THE BOYS TWENTY-SIXTH YEAR!

No. 1,023. Vol. XXI. New Series.]

THREE HALFPENCE.

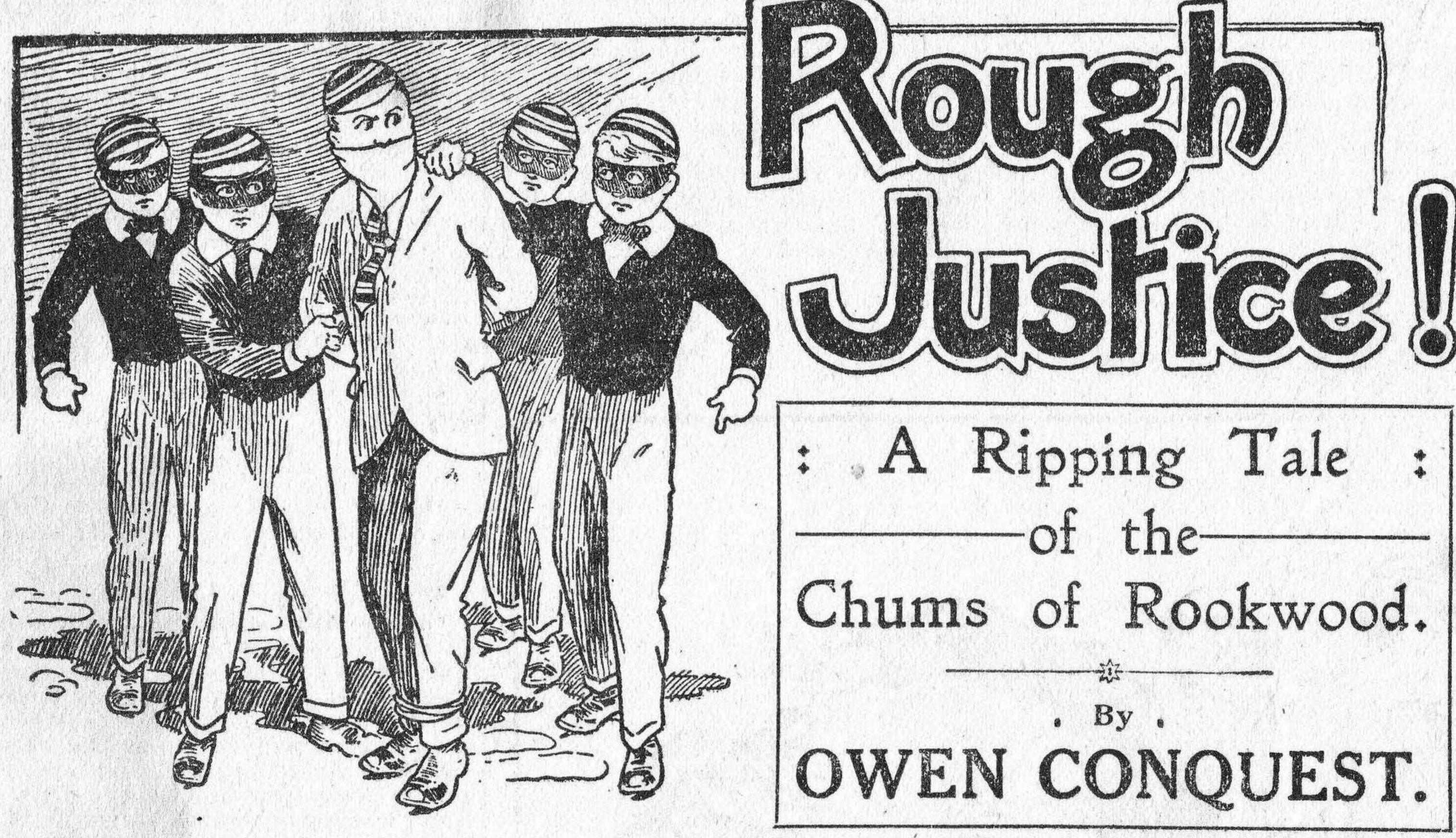
[Week Ending January 15th. 1921.



BUY! BUY! BUY!

Messrs. Grierson & Darrel were doing a roaring trade. Chuta and the Boy with Fifty Millions were both clad in immaculate white coats, the latter also in a topper. Don's half-caste Indian servant had taken up a huge codfish and was waving it over his head excitedly. "Oh, ladies and gen'elmens, do look at dis lubbly fish—only two pennies!" he bawled.

A Screamingly Funny Complete Yarn of Jimmy Silver & Co.!



The 1st Chapter. Warned!

Tap! "Who's there?" growled Knowles of the Sixth.

Knowles' study door was locked. There were four Sixth-Formers in the study-Knowles and Frampton and Catesby of the Modern Side, and Carthew of the Classical Sixth. And as the four "sportsmen" of Rookwood had met for a little game of poker, it was very necessary for the door to be locked.

Even Mr. Manders, with whom Knowles was a favourite, would have been surprised and shocked, and exceedingly wrathful, if he had known how his favourite prefect was occu-

pied just then. On such occasions it was Knowles' cautious habit to lock his door, and it was not likely to be opened until cards and cigarettes had been swept

out of sight. So when the tap came at the study door Cecil Knowles only growled out "Who's there?" instead of "Come in!"

There was no answer to the ques-

tion from outside.

Knowles & Co. removed their cigarettes from their mouths, with a touch of trepidation.

It was always possible that Mr. Manders might drop in unexpectedly, i and such possibilities gave a certain thrill to the "sportive" life of a "sportsman" at Rookwood School.

"Hallo! Somebody's slippin' a letter under the door!" ejaculated Frampton.

"What the thump!" muttered

Knowles. The four seniors stared in astonish-

ment at an envelope that came sliding | nothin' in the threat." under the door.

There was a footstep outside, and then silence.

"My hat!" murmured Carthew. Knowles rose to his feet.

"Some joke of the fags, I suppose," he said, knitting his brows.

"Don't open the door!" exclaimed Catesby hastily, and he waved his hand to the cards and smokes on the table. "Get that little lot out of sight first. If somebody was passing

and---' "Only a fag!" said Carthew. "We don't want a fag to see this

turn-out," said Catesby drily. "Keep the door shut, Knowles!"

Knowles nodded. Without opening the door, he stooped and picked up the envelope

"It's addressed to you, Carthew." he said, "and us, too, apparently.

What the thump does it mean?" He held up the envelope for his companions to look.

It was addressed in Roman capitals with a brush, evidently for the purpose of concealing the "fist" of the writer.

The address was "Carthew & Co." "Some fag's cheek!" growled Catesby. "Dodd or Doyle, perhaps. They may guess that a little game's | Classical prefect. goin' on here—they're rather sharp young rascals-and that we wouldn't open the door in a hurry-"

"Open the letter!" said Carthew. Knowles slit the envelope.

A small sheet of cardboard was inside, and upon it was traced a message in capitals with a brush and Indian

before, and he had half-expected it. But it was new to the Modern Sixth-Formers. The message ran:

"BULLIES! BEWARE! HOUR IS AT HAND! By order, THE ROOKWOOD SECRET

SOCIETY."

"What thunderin' idiot-" began Frampton, in amazement.

Knowles blinked at the card. "I-I suppose it's a joke of some kid who's been to the pictures, and got them on the brain," he said. "I'll find out who did this and skin him! Dodd or Cook or Doyle, I dare say."

Carthew bit his lip hard. "You've seen nothin' of that kind before?" he asked.

"Nothin'. Have you?"

"Oh, this comes from the Classical side, then?" exclaimed Knowles.

"I believe so, though some of the Modern fags may be in it," said Carthew. "I've had half a dozen notices like that in my study over in the School House."

"Oh gad! And who's done it?" "I don't know. It's some kid

working a sort of cinema stunt on us, of course. There's no such thing as a Rookwood Secret Society," said Carthew. "I suspected Jimmy Silver at first---,

"Just the fellow-" "Only one of the cards was put in my study while I was interviewing

him in his study---'

"I don't know what it is. course, it can't go any further than this," said Carthew. "There's Knowles laughed.

"I don't think the Rookwood Secret Society, whoever he is, would care to try to handle the Sixth!" he remarked.

"Of course not. Only-only it's a beastly worry," said Carthew. "This sort of thing gets on a fellow's nerves in the long run. I wish we'd seen the young cad who put that under the

"Too late now!" said Knowles carelessly. "Let's have our game!"

He tossed the warning of the Rookwood Secret Society into the fire, and the three Modern seniors dismissed the matter from their minds for the present.

Mark Carthew did not find it so easy to dismiss it.

It was, as he had said, getting on that lay just inside, and glanced at his nerves. The persecution of the so-called Secret Society was beginning to harass him.

> He was the most unpopular prefect at Rookwood, and most of the Lower School had long scores against him for bullying. His methods had made him so many enemies, in fact, that it was simply not possible for him to guess the identity of the author of these mysterious missives. It might have been any one of fifty or sixty fellows.

"Play up, Carthew!" "Oh, all right!" grunted the

The game of poker went on.

Carthew dismissed the Rookwood Secret Society from his mind at last in the interest of the game.

For half an hour nothing was heard in Knowles' study but the patter of the cards and a few remarks in connection with the game, and the occasional scratch of a match to light a Carthew gritted his teeth as he saw | cigarette. Four faces bent greedily | complete disguise. it. He had seen that kind of message lover the cards in unhealthy excite- I Eyeholes were cut in the masks,

ment, looking strangely old for their

Carthew was the first to "quit." He rose to his feet with a sullen brow, his supply of cash having passed over to Knowles & Co., chiefly to Knowles. Cecil Knowles was a great expert in card games, and his successes did not always endear him to his "sportive" associates.

