

READ ABOUT 'PUTTY' GRACE'S 'STAR TURN' IN THIS WEEK'S ROOKWOOD STORY!

The BOYS' FRIEND

TWELVE PAGES!

TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR!

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THREE HALFPENCE.

[Week Ending August 28th, 1920.]

The 1st Chapter.

Bob Raynor's Dilemma.

Bob Raynor—a young lad of eighteen—comes out West with his young friend, Dicky Smith, on a search of Frank Clarke, a former school friend of Bob's. Bob becomes great friends with the Wyoming Indian agent, Arizona Jim, and earns the latter's admiration by his courage in defending stage-coach from hold-up.

It appears that Frank Clarke changed his name to Mattawa Frank, and he is being searched for by the State authorities for arrest on charge of rustling. When he is actually captured and imprisoned he manages to escape. As Bob has long proclaimed his friendship for the rustler—not believing his pal to be as bad as he is painted—the citizens of Medicine Axe jump to the natural conclusion that it will be his young follower, Dicky, who assisted Mattawa Frank to break prison, and they make up their minds to take up their trails against the boys.

Dicky Smith reached out even as footsteps could be heard approaching along the corridor that led to the bed-rooms of the hotel, and, with a quick movement, turned the key in the lock of Bob's room. It struck Bob suddenly that this was not quite the best sort of move to make, and he reached out in time to unlock the door; but before his fingers could touch the key, somebody outside grasped the knob and gave it a violent shake.

"Open this goddamned door!" came an angry voice from outside.

"Smash the door down!" shouted others in the passage.

Bob's fingers touched the key, but it worked stiffly in the lock, and before he could turn it, something heavy the shoulder of a man smashed against the panels, and the door swung open, while many men crowded into the little bed-room.

Guns were flourished in the air; fists were shaken at the two young Brits. The language used by these excited men was fearful in the extreme. Violent hands seized Bob, the revolver was torn from his grasp and hurled through the window into the street below.

"Lynch him!" cried many of the citizens of Medicine Axe. "He let Mattawa Frank out of gaol! He's in with the rustlers! He's a damned rustler himself!"

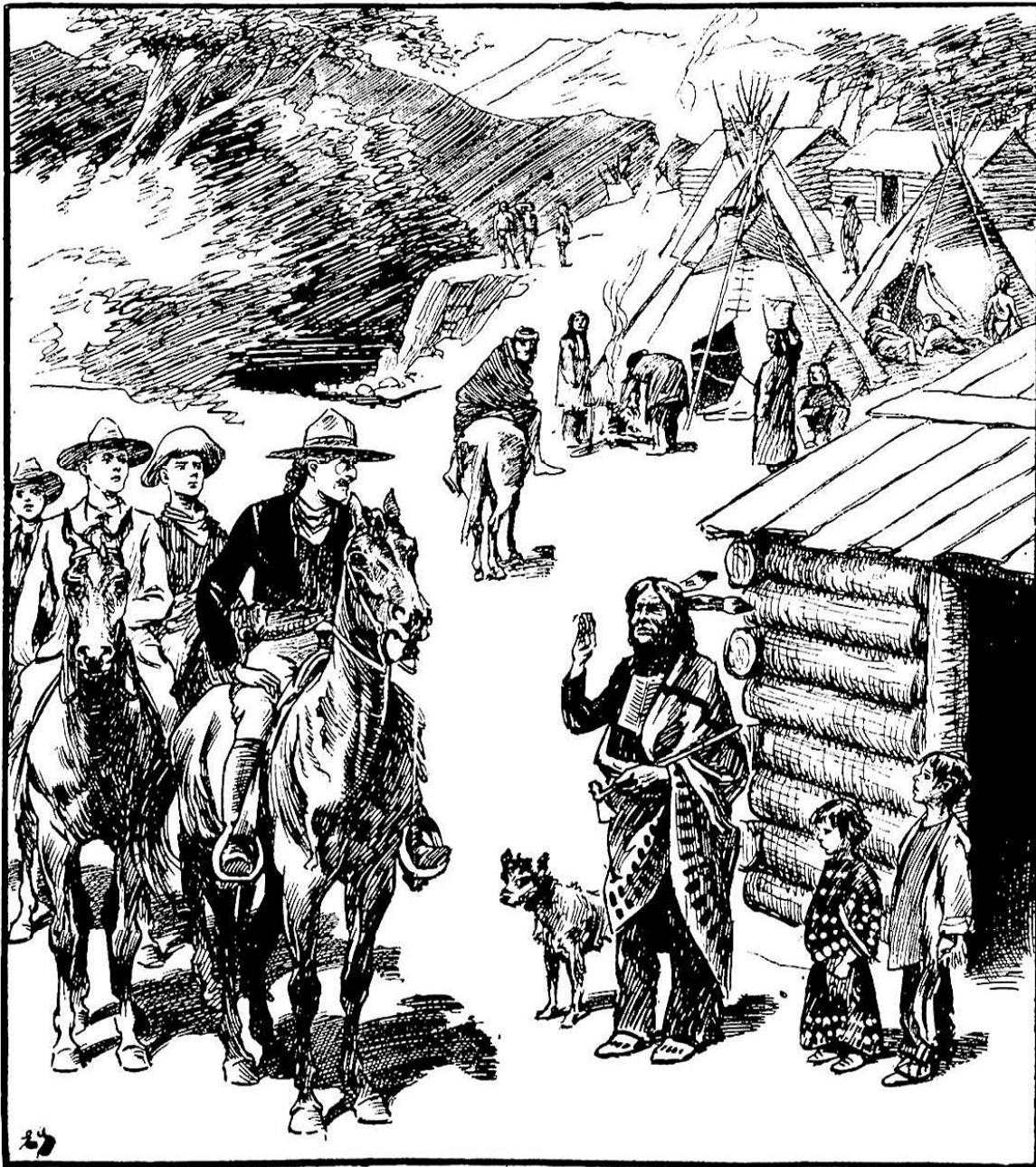
"That's a lie! I'm not! I didn't let him out!" Bob cried, struggling furiously. "Let me go!"

Gallantly Dicky Smith strove to assist his unfortunate young master. The little fellow literally hurled himself bodily at a big, bearded man who had hold of Bob by the elbows. His feet hooked at the shirt of this man, who merely released one of Bob's elbows and, with his free hand, struck a blow at Dicky that sent him staggering across Bob's bed.

"Get him downstairs!" the bearded man shouted. "Run him into the street! Hold him! Gosh! How the kid can fight!"

It was true that Bob was putting up a mighty struggle for himself. Though they held his arms and legs he still could give his captors much hard work to keep their grip on him. Once, indeed, he writhed so fiercely that the men who held his legs went staggering, and his feet touched the floor for a moment. Then he lashed out with them, and yells told him that his boots landed home shrewdly on men's shins. But the numbers were too many for him, and, at length, he was bundled down the

REDSKINS AND RUSTLERS!



AT THE INDIAN CAMP! Sitting Moose held up his hand as the Indian agent approached. "How?" he said gravely. "My brother has trouble?"

stairs, out of the hotel, and into the street, and was made to stand there surrounded by fierce-visaged men.

"Waal, say," said the sheriff, coming on the scene, supported by one of his deputies, "let's get that lad locked right up, right now. And I guess he won't escape us, whatever Mattawa did."

"Guess he's got a pal, too," said the bearded man, jorking his thumb

back towards the hotel. "Young lad, younger'n himself. Better be on the safe side and lock him up."

"Dicky's done nothing to harm anybody," cried Bob. "He's only a child. You—you can't have anything against him, too!"

Apparently the townsmen were too excited to think things out rationally. Many men gave a combined yell and dashed back into the hotel. A

moment later they reappeared bearing in their midst the yelling, struggling form of Dicky Smith.

"Now we got 'em both," said the sheriff. "Boys, just take 'em to the gaol and lock 'em up. We'll have a trial to-morrow."

Both Brits were rushed towards the gaol building. They were powerless to prevent these men. In a few moments they were both in a

bare, cheerless little cell, and the door had slammed on them.

Dicky Smith was blinking hard when he and his rustler's eyes met. His face was flushed a deep red. But there was no reproach in his expression. There was, however, something there which caused Bob temporarily to forget his troubles and think about the fate of his trusty little henchman.

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"Poor old Dicky!" the elder lad said, thrusting out a hand. "I know you think I've brought this on you. But you'll believe me, won't you, when I say I never had the slightest thing to do with Mattawa Frank's escape from here, although I admit I was seriously thinking of trying to help my old friend to get away!"

"If you say you didn't do it, Mr. Bob, then you didn't," said Dicky loyally. "You couldn't tell a lie if you tried."

"But that doesn't alter facts," said Bob. "We are in a hole, both of us. They think I did help Mattawa Frank, and they know you are my friend. So they'll put me on my trial, and they'll keep you locked up, too, until—" Bob gulped a little as the horrid thought came to him—"until I'm hanged!" he said grimly.

"No, no, Mr. Bob!" It was almost a wail that burst from Dicky's lips, and he clutched his master fiercely by the arm. "They'd not hang you!"

"They think I'm in with the rustlers, so they'd as soon hang me as anybody else," Bob said bitterly. "And they don't seem very much inclined to give a rustler, or a suspected one, a show once they have got him. They're all dead sure Mattawa Frank's the worst kind of bad man, and they'd have hanged him if he hadn't escaped. I'm glad Frank did escape, though," he added.

"It would have been murder if they'd hanged him after such a mockery of a trial."

Dicky snapped his fingers thoughtfully, and stared through the little griled window of the cell.

"Just the same," he said doggedly, "I'd rather see Mattawa Frank locked up in this cell this very moment than you, sir—or me. He may be your friend, sir, but he isn't mine particularly, and—"

"I should never have allowed you to come out to this country with me, Dicky," said Bob sadly. "And if I'd known all this upset was going to come to us, I never would have entertained the idea of letting you come. But we can't cry over spilt milk. The thing to consider now is what we are going to do for ourselves?"

"Not much we'll be able to do, sir," said Dicky, shaking his head. "We've already seen how they deal out justice in these parts."

Just then there was the sound of a key scraping in the lock. The door of the cell came open, and one of the sheriff's deputies entered, grinning a little, and heavily armed. Obviously, after the escape of one desperate criminal from that goal, the agents of the law were taking no more chances. The guns the deputy wore went farther to convince Bob that he was very securely imprisoned. "It would be a hopeless matter to attempt any escape."

The deputy stood aside, however, and allowed two other people to enter the cell. Bob Raynor flushed a little on seeing who his two visitors were, for they were Arizona Jim and Eddie Mason.

Bob threw his head back proudly as the handsome Indian agent fixed his clear, steady gaze on him. Arizona's lips were slightly curled beneath his short-clipped moustache. On the face of Eddie Mason was a thoughtful frown.

"Well," said Bob, as Arizona, without speaking, continued to scrutinize him keenly. "I suppose you've come to see me about something, but if you're going to say 'I told you so' to me, you might just as well save your breath. I admit I was foolish in openly declaring Frank Clarke to be my friend, and, perhaps, I can understand the feelings of the townspeople, but—"

"Forget that," said Arizona Jim quietly. "It's too late now to moid that matter. You were foolish, but you're very young, and you have British ideas. I just came, though, to ask you one question, and your answer, whatever it may be, shall not be repeated to a living soul. You see, my boy, in spite of your blamed foolishness, I like you better than I thought I'd ever like any tenderfoot."

"Thanks!" said Bob, a trifle bitterly. "I don't see why you should have taken a liking to such a fool as you put me down to be."

"Perhaps you're not such a fool, to British lights. Eddie, here, tells me many things about Britishers. Loyalty to friends is a big characteristic, though it isn't confined to Britishers. I'm an Arizonian, and I think I know how to stick to a pard, too. However, I'd like to have your answer to my question."

"What is it?" asked Bob indifferently.

"Did you help Mattawa Frank to escape last night?" asked the Indian agent bluntly, his eyes searching the Britisher's face as he put the question.

"No, I didn't," Bob answered, equally bluntly. "Though, I suppose neither you nor anybody else round here would believe that."

"I do believe it," said Arizona thoughtfully. "The others round here wouldn't do it. But I put you down as a truthful man, and Eddie, here, also believes you. Don't you, Eddie?"

"I certainly do," Eddie answered, nodding his head and smiling slightly. "Do you know anything about the escape?"

Bob briefly told them what he had seen from his bed-room window the night before. Arizona and Eddie Mason listened intently, without interruption. Bob told the story in a straightforward manner, and his words were believed. When it was finished, Arizona laid a hand not gently on the quixotic young Britisher's shoulder.

"That yarn might be believed by the jury," said he, "but they would want to know something. You saw some funny work going on by the goal. Why didn't you raise the alarm?"

Bob blushed deeply at that. He hesitated for a moment, then he spoke out manfully.

"I knew Mattawa Frank was escaping, and, though I hadn't anything to do with his getting away. I—well, I was glad to see him making a bid to escape the rope. That's all. I just attended to the sheriff, whom I found badly knocked about, but it wasn't Mattawa who knocked him about. I didn't raise the alarm. I waited for those who were on duty at the goal to do that. Apparently, they were slack, for the alarm was not raised till this morning."

"Hm!" said Arizona, frowning. "I see. Again your loyalty to your supposed friend. My lad, the sooner you know the truth—believe the truth, that is—about that skunk, the better it'll be for you. He is a menace to the State. He would only have got what he deserved."

"He hadn't a fair chance to fight for his life," said Bob. "The worst criminal in England gets that. However, whatever I did or didn't do, I suppose I shall pay for," he added grimly.

Arizona Jim shrugged his shoulders. Then he gripped Bob by the arm. He thrust his handsome face close against Bob's.

"All you've been guilty of," said he, "is a misplaced faith and trust in a man not worthy of anybody's esteem. I understand you, lad. I like you. And you can take it from me that Arizona Jim can be just as loyal to a friend as you can. The difference is that you landed yourself into trouble over a man not worth the snap of two fingers, while I am going to be loyal to a friend who is clean and white—if very green. So don't get too downhearted, lad."

Bob looked at the speaker quickly. Then he shifted his gaze to Eddie Mason. Eddie was smiling. The British coppernicher nodded his head ever so slightly, but somewhat reassuringly.

"So don't be surprised whatever happens," said Arizona Jim. "I hear they've fixed your trial for to-morrow morning; but don't worry."

He turned away, and, followed by Eddie, left the cell. He did not look back, but when he passed out of the lads' prison, the door slammed to, the key grated again in the lock.

Bob looked at Dicky. In Dicky's eyes was an eager light. In Bob's was just puzzlement.

"What ever were those two getting at, Dicky?" Bob asked. "They claimed to be our friends. But what good are our friends going to be to us now?"

Mattawa Frank seemed to have had some friends who came in very useful last night, Mr. Bob," Dicky said.

Bob started.

"But—" he began.

"Arizona Jim is a man of influence in these parts," said Dicky simply. "You never know, sir. Maybe he's thinking of being just as useful to you as Mattawa's friends were to him last night."

Outlawed!

The long day passed wearily for Bob and Dicky. Their cell was bare and cheerless in the extreme. Only twice did they see the deputy who was acting as their gaoler, who entered to bring them food. No mention was made to Bob of being allowed to send for a lawyer to carry out his defence. Indeed, Bob, though he asked the deputy on the occasion of one of his visits, could not get a word of information out of the man about anything—could not even find out definitely what charge was going to be preferred against

him at to-morrow's trial. Indeed, the deputy was closeness itself, and flatly declined to give his prisoners the slightest piece of information.

But there was a somewhat odd expression in the deputy's eyes, which, however, neither Bob nor Dicky noticed.

When darkness came on they had to lie blanketless on the hard floor of the cell, and for hours after sundown they vainly strove to catch sleep. But unconsciousness would not come to them, and in the darkness they lay and talked in low tones about the old country.

It was Dicky who did most of the talking, to be sure, that loyal little fellow striving to raise his master's spirits, for as the night dragged its way wearily on Bob's spirits grew more and more depressed. For having witnessed one case of summary justice in the West he could not allow himself to think that on the morrow he would be treated with any more mercy by the rough judge and jury than Mattawa Frank had been treated. The people in Medicine Axe were ripe to hang somebody.

It must have been about two o'clock in the morning when Bob suddenly started up. Dicky did the same.

There was a footstep outside his cell door. Then he heard the key turned softly in the lock. With his heart slogging painfully at his ribs he listened, wondering who this midnight visitor could be. Something told him it could not have been an ordinary night visit by his gaoler, for when he had entered the cell before he had done so somewhat noisily, making the key almost shriek in the unrolled lock.

The door came open. In the dim moonlight that filtered into the cell through the griled window he could see the shape of a man.

"Well?" asked Bob sharply, as the man stepped to his side, making no sound. "What's wrong now?"

He saw now that the man was masked by means of a handkerchief drawn over his face, covering all save his eyes. The figure of the man seemed familiar, but his face being covered Bob could not be sure who he was.

The man touched Bob on the shoulder and jerked his thumb in the direction of the open door. Bob came uncertainly to his feet.

"Hurry!" the man said quickly. "Beat it! You'll have just two minutes to get clear."

The voice of the man was muffled, but there was no mistaking his words. Almost as though he discredited his own senses Bob stepped towards the door. Dicky, his mouth hanging open in amazement, followed his master. The masked man came last.

"Turn to the left!" ordered the man curtly. And, obeying, Bob found himself in a passage facing a door. This door the masked man opened, and Bob and Dicky found themselves in a room, through the window of which moonlight streamed. Bob recognized the room at once. It was that in which the previous night he had assisted the helpless sheriff of Medicine Axe.

"Now, skip through that window," ordered the masked man, pointing, "then sneak along till you come to the back of the livery barn. Don't let anybody see you. Your horses are waitin' there for you."

"But—but," said Bob dazedly, "who are you? Why should you be doing all this for us?"

"Never mind who I am," said the other gruffly. "You're sure almost to be caught again—you're too green to be loose about this country on your own. If you're caught they'll want to know who let you out, and so I don't want you to know that. And I'm not doing it for you, son. But I'd do more'n this for Arizona Jim. Now, beat it!"

He pushed the window open as he spoke, and Bob quickly clambered through it. No sooner were they outside than it was closed again, and secured from the inside.

Bob took a deep breath of the keen, tangy night air and looked about him. He was, he saw, well away from the main street of the little town. The backs of the buildings were dimly to be seen in the moonlight. Having got his bearings, and hugging the deep shadows, he stole along in the direction of the livery barn, which was a walk of a hundred yards or so. There he found several dark shapes, close in against the dark shadows cast by the long, low livery-stable.

He heard a gentle whinney, and a soft muzzle suddenly was thrust beneath his arm. He uttered an exclamation of delight on recognising Cleopatra, his beautiful chestnut mare. His other saddle horse, the one that Dicky usually rode, was

there, and both were saddled, and apparently ready for the road.

Wondering, Bob's gaze went over to two other forms, human figures, already mounted.

"Who—?" he began; but before he could finish the question that was on his lips the silence of the night was split by the reports of a pistol. Six shots, fired rapidly, set all four horses curvetting.

"Quick!" growled a voice in the shadows. "They've raised the alarm! Mount and ride!"

Bob recognised the voice—it was that of Arizona Jim. The Britisher hesitated no longer, but threw himself into the saddle. Dicky did the same. Before either had found his stirrups the two dimly-seen men set their horses at a gallop straight across the prairie, heading away from the town.

More shots were fired, until Medicine Axe was alive with them. Then Bob could hear excited shouts of men. But he did not stay now to listen to them. He touched Cleopatra with his spurs, and dashed off after Arizona Jim and his companion.

Those two horses owned by Bob were superb animals. It would have been difficult in all Wyoming to find any horseflesh to compare with them. They were fresh, too, for while Bob and Dicky had lain in their prison they had rested, and, apparently, been well tended. Therefore their soon had overtaken the horses ridden by Arizona and his companion, and as Bob rode in between these two he saw that the second man was Eddie Mason.

Eddie was sitting in the saddle seeming to take no notice of Bob. He was riding superbly, getting the utmost effort out of his splendid mount, but he never turned his head to look at either of the young Britishers he was helping.

