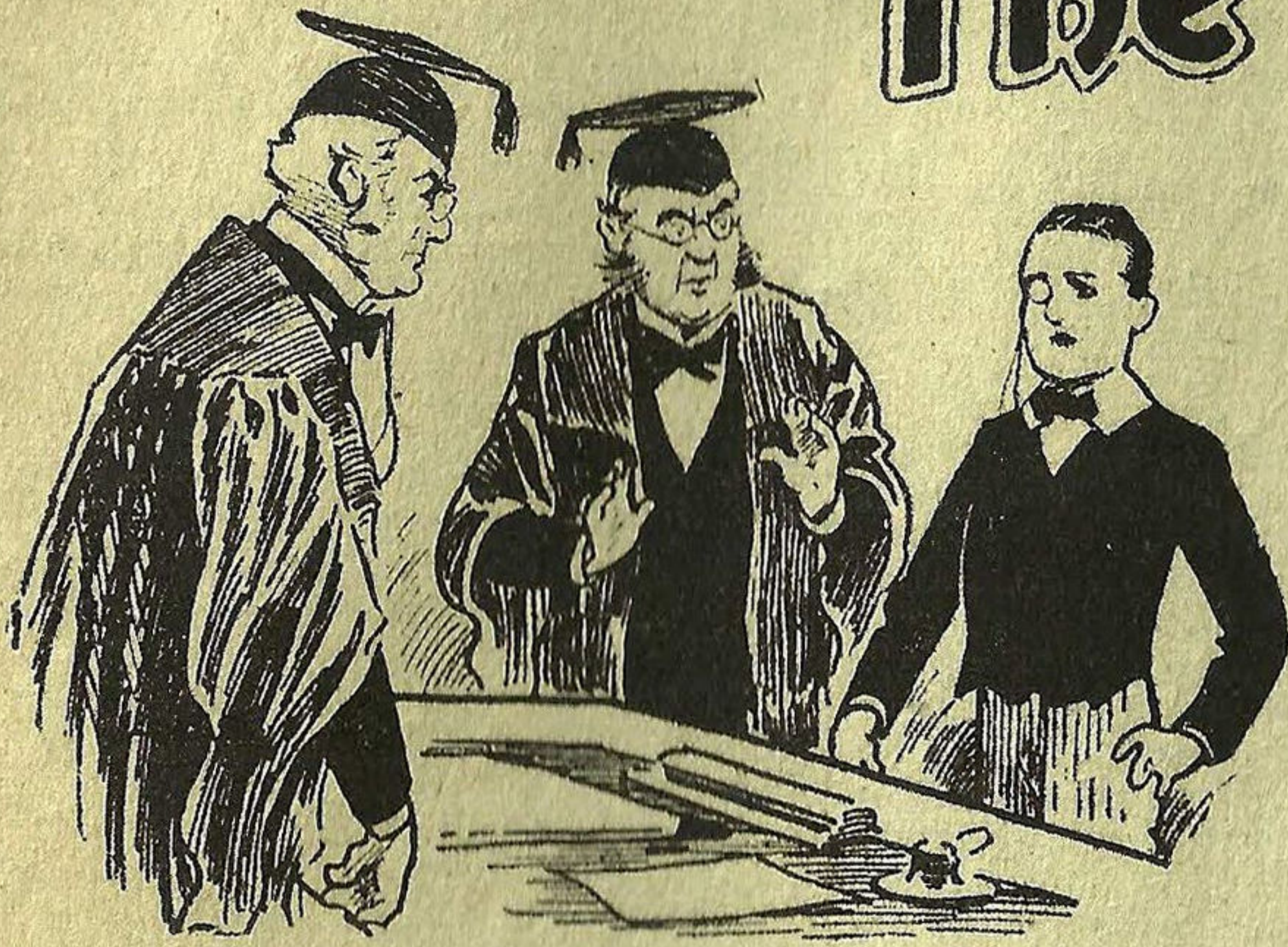
That was all. The two papers were identical. Bennet Garvery fixed his frowning, puzzled eyes on Dick.

"Why, he must have been raving mad!" he said. "What does this rignarole mean?"

"You had better ask me another," said Dick. "It's worse than Sanscrit to me. What does it mean, Mr. Brayburn?"

"I'm afraid it means something very difficult, my boy," said the lawyer. "Evidently your uncle wished his fortune to go to the

The Rookwood Rebel!



A LONG, COMPLETE STORY OF JIMMY SILVER & Co., AT ROOKWOOD SCHOOL. By OWEN CONQUEST.

The 1st Chapter.

Brought Before the Beak!