"Chuckin' it, old bean?" asked Knowles blandly.

"Yes; I've some work to do in my

"Right-ho!" Knowles rose and unlocked the door, opening it wide enough for Carthew to pass out, and then closing it again. The three Modern seniors resumed their game. Mark Carthew went down the passage, and scowled at Tommy Dodd & Co. on the stairs, for no reason excepting that he was feeling sulky and "down," and the three Tommies looked very cheery. Then he walked out of Mr. Manders' house into the quadrangle.

There was a mist from the sea in the old quad of Rookwood, and the ancient beeches were hidden from sight. Carthew strode along without a pause, however. He knew every inch of the way about Big and Little Quads. The School House lighted windows glimmered ahead of him as. he strode on, with his hands in his pockets. He was thinking of his losses in Knowles' study, and wishing that he hadn't dropped in there for that little game of poker. Nothing was further from his mind than the thought of danger. He was taken utterly by surprise when there came a sudden rush of feet in the gloom, and he was seized on all sides, and came down on his back with a crash.

The 2nd Chapter. In Mysterious Hands!

Carthew spluttered as he came

Four pairs of hands were upon him, gripping him tight, and he had simply

no chance of resistance. A knee was jammed on his chest, as he sprawled on his back. Both his

wrists were instantly gripped. "What-wha-a-at-" spluttered Carthew.

"Silence!"

Carthew opened his mouth to shout. "Grooooogh!" he spluttered.

Something was thrust into his mouth to silence him. From its taste, he guessed that it was an oily rag picked up in the bike-shed. It effectually silenced him.

His intended shout spluttered away

into a gurgle. He struggled, but in vain. He felt a cord being looped over his wrists. and resisted furiously; but the cord was looped on and drawn tight. Then his ankles were shackled with another cord, with a length of about a dozen inches between his feet, to give him just freedom enough to shuffle along.

Then he was dragged to his feet. "March!" It was a deep bass voice that spoke, but Carthew knew that it was the dis-

guised voice of a junior. He could not make out his assailants, but their height told him that they were members of some Form

below the Fifth. Each of them had his face covered with a cardboard mask, fastened with a string at the back of the head-a

and through them the eyes looked with a glittering effect.

Carthew, bound and helpless, and gripped by four pairs of hands, glared

helplessly at his captors. "March!" repeated the deep voice. "You young hounds-" he mum-

bled under the gag. "Kick him!"

The order was promptly obeyed. One of the masked assailants stepped back, and landed with his boot on Carthew with a loud thud. The Classical prefect spluttered and

staggered. "Now, march!"

"I-groogh!-I-grrrrrh!"

"Kick him again!" Thud!

"Gr-r-r-r-rh!" Carthew decided to march. Evidently he was in the hands of the Amalekites, and there was no mercy for him. He marched.

Carthew guessed by this time that it was the "secret society" of Rookwood that was dealing with him.

His surmise that the mysterious messages came from one junior, who was playing a trick on him learned from the "pictures," was evidently ill-founded.

There were four at least of the Rookwooders in this affair, that was i clear. He wondered if there were

The secret society led him away a curse, which was answered by a dab from the lighted windows into the darkness of the quadrangle.

They passed under the old beeches, and Carthew found himself bumped

up against a damp tree-trunk. Here he made another attempt at resistance, and the chief rapped out his order again:

"Kick him!" Thud came a boot. Carthew gurgled, and ceased to

A cord was run round the tree, and tied to the prefect's wrists on either

Then the captors stepped back, and a chuckle was audible from under the cardboard masks.

side of the trunk.

Carthew stood against the tree, a helpless, dumb prisoner, and glared at

the quartette. He had a strong suspicion that they were Jimmy Silver & Co., the Fistical Four of the Classical Fourth; but there was nothing to give a clue to their identity.

"Carthew!" said the deep voice.

Gurgle! "Do you know in whose hands you

Gurgle! "You are in the hands of the Secret Society of Rookwood."

Gurgle! "You are being addressed by the Grand Master."

Gurgle! "You have received warnings from us, and you have not mended your ways," went on the deep bass voice. "You have been warned that the hour is at hand. Now the blow will

"Hear, hear!" came in a murmur. "Silence!" said the deep voice of the grand master. "Leave the talking to me. Carthew, are you sorry that you are a bully?"

Gurgle! "Are you sorry you are a crawling

Carthew spluttered helplessly under the gag. The taste of that rag was horrid, and it prevented speech. He could not tell the Grand Master of the Rookwood Secret Society that he was sorry. As a matter of fact, he wasn't sorry; he was only furious.

"Remove the gag," said the Grand Master. "Even this base knave shall not be executed without speaking in his own defence. Carthew. if you try to call out, your nose will be pinched!"

Carthew shivered as the edges of a pair of pincers closed lightly on his

They were metal pincers from some schoolboy's carpentry chest, and if they closed hard the result would be so painful that Carthew did not care to contemplate it.

He did not call out as the gag was removed.

He understood now that his assailants were in deadly earnest, secure in the fact that their identity was unknown, and could not even be guessed with any certainty.

"Now, Carthew, speak in a low voice, or I shall have to twist the tip of your nose off!"

"You young sweep!" Carthew. "That is not the way to address the

Grand Master of the Rookwood Secret Society." "You cheeky little rotter!" gasped

Cartkew. "I know you, Jimmy Silver! I'll have you up before the Head for this!"

vant, Carthew."

"You-you-" "Are you sorry for being a beastly

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"I'll smash you!" "Will you undertake to mend your ways, and in a manner likely to win the approval of the Lower School?"

"I-I-I'll slaughter you!" "The prisoner is quite unrepentant," said the Grand Master calmly. "Brothers, proceed with the paint, and replace the gag."

The oil rag was jammed into Carthew's mouth again. He tried to shut his jaws to keep it out, but a warning pressure from the pincers caused him to open them again in a hurry. He was duly gagged.

Then there was a smell of paint. A wet brush dabbed on Carthew's face, and made him shudder with the contact.

His horrified eyes discerned a paint-can, just uncovered from the newspaper in which it had been wrapped. It was one of old Mack's paint-cans from the woodshed, and it contained a green paint of a raucous hue—the green paint with which old Mack was in the habit of touching up

nerve as it was ladled upon his face. He gurgled painfully. He could not speak through the gag, but he contrived to mumble out

fences. It was thick, and it was oily,

and Carthew shuddered in every

of the paint-brush. One dab of paint in his mouth, along with the oily rag, was enough for Mark Carthew. He did not curse

any more. The paint was laid on his face with a generous hand. How long it was likely to take Carthew to get that paint off again was a dreadful problem, which his mind hardly dared to grapple with.

The painter proceeded industriously with his task, not forgetting the prefect's ears and neck, and giving his hair a daub or two.

In a few minutes Carthew's infuriated countenance was streaming with vivid green paint.

"That will do, Brothers!" said the Grand Master. "Depart!" Three of the dim figures vanished

in the mist. The Grand Master remained. He struck a match, and contem-

plated Carthew's face for a moment, and chuckled.

Carthew's eyes blazed at him from the green paint. As the masked junior chuckled, his mouth opened, and his mouth was

not covered by the cardboard mask. Carthew noted that there was a black space where a tooth should have

The match went out. But Carthew was almost consoled for his disaster by the discovery he

had made. A junior with a front tooth missing would not be difficult to search out at

Rookwood. Vengeance, at least, was certain

"Now I leave you to meditate upon your sins, Carthew!" said the deep voice of the Grand Master. "You can toot now as much as you like."

He jerked the gag from Carthew's mouth, and vanished in the darkness under the beeches. And the moment his mouth was

free Carthew yelled for help.

The 3rd Chapter. The Painted Prefect!

"Ha, ha, ha!"

"What the merry dickens--" "Green as grass!" "Ha, ha, ha!"

There was a roar of laughter, and Rookwood fellows rushed from all sides to see the extraordinary sight.