Bob turned to his other rescuer—Arizona Jim.

"What are you doing this for?" he asked breathlessly.

"Never mind. Ride!" replied the Indian agent. "You'll have all your work cut out to outstrip them. Listen!"

Bob turned his head a little, and could hear the alarm-shots still being fired in the town. He also fancied he could hear the yells of men following. He set his teeth, gripped his saddle hard with his knees, and said nothing further for a long while.

Grimly all four rode, Bob not knowing where his guides were sending him. But he soon found out they were riding westward, and westward, he knew, were the Wind River Mountains. When they had left the level grasslands behind them, when Bob found himself riding immediately behind Arizona Jim up a steep and somewhat rocky trail, Arizona drew rein and gave the word to halt.

Bob listened hard, but he could hear nothing but the clamping of his and his companions' horses' bits. But for a long while Arizona sat there in his saddle, motionless, looking back along the trail they had ridden over. Then he muttered something, and led the little party farther up the path. Soon he turned sharply to the left, and, after a deal of scrambling and sliding on the part of the horses, Bob found himself at the bottom of a deep, wide coulee, where seemed to be another trail, leading right into the heart of the mountains. For half an hour longer they rode silently, then Arizona suddenly gave the word to halt again, and dismounted.

The others did the same. They were beside a small bubbling creek, and before anything else was said all the horses were off-saddled, were hobbled, and after drinking their fill were allowed to graze at will, while Arizona took out a tobacco-pouch and cigarette-papers, and after handing them to Eddie Mason, proceeded to roll a cigarette. He puffed lazily at it, scanning the paling stars for a while, sitting with his back propped against a boulder.

Bob broke the silence that was upon the party. There were many things he wanted to know, many things he wanted to say to this remarkable Indian agent. He could not understand yet why so many people should have run such risks on his behalf.

"I'm—I'm ever so much obliged to you, Arizona," he said awkwardly at length. "But I don't know why you do it. Why you've done the very thing to-night that those people wanted to hang me for doing!"

"Not quite," drawled Arizona Jim. "They wanted you to swing because they thought you'd helped an utter blackguard to make his get-away, while I've helped an entirely innocent man to do the same."

"Thanks!" said Bob huskily.

"There wasn't much time to make plans," said Arizona Jim. "But the first and most important thing to do was to get you clear from Medicine

Axe. I think we've dodged those who followed us, and I'm sure they'll never suspect Eddie and I had a hand at your escape, for we gave it out this morning that we were starting out to-night to visit certain Indian reservations. Besides, my reputation as a hater of rustlers—"

He paused and shrugged his shoulders.

"Then you've risked your reputation for my sake," said Bob. "I would like to know why you did."

"Just because we liked you, boy," answered the Indian agent. "I told you that we out here also had ideas of friendship, and the fellow who fought like you did when the Redskins attacked the stage simply had to be helped. However, say no more about it. There are other things to be talked over. Your future, for instance."

"Yes, my future," said Bob, starting. So hurried had been his recent movements that he had had no time to think of the future.

"You've escaped from gaol," said Arizona. "You were accused of being in with Mattawa Frank, of helping him to escape. Instead of standing your trial—which would have been a hopeless thing for you to do—you beat it. That only means one thing, of course."

Bob began to feel an odd sickness in the region of his heart. His position was becoming clearer to him every moment now.

"It means?" he asked. Then he felt a warm, strong grip about his arm, and, turning, looked into the brave, clear eyes of Eddie Mason.

"It means," said Arizona Jim quietly, "that as long as you remain in this state you also will be an outlaw, with every man's hand turned against you. Furthermore, you will find it difficult to get clear of Wyoming for some time—until this affair has blown over, perhaps; or, at all events, until Mattawa Frank is captured and hung. Then the people round here might forget what they thought about you."

"Good heavens!" Bob groaned. "An outlaw—me! And all because I came out here to find a friend!"

—

A Hiding Place Amongst the Redskins.

Arizona Jim clasped him comfortingly on the shoulder.

"Lucky to see you, lad," he said kindly. "Lucky to see all against you. But there have been—and still are—men like yourself—men who have become outlaws through no real fault of their own. Perhaps some have had to draw guns in self-defence, and have shot too well, instead of getting shot."

"Yes, Frank Clarke was like that," said Bob.

"Oh, forget that!" There was some impatience and some annoyance in the Indian agent's tone. "Forget all about Mattawa Frank! You've got to thank him, and only him, for your present troubles."

Bob bit his lips, but wisely refrained from entering into a discussion about his friend.

"The thing to do," said Arizona Jim, "is to keep out of sight for a while. About twenty miles from here is an Indian village, inhabited by Redskins who are always friendly towards the whites. I'm an old friend of the chief's, one Sitting Moose. I'm going to take you there, and you'd best live with them until I come to you and tell you the coast's clear—that it'll be safe for you to make a bid to get out of this state. All the outlets will be watched for some time. The whole state will be out for Mattawa Frank and all those associated with him. You'll be put amongst the rustlers. But with Sitting Moose you'll always find shelter, because the Indians are my department. But you'll have to keep very low. Remember, if you start prowling about the country you'll likely run up against men who won't care a pin whether they get you dead or alive. You're in a serious position, lad; but if we're lucky we'll get you out of it. But remember this—don't trouble to find Mattawa Frank. Just lie low in Sitting Moose's village until you hear from us that the coast's clear for you to make your get-away."

"But there's Dicky here," said Bob. "Nobody's got anything up against him, surely? Can't he be got out of the country right away? It isn't right that Dicky should be made to suffer through me?"

"I'm staying with you, Mr. Bob," said Dicky simply. "You're in trouble, as Mr. Arizona says, and I'm not the fellow to leave you by yourself."

Bob's eyes began to prickle at that. He gripped his little henchman by the hand.

"I've got some real friends," he said huskily. "I'm sure I don't know why I should have. People are always

showing me their friendship, and whenever I try to repay them I seem to find myself and them into a sort of trouble. But I'll do as you say, Arizona. I'll lie low. I only hope there'll be no trouble for you over to-night's work."

Arizona shrugged his shoulders; and after a while he gave the word for the party to saddle up again. Then followed some hours of somewhat hard and risky riding, for the Indian agent led them over an almost trailless country, through gullies, over mountains, across rivers and creeks, until Bob and Dicky were both sure that they never would be able to find their way back to civilisation unaided. For the most part the ride was a silent one.

The sun was high in the heavens when at length, after they had travelled along the bank of a swiftly flowing river for some time, Arizona suddenly turned away from the stream, and a few moments later, halted on the outskirts of an Indian encampment, composed in the main of tepees, although sundry log-huts were to be seen nesting in a green valley of extreme beauty and splendour.

There were many little camp-fires burning before these tepees and huts, and over these Redskin women were working at their crude cookery, while men, smoking and wrapped in their multi-coloured blankets, lay and lazed in the brilliant sunshine.

Arizona led the party up towards a hut, before which sat an old, grey-headed Redskin, who smoked a long pipe. This old man came to his feet as the Indian agent approached and held up one hand.

"How?" he said gravely. "My brother?"

Arizona spoke several words to him in his native tongue, which, though Bob and Dicky could not tell the difference, was not the Crowfoot tongue. Indeed, Sitting Moose was not of the Crowfoot, who were a restless race, always ready to break out in revolt against the whites. He and his people were the remnants of another tribe of nomads, usually peaceable hunters and fishermen and trappers. They were satisfied with the rule of the whites. They were, furthermore, greatly trusted by Arizona Jim, probably the most efficient and best-respected Indian agent in the United States.

After a while the old man, who was Sitting Moose himself, turned and gravely held out his hand to Bob.

"My brother?" he said quietly. "Friend of the great white chief?" He indicated Arizona Jim. "My brother has trouble? But he is safe in the fingers of Sitting Moose and his people."

"There!" said Arizona Jim, with a smile. "You're amongst real friends, lad, and they'll see you're comfortable. And—Hullo!"

He broke off, for with the speed of light Eddie Mason suddenly whipped out one of his guns, jumped clean across a camp-fire, and came to a halt with his revolver presented at the head of an Indian who had just come out of a tepee. This Indian started back with surprise when the threatening ring of steel stared him unwaveringly in the face.

Bob was surprised at the suddenness of Eddie's movement. So for a moment was Arizona Jim. But Arizona was quick to recover himself, and he stepped up to his young comrade's side, while the Indian Eddie was collecting raised his hands in the air.

Sitting Moose watched the scene with no apparent interest in his expression. Bob saw Arizona Jim reach out and seize the cowering Redskin by the shoulder and stare hard into his face. Then he saw the Indian agent and Eddie conversing together. After which Arizona Jim turned and signalled to Bob to approach.

Wonderingly Bob obeyed his friend's gesture, and when he was close to Eddie and the Redskin raised his eyebrows inquiringly.

"My lad," said Arizona quickly and in low tones, "I find I've got a job for you, after all. Just take a good look at that Redskin, memorise his features, and then keep your eye on him. I'll be along here in a day or two, and you can tell me then all he does. I don't like his being here at all. He's a Crowfoot—one of those who have risen against the whites, and who are in with the rustlers. Do you understand me? Just keep your eye on him, and report to me when you see me next exactly what he does with himself."

Bob nodded wonderingly. He looked at the Redskin closely. There were features about him which, once seen, it would not be easy to forget. His lip had at one time been badly gashed, and it was now a dreadfully twisted thing, making his mouth look as though he were perpetually snarling. His face, too, was deeply pock-

marked. He was a villainous-looking fellow, in a white man's view.

Eddie Mason slipped out of his guns into Bob's hand, then gave him a handful of cartridges. For Bob's gun, of course, had been taken from him when he had been arrested at Medicine Axe.

"There's no saying," said Eddie. "You might need it. But do as Arizona says. Watch that fellow. What you find out might result in the rustlers getting rounded up, and, if that happens, all the troubles with the Redskins will be over. But, if you can help it, don't let this fellow know you're watching him too closely. His name's Red Fox, and his name fits him. I know the fellow well enough, and so does Arizona."

Arizona Jim, still holding Red Fox by the arm, dragged the Indian over to Sitting Moose's side. More conversation took place between the Indian agent and the Redskin chief.

"Sitting Moose doesn't know the fellow," Arizona said at length, "except that he turned up here a few days ago, calling himself a lone hunter, and has been staying in this camp. But I'm suspicious of him. Just you watch him, Bob, and watch him carefully. I've half a mind to take him back with me now, only I think, if you're smart, we'll be able to do more good by letting him go free for a bit longer."

Bob's eyes began to shin. He held out his hand.

"You've helped me, Arizona," he said simply, "and if I can do any-

queer fashion at the tenderfoot outlaw—as Bob actually was now.

"Not yet," he said shortly. "I don't think Raynor will believe me—yet. Some day, though, he probably will. He's got to find out a lot more about Mattawa Frank, though, before he will."

"Now, what on earth are you talking about?" asked Bob blankly.

But Eddie only smiled inscrutably and held out his hand. Bob gripped it warmly, but he was very puzzled as he watched Arizona and the British cow-puncher mount their horses preparatory to starting off back to Medicine Axe.

"So-long, Raynor! So-long, Dicky!" Arizona said out, and, taking off his wide Stetson, waved it airily. "I'll see you in a day or two, and I hope you'll have something interesting to tell me."

He rode away, followed by Eddie Mason. Bob and Dicky stood on a rock and watched them as they wound their way amongst the boulders until they passed out of sight.

Then a figure passed close by them. It was a woman—a young girl—Bob saw. An Indian maiden she was, quite pretty, and she carried a very modern, civilised pin in her hair. She smiled in a friendly fashion as she met the gaze of the white boys bent upon her. She nodded her head, but did not pause in her walk. She was, apparently, making for the near-by stream to fill her pail.

"I saw her working inside that old

Bob said nothing, but watched the Redskin with deep interest. There was something very unusual in the hideous-looking man's motions. He looked neither to right nor left, but, after walking along fifty paces or so, he halted again, and bent further forward, seeming to be looking down at something below him.

Bob, followed by Dicky, stole closer to the man, and, when very near him, hid again behind other convenient boulders. Now they could see the Indian girl was standing beside the edge of the stream, filling her pail in the gurgling waters. The Indian crouched, and, looking like a panther ready to spring, staring at her as she worked, unconscious of anybody's presence.

"Perhaps he's in love with the girl, and is merely admiring her from a respectful distance," said Bob. But he changed his mind the next moment, for, without uttering a sound, the Redskin gave a sudden forward and downward spring. He landed neatly on his feet immediately behind the maiden. So quickly did he act that he had wrapped his dusky arms about the girl either before she could turn, or before Bob and Dicky could make a movement.

The pail she carried fell with a clatter on the stones of the river-bank, then rolled into the water. The girl struggled frantically, but she was helpless in the grasp of this big, brutal-looking savage. His hand was closed over her mouth, stifling any cries she might have uttered.

THE TOAD.

By CLIVE FENN.

It was just the sort of morning that anybody likes. The sun had been up for hours. The blue and crimson dragonflies were making merry over the lake which flashed back the light.

The lake where the water lilies grew was all that remained of the moat to the very old castle, which had stood in the valley for many long years.

The oldest man in Padzham was Tom Baker. He wore a white fringe of whiskers, etc., round his chin, and took snuff instead of smoking.

He reckoned the castle sort of happened, and that was all there was to it. The bats lived there. The rooks were rather partial to it. A fox who had given more good spins to the local hounds than any member of his race, always ended up by taking cover in a rooky sanctuary, which ran right underneath one of the towers.

But the owl, who honoured the place with his presence—the fly-by-night possessed a snug little set of apartments in the west wing—said he knew all about the castle.

"I saw it built," he told some of his friends. "I was there. It wasn't yesterday. I give you my word, but there is practically nothing I haven't seen in my time. Why, old Tom Baker is a spring chicken compared to me."

The blackbirds, the starlings, and the others all pretended to believe the owl. They were polite, because it was their nature to be so, and, as far as all that went, it did not matter a morning worm to them. Padzham was good enough, and the castle was interesting, especially when the summer brought visitors to see it.

The owl went on and on about all he knew. He talked about the country as if he knew every inch. He seemed to think that all the others were just so many visitors, whom he tolerated in the place, even the lark, who built spirals, which you could not see as he soared up and up into the sky, singing as he went. It was all the same to the owl. He treated them all alike, including the birds who only sang the summertime in England, winging it from the far South, where the oranges grow and the frost hardly ever comes.

"I don't want you to make any mistake about it," said the owl. He was giving a small and early tea party in the castle. "I am not the fellow to swank—never did believe in such things—but what I don't know about this castle is not worth knowing, and I might say the same of the rest of things."

And just then, with a crumble, crumble, bang, crash, a big boulder tumbled out of the ivy-covered wall, quite close to where the owl was sitting, crumpled up in its best feathers.

"Bless me!" muttered the owl. "I wish such accidents did not happen. It shakes my nerves."

"Meaning me," said a voice, which sounded rather croaky.

"You! Who in the world are you?" asked the owl.

"Oh, just a toad," was the reply. "It was your chatter woke me up. I have had a long nap. Heigh ho! How bright the sun is!"

The toad gave a leisurely hop, and emerged on the grass where the others were gathered, and stretched itself as it blinked sleepily at the radiant light. Everybody eyed it with scorn and edged away, feeling that a toad was rather vulgar company, and so sarcastic in its manner.

"Yes, I was in that stone which fell just now," it said, pleasantly moving itself stiffly as if it felt a twinge of rheumatics. "I popped inside, a few years back, now I come to think of it, it was just about the time they built this castle. That was hundreds of years ago."

"But this castle was not built so long since as that," cried a thrush. "The owl remembers the time it was run up."

"The owl" said the toad contemptuously. "Why, his great, great, great—there you can pepper in the greats as fast as you like—his great, ever so many, grandfather was not out of his shell when I started my nap."

The owl flapped its wings. It was going to say something, but thought better of it, and flew off amidst laughter.

The toad lolled on the green turf and smiled.

"It is rather cheery this waking up," it said. "Now what about lunch?"



FORCIBLY ARRESTED!

The door swung open and many men crowded into the little bed-room. "Lynch him! He let Mattawa Frank out of jail. He's in with the rustlers. He's a rustler himself!"

thing for you at any time, I'm always at your service."

He caught the eyes of Red Fox bent upon him. He started a little and almost shuddered, for the expression in the Redskin's face was dreadful, though, probably, the distortion of his lip made him seem more murderous than he was. But there was something distinctly baleful in his eyes, and Bob felt himself glad that Eddie had handed over one of his guns to his keeping.

Arizona at length released his hold on Red Fox, and that scowling Redskin, after another glare about him, slunk away, re-entering the tent from which he had appeared.

"Well, lad," said Arizona, holding out his hand to Bob. "Eddie and I have a great deal to do, so we must be going now. I hope you'll be comfortable here. I think you will, and, anyhow, the experience you gain will be interesting. Don't worry, lad! I think everything will turn out right in the end."

He turned to Eddie Mason. "Got anything to tell Raynor, Eddie?" he asked enigmatically.

Bob was surprised at the question, and he was further surprised when he saw his fellow-countryman's face go red and confused. Indeed, Eddie's lips opened to speak, but he closed his mouth again sharply. He shook his head, and he started in a

chie's hut, said Dicky. "Perhaps she's Sitting Moose's daughter, or granddaughter."

Bob watched her receding back. But suddenly he grasped Dicky by the shoulder and violently pulled him down to his knees, kneeling down himself behind the rock upon which they had stood to wave their adieux to Arizona and Eddie Mason.

"Si!" Bob hissed earnestly. "I don't think he's seen us."

"Who?" Dicky asked, surprised at the suddenness and tenseness of his master's movement.

"Red Fox. I saw him coming immediately after that girl. There he is. Look carefully. He's behind that boulder over there," said Bob. "Arizona wants me to keep my eye on him, so I'll begin to do so now. Don't raise your head, but peep round the edge of this rock."

Dicky obeyed him. Soon, from behind a boulder only a matter of fifty feet away, a befeathered head appeared. Without themselves being seen by this red man, Bob and Dicky watched him as he came from behind the rock, and, crouching low, set off at a smooth, gliding pace along the rough trail to the river, down which the Redskin maiden with the pail had gone.

"Mr. Bob. Dicky whispered, touching his master on the arm, "I believe he's after that girl."

Dicky gave a grunt and made as though to rush to the girl's assistance. But Bob laid a restraining hand on his arm. Bob was puzzled. He knew little enough about Indians. For all he knew, this might have been a Redskin custom. He had heard that amongst the savage races the abduction by force of women was looked upon as a marriage custom. He hesitated about doing what Dicky wanted to do at once. He decided to wait for the Redskin's next move.

One thing Bob was sure of, the red man evidently meant to do no serious harm to the girl—to do nothing violent. For he struck her no blow, nor did he handle her particularly violently; he merely held her firmly, and looked up and down stream, whilst he held her in his arms as though she were a baby.

Then, without looking back in the direction of the two watching Britishers, Red Fox gave another spring, and, feet first, dropped into the river, taking his captive with him. He sank from sight at once, and Dicky gave a gasp of amazement as he looked down on the disturbed waters.

"Is he going to drown the poor girl, Mr. Bob?" he asked.

(Another grand instalment of this fine Wild West yarn in next Monday's issue.)

OUR SPLENDID, COMPLETE SCHOOL STORY.



Putty's Plight!

A Splendid Long, Complete Story of the Chums of Rookwood School.

BY OWEN CONQUEST

The 1st Chapter.

Mr. Bootles Looks In!

"Ha, ha, ha!" murmured Mr. Bootles. "Dear me!" "Dear me!" murmured Mr. Bootles. "Ha, ha, ha! Rippling!" "Bravo, Putty!" "Tip-top! Ha, ha, ha!"

It was a kind of chorus, and it proceeded from the box-room at the end of the Fourth Form passage. The box-room door was closed, and Mr. Bootles, standing in the passage, blinked at it over his spectacles dubiously.