"Mornny, old man!"
 Mornnington of the Fourth was waiting in the passage outside the Head's study at Rookwood, when Jimmy Silver came up quickly.
 Mornny glanced round, and nodded coolly.
 "You haven't seen the Head yet?" asked Jimmy.
 "Not yet. I'm waitin' to be called in for execution," said Mornnington, with a grin. "Dear old Bootles has brought me here, and he's gone in to talk to the beak. He told me to wait. So, like a good an' dutiful youth, I'm waitin'."
 "It's a serious matter, Mornny," said Jimmy Silver, in a low voice.
 The murmur of voices could be heard from the Head's study. Mr. Bootles was there, doubtless explaining to Dr. Chisholm that Valentine Mornnington had returned after his reckless escapade. There were few fellows, in Mornny's position, who would not have been feeling uneasy; but Mornnington looked as cool and nonchalant as ever. Apparently he had no dread of the coming interview with his headmaster.
 "Serious!" repeated Mornnington. "I know it, dear boy. Can't you see how serious I'm lookin' and feelin'?"
 "Mornny, this isn't a time for playing the goat," said Jimmy earnestly. "You've done a silly thing, and the Head's bound to be waxy. Don't try any rot with him. If you cheek him it will be all the worse for you."
 Mornnington shrugged his shoulders.
 Jimmy was about to speak again, when the study door opened, and Mr. Bootles looked out.
 "Mornnington!" he said curtly.
 "Yes, sir?" answered Mornny, with undiminished cheerfulness.
 "Dr. Chisholm will see you now. You may enter."
 "Thank you, sir!"
 Jimmy Silver gave the dandy of the Fourth almost an imploring look. In Mornny's present mood, Jimmy was alarmed as to what might happen in the Head's study. Mornny gave him a wink in return, and followed Mr. Bootles into the room.
 Jimmy turned away as the door closed on him, with a clouded brow.
 He went quietly down the passage, to where Lovell and Raby and Newcome were waiting for him at the corner. The Fistical Four were all concerned for Mornny now, though, as a rule, they did not care much about that rather lofty youth.
 "He's gone in?" asked Lovell.
 "Yes, I'm afraid he's looking for trouble," said Jimmy. "If he's silly ass enough to cheek the Head as he did Bootles—"
 "It will be the sack instead of a flogging, if he does," said Raby. "I'm sorry, after the game he put up at Greyfriars to-day."
 Kit Erroll came up and joined the Fistical Four. Erroll's face was deeply troubled.
 "Is he with the Head, Jimmy?" he asked.
 "Yes."
 "I—I hope he'll have sense enough to keep his tongue in check," said Erroll. "He was awfully cheeky to Mr. Bootles, when Bulkeley brought him in. It may be something worse than a flogging, if he's not careful."
 "We'll wait for him here," said Jimmy. "He can't be long with the Head."
 The juniors waited, in a very uneasy mood.
 There never was any telling what Valentine Mornnington might do or say when he was in a reckless temper, and the Head of Rookwood was not a man to be trifled with.
 "Hallo! Here's 'Erbert!" murmured Arthur Edward Lovell, as a

fag of the Second Form came along the corridor.
 Mornnington secundus joined the Fourth-Formers, his chubby little face very distressed.
 Evidently the news of Mornnington's trouble had reached the ears of his cousin in the Second Form.
 "Where's Mornny?" asked the fag.
 "With the Head."
 "Is it a row?"
 "I'm afraid so, kid," answered Jimmy Silver. "Mornny bolted without leave to-day, to play cricket at Greyfriars."
 "I saw him go," said 'Erbert. "I was lookin' out of the window of the Second Form-room, and I saw him streaking across the quad. I've been waitin' for him to come back. I s'pose he's going to be flogged."
 "I suppose so," said Jimmy.
 'Erbert peered along the passage towards the Head's door. The juniors were too far away to hear the sound of voices, and they wondered uneasily what was going on.
 More and more fellows came along, to join the little crowd at the corner.
 Before long nearly half the Classical Fourth had gathered there, all discussing the fate of Mornnington, in low voices.
 "What the thump are you fags hangin' about here for?"
 It was the harsh voice of Carthew of the Sixth.
 "Waiting for Mornnington, Carthew," answered Jimmy Silver quietly.
 "Oh, Mornnington!" said the prefect, knitting his brows. "Do you know that young cud wrecked my bike when Mr. Bootles sent me after him to-day?"
 "He told us so at Greyfriars."
 "You won't see much more of Mornnington here," said Carthew. "Unless I'm greatly mistaken the Head will kick him out of Rookwood. He ought to have been kicked out long ago, in my opinion."
 "Well, your opinion ain't worth much," grunted Mornnington II.
 Carthew stared at him.
 It was the first time that Carthew of the Sixth had been addressed in that manner by a fag of the Second Form.
 "You cheeky little cub!" said Carthew. "Is that the way to speak to a prefect?"
 "You let Mornny alone, then," retorted 'Erbert undauntedly. "You ain't fit to clean Mornny's shoes, you ain't!"
 Some of the juniors grinned.
 Little 'Erbert's devoted attachment to his superb cousin was well known at Rookwood, and he was always ready to "fire up" in defence of Valentine Mornnington.
 Carthew made a stride towards the fag.
 Jimmy Silver signed to his chums, and the Fistical Four closed round 'Erbert.
 "You can let the kid alone, Carthew," said Jimmy Silver coolly.
 "Stand aside, Silver!"
 "Rats!"
 Carthew clenched his hands.
 There was probably no other prefect at Rookwood to whom Jimmy would have answered "Rats!" But the bully of the Sixth had never succeeded in inspiring the juniors with respect.
 Erroll and Conroy and Grace, and two or three more juniors, gathered round the Fistical Four, with the evident intention of backing up Jimmy Silver if Carthew proceeded to hostilities.
 Carthew paused.
 "Follow me to my study, Silver!" he snapped, at last. "I shall cane you!"
 And Carthew strode away, followed by a jeering chortle from the juniors. Jimmy Silver did not follow him.