Bulkeley of the Sixth came in from the dusky quad leading a remarkable

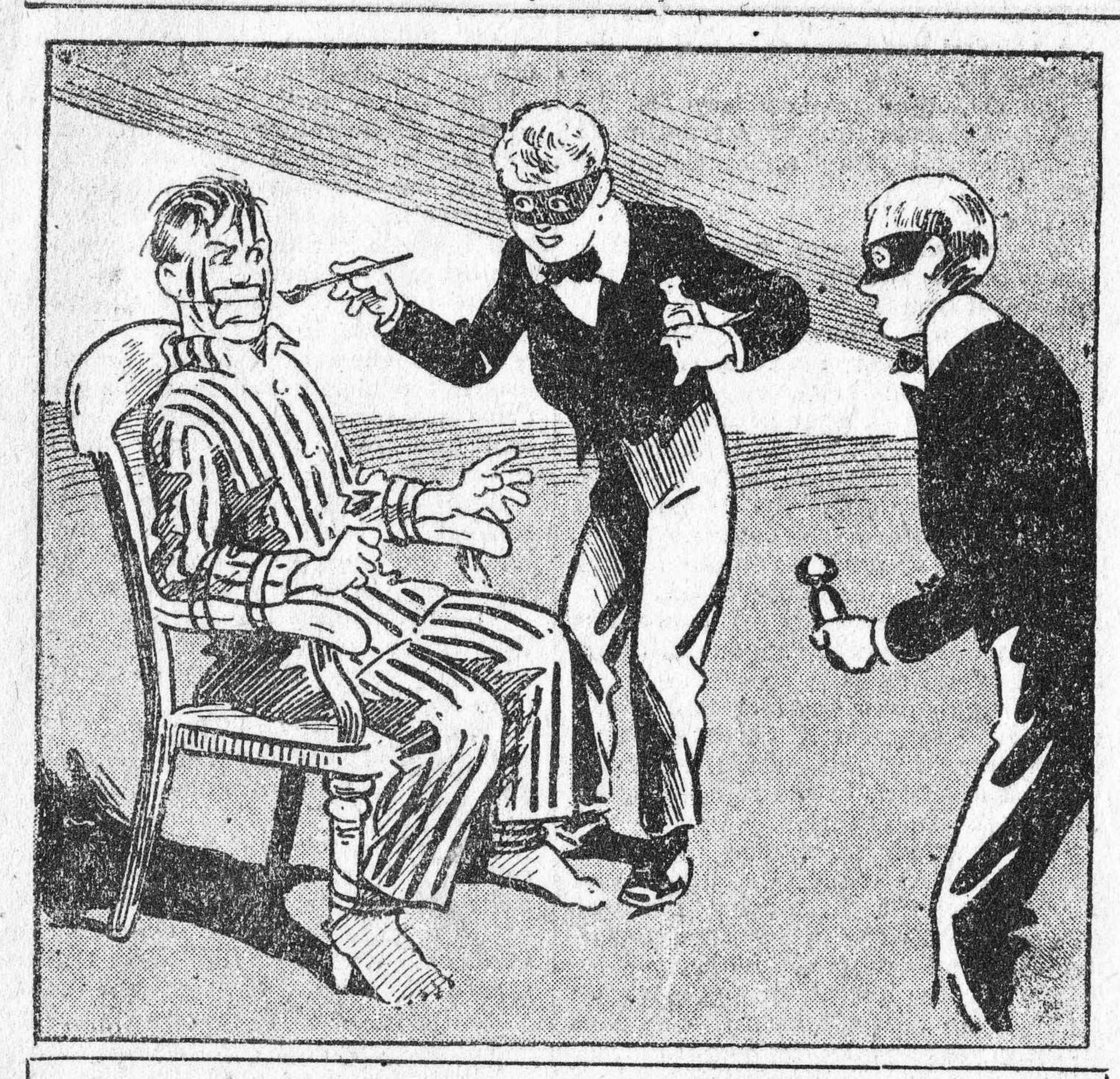
Bulkeley was looking astonished. Carthew's aspect undoubtedly was astonishing. His yells for help had soon been heard, and the captain of Rookwood had hurried out into the quad to discover what was the matter. He discovered Carthew tied to a beech, streaming with paint and

Bulkeley of the Sixth was not smiling as he led Carthew in. This outrage upon a prefect was a serious matter in his eyes. But the crowd in the house simply howled.

Carthew stamped away furiously towards the Head's study.

He was not exactly in a proper state to present himself before the august Head of Rookwood, but he did not care for that. He wanted Dr. Chisholm to see exactly the extent of the fearful outrage that had been perpe-

"Your observations are quite irrele-"The Head will get a shock!" murmured Mornington, as the painted



BY ORDER OF THE R.S.S. I to paint zebra-like stripes over the unfortunate bully of Rookwood. "Brothers, the deed is dood-I mean, done!" said the masked figure at last.

spots of green paint behind him.

roy, Pons, and Van Ryn, the three | enough. Colonials. Sounds of merriment in the study greeted them as they opened, the door. Putty of the Fourth was there. He was lying at | full length on the table, kicking up his heels in an ecstacy of enjoyment. Conroy, Pons, and Van Ryn were chortling in chorus.

"Je triumph, tu triumphe, nous triumphons!" chanted Putty of the Fourth. "Je rejoice, tu rejoices, nous rejoicons! Je cheer, tu cheer,

nous cheerons!" "Ha. ha, ha!"

"Putty, you ass---" began Jimmy Silver.

Putty sat up.

"Is it thou, O James?" he inquired. "Have you come to laugh with us? Go it! Ha, ha, ha!" "I say, there's going to be an

awful row!" grinned Lovell.

"Did you note his complexion?" queried Putty. "Did you observe ever seen anybody look so green?" "Ha, ha, ha!"

"He's got a clue!" chanted Putty. "He knows who did it, because he sow that he had a front tooth missin'! Oh dear!"

"Ha, ha, ha!" roared Conroy. "But I say-" began Raby

seriously.

Putty held up a tiny object—a fragment of black elastic. It belonged to | severe. Evidently he was taking the the property-box of the Classical affair very seriously indeed. Car-Players of Rookwood. The Fistical | thew followed him in. The bully of Four burst into a yell.

"Ha, ha, ha!" "You see, the dear youth never tumbled that he was allowed to see it | on purpose!" sobbed Putty. "He's goin' to search Rookwood for a kid with a front tooth missin'. Let's hope he'll find one. Kids with front teeth missin' aren't really common here. Never seen one at Rookwood myself. But let's wish Carther Suc-"Ha, ha, ha!"

The voice of Bulkeley of the Sixth shouted in the passage: "All the Lower School into Hall at

"Hallo! Assembling the giddy school!" said Arthur Edward Lovell. I "Is it on account of Carthew? That looks as if the Head is taking it

seriously." "It's for Carthew to pick out the chap with a front tooth missin'!" chortled Putty.

"Ha, ha, ha!" crowd of other fellows, into Big Hall.]

The 4th Chapter. Nobody Quilty!

Jimmy Silver & Co. were feeling hilarious when they arrived in Big Hall. But they adopted expressions of extreme gravity as they took their I places in the ranks of the Classical Fourth there.

Privately, in the Fourth Form passage, it might be a laughing | matter; but it was no laughing matter in the presence of the Head, | tive. than that the delinquents would be doubtless to give the hapless delin-bundly flogged if they were dis- quents time to step forward and face

prefect disappeared, leaving a trail of , covered. Quite possibly they might! be expelled from Rookwood. From The Fistical Four went along to that point of view, the painting of Study No. 3, which belonged to Con- | Mark Carthew was a serious matter

> All the Lower School of Rookwood came into Hall, and took their places. A good many of the Sixth and Fifth turned up as well. The prefects were all there to keep order, and Hansom & Co. of the Fifth came in out of currosity.

Modern as well as Classical juniors were gathered there in numerous

"What's the thunderin' row? Anybody know?" asked Smythe of the Shell.

"Oh, good!" said Adolphus Smythe. "I hope they thumped him

Tommy Dodd & Co. of the Modern Fourth looked inquiringly at Jimmy Silver. They knew what had happened, and they were thinking of the Fistical Four.

Jimmy smiled and shook his head. "Queer how fellows seem to think the bloom on the rye? Have you it's us when there's any kicking over the traces!" remarked Arthur

Edward Lovell. "Queer, isn't it?" smiled Jimmy

"Here comes the Head!" said Oswald.

"Silence!"—from the prefects. There was silence and deep gravity as the Head of Rookwood entered. Dr. Chisholm's face was stern and the Sixth had cleaned off the paintas well as he could. But oily paint is not easy to clean off, and very visible traces of green showed about Carthew's ears and under his hair. His face was crimson with scrubbing and rubbing. But for the presence of the Head a ripple of laughter would have greeted Carthew. As it was, there was a murmur, which the prefects silenced at once.

"Boys!" The Head's voice was deep and

Deep silence reigned. Even Putty of the Fourth realised that it was no laughing matter now.

"Boys, an unprecedented outrage has been committed within the walls of Rookwood. A prefect of the Sixth Form has been seized, tied to a tree, and outrageously smothered with a very offensive paint. This unparallelled outrage has been committed by four boys belonging to this school. In hilarious spirits, the chums of I need not say that their punishment the Fourth made their way, with a | will be drastic-exceedingly drastic. No doubt they are well aware of

"Oh lor'!" gasped Tubby Muffin

involuntarily. "The perpetrators of this unheardof outrage will now step forward!" thundered the Head.

No one stepped forward. As Morny remarked afterwards, in his slangy way, it was not surprising that there were no takers.

The prospect of exceedingly drastic punishment, really, was not attrac-

for nothing could be more certain | The Head waited a full minute,

the exceedingly drastic punishment. Then he went on, in a deeply rumbling voice:

"The heinous perpetrators of this outrage cannot hope to escape punishment. One of them, at least, can be identified, and he will be instantly expelled from the school, unless he names his associates. Carthew, you informed me in my study that one of the boys who assaulted you had a front tooth missing, by which you could identify him with certainty."

"Yes, sir. I---" "You adhere to that statement?"

"Certainly, sir!"

"Very good. The boy in question may now step forward," said the Head. "He must be aware now that he cannot hope to escape detection." Still no one stepped forward. The

Head frowned. "Bulkeley, the prefects will now examine all the juniors, and bring forward any boy who has lost a front

Bulkeley and the other prefects "got busy" at once. They passed up and down the ranks of the juniors, examining every fellow in turn. The juniors were told to open their mouths, and some not only opened their mouths but put their tongues out, and there was a good deal of suppressed merriment, in spite of the Rookwood Secret Society. He had majestic presence of the Head.

The examination took a considerable time. Every boy in the Hall had to be looked at in turn, for that missing tooth was exceedingly hard to find. When Bulkeley of the Sixth came up the Hall towards the Head at last, he came alone, to meet the coldly surprised glance of Dr. Chis-

"Well, Bulkeley, where is the

"He is not here, sir."

"Is every boy belonging to the Lower School of Rookwood present?" "Every one, sir. The roll has been called."

"Every boy answered to his name?"