Evidently a large number of the Classical Fourth were gathered in the box-room; he could hear a dozen voices, amongst which he distinguished those of Jimmy Silver and Lovell and Mornington and Townsend.

Something evidently was "on." It was a half-holiday at Rookwood, and, although the weather was fine, very few of the Classical Fourth were out of doors. That was a peculiar circumstance in itself. It was very unusual for Jimmy Silver & Co. to remain indoors on a fine day, unless kept in by lessons or detention.

After some thought Mr. Bootles advanced towards the box-room. It was very odd, to say the least, that a crowd of the Classical Fourth should be shut up there on a fine half-holiday; and, without being unduly suspicious, Mr. Bootles decided that he had better look into it. The little gentleman was very scientific, and he felt that it was his duty to know what was going on, though he had been passing through the corridor quite by chance when the buzz of voices and loud laughter had drawn his attention to the box-room. He paused at the door and coughed. He did not want to appear to be "jumping" on his boys and catching them out by surprise, in the manner of such an obnoxious master as Mr. Manders, of the Modern Side, for instance. But there was too much noise going on in the box-room for Mr. Bootles' little judicious cough to be heard there. "Ha, ha, ha!" came a fresh roar. "Isn't he a corker!" "Go it, Putty!" "This will be a success, and no mistake!" Jimmy Silver was speaking. "It will have to be kept dark—" "Ha, ha! Hather!" "Especially from Mr. Bootles!" chuckled Mornington.

And there was a fresh roar, as if the juniors were very much tickled at the idea of "it" coming to the knowledge of Mr. Bootles, whatever "it" was! Mr. Bootles frowned a little. He could hardly doubt further that some mischief was afoot. He turned the handle of the box-room door. It did not open. The door was locked on the inside. Knock! Mr. Bootles' sharp rap on the door was followed by a sudden cessation of the laughter within. "Sheer off!" came Arthur Edward Lovell's voice. "You can't come in now, Muffin!" "Hook it, Tubby!" called out Jimmy Silver. "Kindly let me in at once!" said Mr. Bootles sharply. "It is not Muffin, as you seem to suppose; it is your Form-master! Open this door immediately!" "Oh, my hat!" "Look out, Putty!" "Great Scott!" "Hush!" There was alarm in the box-room, that was evident. "Let me in immediately!" exclaimed Mr. Bootles. "Ye-es, sir—" "Where's the key, Lovell?" "I—Where's the key, Lovell?" "I—Where's the key, Newcome!" "Have you got the key, Oswald?" "I haven't it! Ask Conroy!" Knock, knock, knock! Mr. Bootles was not a suspicious gentleman, but he could not help thinking that the young rascals in the box-room were only trying to gain time, and that they knew very well where the key was. "Silver! I command you to open this door at once! What, what?" he exclaimed, with asperity. "Ye-es, sir! I—I'm getting the key!" There were hurried movements in the box-room, and a scuffling and shuffling of feet, and husky whispers. Undoubtedly the juniors were startled and alarmed by Mr. Bootles' visit, which was a pretty plain proof that mischief was afoot—though of what kind Mr. Bootles could not guess. But he certainly meant to probe the matter very thoroughly now. The key turned in the lock at last. Mr. Bootles suspected that it had been in the lock all the time while the juniors were asking one another where it was. The door opened. Mr. Bootles rustled into the box-room. A dozen juniors met his eyes there, all of them a little flushed and startled, but giving him their most respectful attention. The Form-master glanced round. Nothing of a very unusual nature met his eyes. There were a number of boxes and trunks in the room, and several superannuated articles of furniture, and a dozen juniors—merely that and nothing more. There were no signs of a "rag" of

any kind, and Mr. Bootles was puzzled.

He stood and looked at the juniors, poking his head forward in the way he had that reminded his pupils of a tortoise putting its head out of its shell. He ran his fingers through the whiskers that were a source of never-ending entertainment to the Fourth, and blinked at the respectful youths over his glasses. "Well!" he said at last. "Silver!" "Yes, sir!" said the captain of the Fourth meekly. "What are you boys doing here?" "We—we—" "Why are you not at cricket?" "There—there isn't a match to-day, sir."

"You are generally on the playing-fields on a fine afternoon," said Mr. Bootles. "The fact is, Silver, I require an explanation of this. Some mischief is going on, I am assured of that."

"Mischief, sir?" said Jimmy Silver, doing his very best to look as if butter wouldn't melt in his mouth. "Oh, sir!" "Oh, sir!" repeated the juniors, in murmurs of mild remonstrance. "I heard one of you say that something must be kept secret, especially from me!" said Mr. Bootles sternly. "What was it?" "Oh!" "Come, Silver! Explain at once!" "We—we've met here for a rehearsal, sir," stammered Jimmy Silver at last. "The Rookwood Players, you know, sir—our amateur dramatic society in the Fourth, sir. We—we're going to rehearse a comedy that we're going to perform soon, sir—" "There is no harm in that, Silver, if your explanation is correct. What comedy are you playing?" "It—it's called 'Good Old Twittles,' sir."

"Indeed! Who is the author of it?" "We are," "What?" "We've written the comedy ourselves, sir," said Arthur Edward Lovell. "We—we wanted a really good one, sir, so—we thought we'd better write it ourselves." "We're not quite satisfied with Shakespeare's stuff, sir," murmured Raby. Mr. Bootles smiled slightly. "Well, well! There is no harm in all this," he said. "But I fail to see why the door should be locked." "Well, sir, those Modern bounders—I mean, the Modern chaps, might have interrupted us." "Ah, no doubt! But why should all this be kept secret from me, as I certainly heard one of you remark?" The juniors exchanged glances. "We—we—" murmured Jimmy Silver helplessly. "I trust, Silver," said Mr. Bootles, with generous severity, "that there is nothing in your comedy of which your masters would not approve." "I—I hope not, sir." "Very well, Silver. As a rule, I do not think it necessary to interfere in such matters," said Mr. Bootles. "But on this occasion, I think it is my duty to see this comedy of yours before you receive permission to act in it. You will bring the manuscript to my study—" "Oh, sir!" "I shall read it through, and decide whether you may be allowed to give a performance of it." "Ye-es, sir!" "I fear, Silver, that you may have introduced something of a disrespectful nature regarding the authorities of the school," said Mr. Bootles severely. "Oh, sir!" "Kindly remember what I have told you."



The Hidden House By the Author of "DRIVEN FROM HOME."

This dramatic and enthralling mystery story will thrill you as no story has ever thrilled you before. Startling surprises and exciting incidents by the score. Do not miss the superb, long opening instalment in TO-DAY'S issue of The Butterfly. The Celebrated Weekly Comic.

Mr. Bootles' own hair; the whiskers were his own brothers to Mr. Bootles' whiskers. The make-up on the face, though detectable at close quarters, at a short distance exactly represented Mr. Bootles' rather ruddy complexion, with a due allowance of wrinkles. The baggy trousers might have been Mr. Bootles' own; and the rather shabby cap and worn were exact. And Putty, who was as intimate as a monkey, had caught Mr. Bootles' trick of jerking his head forward like a tortoise, and ejaculating his remarks in a staccato style in a voice that anyone who heard it would have sworn was Mr. Bootles' own, "loot."

Putty did not mean to be disrespectful to his Form-master in thus reproducing him for the purposes of a comedy. He liked Mr. Bootles and he respected him. But he had seen, with an artist's eye, how valuable Mr. Bootles was to be drawn upon for comedy, and he could not resist the temptation. Jimmy Silver had been very doubtful about it; but he had agreed at last.

There was no doubt that Putty was screamingly comic as Bootles the Second; and no doubt at all that the comedy would bring down the house. And as it was only to be witnessed by juniors, where was the harm? Putty, at least, could not see any harm; and the other fellows agreed with Putty.

But they did not expect Mr. Bootles to agree if it came to his knowledge. The fact that he was being caricatured by the scapegrace of the Fourth had to be kept very dark from the Fourth Form-master. Hence the dimity in the box-room when Mr. Bootles demanded admittance.

Putty gasped for breath as he emerged from the trunk. He had been imprisoned there for nearly ten minutes, and he had found his quarters exceedingly uncomfortable. "Thank goodness he's gone!" gasped Putty. "How jolly lucky he never thought of looking in the trunks!" "If he had—" murmured Mornington. "Poor old Bootles!" chuckled Newcome.

"Newcome!" rapped out Putty, in Mr. Bootles' voice. "I am surprised to hear you refer—ahem!—to your Form-master in such—ahem!—disrespectful manner! What—what?" "Ha, ha, ha!" "I say, this comedy will be a regular corker!" said Lovell. "The Moderns have never got up anything like this. Are we going on with the rehearsal?" "Of course we are!" said Putty. "Bootles won't come back."

Jimmy Silver looked doubtful. "Did you hear what he said?" he remarked. "We've got to let him see the comedy before we play it." "All serene!" said Putty. "That won't hurt!" "But it's all about him and his weird manners and customs!" said Jimmy. "It's written round him. 'Twittles'—only another name for Bootles!"

"That's all right; he'll never guess," said Putty confidently. "Of course, he'd guess, if he saw me made up like this; but he'll never fumble from seeing the manuscript. You see, a Form-master never knows what he's really like—nobody does. It's never dawned upon Bootles what a funny merchant he is." "Ha, ha, ha!" "Same with the Head," continued Putty. "I could imitate the Head in a way that would make you shriek; but do you think the Head knows that he's a funny merchant? Not he!" "Let me catch you caricaturing the Head!" said Jimmy Silver. "It's had enough to make game of poor old Bootles!" "We're not making game of him!" said Putty indignantly. "I suppose we can use him for farce, without making game of him? We want a comic character, and there's Bootles. It would be wicked to waste him!" "Ha, ha, ha!" "Well, let's get on," said Lovell. "Oh, my hat! Is that Bootles again?" breathed Mornington. "Who—who's there?" called out Jimmy Silver. "Me!" came promptly and ungrammatically in the fat voice of Reginald Muffin. "You let me in, Jimmy! I know you fellows are having a feed there all by yourselves! Do you call this paltry?" "It's not a feed, as! Sheer off!" "You let me in," replied Tubby

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Muffin. "If it ain't a feed, why can't you open the door? Yah!"

"It's a rehearsal, fathead!"

"Yah! You let me in."

"Let him in," whispered Putty. "I'll try this rig on Tubby. I've got a cone here."

Jimmy Silver grinned and opened the door. Tubby Muffin rolled in and looked round suspiciously. He started as his eyes fell upon Mr. Bootles' double.

"Oh, I— I stuttered."

"Muffin!" said Putty, in Mr. Bootles' deepest voice.

"Yes, sir?" gasped Tubby. "I—I didn't know you were here, sir. I—I didn't know—"

"Am I to understand, Muffin, that you intended to take part in a surreptitious feast, if such had been proceeding in this room?"

"Oh, no, sir—not at all! I wouldn't!"

"I fear, Muffin, that I cannot place complete faith in your veracity. I have several times detected you speaking untruthfully."

"Oh, sir! Not at all, I—"

"Hold out your hand, Muffin!"

"I—I say, sir—"

"Hold out your hand!" thundered Mr. Bootles II.

"Oh dear!"

Tubby Muffin grudgingly extended a fat and not over clean hand. There was a swish of the cane and a yell from Reginald Muffin.

"Let that be a lesson to you, Muffin, not to be greedy!"

"Yow-wow!"

"And now we'll get on with the rehearsal," said Putty, in his natural voice.

Tubby Muffin jumped.

"Why, you—you rotter! You're Putty all the time!" he howled.

"You cheeky rotter, caning me—"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"I've a jolly good mind to go and tell Bootles!" roared Tubby Muffin, in great wrath, rubbing his fat hand.

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"Of course," added Tubby, as an after-thought, "I knew it was you all the time, Putty. You can't take me in, you know. I just let you think you were spoofing me. He, he, he!"

"My only hat!" said Lovell.

"George Washington was an infant to him. Aunias couldn't have held a candle to him! Kick him out!"

"I say, where's the feed?"

But there was no feed for Reginald Muffin. Two or three boots helped him out of the box-room, and he slammed the door and rolled away in great wrath. Then the rehearsal proceeded.

The 3rd Chapter.
All Boys!

"Come in, Silver!"

It was the following day, after lessons, when Jimmy Silver presented himself in Mr. Bootles' study with a roll of manuscript in his hand.

Mr. Bootles gave him a benevolent nod.

"What is it, Silver?" he asked.

"Our—our little comedy, sir," murmured Jimmy.

"Ah, indeed?"

"You told me to bring it, said Jimmy."

"Thank you, Silver!"

Mr. Bootles took the manuscript and flattened it out on his table. There was a good deal of it, for the schoolboys' writing was large, and it covered many sheets. There were also a large number of erasures and corrections, in different hands. Every member of the junior Dramatic Society had lent a hand in producing that masterpiece of humour, and whenever a fellow thought of a joke, he would stick it into the manuscript in Jimmy Silver's study. Many hands make light work, so the comedy had grown apace. The hits, smudges, erasures, and corrections did not make the manuscript very easy to read. Mr. Bootles had not set himself a light task.

"GOOD OLD TWITTLES. A Comedy of School Life!" said Mr. Bootles, reading out the title. "Ah! Hem—hem!"

Jimmy watched him rather anxiously.

He wondered whether a suspicion might possibly occur to Mr. Bootles that "Twittles" was another name for his respected self, and that it was he who was really the leading character in the Rookwood comedy.

But no such suspicion crossed Mr. Bootles' mind.

He had some misgivings that the masterpiece of the juniors might contain some disrespectful allusions to the powers that were—misplaced humour that would have to be cut out. But that was all.

That his hopeful pupils had selected him as a comic character and written a comedy round him, was not likely to occur to his mind.

He glanced quite benignly over the manuscript, while Jimmy Silver waited.

Jimmy saw him smile.

He wondered what particular masterly stroke of humour brought that smile to Mr. Bootles' face.

As a matter of fact, it was not the humour of the piece that caused Mr. Bootles to smile. The humour was of a very broad variety, not to say boisterous, and Mr. Bootles was really smiling at the idea of this kind of stuff satisfying the artistic aspirations of the Rookwood Players. He was not aware how much depended on the acting—chiefly an irresistible imitation of himself!

"Well, well, you may leave this with me, Silver," he said. "I will hem—look over it at my leisure."

"Yes, sir," said Jimmy. "May we have the Form-room on Saturday afternoon, sir, for the performance?"

"Saturday afternoon," said Mr. Bootles. "Let me see. Yes, my lecture is not till seven. You may have the Form-room up to six o'clock, Silver."

"Thank you, sir! That will do splendidly! It's a matinee performance," Jimmy explained.

Mr. Bootles gave him a benevolent smile.

"Very well, Silver! I will return this manuscript to you to-morrow."

"Thank you, sir!"

Jimmy left the study.

Putty Grace met him in the passage.

"All serene?" he asked.

"Yes, I think so."

"I knew he wouldn't tumble," said

handed the play to Jimmy Silver in the Form-room before lessons.

"Hem! There is your manuscript, Silver," said Mr. Bootles graciously. "I have read it through—hem!—almost through. I see no harm in your little play, my boy."

Jimmy Silver was sincerely glad to hear it.

"Thank you, sir!" he murmured.

"What did I tell you?" murmured Putty, as Jimmy Silver went to his place. "It's all serene!"

Apparently it was all serene.

Relieved of their uneasiness on the score of Mr. Bootles, the Rookwood Players went ahead with their preparations; and that evening there was a notice pinned up in the junior Common-room. The notice attracted some attention. Modern fellows coming over from Mr. Manders' House to look at it and chuckle.

Saturday, at 3 p.m.

Grand Matinee Performance of

"GOOD OLD TWITTLES!"

A Comedy.

By the Rookwood Classical Players.

Admission: Juniors, free; Seniors, five shillings.

The last line was really a masterly touch. In the peculiar circumstances, the players did not want a perfect of the Sixth to wander in during the performance and discover them caricaturing their Form-master. There was

Mr. Bootles observed the unusual risibility in his class, and he handed out some impots to reduce the juniors to a proper state of gravity—in which he succeeded.

It was a great relief when morning classes came to an end and the Fourth were free for the rest of the day.

Much had to be done to transform the Form-room into a theatre. But the Rookwood Players had done it before, and they set to work as soon as Mr. Bootles was gone with great activity.

Before dinner the preparations were very nearly completed.

Curtains were rigged up to screen off one end of the Form-room for the stage and green-room, and after some little trouble the curtains consented to move when the cords were pulled. As for "scenes," there was little wanted. The scene of the comedy being laid in a public school, and the acting consisting chiefly of japing, much was not needed in the way of background; most of the characters in the comedy, too, were going to wear their ordinary Etons, which were quite suitable for the occasion, and Putty was the only actor who had to give much attention to make-up. Putty's part was the great thing of the piece; the whole success of the performance depended on Putty and his inimitable imitation of Mr. Bootles.

There was no doubt about a good audience turning up. All the juniors were in the secret now, and they knew that Mr. Bootles was to be put on the stage—and that was enough for them. Every fellow that could

"Leggo, Lovell! It's important! Jimmy, I tell you—"

"Dry up!"

"If Bootles—"

"Eh? What's that about Bootles?" asked Jimmy.

"Suppose Bootles knows—"

"Oh, ring off! He doesn't!"

"You're not so sure about it," said Tubby Muffin. "I want to speak to you privately about it, Jimmy."

"You fat duffer, if you've heard anything—"

"You just listen to me, Jimmy!" said Tubby Muffin mysteriously. "I've got something to say—jolly important, too!"

Jimmy gave an impatient sniff.

But the possibility that Mr. Bootles had got wind of the real nature of "Good Old Twittles" was serious, so the captain of the Fourth stepped aside with Tubby to hear what he had to say.

"Well, what is it? Sharp!" he asked.

"The fact is, Jimmy—"

"Buck up!" Has Bootles found anything out?" asked Jimmy Silver impatiently.

"Not yet, that I know of," said Tubby, lowering his voice. "But the fact is, Jimmy, I'm not quite satisfied."

"What?"

"On reflection," continued Tubby Muffin calmly, "I'm not at all satisfied that this is treating Bootles respectfully."

"You silly duffer!" ejaculated Jimmy Silver. "Nobody wants to hear your opinion about that."

"Possibly," said Muffin loftily. "But I want you to understand all the same that I'm not quite satisfied about it, and in the circumstances I feel that I can't allow it to go on."

"Wha-a-at?"

Jimmy "took notice," so to speak, at last. He glared at Tubby Muffin as if he would eat him.

"You—you can't allow—" he stuttered. "Are you off your rocker? Do you want me to take you by the neck—"

"Here, you keep off, Jimmy! Let a fellow come to the point. I've been thinking it over, and I feel that it's my duty to stop these disrespectful proceedings. My only course, as an honourable chap, is to go to Mr. Bootles—"

"What?" shrieked Jimmy.

"And tell him!" said Reginald Muffin.

Jimmy made a movement, and the fat Classical backed away.

"Hold on, Jimmy! Of course, I don't want to give you chaps away. I'll do anything I can for you. Treat me as a pal—"

"Why, you—"

"You haven't given me a part," said Tubby.

"We don't want an elephant in the cast."

"Don't be cheeky, Jimmy Silver, or I may decide that it is my duty to go to Mr. Bootles at once!" said Muffin warningly. "I'm doing all I can for you; but my conscience—"

"Your conscience!" stuttered Jimmy Silver. "My only aunt! Are you setting up to have a conscience?"

"I've a jolly tender conscience—not like some chaps," said Tubby Muffin loftily. "Still, as I say, I don't want to be hard on you. You know jolly well that a word to Bootles would knock the whole thing on the head."

Jimmy breathed hard. It was quite true that a word from Tubby Muffin would be enough to spoil everything, by bringing the Fourth Form-master to the theatre in a state of towering wrath. Reginald Muffin felt that he had the whip-hand, and he was very lofty.

"Treat me as a pal," he said. "You haven't given me a part, chiefly because you're jealous of my acting. You admit that?"

"You crass ass!" gasped Jimmy.

"I can overlook it," said Tubby. "I'm used to jealousy—superior chaps have to get used to it. But there's another thing I want to mention."