Carthew had given him that order to cover his retreat, as it were, and he did not expect it to be obeyed. Jimmy Silver remained where he was, waiting for Mornnington to reappear from the Head's study.
The 2nd Chapter.
The Head's Sentence.
 Dr. Chisholm looked at Mornnington with a stern brow, as Mr. Bootles brought the delinquent into his study. At a glance it could be seen that the Head of Rookwood was very angry.
 The Head was a stickler for discipline, and certainly Valentine Mornnington had thrown all discipline to the winds that day.
 His dark frown, however, had no perceptible effect on Mornnington. The junior stood before him with his head well up, his eyes meeting Dr. Chisholm's with rather exasperating calmness.
 "Mornnington," said the Head sternly, "you have this day been guilty of a breach of discipline which is absolutely unparalleled."
 "Indeed, sir," said Mornnington, apparently not very much impressed by this weighty exordium.
 "Mr. Bootles informs me that you quitted the Form-room without permission, during lessons."
 "Yes, sir."
 "You left Rookwood, and proceeded to Greyfriars School, where a cricket match was being played by a junior eleven."
 "Yes, sir."
 "A prefect, Carthew of the Sixth Form, was sent to stop you at Latham Station, and by a trick you damaged his bicycle, and he was forced to walk back."
 "I hope Carthew wasn't very tired, sir," said Mornnington.
 "Bulkeley of the Sixth Form was sent to Greyfriars School to bring you back, and instead of coming with him, you eluded him."
 "I dodged him, sir!"
 "You eluded him," said the Head, who was apparently unacquainted with the verb "to dodge." "You eluded him, and Bulkeley had to return alone to Rookwood."
 "I really didn't think he would enjoy my company on the way home, sir," said Mornnington meekly.
 "What?"
 "Mornnington—" murmured Mr. Bootles.
 "Boy!" ejaculated the Head. "Do you think you will improve your position by studied impertinence to your headmaster?"

"Oh, no, sir! I was simply statin' a fact."
 "Have you any excuse to offer for your extraordinary conduct to-day, Mornnington?" said the Head, eyeing the junior very curiously.
 Mornny was rather a puzzle to the Head.
 "Certainly, sir!"
 "I am willing to hear you."
 "I was wanted in the cricket team at Greyfriars," Mornnington explained. "As a member of the eleven, I felt bound to play if I could. Jimmy Silver will tell you that the team would have been licked if I hadn't turned up."
 "Do you infer, Mornnington, that you may set law and order in the school at defiance for the sake of a cricket match?"
 "It was rather an important match to us, sir."
 "Then you are not sorry for your conduct?"
 "I'm sorry if you are displeased with me, sir," answered Mornnington, with much humility. "I felt bound to act as I did."
 "You felt bound to leave Rookwood against the strict orders of your Form-master, and to elude the prefects sent to bring you back—sent by me personally?" ejaculated Dr. Chisholm.
 Mornnington did not reply to that. Even his cool impertinence was not equal to answering in the affirmative; and he would not answer in the negative.
 The Head's brow was like a thunder-cloud.
 "Since I have been headmaster of Rookwood School I have never known such an instance of impertinence and disrespect," he said. "Yet you are not ashamed to look me in the face, Mornnington."
 "No, sir!"
 "Even in my presence you seem to glory in what you have done."
 "Not at all, sir; I only remarked that I felt bound to act as I did."
 Mr. Bootles was blinking at Mornnington over his spectacles with an expression of horror that was almost comic in its intensity. When a junior spoke to his headmaster in this strain it was time for the skies to fall, in Mr. Bootles' opinion.
 Dr. Chisholm breathed hard for a moment.
 "Very well, Mornnington," he said. "I will speak to you no further. It is only my consideration for your uncle and guardian, Sir Rupert Stacpoole, that prevents me from sending you away from Rookwood at once. I shall try the effect of a flogging."
 Mornny's lips closed hard.
 "To-morrow morning," said the Head impressively, "you will be flogged in hall before the assembled school, and I trust that this punishment will have a proper effect upon your hardened insolence. You may go!"
 Mornnington left the study without a word.
 The two masters remained in discussion on the subject of Mornnington—Mr. Bootles in a state of dismay, and the Head in great wrath.
 Mornnington walked down the passage, and smiled as he reached the corner and found half the Classical Fourth there.
 "Hallo, old scouts," he said lightly.
 "Why this merry meetin'?"
 "What's happened?" asked Jimmy Silver.
 "Nothin'."
 "You're not—" began Erroll.
 "We should have heard him howl