"Yes, sir." "Assault on a prefect" said Tracy. | "No one, sir. The doors have been | closed."

> "Do you mean to tell me, Bulkeley, that there is no junior at Rookwood at all with a front tooth miss-

"Not one, sir!"

"Bless my soul!" Carthew blinked.

He was even more surprised than the Head.

Certainly such a thing as a missing front tooth could not be overlooked in a search-it was sufficient to mark out the Grand Master of the Secret Society among his fellows. Carthew wondered whether he was dreaming. No one at Rookwood with a missing front tooth! Who, then, was the Grand Master of the Secret Society?

Not a Rookwooder at all? But---The Head was speaking.

"Carthew!" "Yes, sir!" gasped the dazed pre-

"You hear what Bulkeley says. him; he did not cry out. He knew Monday's Boys' FRIEND.)

If your statement is correct—you still assure me that it is correct?"

"Certainly! I'm certain-quite certain!" stuttered Carthew.

"Then all the boys present are cleared!" said the Head. "Amazing as it seems, the assault was plainly committed from someone from outside-someone who does not belong to Rookwood School at all! I am glad of it. I am very glad indeed that it has been proved that no Rookwood boy was guilty of this act of hooliganism."

"B-b-but, sir-" gasped Carthew. "Well?"

"I'm certain it was a Rookwooder!

"You are certainly mistaken on that point, Carthew, from your own evidence." Dr. Chisholm raised his hand. "The school is dismissed." And the Rookwooders crowded out

The 5th Chapter. In the Dead of Night!

Midnight!

of Big Hall.

Carthew of the Sixth sat up in bed suddenly.

Perhaps it was the twelve heavy strokes from the clock-tower that had awakened him. Or was it---'

He felt safe enough, even from the taken care to turn the key in his lock before going to bed.

And yet-"Wake!"

It was a deep voice in the darkness of his room.

Carthew trembled.

Well enough he knew the bass voice assumed by the Grand Master of the Rockwood Secret Society.

A glitter of light shone through the gloom as an electric torch was turned suddenly on.

The light blazed in Carthew's face, dazzling him. "One cry, and your nose is

pinched!" said the deep voice. Carthew blinked dazedly.

There were six figures-not four this time-by his bedside; six figures, "No one has since left the Hall?" I fully dressed, whose faces were covered by cardboard masks.

One of them held a pair of pincers. Carthew's glance passed them wildly to the door. It was closed and he had left it locked. How had they entered through a locked door? Somehow, the lock had been forced from the outside. Carthew did not cry out. The six intruders were ready to leap on him, as he could see, and the pincers were ready for his unhappy nose. He sat and blinked at

"Get out of bed-in silonco!" " I—I—"

"Obey!"

Carthew obeyed. "Seize him!"

The grasp of the six was laid on Carthew. In the day-time, the proceedings might have seemed absurd and cinematographic; but at midnight's solemn hour the effect was quite different. Carthew was trembling.

that even if he awakened the house the intruders would have ample time to deal with him before help could And he shuddered at the come. thought of the iron grip of the pincers on his nose.

"You know who we are!" said the deep voice.

"N-n-no!" stammered Carthew.

"We are the Secret Society of Rookwood. We have come here to deal with you. You have been guilty of bullying again since your last punishment." "You -- you

breathed Carthew.

"Gag him!"

Carthew opened his mouth, but the pinchers were too close. He shut it again-sileatly-on the gag that was thrust between his teeth. One of the masked intruders wound a length of twine round his head, knotting it securely to keep the gag in place.

"Sit down!" Carthew was hustled towards his

armchair. He sat down.

He made a movement as if to resist as a cord was looped round his legs. But the pincers tapped his nose, and he desisted. His legs were tied to the legs of the chair, his wrists to its arms. His apprehensive nose was already aware of the smell of paint. But he was mistaken; his apprehensive nose had deceived him. It was a bottle of marking-ink that the Grand Master produced from his pocket. Carthew could see the label on the bottle — "Indelible." He wriggled spasmodically.

The Grand Master removed the cork, and dipped a brush into the bottle. Then quietly, methodically, mercilessly, he proceeded to paint zebra-like stripes on Carthew's face, from the forehead downwards. One of the masked intruders held the electric torch turned on, while the Grand Master painted. The work was done in silence—a terrifying silence.

In five minutes the bottle was empty, and Carthew's aspect had become startlingly original. Through his stripes he glared at the masked avengers.

"Caitiff!" said the Grand Master, when he had finished. "Scallywag! This ink is indelible—warranted not to wash out! You are markedmarked as a victim of the R.S.S. Brothers, the deed is dood-I mean

"Ha, ha, ha!"

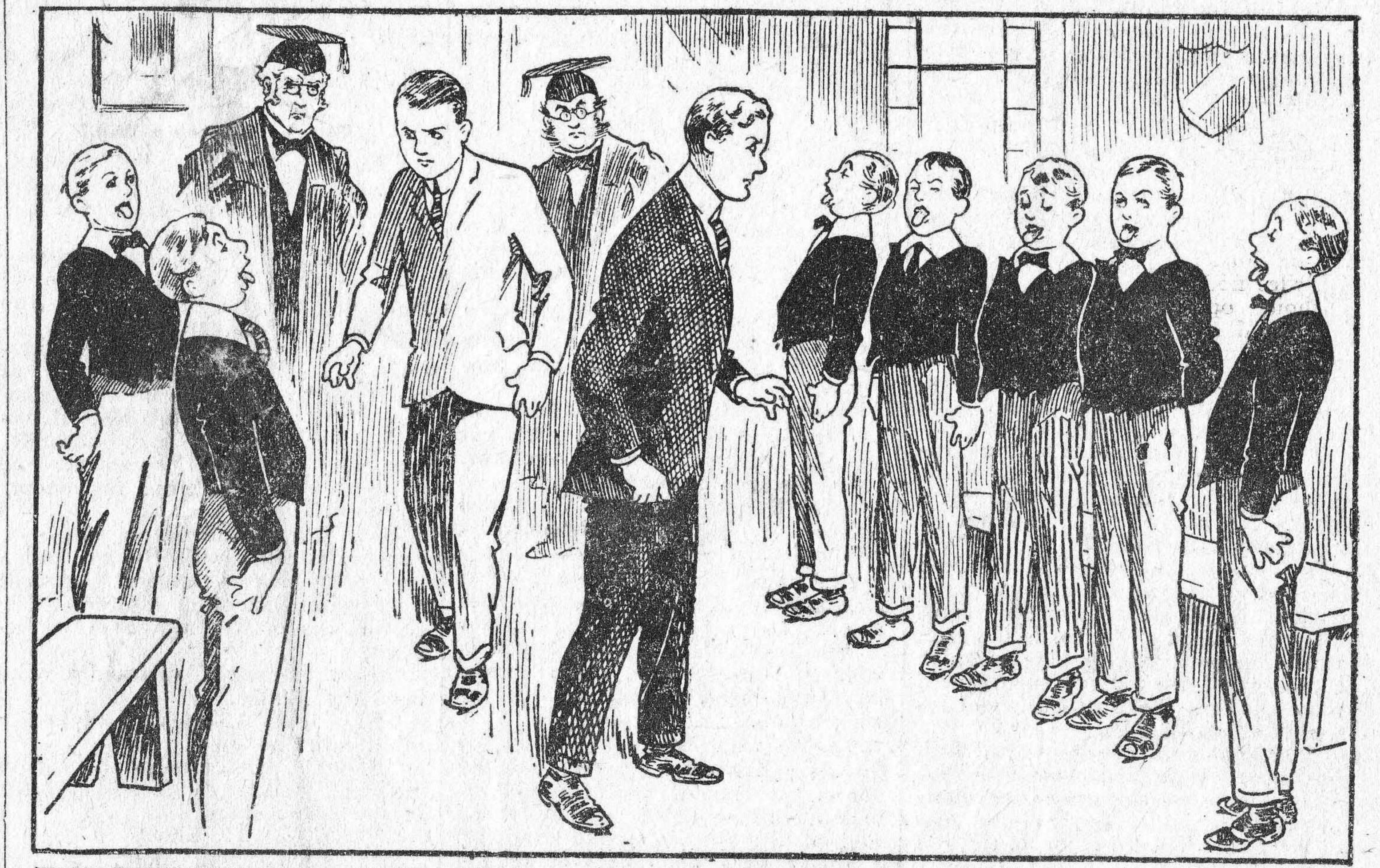
"Shush!" The Grand Master jerked the blankets from the bed, and draped them round Carthew. He did not want the hapless victim of the R.S.S. to catch cold, apparently. Then the light was turned off. With straining ears. Carthew heard the masked intruders stealing softly from the study, and he heard the door close gently after them. Then silence.

And the bully of Rookwood waited

THE END.

for dawn!

(Mind you read "Borrowed Plumes," another fine story of the He did not resist as the six seized | Rookwood Secret Society in next



Despite Carthow's evidence to the effect that his assailant had a front tooth missing, the search for the daring member of the R.S.S. was proving fruitless.

A FINE COMPLETE YARN OF FRANK RICHARDS & Co.!



The 1st Chapter. Yen Makes a Discovery!

"Flanky!"

Little Yen Chin sidled up to Frank Richards, as he came in at the gates of Cedar Creek School, with his chums, on Monday morning.

"Hallo, kid?" said Frank cheerily. "Missel Penlose wantee see you at

Thompson--" "Bother Mr. Penrose!"

"But he wantee see you," said Yen Chin, eyeing Frank Richards curiously with his sly almond eyes. "He callee me when me passee, and givee me message. Wantee see you at office aftel school."