"I thought so," said Jimmy Silver grimly.

"I asked you to lend me a ten-bobber yesterday, Jimmy—"

"I know you did."

"You refused quite rudely. Do you call that pal?"

"Not at all."

"Well, then, if you don't treat me as a pal you can't expect me to stifle my conscience, and allow you to play these disrespectful tricks, can you?" asked Muffin.

Jimmy did not answer. He took Tubby Muffin by the collar and led him out of the green-room, wriggling.

"Leggo!" howled Tubby. "I'm going to Bootles—"

"Here, Rawson, Jones!" called out Jimmy Silver to two of the early members of the audience.

"Leggo!" howled Tubby.



MR. BOOTLES 'TUMBLES'!

"Boys!" "Oh—ah—yes, sir," stammered Jimmy Silver. "How dare you!" said Mr. Bootles. "Grace, I shall take you to the Head! The rest of you, cease this foolery!" It was the "curtain," with a vengeance!

Putty, with a chuckle. "It's all right, of course."

"I'm blessed if I half like it, though," said Jimmy Silver, with a shake of the head. "It would hurt his feelings if he knew, and old Bootles is a jolly good sort!"

"Well, he won't know," said Putty. "It can't hurt his feelings if he doesn't know, can it?"

"I—I suppose not."

"Besides, what's his feelings, even if he did know, compared with my success in a character study?" demanded Putty. "I can tell you this is going to be a real corker."

"Oh, rats!" was Jimmy's reply to that.

"I can see myself in the part, you know," continued Teddy Grace, full of an artist's enthusiasm. "I can tell you, it would bring down the house in a revue. It's just splendid good luck that we've got Bootles here to put in our comedy."

"Bow-wow!"

"He ought really to feel honoured, if he knew—"

"Hosh!"

"Oh, you're a Philistine, Jimmy Silver," said Putty loftily. "You've got about as much artistic feeling as a Hun! Go and eat coke!"

In spite of Jimmy Silver's assurance on the subject, Jimmy Silver & Co. felt a little anxious while the precious manuscript remained in Mr. Bootles' hands. They did not think, upon the whole, that the written part would give the Form-master the clue, but there was a risk.

But their fears were relieved the next morning when Mr. Bootles

no telling what view Bulkeley or Neville might take of it.

By charging five shillings for admission to seniors, all Forms above the Shell were effectually excluded. Certainly the most reckless and extravagant senior at Rookwood was not likely to disburse five shillings to see the junior actors strut and fret their hour upon the stage.

"It will be all serene," said Putty. And everybody supposed that it would.

The 4th Chapter.
Conscientious Scrupus.

Saturday was a busy day.

The Classical Players felt that it was rather hard that they should have to attend lessons in the morning, considering that they were giving a grand matinee in the afternoon. But they had to. And they were even very careful in class. They did not want to run the risk of detention on that day of all days.

There were many smiles the Form-room that morning.

Mr. Bootles caused them.

The Form-master's happy unconsciousness of what was going on tickled his respectful pupils immensely.

That morning Mr. Bootles was officiating as Form-master in that room; and in the afternoon in the same room Putty was to officiate as Mr. Bootles in the comedy! What Mr. Bootles would have said if he had known was hardly to be imagined.

That gave a peculiar zest to the affair, and the juniors simply could not help grinning when they thought about it.

eram himself into the Form-room was sure to come.

Jimmy Silver was still oppressed with some inward doubts as to whether it was quite the thing to treat Mr. Bootles in this way. Perhaps he lacked the artistic enthusiasm of Putty Grace. But he put his doubts aside.

The comedy was going to draw an audience such as the Modern Players had never succeeded in getting together, and that was a consolation for any lingering doubts.

Besides, it was certain that the performance was going to be a good one—a real artistic success. Putty was a born actor, and he was certain to keep the house in a roar.

Curiously enough, the inward doubts which Jimmy Silver set aside began to trouble another fellow after dinner. That fellow was Reginald Muffin.

After dinner the players were busy putting the finishing touches to the theatre, and some of the audience had already strolled in to secure good seats. Tubby Muffin rolled in, looking for Jimmy Silver. He found the president of the Classical Players in the green-room—which was a corner of the Form-room beside the stage, curtained off in a more or less effective manner from the auditorium. Jimmy was very busy, anxiously giving directions, when Tubby Muffin interrupted him.

"Kick that porpoise out," said Jimmy impatiently.

"I say, Jimmy—"

"Here, you, travel!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, taking the fat Classical by the collar.

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"Kick that porpoise out," said Jimmy impatiently.

"I say, Jimmy—"

"Here, you, travel!" said Arthur Edward Lovell, taking the fat Classical by the collar.

"This fat rotter wants ten bob as his fee for not giving away the show to Bootles," said Jimmy Silver.

"Will you two fellows see that he doesn't get out of the Form-room till after the performance?"

"Here! I say!" "You bet!" grunted Rawson. "Take his other arm, Jones!"

"What-ho!" said Jones minor. "Come and sit with us, Tubby." "Yah! I won't! I'm going out—Yoop! Leggo my ear, Jones, you beast! If you kick me again, Rawson, I'll—Yaroooh!"

The 5th Chapter. Mr. Bootles Looks in Again.

All ready! Everything was ready at last. It was turned three, and the Form-room was crowded, not to say crammed.

Some of the audience were stamping on the floor, as a warning to the Classical players that it was time to begin.

In the doorway of the Form-room Higgs and Van Ryn stood. They were the doorkeepers. They let in all juniors without question, but they were ready to demand the admission-fee of five shillings if some senior found the spirit move him to drop in.

"Pay to come in!" ejaculated Hanson. "Catch us!" "Then you won't come in!" said Van Ryn.

"All's ready!" "Shut the door!" "Hallo! My hat!" ejaculated Higgs suddenly.

A little whirling figure in cap and gown came along the passage. The doorkeepers exchanged a startled glance.

It was Mr. Bootles!

"It's—it's Bootles!" muttered Van Ryn. "What—?" "Can't be Putty!" said Higgs. "Putty is behind the scenes!"

"He—he can't be coming—!" Mr. Bootles bestowed a gracious smile and a nod upon the two dismayed doorkeepers.

"Ah! You are about to give your little play, I see," he remarked. "Ye-es, sir," stammered Van Ryn. "I hope I am in time," said Mr. Bootles.

"In time! My hat! I—I mean, yes, sir. We—we haven't started yet. Oh dear!" "I have decided to witness the performance—at all events, a part of it," said Mr. Bootles graciously.

He passed the doorkeepers and rustled into the Form-room. They stood rooted to the floor, not even having the presence of mind to ask Mr. Bootles for five shillings.

The entrance of Mr. Bootles into the crowded "theatre" caused a sensation. The buzz of voices in the auditorium died away, and the audience stared at the Form-master blankly.

Why was Bootles there? If he saw the show— The juniors simply gasped. Perhaps there was some lingering suspicion at the back of Mr. Bootles' mind. Reading the manuscript had failed to give him a clue to the truth, certainly, but he had not wholly forgotten the peculiar episode of the box-room.

What was actually intended he did not know, but there was something at least unusual about "Good Old Twittles," he was inclined to suspect, and on reflection Mr. Bootles had decided that, all things considered, he had better be present.

Some of the juniors mechanically made room for Mr. Bootles in a front seat. The little gentleman sat down, with gracious smiles to right and left. He wanted to put the juniors at their ease, and to let them understand that he wasn't there to spoil their entertainment. He was, in fact, taking the affair under his wing in the most gracious manner.

There was dismay in many faces, horror in some, and if Mr. Bootles observed that it probably made him feel all the more that his presence at this matinee was judicious.

The curtain was wriggling—it had been wriggling for some minutes. At any moment it might jerk back, disclosing the stage, and in the first scene there was Putty got up as Mr. Bootles! A junior jumped up and ran to the stage and put his head through the curtains.

"Silver—!" he gasped. "Clear off, Flynn, you ass! You've no business here!" snapped Jimmy Silver. "Bootles—?" "What?" "He's here!" "Wha-a-a-at!"

"In the audience, bejabsers!" gasped Flynn. And laying given the necessary warning Flynn returned to his seat, leaving the Classical Players to their own devices.

Consternation fell upon the cast. "Stop vanishing the curtain!" said Jimmy Silver hastily. He was just in time. The curtains were already a foot apart, disclosing a strip of the stage.

Jimmy Silver glanced through the opening. There was Mr. Bootles sitting in the middle of the front row of seats, smiling benignly. Only the curtain hid from his eyes his double on the stage.

"Keep the curtain as it is, for goodness' sake!" said Jimmy Silver faintly. He looked at Putty of the Fourth. Putty was fully made up for his part. He was there in all his glory! Indeed, it would have been difficult to distinguish between Twittles on the stage and Bootles in the audience, so alike were they!

There was a hurried consultation. "Thank goodness the curtain wasn't up!" murmured Lovell. "I say, what are we going to do?"

"Chuck it," suggested Conroy. "That!" said Putty at once. "If Bootles is suspicious, chucking it at the last minute, when he comes in, would make him worse. Besides, we can't! We're not going to disappoint an audience like that!"

"You can't let Bootles see you in that rig." "Perhaps he wouldn't recognise himself—" "Fatead!"

"Just as if he was looking in the glass, if he saw you, uss!" "What on earth are we going to do? Can we alter it somehow?" gasped Jimmy Silver, in utter dismay. "Oh dear!"

"What a going on!" said Putty determinedly. "Look here, I'll gag through the performance, and leave out all the Bootles bits. That's the best we can do."

"But you're too like him!" "That doesn't matter, so long as he isn't ridiculed. It's a Form-master's part I'm playing, and all Form-masters are more or less alike. I tell you I'm not going to waste this make-up!"

"But—but—" "Bootles won't think this is funny. He doesn't think it's funny when he looks into the looking-glass, does he?"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "It will go all right. I'll gag all through, and Bootles won't know we meant to take him off," said Putty. "Up with that curtain!"

Jimmy Silver glanced helplessly at his comrades. There was no time for much thinking. Some of the audience were hammering again—especially the Moderns. Tommy Dodd & Co. thought that the scrape the Classical Players were in was rather funny, and they were anxious for a beginning.

"We'll chance it!" said Jimmy Silver at last, desperately. "Mind you don't imitate Bootles, Putty, that's all. You can gag your part. Shove up the curtain!"

And the curtain rose. The 6th Chapter. Aias! Art, according to Putty of the Fourth, was the real cause of the disaster.

Putty said so afterwards. It was the artist in Putty that got out of hand, as it were, and took the bit in his teeth and caused all the trouble.

When the play started, it was Putty's firm intention to "gag" all

through, making up a fresh part for himself, and leaving out all those inimitable imitations of Mr. Bootles which had been planned to bring down the house.

That was Putty's intention; but, like many good intentions, it was very imperfectly carried out. It wasn't really Putty's fault; it was the artist in him that was to blame.

The artist was satisfactory. True, Mr. Bootles looked a little startled at the sight of his double on the stage. The audience watched Mr. Bootles breathlessly, wondering what he would think of it. But after the first startled look, Mr. Bootles smiled.

For his double being exactly like himself, Mr. Bootles, naturally, could see nothing comic in him. He concluded that a Form-master's part being in the comedy, the actor had modelled himself upon his own Form-master, which was really a compliment to that gentleman, in a way.

That is, of course, if the part had been a serious one, and upheld with dignity by the actor. And for the first few scenes Putty remembered that he had to gag, and he gagged heroically.

The comic Form-master in the play became an exceedingly serious Form-master; so exceedingly serious that some of the audience asked one another whether the Classical Players hadn't put on a tragedy by mistake.

It was gall and wormwood to Putty, especially as he realised that his part, thus altered, was an utter failure.

That couldn't be helped! The whole play was written round Putty as a comic character, and the change of the character into a serious one spoiled everything. Then the continual gagging in the place of the right lines mixed up all the cues, and the other actors made incessant mistakes. They were not so quick-witted as Putty, and could not catch on suddenly to changes as he could.

Two scenes dragged through wearily and drearily, and the audience yawned and mumbled, and some fellows went out. Some of the juniors at the back began to hiss.

And it was then that the artist in Putty took the bit between his teeth and ran away with him. Putty couldn't help it.

He couldn't drag through a weary failure to the end, when he had succeeded within his grasp, if by a close shave, in flesh and blood—in an artistic like Putty—were not equal to the strain. Half-unconsciously, as the audience began to groan, Putty put more life into his acting—and his first really funny speech made Mr. Bootles stare, and made the audience laugh.

That laugh did it! Putty, throwing all other considerations to the winds, acted his very best—in the original part! All the original lines came put to his lips. And they came in his inimitable imitation of Mr. Bootles' voice, accompanied by his travesty of Mr. Bootles' gestures and manner.

Putty had, in fact, lost himself in his part, and by that time forgotten that Mr. Bootles was there—forgot, indeed, time and space and all things!

Loud laughter from the audience rewarded him, and spurred him on to greater efforts. Mr. Bootles sat fixedly, his eyes on the stage.

Colour was creeping into his cheeks. The truth was dawning on him. It was another Bootles who was acting on the stage; but a Bootles caricatured and travestied, and rendered utterly absurd.

The changes in Mr. Bootles' face escaped most of the audience, for their attention was fixed on the stage now, and they were yelling with laughter.

The comedy, as a comedy, was a great success; there was not a shadow of doubt on that point. The audience laughed and yelled and howled with merriment.

Still Mr. Bootles sat like a little gentleman turned to stone. But suddenly, as Putty, on the stage, was ejaculating, "What—what?" in Mr. Bootles' own staccato manner, the Form-master jumped up. He raised his hand.

"Cease this instantly." There was a gasp from the audience. The laughter died away instantly. "He's tumbled!" murmured Rawson!

There was no doubt of it; Mr. Bootles had "tumbled." He left his seat, and strode towards the stage. The "comedy" came to a sudden stop. Too late, the unhappy Putty realised what he was doing—what he had done!

In a breathless silence, the agitated Form-master pointed an accusing finger at the dismayed actors. "Boys!"

"Oh—ah—yes, sir!" stammered Jimmy Silver. "How dare you?" "Oh—hem!" "Hem!"

"Grace," said Mr. Bootles. "I shall take you to the Head! Silver, and the rest, you will cease this foolery—I repeat, this foolery—immediately! You will go to your studies, and write out the first book of the Æneid to the end. Grace, you will follow me to the Head!"

"Oh!" It was the "curtain" with a vengeance! The next day Mr. Bootles' manner to his hapless pupils was simply freezing. On the Monday, in class, the atmosphere was like that of a refrigerator. That day Jimmy Silver quite got over the flogging he had received from the Head; Putty replied that he had—and regretted it the next moment when the Co. seized him.

"You brass ass!" said Jimmy Silver. "Bump him! You've got us all into poor old Bootles' black books—bump him again—and spoiled our comedy—give him another—and mucked up everything—and another!"

"Yow-ow-ow!" "And another! You brass chump, if you ever spring any of your precious funny ideas on us again—give him another bump—we'll scarp you, and boil you in oil! Bump him!"

"Yaroooh! Help!" And for a considerable time after that Putty of the Fourth was bemoaning his fate, and repenting that he had been so enthusiastic an artist. And in the Fourth Form of Rookwood there was a plentiful lack of sympathy for Putty.

THE END. (Another splendid tale of Rookwood School next Monday.)

THE SCOUTS' POW-WOW CORNER. By "Scoutmaster."

Every scout ought to be able to find his way anywhere, and every scout ought to be able to point to the north under any circumstances—but can they?

It's no use mending a puncture in a bike tyre when there are several other holes in your tube; and, likewise, it's no use learning one method of finding the north, and being satisfied with that, and not looking for other ways.

By that I mean, what's the use of knowing how to tell where the North Pole is by means of the sun when there "ain't no sun"? The only way to be really certain of finding your way at any time, and all times, is to learn every method you possibly can. And there are many methods. Firstly, the simplest. Of course, every Scout knows the sixteen chief points of the compass, and the fact that at 12 noon the sun is due south. If a scout stands with his back direct

to the sun at 12 o'clock and observes his shadow, the head will be pointing due north, and the feet due south. If now he raises his hands parallel to the ground, their shadows will point due east and west.

That's all very well. But supposing you "find yourself lost" at 2 o'clock in the morning? It's rather a long wait until noon to re-find yourself. It is then the time to turn to the stars for your guidance.

The earth's movement makes the stars appear to circle over us, but, of course, as we all know, it is the world that is turning round under them. For this reason there are only particular stars on which the scout, unless he is a studied star-man, can rely.

The "Plough" or "Great Bear" are the easiest ones to find, and the most useful to know, because in the northern part of the world it shows him exactly where the north is. The "Plough" consists of seven bright stars, four of which are in a slight curve, and from one end of it, by tracing the line, you go to make a square. The farthest two from the curve are known as the "Pointers," because they point direct to a bright star known as the North or Pole Star. The Pole Star is at the end of a group of stars known as the "Little

Bear," and resembles, in appearance, something of the shape of a kilo on a string. The end of the string is the Pole Star, to which the Pointer is indicating.

All the stars appear to move round, but the Pole Star does not change its relative position with the earth. The sky may well be compared to a umbrella over you which revolves round. The Pole Star is where the stick goes through the centre of it.

If you have an illuminated compass, and know how to use it, you need not worry about the stars; but it's as well to know this method, because compasses sometimes have a nasty knack of failing, and it is an extraordinary fact that, left alone in the dark, no human being can walk in a direct straight line. However careful you may be, you will find yourself walking off to the left, and after an hour or two's walking you will find yourself back in exactly the same spot that you started from.

Always get into the habit of noting which way the wind is blowing, and when walking on a compass-bearing journey in a strange country, always note all landmarks, etc., and at occasional intervals glance behind you, so that should you be on the wrong track you will be able to recognise the country over which you must retrace

your footsteps. To the average person, all strange country is very similar, but to the trained scout who keeps his eyes open even a quaintly-twisted twig lying on the ground may be as sure and certain a guide as any signpost.

Another tip in going over strange country. In passing through woods an effective trail can be made by "blazing" the trees—that is, chip a piece out of the bark of occasional trees, or even to snap an occasional bush.

Now for a few words about finding direction by the sun. At 6 o'clock the sun is due east, at 9 o'clock it is south-east, at noon, south, at 3 o'clock in the afternoon it is south-west, and at 6 o'clock it is due west.

But one doesn't want to spend one's day watching for the hands of the watch to denote one of the above times. Here is a method of finding the south at any time of day.

Hold your watch flat, face upwards, so that the sun shines on it. Point the hour hand at the sun. Now note where the figure "XII" is pointing, and place a stick so that it passes over the centre of the dial and midway between the hour hand and the figure XII, and that stick will be pointing true south.

I am always on the look-out for new and quicker methods of finding the elusive north, and only the other day one of my boys came up to me and said he had learnt a very simple and rapid method of ascertaining the points of the compass with a watch.

Eager to learn, I produced my watch, and, on his instructions, held it dangling by the chain. "Now," he said, "swing it round three times quickly, and then let go of it, and it's sure to go 'west'!"

Needless to say, I did not put his method to the test.

One word of warning about using a compass. Don't put too much trust in the compass, especially as it's a cheap one. Test it by one of the methods I have just described to you, and if it doesn't agree, you may rest assured that it is the compass that is unreliable, and not the method. Always keep your compass clear from any metal. The small compass-needle is magnetically charged with electricity, and, like the toy magnet, it will be attracted by certain metals. So before trying to find your direction by the compass, make certain that there is no metal near enough to attract the needle, and set you off in search of a north in an easterly direction.

A GRAND COMPLETE STORY OF THE BACKWOODS SCHOOL.



BUNKER HONK'S BARGAIN

A Grand Tale of Frank Richards & Co. of Cedar Creek. By MARTIN CLIFFORD.

The 1st Chapter. Too Thin.