if the Head had flogged him," chuckled Tubby Muffin.
 Mornnington gave the fat Classical a glance. Tubby drew quickly behind Jimmy Silver. He did not like the look in Mornny's eyes.
 "But you're not let off, surely?" exclaimed Lovell.
 "No."
 "Then what's going to happen?" exclaimed 'Erbert breathlessly.
 "I don't know."
 "Didn't the Head tell you?" asked Jimmy Silver.
 "He told me I was to have a public floggin' in the mornin'."
 "Well, that's what's going to happen, then," said Lovell. "What the thump do you mean by saying you don't know?"
 "I don't know," answered Mornny coolly. "I'm not sure whether I shall take the floggin'."
 "Eh?"
 "I don't see how you can help it," grunted Jimmy Silver. "The Head won't let you off. You've asked for it, and you'll get it."
 Mornny's eyes gleamed.
 "That isn't at all certain," he answered.
 "Are you goin' to ask the Head to have the gloves on with you?" asked Peele, with a grin.
 "Ha, ha, ha!"
 Mornnington walked away without replying. Erroll followed him, and the crowd of juniors broke up.
 Jimmy Silver & Co. were relieved to hear that Mornny was not to be "sacked," at all events. As for the flogging, it was the least he could have expected for his defiance of authority. As for Mornny's statement that it was not at all certain that he would take the flogging, Jimmy Silver paid no heed to that. When Mornny was hoisted on the sergeant's broad back, and the Head "started in" with his birch, Mornny would have no choice about the matter. Beyond that point even Valentine Mornnington could not carry his defiance. But even yet Jimmy did not quite realise of what the reckless junior was capable.

The 3rd Chapter.

Mornny's Resolve.

Tubby Muffin looked into Study No. 4 a little later. Mornnington and Erroll were there—Erroll working at the table, and Mornnington stretched in the armchair with a clouded and thoughtful brow. He scowled at the fat and grinning face of Reginald Muffin appeared in the doorway.
 "All serene, old scout," said Tubby. "I've come to give you a tip."
 "What do you mean, you fat fool?" growled Mornnington, ungratefully.
 "You needn't call a chap names, when he's come to do you a favour," said Muffin warmly.
 "Oh, clear off!"
 "You're going to be flogged to-morrow mornin'—"
 "Will you get out?" muttered Mornnington angrily.
 "I'm not rubbing it in, old scout—only mentioning the fact. I can put you up to a dodge," said Muffin. "I've got some old exercise-books and—"
 "What?"
 "Half a dozen," said Tubby. "I've been keeping them in case they might be needed; flogging might happen to any chap, you know. Now, my idea is that you should put them in your bags to-morrow—"
 "Fathead!"
 "I'll lend them to you, and help you fix them up," said Tubby. "Half a dozen exercise-books, properly arranged, will take the edge off a flogging, you know. I'll lend them to you, and help you fix them up, for nothing. I'm not asking to be paid for them."
 "Idiot!"
 "But you can lend me a bob, if you like," continued Tubby. "One good turn deserves another, Mornny. You see that?"
 "Cut off, Tubby," said Erroll. "Mornny doesn't want your exercise-books."
 "That's all rot," said Tubby. "I know Mornny says he isn't going to be flogged, but that's only his gas. He will be tame enough when the Head tackles him in the mornin'."
 Mornnington's eyes glittered.
 A taunt, even from so unimportant a person as Tubby Muffin, was sufficient to rouse his angry pride.
 "I'm not goin' to be flogged!" he said savagely.
 Tubby winked.
 "My dear chap," he said, "you've got to be flogged. You can't help it. Peele's saying you said you wouldn't be flogged, and they're chortling over it no end in his study. Peele has offered ten to one that you'll be as quiet as a lamb when