Frank Richards' face clouded. Evidently the message from the editor of the "Thompson Press" was not a welcome one to the schoolboy author.

"We can ride over after lessons, Frank," remarked Bob Lawless.

Frank shook his head. "I'm not going," he said.

"But an cditorial request is equivalent to a Royal invitation,' said Vere Beauclerc, smiling. "Mr. Penrose will expect you."

"Let him expect!" said Frank, with a frown. "Yen Chin, you pass Mr. Penrose's office on your way home?"

The little Chinee nodded.

"Me passee!" he said. "Will you call in with answer?"

"Me callee." "Tell Mr. Penrose that he can go and eat coke!" said Frank.

Yen Chin's almond eyes opened wide. "You wantee me tellee Missel

Penlose eatee cokee!" he ejaculated. "That's it!"

"Allee light! Mo tellee!" Frank Richards led his horse out of the corral, followed by his chums, who exchanged a glance of surprise.

"I reckoned something was up I between Franky and Mr. Penrose after we were there the other evening," Bob remarked to Vere Beauclerc. "There's trouble in the family!"

"Looks like it!" agreed Beauclerc. "But Frank had better not send that message. He will get pushed off the staff."

Frank Richards, still with a frowning brow, put up his horse, and was about to leave the corral, when his chums stopped him. They wanted an explanation.

"Hold on!" said Bob. "School isn't for another ten minutes yet. Now, what are you up to, Franky?" "How do you mean?"

"You've had a row with Pen-

"Yes." haven't told us anything about it. Keeping secrets from your old pards!" said Bob Lawless severely.

Frank Richards coloured. "Well, I'd rather not talk about it," he said. "It's a rotten business. But I'm not going to see Penrose any

"But you do a story every week for his paper," said Beauclerc.

"I'm going to chuck it."

"Because he doesn't square?" grinned Bob. "No: other reasons."

afford to chuck dollars away. Besides, he will lose all his circulation if he loses the only good thing in | his natural life and a bit over," said | % his pesky paper. What has poor old Bob, laughing. "I never believed he A Penrose done?"

Frank Richards was silent.

stunt, the Ten Thousand Dollar Prize, "If he doesn't square he will have to Competition?"

"Yes," said Frank.

"But that doesn't concern you!" "As it happens, it does."

"But as a member of the staff-in fact, as all the staff—you ought not I'm not going to see him again. He to compete," said Beauclerc. "There's generally a rule that members of the staff on a paper don't compete."

Frank Richards shrugged his shoulders.

"I suppose I'd better tell you," he said at last. "I don't want it talked all over Cedar Creek, of course. Mr. Penrose is offering a prize of a thousand dollars for the first-opened answer to a dashed silly puzzle--"

"When does a horse become a building?" grinned Bob. "Everybody in the Thompson valley is having a go at it, I guess!"

"The answer's easy enough," said Frank. "Anybody could guess it on That's where the catch comes in. Every fellow will think he has a chance of the prize."

"Well, so he has—if there is a

"But there isn't!" Bob laughed.

"I reckon I thought Mr. Penrose would find it a hefty job to raise a thousand dollars," he said. "But if he doesn't give the prize he will be rooted out of his office and lynched, I guess, after the way the Thompson folks have been buying up his paper at twenty-five cents a time."

"It's a swindle," said Frank. "His idea is to fix up a dummy prizewinner."

"By gum! How do you know?" "He told me," said Frank, his frown deepening. "He fixed on me for the spoof winner. There isn't a name and address."

indignantly. "You refused?" exclaimed Beau-

"Of course! We had a row in the office; and I'm not going there again. The silly owl took it for granted that I shouldn't have any objection, it appears. That's the way he learned the newspaper business in New York, according to what he says. He was quite surprised when I refused!" said Frank savagely. "He will have to look a bit farther for a spoofer!"

Bob Lawless whistled. "By gum! If this got out he would have a lynch-crowd round his office!" he said. "He's a jay to try such a game in the Thompson Valley.
Billy Cook, our foreman, has spent four or five dollars on coupons; and if he knew this he would pull his gun | Allege et allege on Penrose as soon as look at him. Dear Boys and Girls And so would a hundred other galoots Dear Boys and Girls in the valley, I guess!"

"That's why I don't want it talked] about," said Frank uneasily. "Old 3 Penrose is a fool and a rogue combined. He doesn't really know anything about business; he's too sharp, really, to be a business-man. How he will get out of the scrape I don't know; but I've warned him that he's got to give the prize now he's sold his paper on it, and if he fixes up some dummy winner I'm going to show him up. He can't make me a party "This won't do!" said Bob to a swindle. So he can spend all his a Contains a free packet seriously. "Mr. Penrose pays up time now in getting together a j every now and then, and you can't thousand dollars to pay to the JOI YANKEE PANKEE winner."

"I reckon that would take him all had the spondulics. This will mean the end of the 'Thompson Press,' I

clear out of the valley, and a good riddance!"

"But he wants to see you--" "Only to argue," said Frank. "He doesn't understand why I refuse-but can go and eat coke!"

"Hallo, there's the bell!" The chums of the backwoods left the corral, and walked away towards the schoolhouse.

There was a soft chuckle behind the corral fence, as Yen Chin, who had been crouching there out of sight, rose to his feet and blinked after the three chums.

Yen Chin had overheard every word, and it evidently gave him food for satisfaction, for he almost doubled up in a paroxysm of silent merriment. He trotted after Frank Richards & Co. to the lumber school, and his face was still wreathed in a happy grin when he took his place in Miss Meadows' class.

The 2nd Chapter. A Perplexing Position!

Chunky Todgers joined the company when they came out from lessons in the backwoods school that morning. "Hold on a minute, Richards!"

he exclaimed. "Give us a rest, Chunky," answered Frank impatiently. "I've heard more than enough about the thousand-

dollar prize. "I guess--"

"We've told you about a hundred times we're not finding the cash for a merry syndicate," grinned Bob Lawless. "Go and chop chips, Chunky."

Chunky Todgers gave them a reproachful look. The fat Chunky was keenest of all, on the subject of the any thousand dellars; he only wants | great cash prize offered in the "Thompson Press." In his imagina-"The cheeky jay!" exclaimed Bob | tion he had already spent the thousand dollars several times over.

"You galoots haven't any hosssense," said Chunky, more in sorrow than in anger. "With twenty dollars to spend on coupons I guess I could make sure of roping in the prize-it would be a dead sure cinch."

"Suppose there isn't any prize!" suggested Bob.

"Oh, rot! There is." "There isn't!" snapped Frank. "Rot!" said Chunky again. "Penrose wouldn't dare to spoof us. He

out of your hat, Richards. Now, I've

got a set of answers to the puzzle, and

3 TO-DAYS LOT-O-FUN If the bright and breezy COLOURED Comie. yours. The Front page Comedian

I want coupons for each one. You fellows need only find the money---"Rats!"

Cedar Creek," said Chunky, sorrow- to proceed was impossible. Frank fully. "But there ain't any takers, could only hope that the threat of You've got some money in the bank, exposure would induce the too-enter-

sort of personal injury to himself.

"It's staying there," said Frank. splendid chance we've got. You fellows would never guess the I've got six different answers, all

"There's only one answer that I eyes. know of," said Frank, "and that's simple enough for an owl to guess."

"Give us yours, Chunky," said Bob, with a chuckle. "When does a horse become a building?—that's the conundrum. How do you figure it out?"

"It never does!" said Chunky. "Eh! Is that an answer?"

a catch, you know. I'm risking to his chums. seventy-five cents on that answer; three coupons at twenty-five each." "If you've nothing better than

"Oh, I've some more—in case of Bob Lawless, with a nod. accidents, you now. Another answer Best you can do, anyway," agreed is, when it's an ornament to its Beauclerc. stable."

"Eh?" "A pun on the word become," see?" said Chunky. "To become means to be becoming-see? Sort of pun on the word. You fellows would never have thought of that."

"Blessed if I should," said Bob. "It's rather too deep for me." "It's rather too deep for any fellow

without much brain," explained Chunky Todgers.

"What?" "No offence, you know; but I've told you often enough that I'm the only chap at Cedar Creek with any think you can find a better answer,

Chunky Todgers disdainfully.

obvious enough."

position.

"What is it, then " "When does a horse become a building? When it's turned into a stable," said Frank.

Chunky started, and pondered a

"Well, that might be right," he said. "It's not so good as my answer-not so deep, you know; but it might be right. I'll put that in, if you fellows will stand the moneydon't march off while I'm speaking to you, you silly jays---" But the company did march off.

Molly Lawrence and Kate Dawson were going on the frozen creek with their skates, and Frank Richards & Co. joined them. Somehow they found Molly and Kate's company more entertaining than Chunky's. But Frank Richards was looking

very thoughtful when he came in to dinner; and he was very thoughtful for the remainder of the day. He felt that he was in an awkward

Every fellow at Cedar Creek was

taking at least one chance in the would get lynched. You're talking | "Thompson Press" competition; and Frank was well aware that they were throwing their money away-unless Mr. Penrose could be forced to "pay up." To see his schoolfellows swindled was impossible; and yet to tell them what he knew was difficult. All the town of Thompson had entered in the thou and dollar prize competition with enthusiasm; such "stunts" were rare enough in the outlying settlement, and it had caught on. The

"Thompson Press" had sold like hot cakes on the strength of it; Mr. Penrose had exhausted his whole supply of paper in meeting the demand. If the facts were known—as they were known to Frank Richards-the enterprising, gentleman from "Noo Yark" would be in great peril of being lynched over his own door. Frank Richards did not want to be the cause of that.