"Sheer off!" growled Bob Lawless. Dry Billy Bowers blinked with a pathetic blink at Frank Richards & Co. The three chums had come out at the gates of Cedar Creek School, after morning lessons. It was a hot summer's day, and a walk beside the cool creek, in the shade of the cedars, was very pleasant. But the object that met their view on the creek-bank was not so pleasant, for Mr. William Bowers' best friend, if he had one, would not have said that he was a pleasant object to look at. The ruggedness of his ancient coat was only exceeded by that of his trousers, and the dilapidation of his boots was on a par with that of his Stetson hat. An empty pipe was in Mr. Bowers' mouth, turned downward. His rubicund face, adorned with a stubble of beard and whiskers, glowed with heat. Beads of perspiration were on his brow. "Gents—" said Mr. Bowers appealingly. Bob Lawless raised his hand. "Sheer off!" he repeated. "But—" The rancher's son made a movement with his boot, and Dry Billy hastily receded a pace or two. "Let up, old man," he said. "Go easy with a pilgrim what's down on his luck!" "They let you out of chokey too soon," remarked Frank Richards sympathetically. Mr. Bowers grinned faintly. The loafer of the Red Dog at Thompson was certainly down on his luck, and his hard luck had led him within the gates of the county prison, where he had remained some time, not long enough, in Bob Lawless' opinion. The greater part of Mr. Bowers' existence seemed to be spent in leaning against the Red Dog saloon in Main Street at Thompson, waiting for any stray drinks that might come his way. But for the hard necessity of eating as well as drinking, Dry Billy would probably never have detached himself from the Red Dog at all. "What are you hanging about Cedar Creek for?" asked Vere Beauclerc. "You've no business along here." "I guess—" Mr. Bowers paused. His dirty hand had slid into a ragged pocket, as if in search of something, but he appeared to hesitate, blinking very doubtfully at the chums of the Backwoods school. "Well?" said Frank Richards. "If you've got anything to say, say it, and vamoose the ranch!" said Bob Lawless. "I guess I want to do a trade—" "What?" Mr. Bowers seemed to make up his mind at last. He drew his hand forth from his rags, and there was a glimmer of gold in the sunshine. In the loafer's unwashed palm lay a golden nugget—about the size of a duck's egg—and to judge by appearances, nearly solid gold. The schoolboys stared at it. "My hat," exclaimed Frank Richards. "Whore did you get that?" "I've been fossicking up the Thompson River—" "More likely robbing the placer miner's cradles over night," grunted Bob Lawless. "I guess—" "Why, that nugget must be worth two hundred dollars, at least," exclaimed Beauclerc. "All that and more, sir," said Billy Bowers eagerly. "But I guess I'm willing to part with it cheap."

son, galoots'll be suspicious. They'll spie that I never dug this nugget up with my own hands; they'll reckon I've been nosing into the cradles on the creek. Give a dog a bad name, you know. Because I've had bad luck oose—" "How much do you want for it?" asked Bob Lawless. "I'll part with it for twenty dollars," said Mr. Bowers. "Bob," exclaimed Frank Richards, "you can't buy it of him, you ass! Ten to one he has stolen it." "Gents, I swear—" "Oh, he hasn't stolen it!" said Bob. "It's his right enough!" "How the thump do you know?" Bob Lawless laughed. "You've been a good time in British Columbia now, Franky," he answered, "but you've still some things to learn, I guess. This is an old game, and I reckon Dry Billy only half-expected to fool us with it. That nugget's worth about seventy-five cents." "What? It's gold!" "Gold rats!" answered Bob Lawless. "It's a chunk of salted quartz." "Salted!" ejaculated Beauclerc. "You bet!" Mr. Bowers hastily replaced his valuable nugget in his rags. His hesitation in producing it was explained now. He had never more than half-hoped to deceive so keen a youth as Bob Lawless with that very ancient trick. Many a time had Mr. William Bowers taken in some unsuspecting tenderfoot with such a valuable nugget—a chunk of quartz "blown" with bronze-dust, and remarkably like a golden nugget to the uninitiated eye. "You awful rascal!" exclaimed Frank Richards indignantly. "So you were trying to swindle us?" Dry Billy grinned feebly. "He reckoned it wouldn't work," he said dejectedly. "You young gents have got your eye-teeth in, you have. There ain't no luck for me. I guess I shall have to pull up stakes and mosey out of this hyer valley. I've had no luck since I came into Canada." "And the sooner you quit the better," exclaimed Bob Lawless. "Give him a ducking!" Mr. Bowers jumped away in alarm. The creek was handy, and there was no doubt that a bath in the glistening waters would have done Dry Billy good. But Mr. Bowers had a strong objection to water, taken either within or without. "Hyer, let up!" he exclaimed in alarm. "Oh, Jerusalem!" "Oh, Jerusalem!" The loafer started to run as Frank Richards & Co. advanced upon him. He caught his foot in a trailing root and sprawled into the thick grass of the bank, howling. "Let up—let up! Help! Oh gum! Let up!" "Ha, ha, ha!" Frank Richards & Co. walked on, leaving Mr. Bowers sprawling breathlessly in the grass. Dry Billy sat up, gasping for breath, and blinked after them. The nugget had dropped from his rags, and Dry Billy picked it up and contemplated it ruefully. That slum nugget was his last hope of obtaining the wherewithal to quench his thirst. True, he could have quenched it in the rippling creek, but that was not the kind of quenching that Mr. Bowers wanted for his particular thirst. Mr. Bowers groaned dismally. Ill-luck had led his steps in the direction of the Thompson Valley. In the hard-working land of Western Canada there seemed no room for a hapless "hobo," whose only desire was to dodge work of any kind. Mr. Bowers felt that he was a very hard-used individual, and he would have started "on tram," again that very minute if he could have tramped on

anybody else's legs. But his own were too lazy. So he sat with his back to a tree and ruminated upon the severity of Fate till he was interrupted by a sharp, nasal voice hailing him. "Hallo, hobo!"

The 2nd Chapter. A Big Bargain.

Dry Billy Bowers looked up quickly. A slim youth, with a thin face and a nose strongly reminiscent of a knife-blade, stood before him. The youth had come from the direction of the backwoods school, and evidently belonged to Cedar Creek; but he was a stranger to the eyes of Mr. William Bowers. Dry Billy guessed that he was a new boy in the school, and belonged to some newly-settled family in the section. And it did not need a second glance to tell him that the youth came from the other side of the "Line"—the United States border.

"Hallo!" said Mr. Bowers morosely. "Who're you callin' a hobo? Who are you, anyway?" "I guess I'm Bunker H. Honk, when I'm at home," answered the youth. "B. H. Honk, from Chicago. What are you doing with that nugget?"

It was the sight of the gleaming yellow nugget that had caused Bunker H. Honk to stop. His sharp, narrow eyes glittered greedily as he looked at it. Dry Billy's unwashed fingers closed over the nugget. "I guess that's no business of yours!" he answered, eyeing the Chicago youth very keenly. It occurred to Mr. Bowers that this was the tenderfoot he wanted.

and it did not even cross his mind that the nugget was not genuine gold. The loafer's apparent unwillingness to show it would have convinced him of that if he had doubted it. "By gum," said Honk, "this is a real cinch! Don't say this is yours, my pippin. I know you've bagged it. How much do you want for it?" "Three hundred dollars!" said Mr. Bowers.

Bunker Honk laughed. "I guess that's about what it would fetch at Mr. Isaac's office in Thompson," he remarked. "That's where I'm goin' to take it to sell it," said Mr. Bowers. Bunker Honk winked. "Come off!" he said. "You wouldn't dare take this nugget to Mr. Isaac. He would hold you there, and send a message to the sheriff, and you'd find yourself in the calaboose. Stolen nuggets are sold cheap, I guess. How much? Guess again!"

Mr. Bowers with a great effort repressed his inclination to indulge in a gleeful chuckle. "You willing to buy?" he asked. "At my price—yep!" "To let you into the secret," said Mr. Bowers in a hoarse whisper, "I never dug that nugget up myself. I—found it."

Bunker Honk nodded. "I know that," he said, "and I can guess where you found it—in a miner's cabin, or stuck in a cradle on the creek. You wouldn't dare to let it be seen in Thompson. Now, then, are you selling this nugget for five dollars?" "Twenty-five!" said Dry Billy. "It's worth two or three hundred." "Never mind what it's worth;

"Twelve and a half, and not a cent more, or I go to the sheriff—" "You're hard on a poor man, sir!" whined Mr. Bowers. "I don't want to see any old sheriff, as you know." "I guess I do!" chuckled Bunker Honk. "But I guess you'll see him fast enough if you don't trade with me."

"Done for twelve-fifty, then!" said Mr. Bowers, apparently in a state of great dejection. His dejection was not very deep. As the nugget was worth nothing at all, twelve and a half dollars was not really cheap, and Mr. Bowers could always replace the valuable article at a cost of fifty cents or so. Honk's eyes glistened with satisfaction. "It's a trade!" he said. "I guess I haven't the money about me, but you can trust me—" "The old dog Trust is dead!" answered Mr. Bowers facetiously. "He was starved out, I reckon!" "Five dollars down!" said Honk, groping in his pockets. "I'll borrow the rest at the school, and come along hyer and square later. How's that?" "Good!"

"Hand over the nugget." "When you hand over the rocks!" said Mr. Bowers, with a nod. Bunker Honk breathed hard. He was almost trembling with eagerness to become the possessor of that valuable nugget, but his financial resources were limited. Twelve dollars fifty cents was beyond their compass. "I'll wait for you here," said Mr. Bowers blandly. "You raise the blind, and the jackpot's yours. But money talks, you know." "I guess—" "Them's the terms," said Mr. Bowers in a tone of finality. "You're getting this hyer nugget for twelve dollars fifty, and you know it's worth three hundred dollars. I reckon you can sell it without being suspected of pinching it, and I can't. You're making a big bargain, young honk. Not a cent less than twelve-fifty, spot cash. That goes!"

"If I go to the sheriff—" began Honk threateningly. "I guess I'd rather whiz it into the creek than put it with it for nixes!" said Mr. Bowers. "I say, don't you do anything of the sort," exclaimed Bunker Honk, in alarm. "You wait for me hyer, and I'll get back before afternoon school. I'll manage it somehow, I guess."

"Done!" cried Dry Billy. Bunker Honk turned and hurried away towards Cedar Creek School. Dry Billy Bowers stretched himself in the grass, winked at the blue sky overhead, and emitted a soft chuckle. The dry gentlemen felt that his luck had changed at last.



THE NEW BOY'S AUCTION SALE! Honk was mounted on a log, holding up a large silver watch for general inspection. "What offers, gents?" he said, as Frank Richards & Co. came up. "Real lever, solid silver, cost twenty-five dollars." "Gents, you mean!" interjected Chunky Todgers.

The 3rd Chapter. Raising the Wind.

"Hyer, you galoots!" That greeting fell upon the ears of Frank Richards & Co. as they came into the playground at Cedar Creek. Bunker H. Honk was waiting for them near the gates. He came up to the chums quickly, and they eyed him rather curiously. They were not on the best of terms with the youth from Chicago; but that fact seemed to be quite forgotten by B. H. Honk just now. "Well?" said Frank. "Can you lend me seven dollars?" "Eh?" "What?" "Seven dollars," said Honk. "My only hat!" exclaimed Frank. Bob Lawless chuckled, and Beauclerc smiled. The last, young Honk had spoken to them what a one-horse country Canada was in comparison with his native State. And the reply of the Co. had been more forcible than polite. But little trifles like that, evidently, did not matter to Bunker H. Honk.

"I guess I'm in line for a big bargain," Honk explained; "but I'm hung up for sundulices. I want seven dollars." "I guess you'll have to wait!" remarked Bob Lawless. "I'll square to-morrow," said Honk. "To-morrow I reckon I shall be rolling in durocks. In fact, I'm open to let you have eight buck for your seven. Got that?" Frank laughed. "You can keep your eight dollars," he said. "Nothing doing!" "I guess I want—" "Rats!"

The chums walked on towards the lumber school house; it was close on dinner-time for the fellows who dined at the school. Honk hurried after them. "How much can you lend me?" he exclaimed.

Not that Bunker Honk would have answered willingly to the description of "tenderfoot." In Bunker Honk's own opinion, he was a very smart youth, and he was "cold business" from the word "go," as he would have put it; and he was all there, and he had his eye-teeth out, and he would have declared with the greatest confidence that a galoot would have needed to get up very early in the morning to pull the wool over his eyes. But, with all his sharpness and his smartness and his spryness, Bunker Honk was not in reality the bright youth he supposed himself to be, as the astute Billy Bowers read at a glance. The loafer made a motion of concealing the nugget in his rags. Bunker Honk's eyes snapped. "Let's see it!" he said. "You mind your own business!" said Mr. Bowers. "That there nugget's mine, ain't it?" "I guess you've stolen it!" answered Honk. "Don't tell me you're a prospector. I guess I know a hobo when I see one. Whom have you been robbing of that there nugget?" "I guess—" "Own up!" said Honk. "You've bagged it from one of the miner's claims on the creek, I guess." "Look hyer—" "Let's see it!" repeated Bunker Honk, and he held out a bony hand. Mr. Bowers hesitated a few moments in order to make Master Honk all the keener, and then handed up the nugget. Honk's hand trembled with eagerness as he received it. Sharp as he was, Bunker Honk knew nothing about "salted" quartz,

'tain't worth that to you. I might go to seven dollars." "I might go down to twenty!" said Mr. Bowers thoughtfully. "Look hyer, I'll be generous with you," said Bunker Honk. "I'll give you ten dollars for this nugget." "No trade." "I guess—" "Can't be did! I'm taking not a continental red cent less'n twenty dollars for that nugget," said Dry Billy Bowers positively. And, with a sudden snatch, he repossessed himself of the valuable article, and it disappeared into his rags.

"Look hyer—" began Honk angrily. "Make it twenty." "I guess it can't be done. I'll give you ten dollars—" "Shoo!" "Say twelve—" "Shoo!" repeated Mr. Bowers scornfully. Bunker Honk's narrow eyes glittered. "Then I guess I'll drop in on the sheriff at Thompson, and mention to him that a ragged hobo hyer has got a three-hundred-dollar nugget in his clothes," he said. "You wouldn't give me away?" gasped Mr. Bowers. "I guess I will if you don't trade!" said Bunker Honk coolly. "I'm making you a generous offer, seeing that the nugget ain't yours." Mr. Bowers paused. "Make it fifteen dollars, and it's a trade," he said. "Twelve and a half!" "Fifteen!"

"Nix!" said Bob.
 "But I keep on telling you—"
 "My dear chap, I can lend you a dollar, if you like," said Frank Richards, relenting. "That's the limit."

"Oh gum!" said Bunker Honk. "Well, I reckon a dollar is better'n nothin'. Shell out!"
 Frank Richards handed over the dollar, a proceeding that elicited a snort from Bob. The raucous son did not place much faith in Bunker H. Honk, and he doubted very much whether Frank would ever see his dollar again.

"Now, you galoots—" said Honk persistently.
 "Go and chop chips!" said Bob Lawless gruffly.

And the chums went into the school-house, leaving Honk still six dollars short of the sum required.

The youth from Illinois wrinkled his brows thoughtfully.
 It was absolutely necessary to raise the wind before afternoon school, if he was to make sure of the nugget—and Bunker Honk was determined not to let that golden chance pass him by.

Making three hundred dollars or so in return for twelve and a half was a business deal that appealed to him irresistibly. By hook or by crook, that twelve-fifty had to be raised.

Bunker Honk had already made a borrowing round in the backwoods school, but without any success.

Dollars were not common among the Cedar Creek fellows, naturally; and those who had any dollars did not seem inclined to hand them over into Bunker Honk's keeping.

Chunky Todgers had told him to go and chop chips, which did not matter very much, as Chunky never had any money. But the other fellows, though more polite, were equally unproductive of cash.

It was really a painful position for an acute business man who was in a hurry to get rich.

No doubt the cash would have been forthcoming if Honk had stated what it was for; but that he was careful not to do. He did not want any fellow to know that a three-hundred-dollar nugget was to be had for the trifling sum of twelve dollars and a half.

Such information would, Honk expected, bring rivals into the field, and some unscrupulous competitor might raise the offer to fifteen or twenty dollars, and bag the prize from Mr. Bowers. That was a risk Bunker Honk did not intend to run.

As a matter of fact, there were few fellows at Cedar Creek who could not have told Bunker Honk that he was being taken in, if he had confided the circumstances to them. But the keen youth from over the "Line" was happily unaware of that.

"I guess I've got to raise the dollars," murmured Bunker Honk. "I'm not going to let a chance like this pass me!"

"Hallo! Can't you hear the bell?" called out Chunky Todgers.

It was the bell for dinner, and Bunker Honk gave a grunt and followed the crowd into the dining-room.

He hardly noticed what he ate; his thoughts were all on the wonderful bargain that was within his grasp, if only the necessary dollars were raised in time.

That was the problem he had to solve, and he bent all his intellectual powers upon it.

After dinner he joined Frank Richards & Co. as they came out of the lumber school.

"Hold on a bit, you galoots!" he said. "I guess I want—"
 "Oh, travel off!" interrupted Bob Lawless. "You're too numerous, Honk. There's too much of you!"

"I guess I'm on to a good thing," said Honk, unheeding. "I can't give you the details, or you'd try to cut me out. But I can tell you, that if I raise the wind to-day, I shall be thick with durocks to-morrow. Now—"

"Somebody selling you a pup?" asked Frank Richards, laughing.

"Never mind what it is, but I'm in a line for a real cinch. I guess I want six dollars—"

"Whistle for them!" said Bob Lawless; and he drew his chums away. He had had enough of Bunker Hill Honk.

Bunker Honk gave an angry and scornful sniff.

He was tempted to confide to the chums the real circumstances of the case, in order to induce them to "shell out"; but he refrained. He was haunted by the fear of being over-bid for Dry Billy's nugget. It did not seem to occur to Master Honk that, believing as he did that the nugget had been stolen, he had no right to buy it at all, and that

the receiver was as bad as the thief. Trifles of that kind did not seem to matter much to this exceedingly business-like youth.

"Silly mugwumps!" he growled. "I guess they'll open their eyes to-morrow, after I've sold that nugget and they see me lined with dollars! But what am I goin' to do for the spoolin'ness now?"

And he returned to his problem. Frank Richards & Co. had gone over to Mr. Slimmey's cabin to chop wood for the young master. When they came back into the playground they found a peculiar scene going on.

A crowd of the Cedar Creek fellows had gathered round Bunker H. Honk in the middle of the playground under the cedar-tree. Honk was mounted upon a log.

He was holding up a large silver watch to general inspection.

"What offers, gents?" he was saying, as Frank Richards & Co. came up. "Real lever—solid silver—best make in Chicago—cost twenty-five dollars—"

"Gents, you mean!" interjected Chunky Todgers.

"Ha, ha, ha!" repeated Honk. "Look at it for yourselves. Warranted to keep splendid time. What offers?"

Bob Lawless chuckled. "It's an auction," he remarked. "I guess I'll make an offer."

Honk caught the words, and turned quickly towards the chums.

"What offers?" he called out. "One cent!"

"One cent!" repeated Bob. "Is it a go?"

"You silly jay!" hooted Bunker Honk. "I'm not here for funny business! Now, gentlemen, what offers for this splendid watch?"

"Two cents!" said Frank Richards, laughing.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "Three!" chuckled Tom Lawrence. "Four!" roared Chunky Todgers. "Five!"

"Six!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter; the expression on Bunker Honk's face was anything but pleasing.

"You jays!" he howled. "You've got to make your bids in dollars—not in cents!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" "This watch cost twenty-five dollars, spot cash! Now, what offers for this really splendid watch?" said Honk persuasively.

Eben Hacke came through the grinning crowd, and examined the watch. Hacke was a fellow-countryman of Honk's, and he also had an eye to business.

"I guess I'll give you two dollars," said Hacke.

"Make it ten!" "Well, three!" "Look, hyer," said Bunker Honk desperately. "I'm in want of six dollars, and I'll bet the pesky watch go for that! Is it a trade?"

Hacke examined the watch again very attentively. It was worth about fourteen dollars, so Ebenzer felt that he could safely go to six. He nodded at last.