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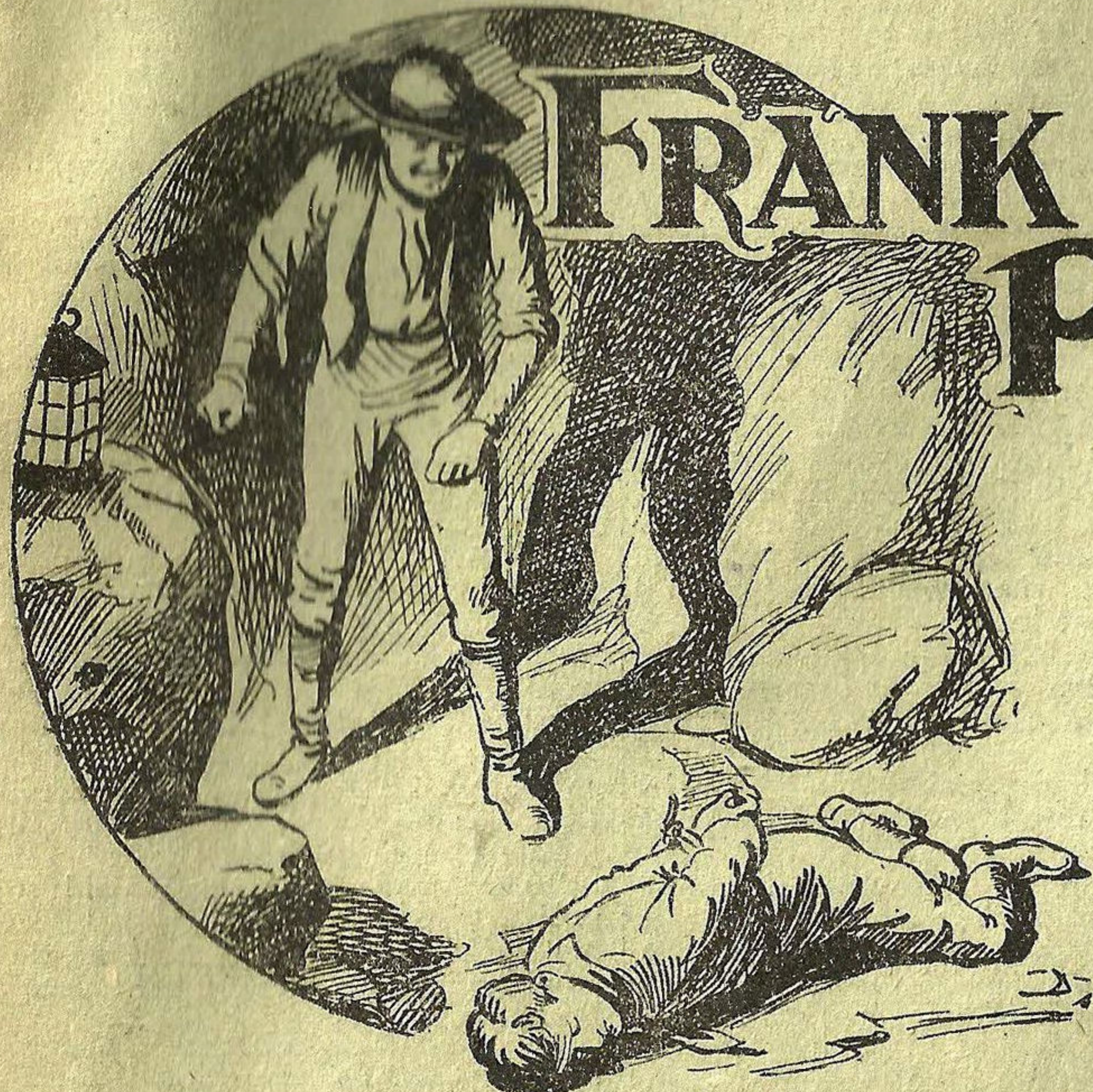
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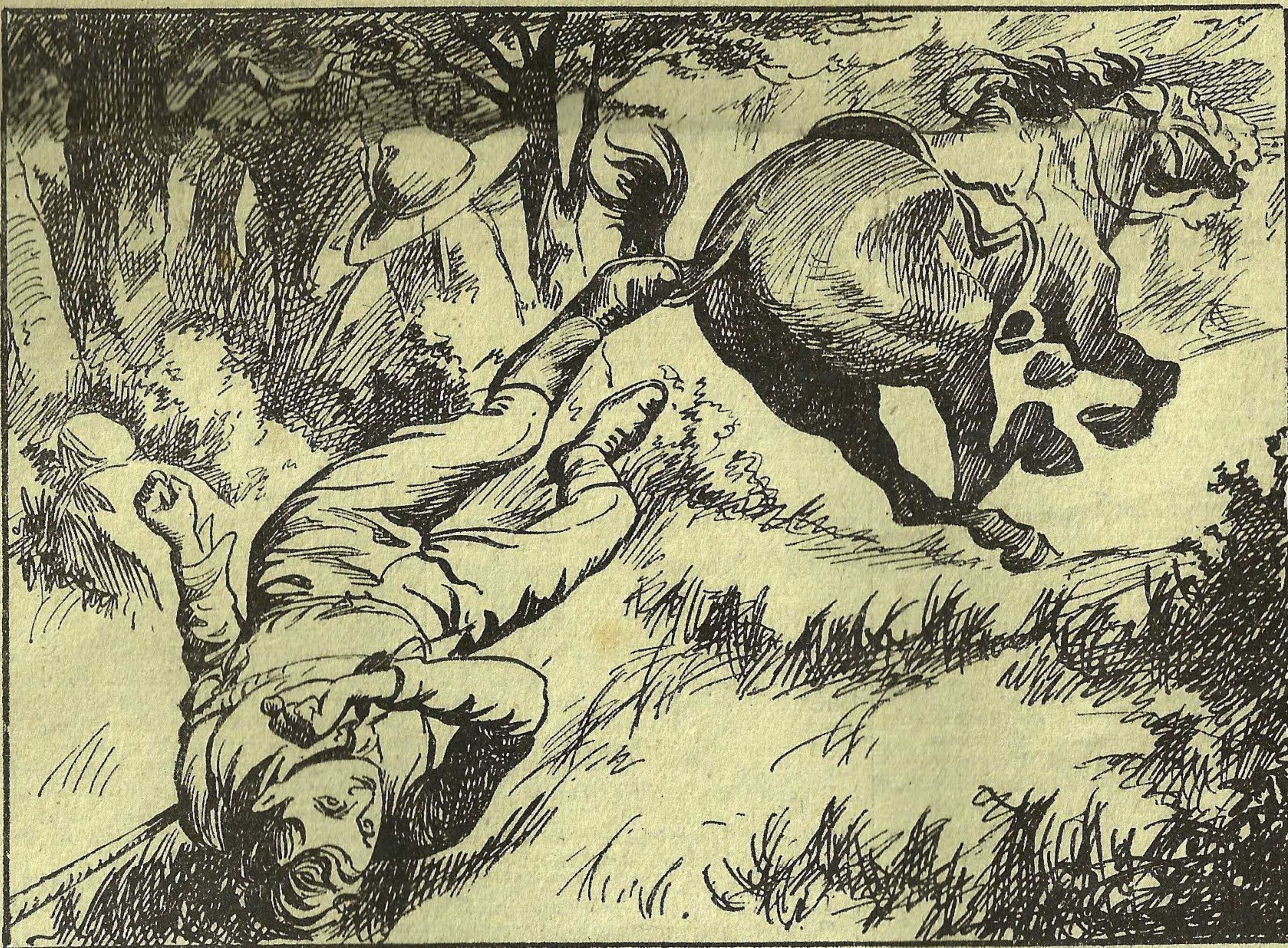
"Frank!" There was a thump on the door of Frank Richards' room at the Lawless Ranch, and Mr. Lawless' deep voice was heard outside. Frank Richards raised his head from the pillow, and yawned. "Yes, uncle!" "Turn out, my boy; there's a message for you."