Mr. Penrose had quite coolly and calmly assumed that Frank would it into small pieces. enter into the scheme-Frank being his "staff"; all the staff he had. But the staff of the "Thompson Press" | the paper, much to the enterprising a sly grin. gentleman's wrath and astonishment.

Frank's angry refusal had come as Mr. Penrose stared at him. "Give it a name!" urged Bob. reckon!"

"Is it something to do with his new left the End of the Thompson Fress, I Buy Your Copy Now!

"All the better!" grunted Frank.

What he ought to do was a problem to Frank. To give Mr. Penrose away was to rouse an angry mob to deal "I've asked every other chap at with him; while to allow the swindle Richards—" prising gentleman to run straight. "Ha, ha, ha!" roared Bob. That | But even so, it was a mystery where was quite a common observation of Mr. Penrose would get the necessary Chunky's. Whenever he was hard | thousand dollars from. It was doubtup-which was often-his fat mind ran | ful if the enlarged sale of the paper on the subject of Frank Richards' would raise that sum; moreover, it "money in the bank." The fact that | was Mr. Penrose's habit to expend his Frank Richards had money in the takings, as they came in, in the pokerbank, Chunky seemed to regard as a room or the bar-room at the Occidental.

Frank Richards' position was a very "I'll tell you what," said Chunky. | unpleasant one. But whatever hap-"I don't mind letting you know my pened, he was determined not to go answers, so that you'll see what a near the office of the "Thompson Press" again.

After lessons that day, when the conundrum in a month of Sundays. | chums were preparing to ride home to the ranch, Yen Chin came up to them, with a peculiar glimmer in his almond

> "Flanky no goey to Missel Penlose?" he asked. "No. Give him my message,"

said Frank. "Allee light."

"Hold on a minute. I'll give you a note. "All selene. Me takee notee."

Frank scribbled on a leaf from his "That's one," said Chunky. "It's | pocket-book in pencil, and showed it

"Unless the prize is given to a genuine winner, the whole matter will be exposed.—F. R."

"That ought to fetch him," said

Frank Richards folded up the note, and handed it to Yen Chin.

"Take that to Mr. Penrose, and tell him, with my compliments, that he can go and eat coke!" he said.

Yen Chin grinned. "Me takee."

And as Frank Richards & Co. rode away on the snowy trail through the timber, the heathen Chinee started for Thompson, still grinning.

The 3rd Chapter. Yen Chin Makes a Bargain!

Mr. Penrose was in his office when brains to speak of. If you fellows | Yen Chin arrived there. He was not at work. He sat on the bench where I'd like to hear it. Try!" said he was accustomed to set type, with his pipe going, and a glass of whisky-"Ass!" said Frank. "The answer's and-water at his side. He wore rather a worried look. The last few days had been days of worry to the enterprising gentleman from New York. Frank Richards' refusal to enter into his precious scheme had put him into what he called a "quandary." It was too late to withdraw the offer of the prize. Hundreds of copies of the "Thompson Press" had been sold to meet the new demand-Mr. Penrose had cleared at least five hundred dollars in additional profits from the sale. Unfortunately, that five hundred dollars had taken unto itself wings, and flown away-with the assistance of Kentuck, the poker player, in the card-room at the Occidental. So far from being money in pocket, Mr. Penrose was in debt for an additional paper bill-such being the hapless gentleman's methods of conducting his business. He was, in . fact, far too thirsty a gentleman to succeed at any business.

Somehow or other, he had to get out of the scrape he had landed himself in; but at present he could see no way. A spoof prize-winner had to be "fixed" up; but where and how to find the necessary individual, Mr. Penrose did not know.

He had to find somebody he could trust, and it was difficult to find a trustworthy person to enter into a swindle. Trustworthiness and swindling did not really go hand in hand.

He brightened a little as there came a step in the doorway. For the moment he hoped that it was Frank Richards, coming in answer to his message. He was prepared to welcome that erring sheep back into the fold with open arms. But it was only Yen Chin.

"Well?" grunted Mr. Penrose morosely. "Flanky say Missel Penlose goey eatee cokee," announced Yen Chin.

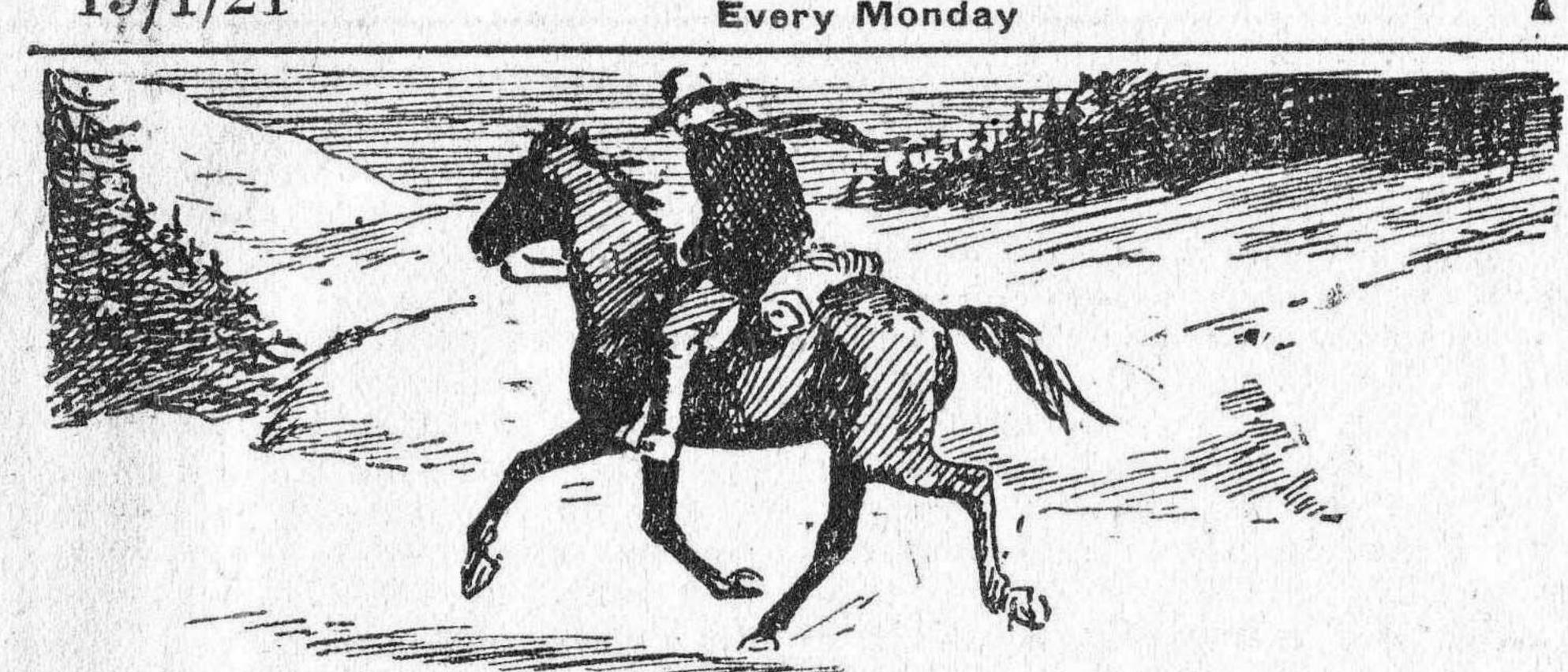
Snort! "Flanky givee me notee." ...

"Hand it over!" The heathen Chines handed over Frank Richards' note. Mr. Penrose read it and snorted again, and tore

"Vamoose!" he said ungraciously. Instead of vanicosing, the heathen Chinee closed the office door, and had now severed its connection with then came towards Mr Penrose with

"Me knowee," he said.

"What do you mean, you durned heathen?" he snapped.



Published

The Editor of the "Thompson Press" is forced to hit the trail!

Cedal Cleek," said the heathen the winds. cheerfully. "He tellee Bob Lawless. Me knowee all the game, Missel Penlose. Yen Chin velly sharp Chinee."

Mr. Penrose gave him a glare and slipped from the bench. His intention of kicking the little heathen out into Main Street was so evident that Yen Chin jumped back in alarm.

"Me no givee gamey away. You in the playground round Chunky lely on pool lill' Chinee. What you Todgers. Chunky had brought the tinkee? Me plize-winnel?" 66 What?"

said Yen Chin contemptuously. "No countenance.

half-raised his heavy boot, but Todgers. lowered it to the planks again. "Cough it up!" he said. "What are you driving at, you benighted

heathen?" "You wantee somebodee to winny plizee, no payee," said Yen Chin. "Me knowee. You gib me ten dollee, and me winnee plizee that you

no payee. Savvy?" Mr. Penrose eyed him thought-

fully. His inclination was strong to kick the grinning little heathen into the middle of Main Street. But he could not help realising that Yen Chin was offering him a way out of his difficulty that had been hopeless

before. In a few days, at the latest, the name of the prize-winner had to be given in the "Thompson Press." It had to be a winner who would not expect to receive the prize. Certainly, Mr. Penrose could have found any number of galoots to play the part for a few dollars, that was certain. But it was equally certain that such 'galoots' would have spent the money in fire-water, and then told the story up and down Thompson.

Yen Chin was really a windfall. In the first place, he had learned the facts by playing the eavesdropper. He knew enough to give i the game away, so the enterprising gentleman would be running no further risk in trusting him a little farther. It was annoying that the heathen should know so much. But he did, and that fact had to enter into the calculation.