"Six dollars goes!" he said. Honk cast a last glance round. "Any advance on six dollars?" he asked.

There was no reply. Evidently nobody was going to make an advance on Eben Hacke's offer.

"Waal, it's yours," said Honk, with a sigh. "You're getting a big bargain in that watch, Hacke. I reckon I'll buy it back to-morrow for seven."

Hacke took the watch. "I reckon you won't," he answered coolly. "If you want this watch again, you'll have to spring twelve dollars for it! Here's your money."

Eben Hacke counted out the six dollars into Bunker Honk's palm, and the watch disappeared into his pocket. He walked away with a grin of satisfaction, which was not wholly shared by the seller. However, Bunker Honk comforted himself with the reflection that when he had disposed of the nugget he would be able to buy a gold watch if he liked.

Honk started for the gates as the school bell began to ring. Frank Richards shouted after him: "School, Honk! Where are you going?"

"I guess I can't come in now!" called back Honk.

"But Miss Meadows—" Honk did not stay to listen. He quickened his pace, and disappeared out of the gates as the Cedar Creek crowd streamed into the school-house. He had to keep his appointment with Dry Billy Bowers, and secure that valuable nugget—which was a much more important matter than lessons, in B. H. Honk's opinion.

The 4th Chapter.

Mr. Isaacs Misunderstands!

Miss Meadows frowned when the new boy came into the school-room at last.

Bunker Honk was more than half an hour late for lessons.

Indeed, it was only by a great effort that Honk had come to lessons at all that afternoon. He was sorely tempted to cut school and start for Thompson at once to dispose of his prize.

For the golden nugget was now in his possession. He had found Mr. Bowers by the creek, waiting for him. He had handed over the twelve dollars fifty cents in exchange for the nugget, and Mr. Bowers had delivered it up, with many lamentations over the tremendous bargain Honk was getting. And when Honk had departed with his prize, Mr. Bowers winked once more expressively, and scudded away towards Thompson.

Mr. Bowers had twelve and a half dollars in his possession—and a thirst that was not to be equalled by any other thirst between the Rocky Mountains and the Pacific. The Red Dog was sure of an excellent customer that afternoon.

Bunker Honk was feeling as happy and satisfied as Mr. Bowers as he returned to Cedar Creek with the nugget in an inside pocket. Miss Meadows' voice rapped sharply on his ears as he came into the school-room.

"Honk! You are late!" "Yep! I—I—I guess I didn't hear the bell, marm," said Honk; his reply showing that he had not been brought up on the same lines as his late lamented countryman, G. Washington.

"You may go to your place, Honk. If you are so unpunctual again, I shall cane you!"

"Yes, marm."

Bunker Honk went to his place. A good many of the Cedar Creek fellows glanced at him curiously.

There was a beatific smile upon Honk's hard, keen face, which showed what a happy state of satisfaction he was in.

His proceedings that day had caused some remark, and the fellows wondered what had kept him so long away from lessons, and caused him to return in such an exalted mood.

Evidently matters were going well with B. H. Honk—or he thought they were!

Honk found it difficult to keep his attention on lessons that afternoon. The golden nugget seemed to be burning a hole in his pocket.

He was anxious to get to the assayer's office in Thompson, and get his nugget valued—and sold!

He had decided to ask three hundred dollars for it; but he was prepared to take two hundred, for the sake of ready cash. With that sum in ready money in his possession, no doubt he would be able to make more bargains, and give his wonderful business abilities full scope. Honk was dreaming golden dreams as he sat in class that afternoon.

Miss Meadows reprimanded him several times for inattention; but Honk really couldn't help it! How was a fellow to put his thoughts into history and geography when he had a gold nugget in his pocket? It really was not to be expected!

He was glad when lessons were over and he was able to escape. He joined Frank Richards & Co. as they led their horses out.

"Lend me your horse, Richards!" he said.

"I've got to get to Thompson quick," explained Honk. "Mr. Isaacs will be closed if I don't hurry! Jest lend me your gee—"

Frank Richards said: "I certainly sha'n't lend you my horse," he said. "But we're going home through Thompson, and I'll give you a lift if you're in a hurry. My horse can carry double."

"O. K.," said Honk. He mounted behind Frank Richards, and they started up the trail for Thompson. Frank had to call at the "Thompson Press" office, and his chums rode with him to keep him company. Honk's addition to the party was not very welcome, but Bunker Honk did not mind that. His cheerfulness overflowed as they trotted up Main Street at Thompson.

"Stop at Mr. Isaacs' office," he said. "I guess I'm going to do a trade with old Isaacs."

"Here you are!" said Frank. Bunker Honk slipped from the horse's back outside the frame-built office of Mr. Isaacs.

The office was still open, and Mr. Isaacs' clerk could be seen within, busy killing mosquitoes with a news-paper.

"You galoots wait for me," said Honk. "I guess I've got some news for you that will make your hair curl. I'm going in there for dollars, I reckon."

And he chuckled gleefully. "Going to Mr. Isaacs for dollars!" said Beaulacque, puzzled.

"I don't quite see," said Frank. "I've got something to sell that galoot!" explained Honk. "Isaac buys gold from the miners, you know, and I guess he will open his eyes when he sees what I've got for him. Some!"

"But you haven't any gold to sell, I suppose?" exclaimed Frank.

"That's where you miss your guess, bub. I reckon I've got a nugget that will make Mr. Isaacs at it and take notice!" grinned Honk. "You wait for me, and I'll tell you how many dollars I get."

And with an airy wave of the hand the youth from Illinois walked into Mr. Isaacs' office.

Frank Richards & Co. stared at one another.

"He's got a—a nugget!" ejaculated Frank. "Is it possible that—that—"

Bob Lawless burst into a roar. "Ha, ha, ha! Dry Billy's nugget!"

"Could he be such an ass!" ejaculated Frank.

Bob chortled gleefully. "That's why he was raising the wind!" he yelled. "Ha, ha, ha! That's his old business from the word 'Go!' as he calls it. He's bought Dry Billy's nugget. He's sold his watch and bought a salted nugget!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

The chums of Cedar Creek waited for Bunker Honk to come out. They were very anxious now to learn the result of the transaction.

Mr. Isaacs, who was an expert in such things, would no doubt have

bought a nugget from anybody—a real nugget! But a single glance would be enough for Mr. Isaacs in regard to Dry Billy's nugget. If that was the great bargain Bunker H. Honk had made, undoubtedly there was a surprise in store for him.

"Hallo, here he comes!" ejaculated Bob suddenly.

The door of the office swung open. Bunker Honk reappeared. He did not come alone.

A fat gentleman with an aquiline nose had Bunker Honk by the collar, and was forcibly conducting him to the street.

Bunker Honk yelled. "Let up! Leggo! I tell you I was took in—yeroooh! I never knew—I didn't guess—Yoooop!"

Frank Richards & Co. looked on breathlessly.

Mr. Isaacs' fat face was pink with wrath, and he paid no heed whatever to Honk's diabolical howls.

But Mr. Isaacs' boot landed on B. H. Honk, and B. H. Honk shot across the sidewalk as if he had been propelled from a catapult.

He landed on his hands and knees, with a loud yell.

"Yaroooop!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

Mr. Isaacs turned back into his office and shut the door. He had finished with Bunker H. Honk.

Frank Richards ran forward to help the hapless youth to his feet. Honk staggered up with Frank's help, gasping for breath, and he blinked dizzily at the grinning trio.

"Waal, I never!" he gasped.

"I guess this ain't a funny business," groaned Bunker Honk. "I've been took in—me, you know—B. H. Honk, of Chicago! Me! That darned hobo's sold me a pup—planted a salted nugget on me, by hokey! Me, you know—B. H. Honk! Pulled the wool over my eyes—B. H. Honk's eyes! Jever hear of such a catch? I gave twelve and a half dollars for that there nugget, and it ain't worth more'n that in cents! Oh, Jerusalem!"

Bunker Honk gave a deep groan. "Oh dear!" gasped Frank, wiping away his tears. "Oh, my hat! But what did Isaacs—"

"Yow-ow!" The old galoot thought I was trying to spoof him with a bogus nugget!" groaned Honk. "I told him it was gold, you know. I thought it was gold, didn't I, or I shouldn't have bought it for hard dollars, I reckon. Oh gum! And the pesky old scallywag told me it was bogus, and led me I was trying to swindle him—"

"Oh dear!"

"And he collared me, and rushed me out, and kicked me!" groaned Honk. "Kicked me out, by hokey! Thought I was trying to swindle him with a spoof nugget—ow!"

"Ha, ha, ha!"

Frank Richards & Co. howled with merriment. Bunker H. Honk seemed to see nothing come in the affair. He groaned again and limped away, looking like a fellow who found life hardly worth living. But as they rode homeward Frank Richards & Co. chuckled loud and long over Bunker Honk's Bargain.

THE END.

(Another exciting story of Frank Richards & Co. next Monday.)

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THE GOLDEN TRAIL

A THRILLING TALE OF MYSTERY AND ADVENTURE.

By SIDNEY DREW.

NEW READERS BEGIN HERE.

JOHN GARVERY, deceased, has left a most extraordinary will, the terms of which are that the nephew who proves himself to be the most resourceful and persevering shall inherit his fortune amounting to over a million pounds. Various clues have been hidden in different parts of the globe, and the two nephews, **RICHARD ARCHGRAY** and **BENNET GARVERY**, are each given five hundred pounds to set them on their travels. Eight months is allowed from the day of starting to collect all the clues together. The successful nephew is to inherit the fortune.

JACK DARBY, an ex-officer of the British Army, is the affianced husband of **CHERRY**, **RICHARD ARCHGRAY**'s sister, and he offers to accompany **Dick** on his quest.

TIM HORRIDGE and **SANDY NOAKES**, two of Jack's retainers in his Army days, **CLIFF TORVEY**, a rascally bookmaker, who has **Bennet Garvery** in his power. He finances **Bennet's** party on the condition that he takes a half-share in the fortune, and also enlists the services of a Greek aviator, named **DAVRI ARCHIELOS**. The second clue is to be found at **Siswah**, in **Egypt**, by the **Well of a Thousand Perils**, and after an exciting race between the rival parties, **Dick** is successful in finding it.

At **Cairo**, **Torvey** attempts to secure the clue, but fails. At **Suez** **Dick's** party embark on an old tramp steamer for **Colombo**, whence they set off for the **Island of Matalara**. They discover the **Cave of Blue Sunlight**, the hiding-place of the third clue. In the meantime, **Bennet Garvery** and his crew of scoundrels have arrived off the island in a yacht, having followed **Dick** and **Jack** from **Colombo**. During their search of the **Cave of Blue Sunlight** our two young heroes discover the third clue.

(Now read on.)

An Unexpected Call.

Dick read the third clue aloud, and **Jack** nodded.

"Slightly better," he said. "That sounds like **Merry England**, though it may be **Ireland**, **Scotland**, or **Wales**. Your mate had some queer pals. **Dick** derishes, **pearl-fishers**, and **eel-catchers**. And **Loulands** may mean any old place. A friend of mine in **Essex** calls his house **Loulands**, but I don't remember any eel-beds in the neighbourhood. And I never saw a white bilbrush, my son—did you?"

"Only brown ones," said **Dick**. "If **Loulands** is just the name of a house like your friend's, it may take more finding than the **Well of a Thousand Perils** and the **Cave of the Blue Sunlight**. It sounds English, and that's a bit of good news. **Drace** sounds English, too."

"I once knowed a feller of that name," growled **Sandy Noakes**. "A mean rogan he was, too, and a plumbler by trade. He owed me seven bob, and I never got it. Instead of paying me like an honest man, he goes and gets run over by a motor-car. He deserved shooting at dawn, he did!"

"I expect he'd have paid if he hadn't got run over," said **Tim**. "And, beside, it might have been fifteen bob, **Growler**. Looking at it that way, you're right bob to the good, so what have you got to grouse about? You puzzle me, you do, all the time."

"If you'll promise to get run over, I'll lend you thirty bob quick, and I won't come on your family for it, neither," said **Sandy Noakes**.

In the purple twilight, **Jack** took out his glasses and looked at the yacht. "Through the lenses she looked a beautiful thing of mother-of-pearl on a dull green sea. They were shaking out her sails. Grey-white smoke broke from her funnel, and she began to head up the channel, leaving a thin, milky wake behind her."

"Where are they off to?" asked **Dick**. "It's pretty certain they spotted us."

"The dago spotted us," said **Noakes**. "If you'd seen him dodge back to get out of sight you'd have known it, sir. What they're after beats me. In course, I do know what they're after; but what are they going to do, and how are they to get anything? Shoot 'em at dawn, I say."

"They want the bit of paper I've just put in my pocket," said **Jack**. "You and **Tim** know all about it now. Here, you'd better look at it and read it. The wisest man on earth can't tell what may happen in an hour. Pass it to **Horridge**, **Noakes**, when you've seen it."

When the paper came back to him **Jack** placed it in his breast-pocket.

There were wonderful in the air, for luckily the breeze was blowing towards the reefs, so that the outgoing boat of pearl oysters, that to see the lights of the yachts **Silver Cloud** were winking.

"She's anchored again, I notice," said **Noakes**. "That's some, for if I was her skipper I wouldn't be going round them islands in the dark, though there does seem to be plenty of deep water this side. I wonder what the bounders have got for supper. I hope it poisons 'em."

Dick laughed. **Sandy Noakes** had always a kind of dash for somebody or something. He was chery and gentle soul.

"If you see that as you don't happen to have looked in, old misery," said **Tim**. "Stop gassing, and let a fellow go to sleep." Again **Jack** took a look at the yacht. Something dark seemed to be sliding away behind her.

"Hallo! She's got a boat," he said. "It's heading this way, I think. Have a look, **Noakes**."

"No, she ain't," said **Noakes**. "If she keeps that course she'll half a mile farther up than this. **Sandy** again was right. The boat pulled in behind the moonlight. Some time later she appeared again. She had hoisted a sail, and was coming along close to the shore. She tacked, and **Sandy** gave a grunt. The moon had risen, and they saw that she had four men on her.

"They mean us no harm," said **Sandy**. "I hope it ain't the dago, for my feelings might get the better of me, and I might be rude to him, and nobody knows better than that cheerful idiot **Tim Horridge** that it ain't in my nature to be rude to nobody."

The sail went down, and neatly

the boat were last. **Archelos** was not there. "Look here, **Torvey**," said **Jack** bluntly. "What do you expect to gain by following us about? That's the question we've been asking ourselves, and now I'm putting it to you. You must be spending money like water. What do you hope to get back for it?"

"Pon my honour, I don't know, unless it's more money," said **Torvey**. "We are spending money—melting it. **Poor Ben** is down in the dumps about it, and does nothing but groan. I'm very fond of **Ben**, but, pon my honour, he's beginning to bore me. A fellow may be merry and bright, though he's unfortunate, and **Ben** is unfortunate. The Greek goddess reserves all her smiles for the youthful **Richard**. And you've struck lucky again, eh? You have again drawn the winning horse—what?"

"I don't want to be rude, **Mr. Torvey**," said **Jack**, "but we don't happen to be answering questions."

"But, by Jove, you asked me a question just now, and I answered it," said **Torvey**; "and, pon my honour, **Darby**, I answered it truthfully, but not hopefully. Now, can't something be done? Can't we wangle it? Won't you give the wretchedly unlucky **Ben** some share of the loot. Who's to know? We're not likely to tell that old goat of a lawyer that we've wangled it, or yell it out to the orphanage and hospital people, who are hungry for the old mariner's dough. A hundred thousand or two wouldn't hurt the youthful **Richard**, would it?"

"If I had the money I'd gladly give **Bennet** a share," said **Dick**, who bore no malice. "I'd rather like to wangle it, as you call it."

"Go easy, old son!" **Jack**.

camel. He was in a temper that night, but he was sorry after."

"I didn't notice that he shed many tears," said **Jack**, with sarcasm. "I have no doubt that **Bennet Garvery** is a most honourable person. **John Garvery's** millions are still a long way off. If **Dick** gets them they will be his to do what he likes with; but just now we'll have no wangling. May I offer you a glass of whisky, if our runaway interpreter hasn't stolen it?"

I watched that, sir," said **Sandy Noakes**, with a grin. "It ain't in my line to put temptation in the way of an innocent savage, even if he did pinch my toothbrush. I bid that whisky careful when the thieving little load wasn't looking. If he sees that toothbrush, I hope he'll swallow it and choke himself. Shooting at dawn—that's the stuff to give him!"

Sandy produced the bottle from behind a rock where he had camouflaged it from **Pudden's** thirsty eyes with a mass of seaweed. He poured out four measures in the drinking-cups, and tempered them slightly with the ice-cold water from the little fall.

"Well, here's to us, and may every thing be merry and bright and rosy!" said **Mr. Torvey**. "And don't think such things of poor **Ben**, **Mr. Darby**, for I give you my word, **Ben** is the soul of honour. He couldn't do it. **Ben** is my friend. He couldn't call him brilliant and brainy, though I say it in friendship. He's not brainy enough to be cunning. I wish you'd compromise for a few hundred thou. It would never be known."

Mr. Torvey was endeavouring to extract an admission from **Jack** or **Dick Archgray** that they were in possession of the third clue.

"There'll be no compromise of any kind," said **Jack**. "Don't waste any more of your money, that's my advice to you, **Mr. Torvey**. It's worth more in your pocket than all **John Garvery's** wealth, which is still in the clouds."

"Said, said! And it would be so easy, too!" said **Mr. Torvey**, forcing a sigh. "I shall have a fearful time with poor **Ben** when I tell him your decision. Will you come on board? I can give you a tune on the piano, a bottle of wine, and a game of cards after."

Jack declined the invitation with many thanks. He would have paid a handsome sum for a trip back to **Colombo** on the neat-looking little yacht, but not in such dangerous company as that of **Torvey**, **Bennet Garvery**, and **Davri Archiehos**.

"So long, then, my youthful **Richard!** So long, gentlemen?" said **Torvey**. "We are floored, but by sheer will-power I intend to keep myself up to par. Alas! for the wretched **Ben**, who will wilt and droop. Pon my honour, you are beastly rough on **Ben**. Good-night!"

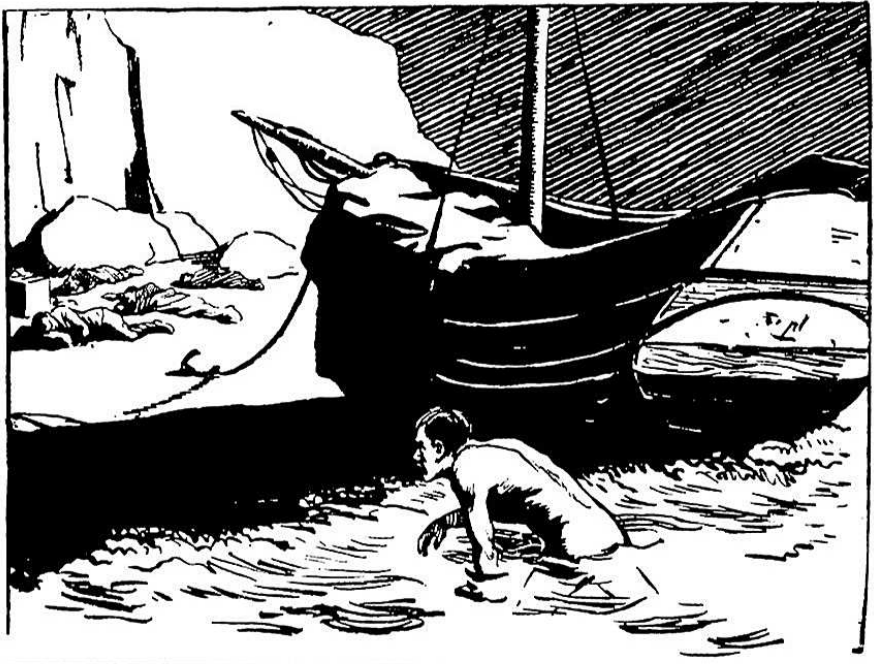
The oil made phosphorescent ripples on the water, and shining drops fell from the blades as the boat pulled away.