the case, I want a description for a special edition of the 'Press.' Come over at once; don't stop for your breakfast. I'll have some ready for you. Hustle!—Yours, "J. PENROSE." "Oh, rats!" was Frank Richards' ungrateful comment upon that important communication.

"I guess you'd better go, Frank," he said. "You can't refuse to oblige Mr. Penrose. I don't like your missing service on Sunday; but you can come to the evening service with me in the buggy, later on. Bob can go without you this morning, as you've arranged to meet young Beauclerc on the trail. Get your breakfast down, and go, Frank."

The door of the shanty office stood wide open, and within, Mr. Penrose was busy. The irregular click of a typewriter that was not in first-class working order, sounded from the bench. Mr. Penrose looked up over the machine as Frank stepped in, and frowned. "You're late!" he grunted. "I came at once after brekker, Mr. Penrose," answered Frank, with a smile.

the keys click under his fingers with their usual facility. In doing his weekly story he drew largely on his imagination, which never failed him; but in describing an actual event for the information of the public he did not feel entitled to draw upon his imagination, in spite of Mr. Penrose's demand for "trimmings" and a "punch" in every other line.



ROPED IN! Whiz! Frank Richards was on his guard, but he was not prepared for the sudden coil that came whizzing from the cover of the trees. He knew the whiz of a lasso, and pulled on his reins, but at the same moment the loop of the lasso settled over his shoulders. There was a sharp tug, and he was plucked from his saddle like a flower from a stalk. He bumped down heavily into the grass, and his horse, startled and frightened, dashed on through the timber!