And there had to be somebody. Better chance Yen Chin than let an entirely new person into the shady secret! That was Mr. Penrose's final decision; so he refrained from kicking Yen Chin. Mentally he promised himself the pleasure of kicking him at some future date. "Ten dollars," he said at last.

"Allee lightee." "You'll keep it up that you're the prize-winner all O. K.?" said Mr. Penrose. "If you're asked about the bill, you sent it off to a poor relation in New Westminster-nope, that's too near-in San Francisco."

"Me savvy." "It's a cinch, then," said Mr. Penrose, with a sigh. He did not! like parting with a ten-dollar bill. But, after all, that was a cheap way out of the very serious scrape he was landed in.

For some little time the heathen Chinee remained in the office, listening to the instructions of the New York gentleman. He listened with a docility that was very agreeable to Mr. Penrose. Indeed, the Chinee was so amenable to reason that Mr. Penrose was glad he was dealing with him and not with that obstinate and self-opinionated youth, Frank | Thousand Dollars Won by a Resident Richards. Yen Chin was as clay in the potter's hand, to be moulded as the enterprising gentleman liked. At all events, that was the im-

pression he gave Mr. Penrose. The latter breathed more freely when Yen Chin took his departure at last.

"That lets me out!" he murmured. "I guess it's all serene now! By gum! I was thinking I was in an awful scrape owing to that young jay I Richards cutting up rusty! But I

And Mr. Penrose locked his office | dollars has been duly awarded.

"Me hearee Flanky talkee at 1 a gentleman who has thrown care to

The 4th Chapter. The Prize-Winner!

"Rotten!"

"Yen Chin!"

"Lucky little beast!" "Br-r-r-r-r!"

It was Friday again, and a crowd "All selene!" he exclaimed hastily. of Cedar Creek fellows were gathered earliest copy of the "Thompson Press" to school with him. He had 66 Flanky Lichards gleat fool!" also brought a sad and lugubrious

knowee nuff to go in when lainee. For the name of the winner of the Me, Yen Chin, velly sharp lill' great thousand-dollar prize was in Penlose aftee school, and askee for the prize-winner was the great topic rascal! What you tinkee?" | that issue of the "Thompson Press," | plize," said Yen Chin. "You comee | in Thompson that day. Buster Bill, | boss. What's the matter with hand-Mr. Penrose gazed at him. He and the name was not Joseph

> Frank Richards & Co. clattered up to the gate as the Cedar Creek fellows were examining the paper. They joined the group.

"All the winners?" asked Bob Lawless, with a laugh.

readers trust us we know; but we | dollars, and asking Frank Richards & | choose to place the Grand Com- | Co. to accompany him? petition, like Cæsar's wife, above That was a mystery. suspicion!"

"Well!" said Frank, with a deep

that Penrose has given the right Yen Chin. The little Chinee had answer in the paper, and hasn't rung | asked nearly all the school to come in a change on us. I know it's all, with him, and a good number of the square, but it's rotten, all the same! fellows had decided to go. Frank was I've lost a dollar 'n a half on the pesky stunt. If you fellows had financed me, I might have bagged the thousand dollars, though perhaps you're sorry now you were so jolly mean."

Frank Richards & Co. walked away without replying. They looked for Yen Chin, and found that cheery heathen grinning in the playground. "So you're the winner?" said Beauclerc.

The little Celestial nodded.

"Say so in papel," he answered. "Got your thousand dollars yet?" asked Bob sceptically.

"Nottee yet."

"Let's see it when you get it," said Frank Richards.

"Allee lightee. Me call on Missel and see Missel Penlose payee."

"Good! We'll come," said Frank: They left the little Chinee grinning. Frank Richards was sorely puzzled.

"Looks fair and square enough," Bob Lawless confessed. "If Mr. Penrose had wedged in some hobo as the prize-winner it would be suspicious; I. Yen Chin checked his pony as he

Frank Richards and his chums were keen enough for the day's lessons to be over, so that they could ride over "It's all square," said Chunky to Thompson. When the time came, Todgers dismally. "The answer they found that some more Cedar being at the bank beforehand shows Creek fellows intended to accompany more and more puzzled. It really looked as if Mr. Penrose had made a virtue of necessity, and determined to "shell out" the prize, after all. But even in that case it remained a mystery how he could possibly have raised such a sum.

> Frank Richards & Co., and Chunky Todgers, Tom Lawrence, and a dozen more Cedar Creek fellows, rode into Main Street at Thompson together, escorting Yen Chin to the "Press" office. Yen Chin trotted along on his pony, with a placid and contented smile on his yellow face, and a sly, cunning gleam in his almond eyes.

Outside Gunten's Store there was a crowd, and copies of the latest number of the "Thompson Press" were much in evidence. The announcement of the big cattleman, was making remarks on the subject, with a richness of adjectives that was really eloquent. Buster Bill had spent ten dollars or so on coupons, and he had got the right answer; but he had evidently not had the luck to be "opened first."

in the presence of any citizen who two of them, why was Yen Chin Buster Bill hurled open the door, and cares to mosey along. That our calling at the office for his thousand the crowd swarmed into the dusty shanty.

Mr. Penrose's eyes turned on Yen Chin with an expression of threatening inquiry.

"What's this stunt?" he asked.

"Me winny plize," said Yen Chin "Correct!"

"Me callee for thousand dollee!" "Wha-at?"

"Me winny-s'posee you payee!" said Yen Chin.

The 5th Chapter. A Precious Pair!

Yen Chin smiled sweetly at the editorial gentleman.

His smile was not returned.

Mr. Penrose was staring at him, as if the grinning little Chinee were some dreadful vision.

"What?" he stuttered at last. "You payee up, yes?"

"Why, you young scoundrel-" roared Mr. Penrose, taken off his guard in his angry alarm and indigna-

"You no callee pool lill' Chinee names," said Yen Chin deprecatingly. "Me wantee payee plize. Me winny plize, me tinkee. Oh, yes!"

"That's fa'r and squar'!" said Buster Bill. "The heathen's won the prize-hyer it is in your own paper, ing him his money?"

Mr. Penrose did not answer. Frank Richards & Co. eyed him very curiously. They read wrath and indignation and terror in his face.

The hapless swindler was fairly "flummoxed," as he would have described it. He understood now why Yen Chin had brought a crowd of witnesses with him!

He understood that in making that arrangement with him, the wily little heathen had simply been pulling his dishonest leg.

Yen Chin had agreed to pose as the prize-winner for the payment of ten dollars. And his intention had beenas soon as the public announcement placed the wretched schemer in his power-to demand the thousand!

Mr. Penrose saw that now! He discovered it rather too late to be of much use to him. The cunning little heathen had fooled him all along

For it was impossible to deny Yen Chin's claim without letting out the whole story. And if the hapless man had revealed his secret arrangement with Yen Chin, there was not the slightest doubt that Buster Bill and his comrades would have laid violent hands. upon him, and sacked the office, and probably lynched the swindler on the nearest tree. Buster Bill & Co. were not the kind of men to take such trickery tamely. So far from daring to defy Yen Chin, Mr. Penrose dared not let a whisper escape him—a breath of suspicion would have put his valuable neck in danger.

The weird and mingled expressions on Mr. Penrose's face were no mystery to Frank Richards. He guessed easily enough how matters stood-that his place as a spoof prize-winner had been assigned to Yen Chin, and that the wily heathen had betrayed his confederate. Frank smiled grimly. The schemer had been hoisted by his own petard, and certainly it served him

Mr. Penrose's dismayed silence was puzzling Buster Bill & Co.. They did not know what Frank Richards guessed.

Yen Chin did not turn a hair under "Is the prize given?" exclaimed, but Yen Chin is a Cedar Creek chap, came by the stores. Evidently the the ferocious glare of the unhappy

"Yep!" groaned Chunky. "Your | "He's an unscrupulous little tion to his fortunate self. Buster Bill He had a truly Oriental conscience, warranted to stretch to any extent that was necessary.

prize, hasn't he?" the heathen that's roped in the dollars. "Me waitee!" he remarked, at last. Frank paused. I guess it's too good luck for a pesky | "You gottee money, oh yes? You handee me bill for thousand dollee, me tanky you! Oh, yes!"

"I-I guess-" spluttered Mr. Penrose.

it up with you?"

"You comee see Missel Penlose "Why don't you pay up?" deBeauclerc whistled.

payee plize," suggested Yen Chin. manded Buster Bill. "Hyer it is in the paper-in black-and-white! Pay the heathen his spondulics!" "I—I—"

he tried. If he's going to call on Pen- | given in the paper," said Buster Bill, | claimed Chunky Todgers. "Look here, if this isn't a prize. I want my money back! Dollar'n half!"

"I guess if there ain't a prize every galoot will want his money back, and of Yen Chin was pretty well known at | And the big cattleman strode along | the editor's hide into the bargain," the backwoods school. He was quite | with Frank Richards' party to the | remarked Buster Bill grimly. "Now, look hyer, Mr. Penrose, I don't foller this hyer. Are you paying the heathen his prize, or ain't you paying the heathen his prize?"

I-I-I was surprised---"



"The heathen's won the prize, wot's the matter with handing him the PAY UP ORmoney?" roared Buster Bill. The hapless swindler of Thompson was fairly flummoxed!

answer was right, Richards-when it's rascal," said Frank. glared at him. turned into a stable. Yen Chin got | "I guess so. But he's won the | "Thar he is!" he said. "That's it right."

"Yen Chin!" exclaimed Frank.

"Yep!"
"Well, my hat!"

Frank Richards stared at the announcement in the paper. It ran:

"Result of the 'Thompson Press' Grand Prize Competition! of Thompson Town!