"There's such a thing as being deceived in this world mostly made up of thievery and deceit and cheerful idiots like **Tim**," said **Sandy Noakes**, "and so p'raps I'm mistook. There's a man short in that boat. When I see her afore I'd almost swear there was five men in her."

"Then they must have landed a man, **Sandy**," said **Dick**. "I thought I saw five men in her, but I may be wrong."

And a funny sort of place to land a man in the dark, too!" growled **Noakes**. "Wasn't you looking, **Tim**, or only mooning, as usual?"

Neither **Tim** nor **Jack Darby** had noticed a fifth person in the boat. If they had really put a man ashore in that desolate place, and at such an hour, it was a curious proceeding, and one difficult to understand.



FROM OUT THE DEEP! Out of the sea rose the head and naked shoulders of a man, **Davri Archiehos**, elbow-deep in the water, peered intently at the sleeping forms of **Dick** and **Jack Darby**.

"If it's lost, or gets into wrong hands, you two fellows will be able to swear that I had it," said **Jack**.

"Swearing ain't at all in my line for you," growled **Sandy Noakes**. "But I don't like the name **Drace**, that's wrote down there. You'll get nothing good out of any **Drace**, sir. It was a **Drace** that owed me that seven bob, and the mean wessel, sooner than pay, gets himself run over deliberate. The whole tribe of them **Draces** ought to be shot at dawn!"

"But this **Drace** ain't a plumber, he's an eel-catcher," said **Tim**, as if this change of occupation made a vast difference.

"And I'll bet he's a shmy rascal, and as wiggly as the eels," growled **Sandy**. "Very likely he's the plumber brother. There's two names that give me a dronemary's humn, **Drace** and **Horridge**. **Horridge** rhymes with porridge, and porridge is stuff I never could stick."

The shadow deepened, and the little water-fall made a cool, musical tinkling. It was the briefest of twilight, for the light suddenly went and a myriad of stars shone out,

huddle the boat glided in, and her nose touched the sand. Out sprang a gentleman in evening-dress, for on board the yacht they dined in state. It was **Mr. Christopher Torvey**. The cap rather spoiled his brilliant appearance, for caps do not go well with evening dress.

On the other hand, a tall hat or an opera-hat would look out of place in a boat. **Mr. Torvey** advanced smilingly in the moonlight, a cigar between his lips and a diamond ring sparkling on his hand.

"How are you, gentlemen?" cried **Mr. Torvey**. "Not such a great surprise, eh? For I suppose you know we were here. I couldn't persuade **Ben** to come. **Poor Ben** is a wretched sailor, eh? Pon my honour, the very sight of a small boat makes him turn pale. And how is my youthful friend **Richard**? **Merry** and bright, I trust. I have a bone to pick with you, **Richard**. Manners, dear boy, always consider good manners. I invited you to dinner in **Cairo**. Really, friend **Richard**, you might have left a note or a message. It quite pained me when I found you had flitted, for I'd ordered a red wood dinner."

Jack noted that the three men in

"You haven't got the money. Supposing you could wangle it, and did wangle it for a hundred thousand or two, let me point out to you what would happen, or, rather, might happen. There's a syllipiate of three here—**Mr. Torvey**, **Garvery**, and **Archelos**. Though I am not suggesting that **Mr. Torvey** would do such a thing, it might occur. We'll presume you were lucky enough to win these millions, **Dick**, and wangled **Bennet** a share, and just soon have him knocking at your door again asking for more. He'd threaten to inform the lawyer that you had come to an arrangement unless you disgorged more and more; and if you refused to disgorge more you'd lose the lot. A horrible suggestion to make, I know, **Mr. Torvey**, but it might turn out that way."

Mr. Torvey's hand went up to his little ginger moustache. "Pon my honour, it's wicked," he said. "Ben wouldn't do it, couldn't do it. He's a bit weak and a bit of a lout at times, but, by Jove, he has a heart of gold! He couldn't do any thing mean, unless he was in a fearful temper, and he's seldom in a temper. He's always regretting that he fired at the youthful **Richard's**

job at

it. Anyhow, I'll not have that on me."

Jack hid the third clue in a dry crevice on the cliff, and lay down after again trying to make out the yacht. In ten minutes he was asleep. The waves rippled in, breaking on the beach in little curves of liquid flame, and the waterfall tinkled in the silence. Then out of the sea rose the head and naked shoulders of a man. Leaning elbow deep in the water, he peered at the sleeping figures—Davri Archelos!

The Dope.

On the left of the little bay that Jack Darby had chosen for the camping-place the jutting cliff threw a dark shadow. Archelos guided across the sand, and stood there practically invisible against the black background of volcanic rock. His quick eyes moved from one slumbering form to another. All were perfectly quiet and motionless, except Dick Archgray. Dick moved restlessly, as if the memory of his startling adventures of the day still lingered with him in his dreams. Even Tim Horridge had forgotten to snore.

Except for a waistcloth, Archelos was naked. A small bag was slung over his shoulder. He opened it, and then stood rigid, as Dick muttered something inaudible and stirred again. The midnight invader from the sea seemed to think that the youngster was about to awaken. He had come on a risky and desperate errand that needed ample courage, not the courage of heroism, but the sort of courage a wild beast displays when out for prey.

His brain worked quickly, and so did his hands as he took a cylinder made of celluloid out of the bag. He licked his fingers, and stretched out one naked arm to make sure in which direction the faint, warm breeze was blowing. Then he tied a handkerchief that was saturated with salt water over his mouth and nostrils, and sank to his knees. Swiftly he unscrewed the nozzle of the cylinder. There was a low, hissing sound. A grey vapour spurted from the nozzle and drifted towards the sleepers, spreading and widening as it went. The gas seemed much heavier than the atmosphere, for it hung low, and assumed a density that almost hid the four sleepers. It had a faint, sickly smell. Davri Archelos tossed the exhausted cylinder into the sea, and waited until the hazy vapour slowly dissipated and vanished.

Jack Darby and his comrades had taken no precautions to shield themselves from the moonlight, for there were no foveas in that pleasant moon and no danger of catching Yellow Jack. A little cloud of fireflies dancing in the air in front of the waterfall suddenly disappeared as the fumes from the cylinder reached them. Archelos did not remove the handkerchief. He bent over Jack Darby. Jack was stretched out on his back, with his hands clasped under his neck. Archelos listened to his low breathing, and then ventured to push back one of his eyelids. Then he began his search, for Darby was drugged and unconscious.

He secured Jack's pocket-book, and examined all the papers it contained. He found the second clue, which Nal

Parja had given back to Darby, after comparing it with the document John Garvery had left in his keeping. Here was ample proof of what Archelos had already guessed—that the third clue had been found, but it was not in the pocket-book. There were letters there, Treasury notes, visiting-cards, and a four-leaved shamrock in a gold case Cherry had given her sweetheart for luck, and other scraps and oddsments a man's pocket-wallet usually contains, but not the important paper Davri Archelos had made his perilous swim in hopes of obtaining.

Perhaps the boy had it. Archelos pushed the wallet back into Jack Darby's pocket and stooped over Dick. Dick also had a wallet, but it did not contain the coveted clue. It had been hidden, the man thought. It was unlikely that either Horridge or Noakes were in possession of such a precious document.

There was another cylinder in the bag. If he had found the clue Archelos would have used the cylinder—a grey death that would have caused the sleepers to sleep the long sleep that knows no awakening. They might have lain there in that beautiful but solitary spot until their clothes had rotted and the sun had bleached their bones white, or until some storm had flooded the little bay and swept their bodies out to sea, leaving no trace of the black crime committed through the greed of gold. But without the clue murder was profitless.

Ten minutes later Davri Archelos waded back into the phosphorescent sea, cursing, and empty-handed. He struck out round the headland on the

low tide, swimming with the ease of a seal, till he reached the next bay. Then he climbed the cliff. His clothes were there. He dressed and gathered a heap of dry grass and brushwood, and put a lighted match to the heap.

The dry rubbish crackled and flamed up brightly. Archelos added more fuel, and then went up the low hill. The dense jungle was before him. After a last glance southwards over the sea he plunged into the jungle. Slowly the flames sank, and the fire died out.

For once in a way Mr. Sandy Noakes had just cause for thinking the world a dreary place, and for considering that it would do no harm if a certain number of its inhabitants were shot at dawn. He was a very sick man when he awoke, and he was the first to awaken. Black spots danced and gyrated in the air before his heavy eyes. There was a dull aching in his temples and a dry, nauseous taste in his mouth. He got up groggily, put his cupped hands under the waterfall, and drank greedily draughts of the deliciously cool water. When he turned round Tim Horridge was sitting up, yawning.

"Tim," said Noakes, with a grunt, "you'll be happy at last. I've gone and got it. You can lay me in my lonely grave and dance atop of me, as I expect you will. My number is up. I've caught the fever, and a mighty bad dose, too. I feel just awful."

"So do I," said Tim. "My poor old head is bustin'. I can see all

sorts of wiggly things snake and tadpoles and daddy-longlegs. And I might have been chewing bricks all night." Tim staggered to his feet. "Gone to the knees a bit, too," he added, brushing his hand over his eyes. "Get away, you beast! It's a tadpole, with five or six tails, and I don't like the beggar floating in front of me, and wagging all them tails at once. What's the matter with us, Sandy. We only had one drink of whisky, didn't we?"

"It's fever, jungle fever, that's what!" growled Noakes, with his happiest grin. "There ain't no cure for it. For a start you get a headache, and these 'ere tadpoles and centipedes and things. About an hour of that, and then you start with the shakes, and go raving mad, which won't be nothing fresh to you, for you've been mad all your life. Then you go to skin and grief, and die miserably, after all your teeth has fell out. What a world! Oh, my head! Somebody is walloping it with a 'ammer."

"Somebody's walloping mine with a crowbar!" sighed Tim, seizing a cup and making for the waterfall.

Tim drank, and then put his head under the fall to wash some of the pain out of it. Both men were sitting in dejected attitudes when Jack Darby opened his eyes. Jack felt as sick as either of them.

"It's fever, sir!" said Sandy. "Four little lonely graves is what it's going to be. I only hope I'd die first, for I don't want the trouble of burying Tim Horridge."

(More of "The Golden Trail" in Monday.)

HEALTH AND EXERCISE
"BE PREPARED!"

Conducted by PERCY LONGHURST.

(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!)

On Getting Taller.

Several correspondents have written me recently on the subject of increasing one's height. Well, it's a laudable ambition. Probably not one of us but at some time or other has had the wish, "that I were two or three inches taller."

It is not impossible for the height to be increased, even beyond the period when one is supposed to have "done growing." But it mustn't be forgotten that some individuals are naturally of moderate stature, while others couldn't help being tall if they tried. As a fact, height is a matter of the skeleton—the length of one's bones—and there is no known method of making one's bones grow, even by exercise.

There are exercises which tend to make one taller—all stretching exercises. In fact, have this effect—but a good deal of apparent shortness is due to the fact that so many persons don't hold themselves properly; they go about "all humped up." Did they keep themselves erect, they would find themselves a couple of inches taller than they seem. Amongst the exercises I have referred to, the following are the best:

1. Stand erect, feet together, and shoot the right arm straight above the head; now rise high on the toes and try to shove your finger-tips nearer to the ceiling. Hold the position a few seconds, then go through the same operation with the left hand. Repeat this many times.

2. Stand as before and raise both arms above head. Then bend over backwards as far as possible without losing balance and topping on the back of the head. It is a good plan to stand with the thighs against the edge of a table. Rise on toes, as in No. 1. Hold position, then come slowly forward, and try to touch the toes, stretching the arms for all they are worth. Repeat several times.

3. Stand erect, and without moving the shoulders bend the head forward, trying to dig the chin into the chest. Then bend backwards, well stretching the muscles on the front of the throat. These are genuine exercises for increasing height, as they assist in expanding the pads of cartilage (gristle) which are inserted between the several bones of the spine.

Body Bending.

A series of exercises I am always recommending for the development of the many muscles about the waist—known as "body bending" exercises—should be neglected by nobody who wants a tough body and to maintain good health. Not only do these movements create muscle, which has the effect of holding the body upright, but they have a most important influence on the stomach, liver, and other internal organs, upon the working efficiency of which good health depends to such an enormous extent. Some of the following ought to be practised by everybody at least once daily:

1. Stand erect, feet, say, twelve inches apart; head erect, shoulders back, but no stiffness. Throw right arm up sideways and at same time bend body down and over to left as far as possible, but not bending forward. You can do this slowly and strenuously if you are strong, or lightly and easily if you happen to be weak. The left-hand goes down left leg as far as possible. Do not raise the right heel. Now rise and bend over similarly to the right, left arm going up in the air. Repeat this nineteen times to each side; increase to twenty as you get more used to it.

2. Hands on hips, fingers to front. Bend forward at waist, not hips—you won't bend very far—hold position while you take in a big breath, and then bend over slowly backwards from waist, not from the knees. Ten movements each way.

3. Position of No. 1, but arms extended sideways. Now turn the body to the left at the waist, not swaying from the knees, and go as far as possible before turning about similarly in the other direction. This should be a quick exercise. Ten turns each way.

4. Very much like the one before, only the hands are to be on the hips, and, the turn made, the body is to be bent over to the side. Ten movements each way.

5. Position as for No. 1. Now lean forward as though meaning to touch the toes, but throw left arm straight up in the air, and carry the right hand away to the left, trying to touch the outside of the left arm into air and bring left hand down and try to touch outside of right foot. It may be neces-

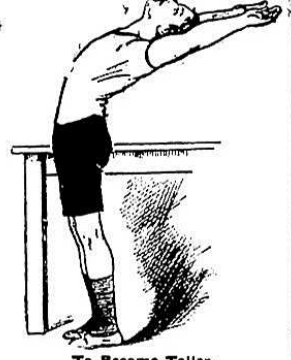
sary to bend a knee each time. Ten movements each way.

Six months' careful practice of these exercises, and you should be able to see muscles between the breast-bone and the top of the thighs which have not before been visible. And your health will be thirty per cent. improved.

Ju-jitsu Training (continued).

We now get to a stage of pole work that closely resembles tug-of-war. This is pretty strenuous work, too, but the physical development by the work already done will enable the pupils to go through with it without bad effects.

First exercise: Both parties to lean forward, right foot in advance, with a left-hand grip of the end of the pole,



To Become Taller.

which is to be (the end) somewhere about the top of the thigh, the right hand at a convenient distance in advance. Both grips are undergrips. The pole is horizontal. Now the attacker begins to pull with might and main, dragging the defender, who is resisting strongly, from one end of the room—but the exercise is better for being done out of doors; there is not the liability of the feet slipping—to the other. This accomplished, there is a spell for deep breathing, and then the attacker becomes the defender. The pulling must be steady, not a series of short jerks.

Variations can be introduced—as with both pupils facing in the same direction, or standing back to back. In any case, the bending forward position must be observed. Still another is with the contestants face to face and the pole held at chest level, the arms extended forward. Again, with the pole held at the height of the abdomen; and yet again, with the pole about midway between abdomen and knees. One more, but for this there is no leaning forward; on the contrary, it is well for both to lean more than a little to the back. The pole is still horizontal, but the arms are bent, and the hands, which are close together, are just at the rear of and several inches above the level of the head.

Tug-of-war movements may be carried out without the use of the pole, and these I will deal with next

week, as there is one further pole movement I want to describe, the importance of which, when properly carried out, is not to be overestimated. The contestants stand back to back, the hands backwards, and at about the level of the small of the back. The pole is horizontal, is held with both hands near the end, and the kind of grip that which the pupil finds most convenient. The one selected as attacker may have one foot slightly in advance; the defender, at first, should have both together. Both parties are leaning forward. At the word "Go!" the attacker starts to drag the defender backwards, he resisting.

Do not continue the contest for very long, as this is a punishing exercise. It calls every muscle of the body and limbs into severe operation. Every muscle of the arms and legs becomes tense during the struggle; the back and the abdominal muscles are not inactive. But it is the wrists and fore-arms that gain most, and these are often the weakest parts of a person's body.

Putting on Weight.

Nobody, young or old, is particularly astute in pig, thin and scrawny; and although there is no particular advantage in being very fleshy, one is certainly the better for being well covered. For one thing, during cold weather less notice is taken of a low temperature. Thin people generally feel the cold more than the stout, not only because of the want of the protective covering of fat, but because the circulation of the stout one is usually better.

Which doesn't mean that the thin youth or man or woman of necessity suffers from a bad circulation. Circulation is largely a matter of good health and plenty of exercise. It isn't always.

Now, to put on weight it isn't always necessary to increase the quantity of the grub eaten. Big, stout chaps are not always very large eaters. For instance, I know one old athlete who weighs in the neighbourhood of 19 stone, and he eats in quantity no more food than I do, and I weigh about 10 stone, good training. A good number of years ago I weighed almost 12 stone, but wasn't a bit the better or healthier or stronger for it.

It's the food we're able to digest, not the quantity, that matters. Of course, some foods help to put on flesh. A diet of cabbage and other greens, with plenty of fruit, and not much bread, potatoes, butter, or cheese, might suit some individuals, but it would never help them to put on flesh. For flesh is muscle, and there is little that's muscle-forming in that diet. Butter, cheese, eggs, bread, potatoes, oatmeal, and, to some extent, meat, do assist in putting on flesh. But an all-meat diet is not a flesh-forming one.

Plenty of fresh air and plenty of exercise help to put on weight—and the right kind of weight; for no one wants to put on mere fat. It is well masticated and well digested food, with fresh air and exercise, that go to the development of muscle. And muscle is flesh—the lean part of meat.

Pears, beans, lentils, are flesh-formers. Fish isn't much use for the purpose, but that is not to say fish should not be eaten. It gives a change of diet, which is good, just as vegetables are good for one. Anything that one is really fond of—if one will trouble to chew thoroughly—does good; but a food one loathes, good though it may be, won't do one much good, simply because it isn't liked.

Jumping.

We don't pay much attention to jumping in England, with the result that we have but a very few good men, either broad or high jumpers, and these are natural good jumpers. This want of good jumpers is a pity, for, with proper coaching, a very great deal of improvement might be made.

Any lad who thinks he promises to be a jumper should go in for a great deal of physical development work, well developed muscles of the thighs and middle body being necessary. Hence he should do much running and body exercises recommended in these notes.

As a rule, the natural good jumper has a thigh rather longer than ordinary. The bone being longer, the muscles are longer, and he is able to get a more powerful spring.

The untalented jumper, either long or high, generally takes too long and too fast a run up to the jump. Fifteen yards should be ample, and it isn't necessary it be made at high speed. One great jumper who could do 6ft. every time, simply trotted up to the bar. An American champion I have seen takes only the last few strides fast. B. H. Baker, the English champion, who can do 6ft. 3in., does not take a long run.

Judging the spot to jump from or to troubles some athletes. A good tip is to put down a square of paper at the take-off, the feet stepping on this when the leap is made. It is an assistance to the high jumper to place a strip of white paper over the bar or line. It is something to hold the eye.

When long jumping, don't forget that the arms and shoulders, play a part; all the work isn't done with the legs. Shoot the legs forward as the feet come down at the end of the jump, but throw the shoulders forward also, or you'll find yourself tumbling over backwards.

Don't try to high jump so as to get both feet over the bar together. The most successful is a sideways jump, the right leg being thrown over the bar first; then, with a body-swing, the seat is lifted over, and the left leg follows. If the shoulders aren't lifted and jerked forward the body is likely to drop, and probably the bar will be knocked down by the seat, even though both feet get clear over. Trial alone will show the high jumper whether he should run squarely up to the bar or start from a point outside one of the uprights, thus making the run-up diagonal. As the body is lifted a deep crouch before springing is not recommended—let the right arm swing upward. This helps to lift the body upward. (Another "Health and Exercise" article in next Monday's Boys' Friend.)

THE LATEST STORY OF THE FAMOUS SEA-GOING SCHOOLBOYS.

The SCHOOLBOY ADVENTURERS!



A Magnificent Story
of Adventure in the
Arctic Regions.

By . . .
DUNCAN STORM.