The 2nd Chapter. Roped In!

Frank Richards smiled and set to work. The "man" Mr. Penrose had to see was undoubtedly the barkeeper at the Occidental, and the editor was likely to be away some time. But Frank Richards did not find

In his excitement, Chu Ching had shouted in his own language, and if Frank had distinguished the words,

THE SCHOOLBOY ADVENTURERS!

(Continued from previous page.)

indignant Skeleton. "I knew the beast was only shamming all the time!"

Gus was strapped up in his cricket-bag, and Skeleton was hurried off to his bed in the Glory Hole, where he was packed away under a huge load of blankets.

And as the Bombay Castle steamed away across a wide ice-free sea towards the coast of Greenland, the boys all slept soundly, and only an occasional flop from Gus' cricket-bag showed that the water-bottles were doing their good work.

The boys slept late on the following morning, for Scorcher Wilkinson had himself given orders that they should not be disturbed after the toils and the excitements of the previous day.

And when they woke the sunshine was pouring in bright at the port-holes of the Glory Hole.

Skeleton was thoroughly restored, and did not feel a bit the worse for his ducking of the previous night. And as for Gus, when they opened the cricket-bag to see how he was getting on, they found that he had eaten both the rubber hot-water bottles, and was as lively as ever.

It was past ten o'clock when they found their way to the saloon for a late breakfast. And the breakfast that Skeleton put away after his ex-

hausting adventures would have made an Eskimo sit up and take notice.

When they went up on deck they found the Bombay Castle steaming fast through a smooth, blue sea, which might have been the Mediterranean itself had it not been for a couple of icebergs that were floating past like white sailing-ships, and a tough-looking, iron-bound coast which showed on the horizon with a blink of snow and ice showing over its cliffs.

This was the coast of Greenland, and Captain Handyman was steaming along it at a distance of about fifteen miles from the shore, looking for the entrance of Nuvik Fiord, where he was to find the settlement of Eskimos who would supply the ship with guides and hunters and dogs.

Here and there a puff of vapour going up from the calm surface of the sea, like the spray of a shot, showed that there were whales about, and Skeleton hoped that they would get a chance of whaling.

Skeleton had heard that whales' skin was very good to eat, something like a good cut of calve's head. And he wanted to try it.

But, of course, first he would have to catch a whale—and whales are not quite so easy to catch as walruses.

As they drew nearer in to the coast they could see that the Greenland coast was not quite so savage or so sterile as it had seemed at first sight. There were patches of green grass on the cliffs, and, though streaks of unmelted snow lay in the hollows of the hills, there was a feeling of summer in the air.

(Another grand instalment of this splendid serial next Monday.)

FRANK RICHARDS PERIL!

(Continued from page 250.)

gentleman had found it a trying task to put the "trimmings" and the "punches" into Frank Richards' articles, and he was cross in consequence.

Bob Lawless galloped home, in the hope that Frank had turned up there during his absence; but there was no news of him. Then he rode across to the Beauclercs' cabin; but neither Vere Beauclerc nor his father had any news for him.

That night there was deep anxiety at the Lawless Ranch.

On Monday came news that deepened it further. Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones had been seen near Thompson. Chu Ching, the laundryman, had seen him, and narrowly escaped, and had seen Frank Richards near the spot where the outlaw had lurked in the timber. The search for the outlaw had been in vain. As soon as the news from Chu Ching was known the cattlemen of the Lawless Ranch searched the timber and the surrounding plain, and later that day Frank Richards' horse was found, without the rider.

Needless to say, Bob was not at Cedar Creek School that day. With Beauclerc, he was taking part in the search for his missing chum. Every

recess of the timber-belt was ransacked, with the terrible fear of finding a dead body hidden somewhere in its depths. The next day the search went on, but there was no discovery.

Frank Richards had vanished as if the earth had opened and swallowed him up.

By Wednesday in the fateful week Mr. Penrose was sharing in the general anxiety. Frank Richards' "copy" for his paper was due, and it was not forthcoming, which was more than enough to make an enterprising publisher anxious. On Wednesday evening Mr. Penrose went to the trouble of borrowing a horse and riding over to the Lawless Ranch on a mission of inquiry.

He found Bob Lawless there, with a clouded face, resting after a long and hopeless ride on the plains. Bob started up eagerly as he came in.

"You've heard of Frank—"
"Nope," answered Mr. Penrose. "I guess I've come to you for news, young Lawless. Where is he?"

Bob made a gesture of despair.
"Goodness knows! He's disappeared! He must have fallen in with the outlaw, but we can't find any—any—" Bob's voice faltered. "If that villain had killed him, we should have found it out by this time. The rascal must have taken him away. Goodness knows why! Oh, if a chap only knew where to look—" Bob broke off again miserably.