Paid on the Nail! "The answer to the conundrum given in last week's 'Thompson Press' is, 'When it's turned into a

"The first-opened correct answer

was sent in by Yen Chin, Chinese Laundry. Main Street,

Thompson, guess it's all O. K. now." to whom the prize of one thousand

walked round to the Occidental answer, deposited at the Thompson Hotel with the free and easy step of Bank, will be opened this afternoon it was a concocted scheme between the that he was not expecting callers. (Continued on page 23, column 2.)

Frank. though he's a pesky heathen--"

"My word!" exclaimed Bob Law- heathen. If it was a white man, we'd "He's won the prize?" yelled Bob. less breathlessly. "Franky! You make him stand drinks all round.

getting the truth out of Yen Chin, | man, you see fair play." anyhow. He couldn't tell the truth if | "I guess he'll pay-ain't your name | "Ain't there a prize, after all?" ex-

matter of fact. The unscrupulousness | thousand-dollar bill." rascal enough to dend himself to a newspaper office. swindling scheme. On the other | Several of Buster Bill's friends dehow it was to be proved, so long as | Penrose's office. in a satisfied frame of mind, and | "The sealed envelope containing the | Yen Chin and Mr. Penrose were care- | The editorial gentleman looked out | "Nothing to be s'prised at, in a

prize-winner desired to attract atten- spoofer he had out-spoofed.

don't think Penrose has fixed it up | Vamoose the ranch, you pigtailed | with the heathen, as he wanted to fix | pagan!"

payee plize," suggested Yen Chin. "Blessed if I know what to think," | "P'l'aps he no wantee payee pool lill' said Frank Richards. "There's no | Chinee. You big handsome 'Melican

rose for the prize it looks square. | mollified by Yen Chin's soft words. We'll see what happens after school." | "But I guess I'll mosey along and see Frank was sorely perplexed, as a lit done. 'Tain't often I see a

hand, Yen Chin, as a competitor, had | cided to come, too-curious to see the as much chance as anybody else of | handsome bank-bill that was to be having his solution opened first. If it | handed over to Yen Chin. Quite a | "Oh dear! I--I-- Yes!" was a swindle, Frank could not see large party arrived at the door of Mr. | gasped Mr. Penrose. "Certainly!

days, and received full appreciation and justice.

Yussuf's powers of invention were drawn upon to a considerable extent during the next few hours, for the Arab insisted upon being told the adventures of the party. But Yussuf, for the good of the cause, lied like a practised hand, and wrung from the Arab and all his attendants murmurs of sympathy and repeated assurances of friendliness.

Then, just as Yussuf was in the middle of a story, there raced into the tent one of the Bedouins. Yussuf's yarn was snapped off short, and his eyes betrayed their anxiety to the watching Dick, and made each man feel for his automatic.

"There is a messenger from the sacred city of Elcazar without, O sheikh," said the newcomer, "who demands audience of thee regarding these infidels and one Yussuf, late of the secret city, and now their guide!"

The man disappeared, and a second later a tall, dust and sand-stained Moor, clad in the field-grey uniform of the league, entered in a hurry. He started as his eyes fell on the blueclad sailormen, squatting all around the tent, and lit up triumphantly as they encountered those of the young midshipman. He would have spoken to the lad, but the sight of the automatic pistol with which Murray was nonchalantly playing, perhaps deterred him. He turned to the sheikh and prostrated himself.

"I come from El Ferris the Tiger, O sheikh," said the stranger, "with a message that thou shalt keep thine eyes open to intercept a party of English sailors, and one Yussuf the Moor if they be encountered in the desert. And, lo! here they are in thy tent. They are those in whose keeping are the secret writings of the league's treasure-hoard. They have flouted Ben Adeem, and through them has been destroyed the virgin fortress of Elcazar. They have killed many of the league's servants, and their lives are forfeit to the cause. I demand that thou. O sheikh, take these men and at once bind them, and, in the name of the League of the Star and Crescent, whose badge thou wearest, and whose servant thou art, carry them forthwith to Elcazar, that they may receive the judgment and punishment that is their due."

The sheikh's eyes were expressionless as he regarded the messenger, then Dick, then the rest of the sailormen. Finally, he turned to Yussuf. "Thy moving stories of adventures by fire, flood, and field," he said softly, "they were, then, not true?"

"Nay, O father, there was no truth in them," said Yussuf. "We are fugitives from Elcazar, that evil city, as this dog saith. There is a price on our heads, and we have killed many of the league's soldiers. We have captured their virgin fortress, and stolen their riding camels, and we are worthy of death. What dost thou with us?"

The sheikh looked again at Dick and the sailormen. Then his eyes rested for a moment on his son, and transferred themselves to Casey.

"Stand up, O tamer of mad camels and saver of my son's life," he said in English, and Casey never knew whether he was the more surprised to hear the old gentleman speak his language, or to receive the order. He stood up, however, a towering bulk of a man; his hands thrust into his pockets. "What shall I say to this man, who comes hot-foot from the chief city of my league, which I have sworn to uphold with my life and my lands, my fortune, my flesh, and my tribesmen?"

"Is it really necessary for ye to speak to the dirthy blackguard at all, chief?" said Casey, recovering his aplomb on the instant. "Let me do the talking, and by the time that my two hands have finished with himwell, nimiless ye tell 'em yerself, there's mobody will ever know the sneaking omadhaun paid ye a visit at all !!

He extended two great paws as he spoke, and the man in field-grey fell

on his knees. "Thy protection. O sheikh!" he cried whiningly. "I claim thy protection!"

"Nay, fear not, whelp of a pariah dog!" said the sheikh. "None shall hurt thee. But the big man's answer would be best. But this I tell thee. I have taken the oath on the beard of the prophet and on the Koran to obey the commands of the League of the Star and Crescent unquestioningly in every least particular, which is one thing. But I have taken the more ancient and more binding oath of bread and salt with these my guests, and till the sun is in his zenith tomorrow I may not break that law."

(Another grand, long instalment of BOYS' FRIEND.

Published

Every Monday

CATCH A THIEF! (Continued from page 21.)

won!" said Buster Bill. "I'm here to see him get it. Even a yaller heathen's entitled to fair play. Hand it out."

"Hand it out, Mr. Penrose," said Frank Richards, with a smile; and there was a chuckle from Bob Lawless. Bob, too, could make a very shrewd guess how matters stood.

Mr. Penrose pulled himself to-

"I-I-I guess I-I was surprised," he said. "Because-because the prize has been sent already-by-by post!" The hapless gentleman was trying to gain time. "You'll find it ready for you at home, Yen Chin." Yen Chin smiled sweetly.

"My fliends come and see me open lettee," he said. "P'laps Missel Penlose forget to puttee in bankbill, oh, yes?"

Mr. Penrose breathed hard. "Any galoot's welcome to see that letter opened," he answered. "If there ain't a bankbill for a thousand dollars in it, come right back hyer."

"I guess we will!" said Buster Bill, very suspicious now. "And if it turns out that there ain't a prize, you look arter your neck, sir. I've got a trail-rope that will jest about fit it."

And, with that terrific threat, Buster Bill marched out of the office, with his friends and Yen Chin. Frank Richards & Co. remained behind. Frank was quite well aware that Mr. Penrose had not posted any letter to the Chinese laundry with a thousanddollar bill in it; the wretched man had only been seeking to gain time. Mr. Penrose stared at Frank with a dispirited countenance.

"All your fault!" he muttered.

Frank's lip curled. "If I'd been rotter enough to do what you wanted, I should have been rotter enough to stund on you, as Yen Chin seems to have done," he answered.

Mr. Penrose groaned. "I guess the game's up hyer," he "The biggest stunt I ever thought of-to turn out like this!

Oh gum! Vamoose the ranch, you kids, for goodness' sake!" Frank Richards & Co. left, and mounted their horses in Main Street.

"What on earth is the silly ass

going to do now?" Bob Lawless

asked, as the chums rode homeward. "Blessed if I know!" said Frank. "But whatever happens, he's asked for it. It's a case of set a thief to catch a thief; and the thief's badly caught. If he's got any horse-sense he'll bolt before Buster Bill comes

As a matter of fact, that was precisely the intention in the hapless stunt-merchant's mind.

When Buster Bill came back, his bearded, stubbly face was red with wrath, and he had a six-shooter in his hand. His friends were equally ex-Yen Chin was smiling as sweetly as ever; he had not the slightest doubt that his victim would pay up, at least to the greatest extent in his power, rather than face the wrath of Buster Bill & Co. in confessing to a swindle.

Buster Bill strode into the office with heavy feet.

"Hallo! Where is he?" he demanded. The office was empty.

"Gone to the Occidental, perhaps,"

suggested a cattleman. An excited crowd rushed to the Occidental in quest of Mr. Penrose. He was not there; and the Red Dog also was drawn blank.

That evening, when it was known in Thompson that the grand prize competition was a swindle, and that there was no prize, quite an army of excited citizens searched high and low for Mr. Penrose—several of them thoughtfully carrying ropes with them. If Mr. Penrose had been found, it is only too probable that he would have received the shortest of shrift, and the fire-water trade would have lost one of its firmest supporters.

But he was not found. While Buster Bill & Co. were seeking him high and low, a dismal gentleman was ambling miles away from Thompson on the trail to Kamloops, mounted on a borrowed horse which the owner was destined never to see again. The editorial career of Mr. Penrose in the Thompson Valley had come to a sudden end.

THE END. (Be sure you read "Frank Richards & Go.-Newspaper Proprietors," a topping tale of the chums of Cedar this exciting yarn in next Monday's Creek in next Monday's Boys'

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