READ THIS FIRST!

Continous school-ship, the Bombay, with Dr. Crabhunter as its leader, and a crowd of schoolboys on board, amongst whom we find our old friends, Dick, Dorington & Co., not forgetting Captain Boues, sets a course for the Arctic regions on an educational cruise.

The boys chum up with an Eskimo named Uif and his pet seal, George. After many thrilling adventures the Bombay Castle steams along the coast of Greenland for the Nuuk Fjord, where Captain Handyman intends to enlist the services of some Eskimos and their hunting dogs.

The boys quickly find a friend in a native, whom they christen Fishhook. Whilst out on a long tramp they rescue Dr. Crabhunter from three wild mountain bulls. The party then set out on a trip to the ice-cap.

(Now read on.)

Across the Ice-Cap.

They soon began to wish that they had the dogs with them. But Mr. Wilkinson explained to them that dogs were not suitable for this sort of work, partly on account of the softness of the snow, and partly on account of the ice and snow conditions they would find when they reached the ice-cap.

The doctor was rather weary after his hunting exploits of the early morning, so he honoured the boys by taking a seat on the sledge at which the boys were hauling. But when they had hauled him up a few miles of the snow slopes they began to wish that the doctor weighed a little less.

And all the time they were toiling up the slope Fishhook kept a sharp look-out for stray deer or musk-ox. But they saw nothing, for they were now getting above the level where the winds cleared the mosses of the snow, and there was little or no food up here. They were reaching the edge of that mysterious 600,000 square miles of virgin ice and snow, which sustains no life of any sort, and which is the playground of the Polar winds and hurricanes.

It was quiet and still enough to-day under a glorious blue sky. But Scorchers Wilkinson, looking at the light, and testing it with a strip of sensitised paper, produced dark smoked goggles, a pair of which he ordered everybody to put on, Eskimos included.

"What are these for, sir?" asked Skeleton.

"They are to prevent you from going blind," replied Scorchers.

"Must we wear them, sir?" protested Skeleton.

"Well, of course, Skeleton, if you want to go blind before the afternoon and to suffer from the fiercest headaches you have ever sampled, you can leave your spectacles off and enjoy the view," answered Scorchers. "But I warn you that if you do go blind, and we have to detach two of the party to lead you back to camp, I'll give you the soundest wishing that you have ever had from me when you have recovered."

Skeleton grumbled and muttered under his breath that he'd sooner have a go of snow-blindness than be blinkered with such smoky glasses.

"Don't be an ass!" put in Dick. "You don't know what this Arctic sunshine is like, and snow-blindness is no joke!"

Up and up they toiled, the doctor sitting on the sledge, now and then cracking some learned little jape as the boys pulled on the drag-ropes of his sledge.

The boys had never learned before that the doctor was a bit of a wag in his way. But it is wonderful how even the headmaster of a great school will unbend when he is seated on a sledge in the Polar regions on a glorious summer's day, with the wonderful panorama of Greenland's mountains opening before him.

The boys began to feel a bit fed up with Dr. Crabhunter when they

had hoisted him up two thousand feet. They wished that he would get out of the sledge and push behind.

But the doctor was very playful. He cracked the dogwhip of the sledge, and cried "Iluk, huk!" in the Eskimo fashion.

But he dropped this when he gave himself a lick round the neck that nearly cut his throat with the biting lash. And when he had almost cut Fishhook's ear off he laid aside the whip and grew more serious.

By one o'clock they had reached the edge of the ice-cap, and here they stopped to make their midday meal.

As far as they could see was a level plain of snow and ice lying flat in the white, blinding glare of the sunshine.

Over the edge of the side they had approached projected a blue crag here and there, the top of one of the mountains that held this huge mass of ice and snow on their shoulders.

Skeleton was desperately hungry. His naturally-keen appetite had come to a razor-edge in this pure, freezing air, and the boys all agreed that he looked uncommonly like an Eskimo as he gnawed at a huge rib of roast musk-ox that was given to him for his lunch.

They made coffee over their spirit-stoves, and, as a slight wind was rising, the boys, who had stripped to their shirts whilst trailing up the slopes, put on their waistcoats and coats again.

They built up a low snow wall round their camp to protect the doctor and Captain Handyman and Scorchers Wilkinson, who had not yet finished their meal.

Then they began to get their first experiences of the vagaries of the great ice-cap of Greenland.

The temperature dropped swiftly as the Polar wind played over the snow, which started to drift and blow in low clouds like sand, the fine grains of snow growing coarser as the wind increased in strength.

And, as they got to the drag-ropes of their sledges again, and started off across the ice-cap, heading into this desert of snow to the place appointed for the doctor's camp, they found themselves marching against a keen blast that was cold enough to punch through anything but the thickest of skin clothing.

The boys tugged the sledges along doggedly as the sun paled in the cloud of driving snow.

It was not actually snowing, for no snow was falling from the sky. But the desert winds of these Polar wastes caught up the surface snow and whirled it in the air as the desert simoon drives the hot sand.

There was no need for their glasses now; but they wore glad enough to keep these on to protect their eyes from the cutting, frozen spray of the snow.

This sudden storm of wind had one good effect for the boys.

Dr. Crabhunter thought that he would walk instead of riding on the sledge.

The worthy doctor was beginning to feel rather sorry that he had elected to camp with Captain Handyman and Scorchers Wilkinson to assist them in their observations in so inhospitable a spot.

But he was not going to show the white feather before the boys.

He trudged along stolidly behind their sledge. But he cracked no little wheezes or japes, but looked more like the last survivor of a Polar expedition than a headmaster out on a holiday.

The three sledges kept very close together, through this storm, for now the snow was flying so thick that the boys could not even see their feet in the mist of snow, which was set full of an opaque sort of light.

It was like trudging through a thick fog, for everything was ob-

scured, and they seemed to be looking at the world through a pane of ground glass.

Presently the leading sledge came to a stop.

They had come to a group of enormous snow crevasses, huge, yawning splits in the ice-cap which are found near the borders where the cap comes under the influence of the changes of temperature produced by the sea.

It was at the first of these that the leading sledge had stopped. The crevasse was over fifty feet wide, and they could not judge its depth, for these vast chasms had an overhanging lip of snow, which prevented any attempt at looking down into them or sounding them with a plummet and line.

The crevasse, in many places, was crossed by arches of snow and ice,



RUSHING TO DESTRUCTION!

"Stop her! Stop her!" cried Mr. Lal Tata. "We come to precipice! We shall be smash to little pieces!" Before them yawned a great crevasse, over two thousand feet deep!

which spanned a gap whose ragged blue walls, hung with giant icicles and fantastic frostwork, disappeared into blue-black depths hundreds of feet below.

"What are we going to do about it, Fishhook?" asked Dick, as he viewed the frail-looking bridge that spanned this ugly chasm.

"Jump!" replied Fishhook, with a grin. "Go quick! Bridge him no break!"

"Crukey!" exclaimed Skeleton. "I shall be sorry for us if it does! If we fall into that hole, we'll be frozen up in the ice-cap for the next ten thousand years. Then maybe we'll float off in an iceberg, and be found on the ice in mid-Atlantic!"

Scorchers Wilkinson laughed at this. He saw that his lessons on physical geography were gradually sinking into the minds of his pupils.

Dr. Crabhunter did not laugh at all as he looked at the fairy bridge which spanned the chasm.

The wind had eased a little bit, but the snow was drifting down into those blue depths like smoke, falling and falling till it disappeared out of sight.

"Do you think it is quite prudent?" he asked, as the Eskimos prepared to rush the first sledge over the bridge of ice.

Fishhook grinned as this query was translated to him.

"Me never come here before," he said. "This silly place—no musk-ox, no deer, no seal—not nothing. Only mad man him come here!"

Captain Handyman laughed. He said that Fishhook was about right.

With a run and a rush they dragged the sledge out on the snow bridge and raced across it, landing safely on the other side.

And as this was the heaviest sledge of the lot, they concluded that it would bear the rest of the party.

Over they went, one after the other.

The bridge was over twelve feet wide; but the boys felt their stomachs roll over as they crossed the deep blue abyss, and Mr. Lal Tata gave a deep sigh of relief.

"I call that rotten place!" he said. "In fact," he added, in a lower tone, "I think this is rather foolsome expeditions to come on. It is not good that headmaster should risk necks of pupils and under-masters on expeditions so rabbit-brained!"

"It's all in the interests of science, sir!" replied Dick, with a laugh, as he shouldered the drag-ropes of the sledge again.

And one by one they crossed six of these huge crevasses over snow bridges that brought their hearts into their mouths as they crossed them.

Beyond the crevasses the snow grew firmer, and lay in a great white flat plain, like a boundless sea.

Captain Handyman, with a four-inch liquid boat-compass strapped to the top of the leading sledge, was navigating this snowy waste as the other two sledges following in his tracks.

And though the plain over which they were travelling seemed flat, the pocket-barometers told them that they were steadily rising in an altitude as they made their way up over the stupendous lip of the ice-cap.

Not a vestige of life did they see on this waste as the afternoon drew on. The snow which had melted

The boys crawled in and had a quilt inside this Eskimo villa, which they at once called the schoolhouse. The walls were snowy-white and smooth inside, and from floor to the keystone of the roof there was six feet of head room.

There was a bed-place of snow, where the sleeping-bags could be placed, and there was a well in which the blubber and spirit-lumps could be burned, filling the icehouse with their grateful warmth.

Even though there was no lamp in this ice-dwelling, the interior felt quite warm after the chilling Polar blast outside.

And in this house Dr. Crabhunter, the captain, and Mr. Wilkinson would live for two days if the weather still remained rough.

The boys crawled in and out of the doctor's dwelling, laying down sealskins, and covering the snow bed-place with rubber blankets, on which the sleeping-bags would be laid.

Then they were entertained to tea in the schoolhouse, and got some idea of the warmth which starts up at once in this sort of dwelling.

As soon as the party were packed in all snug with their belongings, and the spirit-stove was lighted, Porkis turned quite red, and took off his sealskin jumper.

And before the tea was boiled up he took off his sealskin trousers.

The boys had tea and cake. But Skeleton, who was hungry again, had a musk-ox sandwich, three inches thick, with lots of frozen mustard.

Fishhook crawled in at the narrow tunnel of an igloo, and announced to the boys that the sledges were ready, and it was time for them to be going if they were to reach the camp in the wail by dark. They had over twenty miles to go.

So the boys bade the doctor a glad farewell, and left him with his companions in their house of snow.

There was no drift of snow now, for it had frozen down. But there was a roaring strong wind howling over the ice-plain, and greatly to the astonishment of the boys, they saw that there was a mast stepped on the sledge ready to take a small, square boatsail.

"Hallo, Fishhook!" exclaimed Dick. "What's the game?"

"We go home quick!" said Fishhook, pointing to the long snow-floes that lay ready on the sledge. "Black man him sit on sledge," he added, pointing to a pile of skins which were placed ready.

Lal did not much like being called a "black man" by an Eskimo, but he seated himself on the sledge as though he were going to ride on a toboggan.

Chip seated himself behind him. Then Pongo and Porkis took their seats, whilst Fishhook, who had fastened an axe at the rear of the sledge so that its blade might act as a sort of rudder, prepared to sail the sledge home.

The sledge was full now, but Arty and the rest slipped the long ski, or snow-slat, on their feet, and stood ready, holding towlines of sealskin which were fastened to the sledge. They were to be towed home by this novel ice-yacht.

The sledge was already fretting and on the move, pushing forward inch by inch impatiently, so strong was the thrust of the wind behind it.

There was a yell from the boys as the sail went up, filling and straining as it caught the breeze.

The sledge started to slide forward, gathering way as it ran over the frozen surface of the snow.

There was no doubt that Fishhook was right in his prophecy. They were going home quick, for the flying-sledge, its runners ringing over the icy surface, was travelling like smoke before the howling gale.

They were running most of the time down a slight slope, and when they came to the levels the speed slowed down to a jog-trot.

Now and then a flying squall of snow would catch them, and hurl them along down the long crystal slopes at twenty miles an hour.

Mr. Lal Tata became quite exhilarated by the swift movement, and the ski-runners, hanging on behind, shouted with exultation as they flew over the ice-cap on the wings of the wind.

"By Joves," shouted Mr. Lal Tata, "this is very hot stuff!"

But suddenly Lal's yells of delight turned to a yell of dismay.

"Stop her! Stop her!" he cried. "We come to precipice! We shall be smash to little pieces!"

Before them yawned one of the great crevasses of the ice-cap, a hundred feet wide, and perhaps two thousand feet deep. And they were no time even to jump!

(Another instalment of this splendid yarn next week.)

IN YOUR EDITOR'S DEN.

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

Next Monday's issue of the Boys' Friend will be something very special. Here is a brief outline of the contents:

"REDSKINS AND RUSTLERS!"

By Gordon Wallace. There will be a fine long instalment of this ripping yarn. The hero, Bob Ruckmore, and his young friend, Dickie Smith, are arrested and imprisoned in the town "gaol," and escape as outlaws, having to seek hospitality at the hands of the Indians, make most excellent reading.

"THE MAN IN BLACK!"

By Owen Conquest. Of course, there'll be a Bookwood story—the paper wouldn't be complete without one. "The Man in Black" sounds rather creepy, doesn't it? Well, it's not; it's an absolute scream, so you needn't be afraid of reading it just before going to bed!

"THE GOLDEN TRAIL!"

By Sidney Drew. This great serial of adventure is providing a real "scop," if we can judge by our daily paper. The reason is pretty obvious plenty of exciting adventure without any sordidness. This week, as you will have already read, the third clue has been found by our two young heroes. Next week we shall see them setting off in search of the fourth clue, which they imagine is hidden somewhere in England.

"HEALTH AND EXERCISE!"

By Percy Longhurst. Another of Mr. Longhurst's popular articles on keeping fit will, naturally, be included; and also, the Scouts' Pow-wow Corner will be filled with excellent tips for scouts—and others.

"THE CEDAR CREEK ARTIST!"

By Martin Offord. You'd all be writing to me and telling me what you "thought of me" if I didn't publish a Backwoods yarn, so the above is on the programme. Take it from one who knows—it's a splendid tale!

"THE SCHOOLBOY ADVENTURERS!"

By Duncan Storm. Our young Arctic friends will be "on show" again, and their many adventures amongst "Greenland's Ice Mountains" will make you ask for "Samoa." Get that? Sorry! However, be sure you order your copy of the Boys' Friend well in advance, for, if your newsagent told you you were "too late," you might get cross!

MINDING ONE'S OWN BUSINESS.

"We all know the story of the quick-tempered man, who, when asked what he was doing in town, swung round and said he was extra busy, as he had just made a million by minding his own business. Of course, he was exaggerating. Fortunes are not made in that style—not the ordinary sort of fortunes—but the affairs of others gets some rich reserves of confidence and strength. It is, however, amazing the interest other folks' business has for some people. Apparently they have none of their own to be interested in. It is a pity, because that means there is so much energy running to waste. There is business for everybody if there is the wish to take it up—more than enough to go round.

BEING INTERESTED.

Next to the wisdom of attending to your own special business is the desirability of throwing yourself into

the troubles of others, when requested. It is a poor compliment to the friend who is telling you something to say you are not able to suggest a way out of the dilemma, whatever it is. We know the chap who says, "Oh, I can't be bothered." He is closely allied to the individual who swings off with a shrug, murmuring something about charity beginning at home. The poor creature has got it all wrong. The chum who wants his aid, is, for the moment, the special quarter where charity should begin.

SIMPLY TERRIBLE.

I take it that the Indian climate is responsible for the following: "There was a young man of Calcutta, Who had a most terrible stutter; He said, 'If you p-p-p-please, Will you p-p-p-pass me the cheese, Like-wise the b-b-b-butter."

IMAGINATION.

It was solemnly put forth the other day that boys were less imaginative now than in the old days. Frankly, I do not credit it. Statements of this kind are usually based on some slight, shadowy experience in a few cases. Then people judge the world often enough from what goes on in a bit of a town. There could be nothing more unjustly. It is not that town facts are unimaginative, though their lives in the main are surrounded by matter of fact influences. But in town or country there is any amount of that strange, elusive business called imagination. It is the way of thought which turns the world into the most interesting of places. Unhappily, with many who get on in years the world becomes merely a centre of worry and needless preoccupation. To the youngster it is quite different. Even after his back-garden has ceased to be a howling wilderness, where fiery Red Indians throng after midnight, with a peculiar race of dragons in residence on the common, long after those myths have been blown away, he sees the wonder of the world. It does not matter where he lives. The way men work, what they do and think, the realm of Nature and all its marvels fascinate him. At least, they do if he is wise, and youth has its own special wisdom.

PLENTY OF CHANGE.

There is nothing like it. You want to get as much as you can. If I had my way every fellow who wanted it, I'd have a fortnight in the country every summer. Of course, people say that with rail fares "up" much change is as impossible as a few cherry weeks botanising amidst the Mountains of the Moon. Half a minute. If pounds, shillings, and pence are like the Camberwell Beauty—i.e., extremely rare—you can be your own change. It is well to think, it is better to do, it is best of all to be—and how about having a complete change of mind concerning many old prejudices and dislikes? No bad thing.

I am sure you have noticed in the course of your travels up and down the world the absurd attitude struck by some folks who say they are matter-of-fact and up-to-date, and have no time for idle fancies. The result is they make themselves so commonplace that they shut out even the absolutely necessary dreams. They could not change their minds. They are so fixed in their own narrowness that they cannot change their views about anything. They seem to have shut and bolted the door. If that door could be opened to let in fresh ideas and a dash of generosity, such fellows would find the experience as beneficial as a tramp across the Downs.

Your Editor

OUR NOVEL CINEMA COMPETITION! HIDDEN TITLES OF POPULAR CINEMA PICTURES.

First Prize, £10; Second Prize, Five Shillings a Week for a Period of Six Months; Third Prize, Half-a-Crown a Week for Six Months; and Twenty Consolation Prizes of Splendid Pocket-Knives.

THE EIGHTH SET OF PICTURES

The first seven sets can be obtained through any newsagent.

All the BOYS' FRIEND readers, I feel sure, visit the local Cinema at least once a week, and, having taken that for granted, I have designed this simple competition with a view to its being popular with all my chums.

In the adjoining columns you will see the eighth set of six pictures which, on careful study, will reveal the titles of popular Cinema Pictures.

Write the title of the film which you think the picture represents in the space provided; cut out each set of pictures in one piece, and pin your solutions together in complete sets.

The coupon which appears on this page, agreeing to accept the decision of the Editor as final, must be filled in, IN INK, and MUST ACCOMPANY EACH COMPLETE SET OF SOLUTIONS.

Competitors may submit as many efforts in this competition as they please, but such efforts must be sent in in complete sets, and the coupon below must be signed in each case.

The First Prize of £10 will be awarded to the competitor who sends in a list of titles which most nearly corresponds with the one locked in the Editor's safe. The others will be awarded in order of merit.

In cases of ties the prizes will be divided. The right to add together and divide any, or all, of the cash prizes is reserved, but the full amount will be awarded.

Efforts must be addressed: CINEMA PICTURES Competition, The BOYS' FRIEND,

Gough House, Gough Square, London, E.C. 4,

and must reach that address not later than Tuesday, August 31st.

Employees of the proprietors of this journal are not eligible to compete.

Remember that your Editor's decision must be accepted as absolutely final in this competition.

The issues of the BOYS' FRIEND containing the first seven sets can be obtained through any newsagent.

Grid of 12 numbered boxes (43-54) containing illustrations for a cinema picture competition. Box 43: 'STABLE CHAIN' with eagle. Box 44: 'I'LL TELL TEACHER!' with boy at desk. Box 45: 'EXIT' with man walking. Box 46: 'KISS ABSALOM' with man and woman. Box 47: 'Daddy Long Legs' with spider. Box 48: 'Daddy Long Legs' with spider.

I enter CINEMA PICTURES Competition, and agree to accept the Editor's decision as final and binding.

Signed.....

Address.....

EXAMPLE: Illustration of a spider with the caption 'Daddy Long Legs' written in cursive below it.

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