Mr. Penrose frowned.
"That's all very well," he said.

"But what about my copy? I sha'n't be able to put the story in this week, at any rate."

"Hang the story, and you, too!" said Bob savagely.

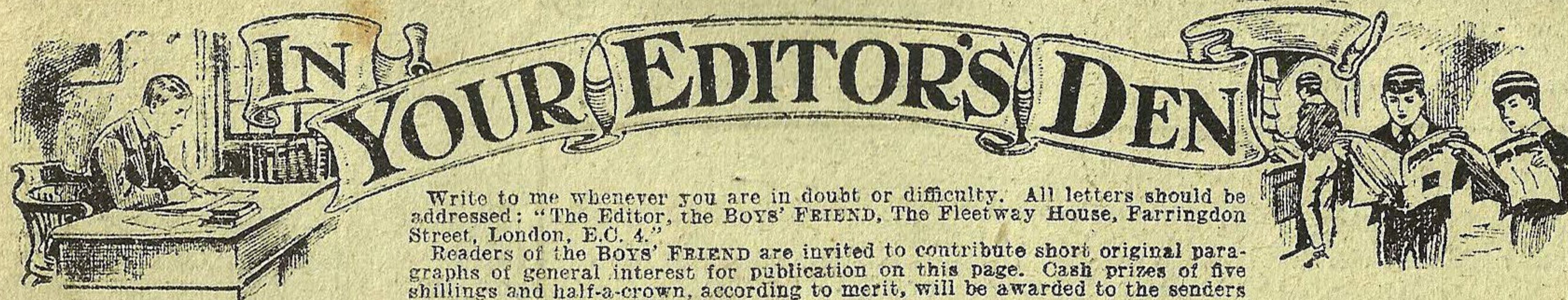
"That's all very well; but—"
Mr. Penrose appeared to reflect. "Never mind! I guess I can turn it to account. This will be as good as the story, or better! 'Our schoolboy author roped in by Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, the fire-bug from 'Frisco!'" Mr. Penrose rubbed his hands. "I guess that tops the stack! I guess the 'Press' will go this week! Yes, sir."

"You—you—" gasped Bob.
Mr. Penrose did not heed. He fairly ran back to his horse. That night he was busy setting type. On the following day the 'Press' appeared as usual. Frank Richards' weekly story was absent, but in its place was startling news for the town of Thompson.

"ST. KIT'S FELLOWS," by Frank Richards, unavoidably held over this week. Our favourite Author has been ROPED IN by Five-Hundred-Dollar Jones, the 'Frisco Fire-bug. Is Frank Richards ALIVE OR DEAD? SEE NEXT NUMBER OF THE 'PRESS'!"

THE END.

(Another of this splendid series of Backwoods Stories in next Monday's issue of the "Boys' Friend." DON'T MISS IT. Order Your Copy Early.)



Write to me whenever you are in doubt or difficulty. All letters should be addressed: "The Editor, the BOYS' FRIEND, The Fleetway House, Farringdon Street, London, E.C. 4."

Readers of the BOYS' FRIEND are invited to contribute short original paragraphs of general interest for publication on this page. Cash prizes of five shillings and half-a-crown, according to merit, will be awarded to the senders of all paragraphs published.

"THE GOLDEN TRAIL!"

By the time you glance through this Chat, I take it that you will have read the opening instalment of the above-named new adventure serial, which, take it from me, is going to be

new cinema serial is included in the list of good things for next Monday, in which Joo Fosdyke, Phil Fernie, and the rest of the party set out on the quest for the lost pyramid that is supposed to be the hiding-place of a vast hoard of treasure. With his

premises, and is stirred with a bamboo stick. When ready for sale, it is placed on dirty pieces of cloth, presenting a distasteful appearance, and a great contrast to our English dainties which are so temptingly arrayed. The wares consist of cubes

there is nothing so interesting or so illuminating as the real letter—the missive which holds the best thought of the writer. A crowd of people say that there are no letter-writers nowadays. How do they know that? It cannot be true. If you look back you find that the talented letter-writers of the past were never heard of, as a rule, until ages after they had gone away. Then somebody discovered the bundle of old letters in a desk corner, and gave them to the world.

THE GOOD OLD TIMES.

Now, were they good? There are myriads of questions which cannot be dealt with properly with a plain

"Yes," or "No." A loyal reader says that the old times were bad and stupid with their stiff and narrow ways, their side-whiskers, and all that. It is merely a matter of taste. But very few individuals would care to go back. They very wisely see that the best of the spirit of the bygone is offered now and again as a kind of inspiration and a rallying sense to the age which is passing now.

Your Editor